



Chicago re re re re re re redesigns high schools (again)...

Mayor, minions sabotaging Chicago's remaining public high schools

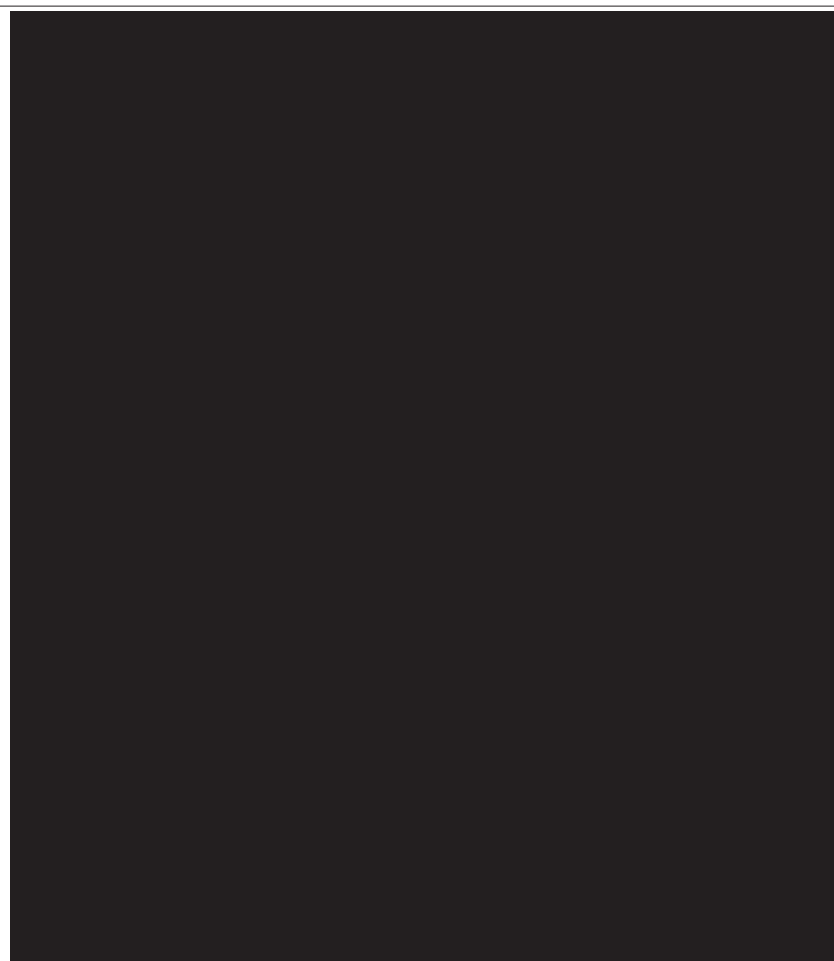
By George N. Schmidt

By the time Chicago's high school principals received the fax from Chief High School Officer Don Pittman telling them they would not be receiving any new teachers, some of them said they felt like officials in New Orleans learning that the Bush administration wouldn't be helping their poorest citizens escape the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"We have classes that are now over 40 and will have to be reorganized at some point," one high school principal told Substance September 13, the day of the infamous Pittman memo. "It's as if Arne Duncan were deliberately sabotaging the general high schools."

In fact, an informal survey by Substance of more than 50 traditional Chicago public high schools during the last two weeks of September 2005 revealed that policies and practices of the Duncan administration are sabotaging all of them. Substance reporters were surprised to learn that the sabotage extended to the remaining elite "academic magnet high schools" like Whitney Young, Lincoln Park, and Northside College Prep.

Despite an announcement by Arne Duncan that the Chicago Public Schools administration is once again going to redesign the city's high schools



Flanked by a U.S. Navy banner and speaking from a U.S. Army podium, Chicago Schools CEO Arne Duncan announced the Daley administration's latest attack on the city's remaining public high schools on September 19 at Farragut High School. Nobody from the media asked Duncan why the seven reorganizations of the high schools (1996 - 2004) since the Daley administration took over in 1995 had failed. With each passing day, critics of the Daley 'education miracle' are more likely to be fired from CPS teaching or administrative jobs. Meanwhile, corrupt officials are transferred from City Hall to the school board's growing political patronage bureaucracy. Substance photo by George N. Schmidt.

and regular speeches replete with talking points provided by the Board's communications department about the "failure" of the high schools, a closer look at budget constraints and staffing strictures shows that the word "sabotage" is not too strong to describe what the central administration, on Duncan's command, has done since April to Chicago's public high schools.

Although the staffing restrictions that are undermining the city's elite public schools are not as dramatic or damaging as those hitting the city's 45 general high schools, by the end of September it was clear that the Duncan administration, as part of Mayor Daley's Renaissance 2010 plans and other initiatives, was doing every thing possible to undermine the public high schools and push as many resources as possible out of the public high schools and into privatization and militarization schemes. At every step, the public high schools have been stripped of teachers and other materials, sometimes in dramatic ways, while every military and privatization scheme has been allowed extra resources.

Across the city, a large number of students in the general high schools entered the last week of September in overcrowded classes. Many of them were not able to take books home to study, because school staff, knowing

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Democracy crushed as delegates greet new year...

Union leaders continue dictatorial juggernaut

By Theresa D. Daniels

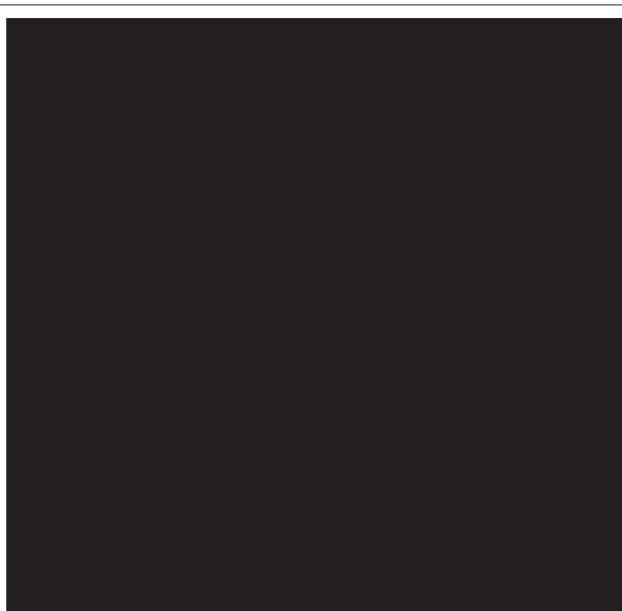
The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) September 7, 2005, meeting of the House of Delegates at Plumbers Hall saw President Marilyn Stewart continue her hurtle into history as what many delegates now agree is the most openly corrupt presidency in the history of this union. During the three years that Deborah Lynch was union president, Stewart led or joined in disruptions and catcalls from the floor of the House, regularly showing disrespect for the delegates and the traditions of the union. Today, she and her supporters continue that same tradition while she runs the meetings from the podium.

Onslaught on democracy and delegates

In meeting after meeting, beginning dramatically in December 2004, the will of the delegates has been subverted. In some cases, this has been done by parliamentary trickery — like motions for early adjournments and calls for quorum — by President Stewart's United Progressive Caucus (UPC).

It has also been done through dismissals of motions as "out of order." One motion was

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Chicago Teachers Union President Marilyn Stewart told the House of Delegates in September that a mail ballot to teachers' homes shouldn't be done because many teachers cheated on their required Chicago residency. Delegates criticized Stewart and her supporters for opening up the union's members to a major public scandal because of their desire to avoid mail ballots in union elections, despite the fact that New York and Los Angeles already follow the mail-ballot procedure. Substance photo by George N. Schmidt.

Bureaucrats threaten critics...

'The Chicago Squeeze'

By George N. Schmidt

When Chicago Teachers Union Vice President Ted Dallas (whose pay and benefits this year will surpass \$140,000) last month called one union member demanding that she deny things she said in Substance, he was joining other \$100,000-a-year people in the Daley administration — and their supporters — who take a meticulous interest in what is reported in the pages of this newspaper.

Dallas was not the first purveyor of the "Chicago Education Miracle" myth to try to bully people by micromanaging news critical of their version of reality. That began at the Board.

Last winter, David Pickens (\$120,000 per year assistant chief of staff in Arne Duncan's office) began calling parents and teachers who were quoted in Substance critical of Board policies.

One April morning, Pickens spent more than an hour of his expensive time on the phone berating a teacher, during the conversation calling Substance a "Commie Rag" and suggesting the teacher would never get promoted in Chicago if she continued being quoted in Substance. Since Paul Vallas, Chicago bureaucrats have tried to micromanage news and bully people into repeating their talking points. Beginning this month, Substance will report on "The Chicago Squeeze" regularly. Share your censorship experiences and we'll share them widely here. 🍏

Editorials

Substance™

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Substance™ (USPS # 016-073) is published monthly except July and August during regular publication years by Substance, Inc., an Illinois corporation. Editorial offices located at 5132 W. Berteau Ave., Chicago, IL 60641-1440. Please address all editorial correspondence to Substance, 5132 W. Berteau Ave., Chicago, IL 60641-1440. Periodicals postage paid at Chicago, IL. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Substance, 5132 W. Berteau, Chicago, IL 60641-1440.

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Website: www.Substancenews.com

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Publication date September 28, 2005

Mailed by September 30, 2005

Chicago Main Post Office Business Mail Entry
Periodicals Rate

Daley's destabilization campaign against Chicago's public high schools

We were pleasantly surprised, albeit a bit skeptical, on September 26 when the Chicago Tribune, which is usually touting every gyration of corporate "school reform" in Chicago like a carnival pitchman, noticed editorially that Arne Duncan's latest "re-ing" of the city's high schools has a lengthy history of failure. This failure goes back to the very dawn of corporate "school reform" in the nation's third largest public school system, in 1995 when Richard M. Daley took over the school system and appointed his first frenetic pitchman, Paul Vallas, as "CEO."

The day of the Tribune editorial, we were preparing a story that even shocked some of our more jaded reporters. Over the past three weeks, we discovered that the remaining *public* high schools in Chicago — including the magnet schools and high schools in the city's few middle class communities (like Taft and Morgan Park) — were all facing the same insurmountable problems. While privatized entities (even those run by convicted sex criminals) are praised in the corporate press, the attack on public high schools escalates, backed by millions of dollars from the world's richest guy, Bill Gates and prattle from pitchmen and propagandists.

Staff cuts and programming straight jackets — ranging from dozens at places like Steinmetz High School on the Northwest Side to more than a dozen at most public high schools — have created a situation where the high schools are going to spend the first weeks of *October* starting over, as we report in our page one story. For many (if not most) Chicago public high school students, October will be the first time they get the teachers they will have in their classes all semester and the books they will be studying every night at home (if there are enough books to go around at their schools).

To add a truly idiotic but contemporary cachet to this entire public relations monstrosity,

Arne Duncan's staff (which now includes dozens of Yuppies with no urban high school teaching experience) has declared that all advanced courses — Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) — have to have 28 students in each class even if only a dozen kids are really ready for that level of study. Principals are forced to pad the classes or cut back. While suburban kids are in AP classes of 15 or 20, city kids are jammed in classes called "AP" with double that number. So the city's best high schools — Lincoln Park, Northside, Von Steuben — are screwed, too. Duncan's fraud won't show until the results of the AP exams come in — July 2006, long after the damage has been done. By then, there will be another pirouette of spin and mendacity from City Hall and the propagandists at 125 S. Clark St.

More and more of the city's general high schools have been forced to admit — even in the face of increasing pressure mouth New Age clichés about "High Expectations" — that only a handful of 11th and 12th graders in their schools have enough prior training and knowledge to really do AP and IB work in subjects like calculus or literature, Duncan's boys and girls, unimpeded by real world experience, repeat lines from teacher-bashing scripts like "Stand and Deliver."

"Students will rise to our level of expectations," Don Pittman, the former basketball coach who is now the chief of the city's high schools, told Substance September 19. Hollywood clichés are now policy. While Pittman would never have put a short, overweight asthmatic 14-year-old on a basketball court against his rivals from King High School 20 years ago, he now proclaims that English, math, science and social studies teachers should do the equivalent of that. And the media ignore the reality. Stupid is a mild term for this. But that's one thing Richie Daley — and his regime — have always been. 🍏

The Resistance

Why not make children's happiness the main 'outcome?' ... Schools need a happiness index

By Susan Ohanian

People who care about public schools need to ask why the school research approved by the U. S. government under the label of No Child Left Behind pays less attention to the happiness index than does the chicken research sponsored by McDonald's.

Marching in lockstep to demonstrate its allegiance to a Big Business model, a few years ago the New York City school district trumpeted its hiring of Neutron Jack Welch as chief advisor to their academy for training principals. Now, McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken have given the nation's public schools a somewhat different corporate model to consider. Just take a look at the lead sentence in an article titled "Animals Seeking Happiness" from *The New York Times*: "Can a white leghorn hen be truly happy?"

These corporate giants are sponsoring research to find out answers to that questions as well as others: "Are cows ever happy? Do pigs feel pain? What do chickens really want?"

The *Times* reported that researchers videotape chickens at play and they rig doors so pigs can use their snouts to choose between eating their food alone or hanging out with other swine. "Asking scientific questions about an animal's feelings is brand new," says Edmond A. Pajor, an associate professor of animal behavior at Purdue University. "It's hard to talk about happiness, so we're trying to reduce the number of negative emotional experiences."

Reduce the number of negative emotional experiences. Now that's a mission statement I could subscribe to. I'll get out my tambourine and march to it.

Put aside, for the moment, the question of whether McDonald's and KFC are being somewhat disingenuous. Just consider the new territory they are entering: asking scientific questions about an animal's feelings. That's worth repeating: *asking scientific questions about an animal's feelings.*

Consider how far Federal and state policy mandates have driven schools from the territory of the feelings of children or their teachers. The fact that it is inconceivable to imagine the current U. S. Department of Education sponsoring research to find out answers to such questions as "Are schoolchildren ever happy? Do schoolchildren feel pain? What do schoolchildren really want?" should give parents and teachers pause. And it should give them a cause for which to join hands and march together.

These are our children, and they don't get a second chance at childhood.

Recently I came across a lament by a California middle school teacher whose school just had to send out a letter to parents, inviting them to transfer their children to one of the other two middle schools in the district. "For the past two years," the letter read, "Barnard-White Middle School has not met the NCLB criteria adopted by the State Board of Education and so has been identified by preliminary reports as needing program improvement."

A whole lot of teachers — and parents — write me, complaining about how damaging such letters are to a school. Damaging and unfair. What struck me about Dave Ellison's objection is that instead of pointing out that 75 percent of the school's population are students of

color speaking 22 language, he brought up the faculty's emphasis on happiness.

In Dave Ellison words, "Clearly, we, the staff and students at Barnard-White, had been doing a lot of things right. Many of these things — such as creating an environment where most everyone felt safe, supported, cared-for, and happy (one of our strongest suits) — would never show up on a standardized exam."

Happiness as a category on a standardized exam. What a notion.

I looked up the school's mission statement. Okay, there's a lot of verbiage (but there's no mention of preparing workers for the global economy or any of that corporate twaddle), but these words are there: *All persons have the right to be treated with respect, kindness, and courtesy.*

Clearly for this faculty "all persons" means children. And I fear too many educators have forgotten this. Too often, people who are themselves treated badly forget how to exercise care and concern toward others, even the smallest among us.

When I wrote Dave Ellison, asking him about this happiness thing, I was struck by the fact that he credits the staff *and* the students. Together. With an emphasis on the students. In his e-mail, Dave said that the kids at Barnard-White are just plain nice kids. How refreshing to hear from a teacher, and a middle school teacher at that, who says kids are nice. Dave wrote: "We notice that our kids are more mannered and kinder when all the district's middle schools' bands get together, or the color guards, etc. These kids are just nice kids."

Please note: nobody is trying to ascribe these kids' good manners and kindness to some sort of behavior mod program or a rewards system. Not even Small Schools gets credit. In a building housing 856 kids, 75 percent of whom are students of color speaking 22 languages, the predominant quality is niceness. And happiness. A former vice-principal described the school as "the happiest place on earth."

Forget making this faculty sending out a letter announcing that students have the transfer option. Send in teams of researchers to find out about their happiness index.

Why isn't a kindergartner's Happiness Index taken as seriously as his phonemic awareness score? Why don't we ask high schoolers this question: "What do you really want?" Ask that—and shut up and listen to the answer—instead of issuing rules that nobody gets a high school diploma without passing high stakes math tests based on algebra, geometry, statistics, and probability and other high stakes tests requiring deconstruction of a sonnet and the use of the semi-colon.

I'd contribute to research to find out if more than three members of the U. S. Congress know how to use a semi-colon. I happen to admire semi-colons; that doesn't mean I think leaving them in disarray has anything to do with America's standing in the Global Economy—or its domestic tranquility.

Consider Bhutan, a Himalayan country the size of Switzerland. In 1972, the king of Bhutan declared that his country would henceforth measure progress with gross national happiness instead of gross national product. It is still the only country in the world to do so. Writing in *Sojourners* (http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=news.display_article&mode=C&NewsID=4925), Richard Ingram discusses Bhutan's position, asking, "If there were greater

emphasis in America on life satisfaction as a matter of public policy, which groups of voters would benefit? One answer could be anyone who would gain from government programs that help with the work of care-taking while holding a job — such programs as childcare, adult day care and universal health care. In fact, wouldn't all workers benefit from a broadening of the definition of the bottom line? A happier, healthier workforce might even increase America's gross national product."

If we really want to raise students' standardized test scores, the easiest, most economical way to do it would be to improve their happiness index. And the place to start is by providing their families with a living wage.

Questions about children's happiness are neither frivolous nor rhetorical. The cruelty of No Child Left Behind puts childhood at grave risk, setting schools on a destructive course that will produce very very angry children who grow up to be adults whose values are skewed and who are mad as hell to boot.

Some food retailers have introduced labels indicating that an animal was raised with care. Surely our schools can do no less. Every teacher, every year, must be able to testify that every child in her class was educated with care. What's the education equivalent for 'free range' and 'no pesticides'?

Childhood is short; it is our obligation to make sure it is also sweet. Our job is not to educate future workers for the global economy. Our job is to nurture children and to make their schools joyous places. 🍎

One of the most important books about the current corporate attack on public schools and public school teachers has been written by Susan Ohanian and Kathy Emery —

'Why is corporate America bashing our public schools?'

(Heinemann) is available from all online booksellers, including the publisher, www.heinemann.com.

If you want to learn more about the widespread national resistance to high-stakes testing and inhuman 'education reform' policies, visit Susan on her website:

www.susanohanian.org

October 2005

One way to fight high stakes testing is to deconstruct test questions and show how irrelevant, ridiculous and/or developmentally inappropriate many of them are.

Please send questions to:

Susan Ohanian

P. O. Box 370

Charlotte, VT 05445

Please include:

-- the name of the test

(copyright information, including date)

-- publisher of the test

-- where and to whom it was given (grade level, state)
Accuracy is important.

October 2005

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The Resistance

Jackson tells 1,000 supporters...

'I too have a dream...'

By George N. Schmidt

Standing in the pulpit of the Chicago Temple, less than a block from the famous 5th floor offices of Chicago's mayors, Congressman Jesse Jackson on July 30 told more than 1,000 supporters who jammed the main floor and balcony of the downtown church, "I too have a dream..." The rally took place in mid-summer and was part of a build up of opposition to Mayor Richard M. Daley for the next mayoral election.

Jackson's 15-minute speech followed testimony by community leaders, union members, and residents from among Chicago's poorest and most oppressed communities. Among those at the rally were hundreds of members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which had just split from the AFL-CIO over the need for more aggressive organizing. Chicago Federation of Labor president Dennis Gannon promised that the labor federation would remain united in Chicago.

Jackson's speech contained a litany of charges about how the present Chicago administration had surrendered the city to large corporate interests while neglecting the communities,



Above: Part of the crowd of more than 1,000 people who attended the July 30 rally and meeting at the Chicago Temple to hear Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. speak about a new vision for Chicago. The enthusiastic crowd filled the main floor and balcony of the unique downtown church. (Substance photo by George N. Schmidt).



Above left, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. speaks to the crowd. His speech, which called for massive voter registration, echoed a them "I too have a dream" that was highly critical of the corporate priorities of Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley. Above right, Chicago Federation of Labor chief Dennis Gannon told the crowd that the CFL has a half million members in Chicago, and that those members will be mobilized on behalf of working people in future Chicago elections. (Substance photo by George N. Schmidt).

working people, and basic services such as public schools. Citing Millennium Park as an example of misplaced Chicago priorities, Jackson said that he believed that every Chicago child should have the same educational facilities and opportunities as the children in Wilmette and Winnetka who attend New Trier Township High School.

Every speaker emphasized the need to register thousands of new voters for upcoming elections. Most also spoke of the policies of the Daley administration that have harmed poor, working class, and middle class communities across the city. Many of the seniors spoke of the problems with rising city property values, which in turn drive up real estate taxes and force people to leave neighborhoods where their families have lived for generations.

Health care was also a theme of the event. The major health care corporations that support Mayor Daley have also been charged by many with reducing access to affordable health care to the poor and working people in most Chicago communities.

Several speakers noted the failure of the city to adequately provide housing for the poor as the Chicago Housing Authority projects have been torn down and replaced by expensive middle class communities, often at great expense to taxpayers. Union leaders charged that the Daley administration had forgotten the men and women of Chicago's labor unions and turned their back on their oldest allies, the unionized workers of Chicago.

The basic charge, repeated over and over, was that the Daley administration was attempting to transform Chicago into a playground for wealthy tourists and highly paid corporate types, while the backbone of the city — the neighborhoods — was neglected at every turn.

Speakers at the rally included State Senator Miguel DelValle and leaders of ACORN, Metro Seniors in Action, labor unions, and student groups.

Conspicuous by its absence was the Chicago Teachers Union, although there were dozens of teachers in the crowd and many public education activists, the CTU leadership was not visibly present at the event. Observers noted that the last major political insurgency against the Democratic "machine" involved thousands of teachers helping to elect Harold Washington mayor in 1983. 🍏

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The Resistance

Despite his popularity, Illinois senator gets it very wrong...

Senator Obama, Literacy and Libraries

By Stephen Krashen

Illinois Senator Barack Obama is extremely well-informed in a number of important areas crucial to his position in the U.S. Senate. He is not, however, well-informed about some important issues in education. In a presentation at the American Library Association, Senator Obama (Obama, 2005) repeated the commonly held views about how well our children read, how children learn to read, the effects of TV and computers on reading, and, even though he was speaking to the library association, he underestimated the importance of libraries.

Obama believes in the proficiency levels that accompany the NAEP exam, a test given to children throughout the US: "During the last 20 years or so, over 10 million Americans reached the 12th grade without learning to read at a basic level ... In 2000 only 32% of fourth-graders tested as reading proficient ..." (p. 50).

As Gerald Bracey (e.g. Bracey, 1999) has pointed out many times, measurement experts have agreed that NAEP "proficiency levels" such as "basic level" and "reading proficient" have no actual basis. The NAEP categories appear to be arbitrary.

Obama also appears to accept the National Reading Panel report: "We know that children who start kindergarten with awareness of language and basic letter sounds become better readers ..." (p. 51). Several scholars have argued is that "awareness of language and basic letter sounds" are the result of a more general competence in reading, which is really the result of interaction with comprehensible text, real reading (Goodman, 1993; Smith, 2005).

Obama notes that "the more reading material children are exposed to at home, the better they score in reading tests throughout their lives" but feels that the implications of this finding is to fund family literacy programs, ignoring the obvious fact that school and public libraries can also be of tremendous help in solving the problem of providing access to books for children.

Obama is apparently unaware of data showing that better libraries mean higher reading scores. He is also unaware of the many studies showing that children of poverty attend schools with inferior school libraries and live in communities with inferior public libraries (research reviewed in Krashen, 2004).

Obama repeats the common view that TV and computers are threats to reading: "When you're at home, you might try to get your kids to read, but you're competing with other by-products of the technology revolution, TV, DVDs and video-games ..." (p. 52). "Children can't achieve unless they raise their expectations and turn off television sets ..." (p. 50).

Obama is clearly unaware of research findings showing no relationship between time spent watching TV and time spent reading, and studies showing no relationship between computer use and reading. One study, in fact, concluded that more computer use was related to slightly more reading (research reviewed in Krashen, 2004). The bottom-line on TV and computers is this: *The problem is not the presence of distractions but the lack of access to books.*

Like nearly all politicians and media columnists, Obama ignores the real problem in literacy. Studies tell us that those with more access to books read more, and those who read more, read better. Children of poverty have very little access to books, and as everybody knows, they score poorly on reading tests. The first step in dealing with this obvious problem is to improve



Above: (Then) Illinois State Senator Barack Obama with Chicago Teachers Union members at the October 25, 2002 Chicago Teachers Union LEAD (Legislators Educators Appreciation Dinner). Despite the fact that members of Lynch's opposition (the United Progressive Caucus) were boycotting LEAD events in an attempt to embarrass Lynch and her administration, Obama received the early backing of then CTU leaders in his bid for the Democratic Party nomination for the U.S. Senate seat he now holds. Obama's earliest supporters included President Deborah Lynch and Vice President Howard Heath, who helped ensure that Obama received more widespread support within the Illinois labor movement. CTU support offset some Democratic Party leaders in Chicago who at the time were backing Controller Dan Hynes for the nomination for the U.S. Senate seat Obama now holds (Substance photo by George N. Schmidt).

school and public libraries in high-poverty areas.

Obama said some very good things about libraries in his presentation; he feels that "libraries are a critical tool ..." (p.51). They are more than this. They are the core of the solution to ensuring that all children become highly literate. As Obama notes, "it should be as easy to pick up a book as is to rent a DVD or pick up McDonalds" (p. 51). Agreed. In fact, it should be a lot easier. 🍏

Notes: Bracey, G. 1999. Problems with NAEP writing proficiency levels. <http://www.america-tomorrow.com/bracey/EDDRA/EDDRA9.htm>.

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Above: Chicago Schools CEO Arne Duncan (right) reviews his prepared remarks alongside sparsely equipped library shelves at Chicago's Farragut High School on September 19, 2005. That day, the Chicago Board of Education held a media event to announce another "Redesign" plan for Chicago's general high schools. To the left above is Farragut Principal Edward Guerra. A careful review of the Farragut library in early September showed that it has a large collection of law books (in a fancy special section named the "David Cerda Legal Clinic") but a relatively small collection of the general circulation books that most high school students need. For the September 19 media event, Duncan's podium (marked "United States Army"— not "Chicago Board of Education") was placed in front of the law library, rather than before the much more sparsely equipped general library. The Farragut library is typical of those in Chicago's general high schools. The general high schools take the majority of students from their communities. They are not allowed to require high standardized test scores or set other criteria for admission. Stephen Krashen's articles have long criticized the lack of adequate libraries in public schools today. (Substance photo by George N. Schmidt).

The Resistance

Pilgrimage in honor of the 'Civil Rights Martyrs of Alabama...' WOO students make Civil Rights journey to Hayneville, Alabama

By Steve Orel

Early Saturday morning (August 13, 2005) at the World of Opportunity (WOO), a school in Birmingham, Alabama, Veronica and DeMarkus were busy making sandwiches and preparing sack lunches which also included an apple, a bag of chips, water and fruit drink. While other students arrived, Johnnie and Jermaine turned on computers and began to surf the web. Jacqueline and Jermaine helped load the lunches. Finally at 8:35 a.m. with 13 of us (Corey, Angela, Candace, Javon, Jacqueline, Veronica, DeMarkus, Jermaine, Johnny, Ch'tay, Lucille, David & I) in a van and pickup truck, we pulled out of the WOO parking lot to begin our civil rights journey to Hayneville, Alabama, about 120 miles southwest of Birmingham.

When we left the interstate on Exit 151, south of Montgomery, we traveled on County Highway 97 west towards Hayneville. We reviewed the events of 40 years past, when Jonathan Myrick Daniels, an Episcopalian seminarian; Ruby Sales, a sixteen year old Tuskegee student; Phyllis and Joe Bailey, residents of Hayneville; Stokely Carmichael (later known as Kwame Toure), a SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) organizer; Father Richard Morrisroe, and fourteen others were arrested on August 14th 1965 and held for a week in the Lowndes County Jail for registering African-American voters. One week later, without notice, they were released on a hot scorching day. Daniels, Sales, Bailey and Morrisroe headed around the block to Varner's Cash Store to get soda pops.

As Daniels reached to open the screen door to the store, Tom Coleman suddenly appeared at the door with his shotgun. He shouted that the store was closed and ordered them to "get off this property or I'll blow your g — damned heads off, you sons of _b@#%&es!"

Coleman aimed his shotgun at Ruby Sales. Without hesitation, Daniels pushed Ruby down and out of the way and sustained Coleman's shotgun blast at point blank range. The buckshot tore a hole in the right side of Jonathan's chest. He died instantly. Coleman fired a second round and the buckshot hit Father Morrisroe in the lower right back and side and felled him (Morrisroe was hospitalized for months recovering from these wounds). Coleman then threatened to shoot other African-Americans who were standing at the corner in the distance. At the Hayneville Courthouse, Coleman was acquitted by an all white jury.

We had been studying and discussing the events in Hayneville of 1965 for several weeks at WOO and we all hoped that we might see or meet Ruby Sales if she was in attendance at the ceremony.

The solemnity of that event 40 years ago crept into all of us in the van as we passed country farms, leaning shacks, rusty signs, quiet pastures, weeping willows draped in Spanish moss, a rebel flag, and other remnants of the Old South the closer we came to Hayneville. I urged everyone to stay together once we arrived at Hayneville and keep an eye on each other. "You don't gotta worry about that!" was the refrain.

Highway 97 took us straight into the main street of Hayneville, and a sigh of relief was heard throughout the van as we saw what appeared to be a friendly traffic jam, a bus, and then hundreds of people gathering peacefully in the courthouse square. Nothing was quite as reassuring as seeing a courthouse packed with kindred spirits. I had imagined a much smaller turnout since the tragic Hayneville event and the slaying of



WOO students meet "the incredible Ruby Sales" during the August 13 pilgrimage at Hayneville Hayneville, Alabama. Substance photo by World of Opportunity (WOO), Birmingham, Alabama.

Jonathan Daniels are buried deep in civil rights history.

Veronica and Jacqueline were first to point out that we had parked right next to a monument erected to honor the life and legacy of Jonathan Myrick at the southeast corner of the courthouse square.

As the hundreds began to assemble in the square young people stepped to the front of the crowd carrying portraits of some of the other Alabamians slain during the turbulent civil rights movement.

The remembrance ceremony was conducted by the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama, the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, and REACH (Rural Enrichment Accessing Community Hands). The event was called a pilgrimage and procession, a Feast of Jonathan Myrick Daniels, Martyr of Hayneville and all Martyrs of Alabama. The sun bore down on our assembly and our skins glistened with sweat.

About 500 of us left the courthouse square and marched a few blocks back down Highway 97, and then turned right one block to the Lowndes County Jail. A service and recounting of the events was held at the front door to the jail. The jail is not used today, but held prisoners up until about five years ago. The building was open and our students and others walked up the outside hot metal stairs and into the dark, barren, stinking, small jail cells which held Daniels, Carmichael, Morrisroe, and the men. It was a sad sight to watch Jermaine, Johnny, Ch'tay, and Corey walk into the cells, first making sure that the door was wide open and would not shut, and inspect the harsh metal and concrete interior. Then, we walked downstairs where the women were crammed like sardines into the first floor cells. The meanness of this small, thick metal, jailhouse which was once packed with civil rights freedom workers hung in the air 40 years later.

From the jailhouse, the procession walked back down to the main street and turned right one block to the site of the old cash store. Today, a brick insurance company building sits on that spot. Again, a brief service and historical account of the events was shared with the marchers. It was in front of that building that we first saw Ruby Sales. A young man sang a beautiful gospel spiritual and then Ruby came to the microphone. She spoke calmly and with conviction, standing on this very site where her life almost came to an end forty years ago. "This is the place

where a tremendous event took place involving ordinary people in Lowndes County, Alabama. We were just standing up for our rights. Jonathan Daniels was a good man and I am thankful for him."

It was quite remarkable to see and listen to Ruby Sales. Ruby was born the same year as five of the six youth who were killed in the bomb blast and its aftermath at 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham on September 15, 1963, just two years before the Hayneville event. So, to look at Ruby Sales physically, was to imagine what Denise McNair, Addie Mae Collins, Carole Roberston, Cynthia Wesley, Virgil Ware, and Johnny Robinson might have looked like how they might have aged, had they been able to live out these past forty years, more than 15,000 sunrises and sunsets, stolen from their lives; how the passage of time might have been reflected in the palms of their hands, the burdens etched into their faces, or the saltiness spreading throughout their hairlines.

More importantly, to look at Ruby Sales was to imagine what Birmingham's martyred youth might have been had they had the chance to live, learn, explore, and discover. As the life of Jonathan Daniels was stolen, the life of Ruby Sales was reaffirmed. Ruby Sales has undertaken tremendous work in the field of exploring the legacy of American violence, national oppression, and sexism. She has continued to fight the good fight. Embodied in Ruby, one can imagine the possibilities and contributions which Birmingham's six youngsters might have made as teachers, mechanics, or doctors, nurses, scientists, authors, or political leaders. As an instructor, I pause with the realization that the students in our program might very well be Dr. Martin Luther Kings, Malcolm Xs (El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz), or Zora Neale Hurstons.

This is why it was very inspiring to see a number of youth actively participating in the pilgrimage march: the spirited youth from WOO, the local gospel choir from Lowndes County, African-American, white, Palestinian, & Episcopalian youth from different walks of life.

From the cash store site, we proceeded back to the courthouse, stopping for a brief moment in front of the memorial monument to Jonathan Daniels. Then we slowly negotiated the long flight of concrete stairs leading to the sec-

The Resistance

Pilgrimage honors Alabama Civil Rights martyrs

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ond floor of the building at the edge of the courthouse. We were greeted by the youth gospel choir wearing yellow shirts from Lowndes County. Radiantly, they sang "I saw the light" with beautiful organ accompaniment. The Episcopal officials stood at the front of the room which was packed beyond capacity. It dawned on me that this was an awfully large church for such a small town,

The guest speaker was Dr. Vincent Harding, a beloved colleague of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Harding is a very engaging speaker who quickly makes eye contact and heart-filled connections with the audience. He heightened our awareness of the importance of this moment, "This gathering in this courthouse has been paid for dearly. We are not here for free. The dues have been paid. Forty years ago, if we imagined a gathering like this, we would have been called 'crazy dreamers.' We need more crazy dreamers now." He looked behind him, at the large black and white portraits of other martyrs which were held prominently by today's youth. "These are the pictures of people who were shot, and bombed, and beaten. Terrorism did not begin in America in 2001." He spoke of the courage of Jonathan Daniels and "the freedom workers who had to make conscious decisions if they would continue going on in the struggle despite the terror which was going on all around them."

It was during Dr. Harding's remarks that I suddenly realized that we were not in a church at all. We were in the Hayneville courthouse, the very courtroom where Daniels and Sales were charged when they were arrested. We were sitting in the same benches and standing in the same aisles and on the same tongue and grooved hardwood floors where Ruby Sales was in 1966, six months after the slaying of Daniels, defying death threats, to testify against Tom Coleman. Dr. Harding explained, "This Hayneville courthouse has historically been a place of injustice. This afternoon it is a place where we come seeking justice."

One of the most emotional moments weaving together the sacrifice and sorrow of the civil rights struggle came when a roll was read including the names of many of the Alabama martyrs. A woman read aloud, "Willie Edwards Jr." Then, a youngster at the front of the courthouse, where the judge would normally sit stood up and testified, "Present," and held Edward's portrait above her head. The reader continued, "January 23, 1957, martyred in Montgomery."

"William Lewis Moore." Another young person testified, "Present," and his portrait was hoisted high next to Willie Edwards. "April 23,

1963, martyred in Attalla, Alabama.

"Addie Mae Collins... Present."

"Denise McNair... Present."

Carole Robertson... Present."

"Cynthia Wesley... Present," and the large portraits of the four little girls were raised by four youth and stood next to Edwards and Moore.

"September 15, 1963, martyred in Birmingham, Alabama."

And this stunning roll call continued with youth raising each martyrs large portrait.

"Virgil Ware... Present September 15, 1963 martyred in Birmingham, Alabama."

"Jimmie Lee Jackson.... Present. February 26, 1965, martyred in Marion, Alabama."

"The Reverend James Reeb.... Present. March, 1965, martyred in Selma, Alabama."

"Viola Liuzzo.... Present. March 25, 1965, martyred near Lowndesboro, Alabama."

"Willie Brewster... Present. September 18, 1965, martyred in Anniston, Alabama."

"Jonathan Myrick Daniels... Present. August 20, 1965, martyred in Hayneville, Alabama."

"Samuel Leamon Younge, Jr... Present. January 3, 1966, martyred in Tuskegee, Alabama."

"And all others known to God."

The words I have at my disposal in this chronicle cannot recreate the significance of that moment of silent reflection, seeing these thirteen larger-than-life portraits, along with Dr. Harding and Ruby Sales gathered together at the front of the courtroom, filled with hundreds of people, of many nationalities, youngsters and old, restless children and the tired and frail, all under this old roof of oppression, now seeking peace, justice, and reconciliation. I will always remember this precious moment.

As we left the courthouse, Veronica and Jacqueline met Joe Bailey who was sitting on a park bench. Mr. Bailey told us about his recollections of that fateful August 20th day forty years ago, and what he witnessed at the cash store when he was released from jail. Mr. Bailey accepted our invitation to share his history with students at WOO. We exchanged contact information. Ms. Sales also said that she would get in touch with WOO to explore ways in which we can collaborate on peacebuilding projects in the future. We documented our journey with group photos of WOO at the Daniels monument, with Ms. Sales, and Mr. Bailey.

We headed back home and listened to each person's reflections of the significance of the day's events. Since our contingent is intergenerational, we had a wide range of reac-

tions to this journey. Veronica, Jacqueline, and Candace were so honored to meet Joe Bailey and they are looking forward to hosting him at WOO. For Candace's son, six-month old Javon, this was his first civil rights march. Candace's first hand experiences in Hayneville might be the basis for her English composition classes which she begins next week at UAB. Our teenage students were glad to once again see their Palestinian counterparts whom they met at WOO for a peacebuilders lunch one week earlier. Corey and Veronica was horrified by the jail which was nearly in the same condition today as it was in 1965. Lucille said that she met a number of people in the courthouse square. She and her husband, David, are veterans of the Money, Mississippi civil rights activities where Emmett Till was lynched on August, 1955. David walked home with young Emmett that August 28th evening, just hours before 14 year old Till was kidnapped. Angela recruited one possible volunteer English tutor for WOO. Ch'tay was impressed that Dr. Harding knew Dr. King. And our minds are still sorting all of this information out.

After day full of civil rights fuel for the heart and soul, we stopped at Golden Coral buffet, fueled and soothed our stomachs, breaking bread together and sharing more reflections.

This is how we practice our WOO mission as a civil rights and social justice educational and job readiness program, teaching with and learning from the whole person. The trip was even more poignant and joyful for us because so many students at WOO have been slandered by school administrators who claimed they possess a "lack of interest" and used this designation to justify pushing them out of school. Here we were on an early Saturday morning, and our students are so vibrant with a "lack of interest" that they walked and caught rides to the WOO to travel some 250 miles in the scorching sun to learn about our history and experience crazy dreams about a better future.

Our next civil rights journey will be next month when we close on Thursday, September 15, 1963, and gather inside 16th Street Baptist Church at 10:22 in the morning (and then later in the evening), to pause and reflect upon the bombing by the Klan and the loss of life and injury 42 years ago.

Through these activities we reaffirm that freedom is a constant struggle, as we pass along the baton of peacebuilding and justice to our amazing students.

Note: Many of the details of August 14-20, 1965 were pieced together relying on excerpts from "Outside Agitator," a chronicle written by Charles W. Eagles, and distributed at the pilgrimage. 🍎

Rickover 'Naval Academy' to hold secret dedication?

By George N. Schmidt

In the face of mounting public opposition to the Iraq war and the expansion of military and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in Chicago's public schools, city and school district officials have decided to hold the dedication ceremonies for the newly opened "Rickover Naval Academy" — housed at Chicago's Nicholas Senn High School — in secret. When contacted by Substance for the date and time of the upcoming event, board officials refused to tell Substance the date and time of the ceremonies. Informed sourced have said that the ceremonies will probably be held on Veterans Day, November 11.

"This event will not be open to the public," Lieutenant Michael Biela, Academy Superintendent, told Substance on September 22.

Biela said that worries about the security

of the academy's 120 students were part of the reason for the decision to close the ceremony, which at one point was expected to include former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Carter served under Admiral Hyman Rickover in the nuclear submarine fleet. The naval academy was named after Rickover, who was known as the father of the nuclear Navy.

Biela noted that the event might draw anti-war protestors were it conducted in public.

Officials at the Board of Education's Office of Communications confirmed that the event was going to be closed to the public. According to former high school history teacher Timothy Tuten, who now serves on the board's public relations staff, final plans for the event have not been made.

Arne Duncan declined to be interviewed by Substance regarding the controversy surround-

ing the Rickover Naval Academy. Dan Lebolt, press secretary for Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, said on September 22 that he would look into the question and get back to Substance. Schakowsky supported the academy despite widespread public opposition among her constituents. Alderman Mary Ann Smith, who represents Chicago's 48 Ward, did not return phone calls requesting comment on the plans for the dedication. A spokeswoman for Smith's office told Substance on September 22 that she would get back to us but never did.

Others were angry and said so.

"How can they possibly have a private event with the military and a public school involved!?" asked one Senn teacher, who asked to remain anonymous. In the coming month, information will be available at www.save-senn.org and www.Substance.news.com. 🍎

Delegates

Continued from Page One

called “out of order” belatedly — a month after it overwhelmingly approved in the House — came at the last December meeting. This was the motion of former South Shore Delegate Devon Morales. According to the motion, the hiring of any union employee at a salary of over a \$100,000 per year must be voted on by the House. The UPC and Stewart have simply ignored the fact that the motion was ever approved, and several lucrative union jobs have been awarded since then with no House action, or even details to the House.

The will of the delegates also has been thwarted through outright fraud. Lately, President Stewart and her supporters simply flip the vote results to say that “No” is “Yes.” At the June 2005 meeting, the House voted not to approve the budget by a significant margin. Stewart and her supporters simply announced that they had won that budget vote at the June meeting giving the new leadership *cart blanche* to spend our money as they wish.

Other affronts to the House come through scandalous spectacles like the arrest of Debbie Lynch at for “disorderly conduct,” also at the infamous June meeting. The arrest came after Lynch had won an election for High School Functional Vice President, giving her a seat on the CTU Executive Board and a voice in the House. Although police took Lynch into custody on orders from Stewart’s supporters, none of them ever went to the police car in which Lynch was held to sign the formal charges. The charge was later dropped, but only after Lynch had been arrested and placed in a police vehicle.

The facts of the Lynch arrest were seen by hundreds of delegates inside the House meeting. Lynch was in the custody of the Chicago Police in the Plumber’s Hall parking lot, as witnessed first hand by dozens of delegates. The event was then reported in detail in the Chicago Tribune (June 2), on at least one TV station (June 1), and finally in the September 2005 print edition of Substance. Nevertheless, the Chicago Union Teacher (CUT), which is now heavily censored by one of Lynch’s top aides, reported a fictionalized “news” story about the event in its September issue. A complete report was published in the September Substance and is already available on the Substance website because of its importance. [A lengthy Subscript on the story also appears on Page Thirty-Nine of this Substance].

Debbie Lynch savaged again by sleazy tricks at the September meeting

The September 7, 2005 meeting was no different from the heated meetings of the past year. The official question period — which is now the only place where the Stewart administration will sometimes let a delegate get away with making a motion — has come to be shunted to the end of the meeting. This seems to be based on the hope of the union chiefs that many delegates will have left by the time motions are officially in order. Stewart’s people can then make a call for quorum (meaning that approximately 300 delegates of roughly 1,000 must still be remaining for a vote to be conducted), effectively ending the meeting. Stewart’s people can also make a motion to suddenly adjourn the meeting if the speakers lined up at the mikes are those whose motions they fear.

The effect is a system which is guaranteeing that fewer and fewer voices from the schools are heard, and that a growing number of delegates are even leaving the meetings very early or not bothering to go at all.

This stifling of democracy happened when Debbie Lynch was to be the next speaker on Microphone One during what I will from now on call the “Official Question and Motion” por-

tion of the meeting. Lynch was at the microphone. Suddenly, Sharon Orlowek, delegate from Johnson School (a UPC member and chair of a number of union committees, and part-time staff member of the Class-size Committee) made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Orlowek’s motion was voted down by a loud voice vote of No.

Once Orlowek’s motion for adjournment had been voted down, Lynch was able to make her motion. She moved for the reinstatement and refiling of the class action grievance on the 5 + 5 early retirement plan for teachers. This grievance had been dropped by the Stewart administration. After losing 5+5, Stewart then promoted her “victory” in getting a modest ERO (Early Retirement Option) for teachers. As was widely noted, the “5 + 5” option is much more lucrative for veteran teachers and affects a very large number of union members. The “ERO”, by contrast, is relatively expensive to members and is limited to a small number of teachers.

When the motion on the “5 + 5” question came before the House in September, it was the first time Deborah Lynch had spoken at length as a member of the House since Stewart took over the union in August 2004. She was well received by the majority remaining at the meeting, but many members of the UPC were as nasty as possible, unable to refrain from making personal attacks on the former president.

In speaking to her motion, Lynch said that she hoped that this leadership had not exchanged 5 + 5 for the ERO. The ERO benefit for 450 people paled in comparison to the 4,000 union members the 5 + 5 would have benefited. She said that under the Lynch administration, the Board of Education had *signed an agreement* to push for 5 + 5, or some comparable benefit to retiring teachers, and had reneged on their agreement. She said that unlike what the Stewart administration keeps implying, the Board knew that the ERO was not a comparable benefit. By dropping the class action grievance, Lynch said, the Stewart leadership allowed the Board to do nothing.

Lynch’s motion was followed by mass confusion on the part of the Stewart “team.” Attorney Jennifer Poltrock spoke to say that the officers had decided not to pursue 5 + 5 and that Lynch’s Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) against them for dropping the grievance had been dismissed. Lynch’s rejoinder was that the ULP decision was being appealed. A large number of delegates noted that the ULP appeal had nothing to do with the question before the House of Delegates, which has the right of the House to decide on matters such as the 5 + 5 grievance.

President Stewart at first tried to say that two-thirds of the House would have to vote “Yes” to pass a motion reinstating the class-action grievance. Lynch challenged the ruling and said that it was a simple majority that was needed. She said that the House had to vote it up or down.

Pam Massarsky — who served as CTU Recording Secretary for the “Old” UPC under Tom Reece, among others, during the 1980s and 1990s — is now a patronage worker for our union as a Springfield lobbyist. Nevertheless, Massarsky, although officially a retired teacher who doesn’t hold any elected union office, is now one of the most active people at every House meeting, where she usually speaks more than any delegate from any school. Without being asked by President Stewart, Massarsky rose to say that Lynch’s “5 + 5” motion had to automatically go to committee.

Diana Sheffer — like Massarsky, another retired UPC staff member also rewarded now with a union staff job — rose, without being asked by the president, to help Massarsky run the meeting from the House floor. Sheffer asked the president hadn’t she ruled it to be referred to the executive committee.

There was at this point a vote. The Ayes had it. Most people thought that they were voting on Lynch’s motion, which had wide support.

Sheffer then said that the House had voted to *discuss* Lynch’s motion — that we had not voted on the motion itself. There were cries at this point asking, “Who’s running this meeting?” President Stewart answered, “I’m running it.”

President Stewart then declared that the House had voted to hear the motion, but had not voted on the motion. In the midst of the confusion, she then conducted a vote on the motion itself. Possibly because it was apparent that the majority had voted Yes (or “Aye”) to pass the motion, Stewart then interrupted the vote and asked Lynch to put her motion in writing, which Lynch did. The aisles weren’t cleared for the vote, as is customary. The Yes vote was then “continued” after a reading of the written motion as presented by Lynch, and many people weren’t sure as to what was happening. It wasn’t clear that those voting Yes for the motion should remain standing, but many were. Then the No vote was taken.

It was so clear to me that the Yes vote on the Lynch motion had won that I didn’t even count. Others from different parts of the large hall agreed.

Nevertheless, Stewart announced that the vote count was 72 Yes and 93 No. (Please see the Letters section of this issue of Substance for the reaction of delegates and others.) Stewart said that the Lynch motion was defeated. Amid shouts of protest, Lynch moved for a roll call vote. At that time a UPC stalwart — name unknown — called for the meeting to be adjourned. The next thing everyone knew, Stewart said the meeting was over and everyone was told to leave.

Our beloved union—a deathly stench rising?

It has become embarrassing to have friends and family who are not directly associated with the schools or the union to read these reports, and for me to have to admit that this is what our union has come to.

It is small wonder, then, that some of our union members been in discussion with the Illinois Education Association (part of the National Education Association), a rival union, about ending the 70-year relationship between Chicago’s school workers and the Chicago Teachers Union (part of the national American Federation of Teachers). Outside the September House meeting, a number of delegates were distributing a leaflet inviting union members to a meeting to explore getting another union to represent Chicago teachers and ESPs.

A week after the House meeting, a group of more than 40 CTU members attended a meeting at the Parthenon restaurant in Greektown to listen to presentations about how we could have an election in 2006 or 2007 to choose a new union to represent those currently covered by the CTU contract. According to those present, it would take roughly 10,000 - 12,000 signatures (one third of the active CTU membership) on a petition asking for such an election to be held. If such a petition drive were successful, an election to determine whether the Chicago Teachers Union or the new union — in this case, a local of the Illinois Education Association (IEA) would represent the members in negotiating the 2007 union contract. Because the election would be conducted independent of all factions within the Chicago Teachers Union, the chances of manipulation would be minimized.

The specter of a split in the Chicago Teachers Union was ironically noted during the meeting. In her President’s Report, Stewart spoke of the disaffiliation of at least four unions from the AFL-CIO at the AFL-CIO’s July national convention in Chicago and made an appeal for “labor unity.” At the AFL-CIO in July, members of the CTU were called out for a rally in support of AFL-CIO president John Sweeney, who had the backing of the national teachers’ union against the

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Delegates

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dissidents.

The issues are complex, but the boil down to who will get a contract that does better for CTU members and enables members to win back the rights that have been stripped away or surrendered the past ten years or so.

Members will need to examine what the IFT and the AFT have been doing to improve the situation of the Chicago union members in the schools. Anyone holding a union membership card can attend a meeting of the House of Delegates and watch the Stewart faction in action. Another source of information would be to call suburban school districts and ask for copies of their union contracts, comparing them with Chicago union members' pay, benefits, and working conditions.

Thirty years ago, when Chicago first got collective bargaining, Chicago members were doing better than our suburban counterparts. In the course of the careers of many teachers now retired or approaching retirement, the opposite has happened. Suburban teachers now do better than Chicago teachers, and most suburban teachers are represented by the IEA. With the advent of the Internet, research comparing the pay, benefits, and working conditions of members in the Chicago Teachers Union (affiliated with the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers) and members of the IEA can be easily done. Critics of the CTU have noted that many suburban teachers early larger pensions than senior Chicago teachers earn working full-time after 30 or more years in the classroom! Few suburbs offer the challenging working conditions of Chicago, and none regularly threaten teachers with termination because their schools are "failing" through no fault of the teachers.

The meeting at the Parthenon was organized by a union caucus called "CEEC". [Deborah Lynch heads the PACT caucus, while the union's not offices — but not the entire executive board — are now controlled by the UPC].

Bill Malugen, delegate from Roosevelt High School, and organizer for CEEC (Chicago Educational Employees Caucus), told Substance: "The single reason that the Chicago teachers and others are so behind in salary and benefits compared to the teachers in the rest of Illinois is that for three decades under the rule of the UPC, who are now back in power. The leadership of the Chicago Teachers Union failed to protect its teachers."

Malugen spoke of the two percent raises in the 1990s and the erosion of benefits and seniority rights under former President Tom Reece and others. He also talked of ending the corruption of the "Old/New" UPC.

Also at issue is how much power the union leadership is placing in the hands of its now-retired former staff members and its expensive lawyers. A flier from CEEC distributed at the September meeting, states: "The AFT allowed its General Counsel, Larry Poltrock, to represent UPC, and they failed to acknowledge that voter misconduct took place in the last officers' election."

The CEEC flier also states: "Marilyn [President Stewart] saw fit to bring back the same people who were forced to return \$325,000 to the CTU when they were defeated in 2001. Marilyn gave herself, officers and field staff a \$2,000 Christmas bonus. Marilyn restored the 21% annuity payment to herself, officers and staff at a cost of nearly \$600,000 to our members. Marilyn restored the \$18,600 TAX-FREE expense accounts for herself, officers and staff.... We are returning to the days of Tom Reece and the ineffective and corrupt leadership that existed then. He's back along with Pam Massarsky, Diana Sheffer, Gail

Koffman and June Davis. IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE."

Doubletalk on the mail ballot

The Stewart administration is using its power to stall every democratic attempt to reform the Chicago Teachers Union. Election procedures are one example. The topic of elections now comes up at every union meeting.

At the May, 2005, House of Delegates meeting, Sandra Finkel, delegate from Franklin School, submitted to the Stewart leadership a petition from PACT (Pro-Active Chicago Teachers and School Employees), the caucus of Debbie Lynch. The petition had the signatures of 2,450 union members (many more than the 1,750 signatures required).

The petition requested that a referendum be held on the question of the mail ballot for all union elections, with safeguards in place such as double envelopes and an outside agency to conduct the election in entirety. This would eliminate the problem of unused ballots being used to cast fraudulent votes, which is a problem that can arise when voting is conducted in the schools. The mail ballot had been used for several citywide votes under the Lynch administration, but only part of the process was in place during the controversial elections held in May and June 2004. (An independent outside firm, the American Arbitration Association, collected and counted the ballots after they were cast in the schools. But the balloting in the schools that led to the controversy over fraud in the June 2004 vote was done under the supervision of the union delegate at each site).

At the June, 2005, meeting, when Sandra Finkel and Larry Milkowski, delegate from Carver High School, both asked at various times about the status of the petition, they were told that the office staff was "verifying the signatures", but that all other work could not stop. The union officers acted as if the verification of signatures would take forever.

At the September 2005 meeting, more than 120 days had passed since the petition was submitted. When Finkel raised the question about the status of the referendum for the mail ballot during the pre-meeting question period, she was told that the staff was still working on it. When Finkel tried to ask again about the timeline for the referendum, she was told that they were still working on it. In his report, Financial Secretary Mark Ochoa stated that there were some duplications of signatures in the petition. Delegates tried to point out that the petitions had more than 500 signatures more than required by the CTU Constitution and By-Laws to mandate a referendum on the question.

What has been going on? Ignoring a petition that was already signed by so many more than the requisite number of members, what was presented at the September meeting by the Stewart team? While stalling the mail ballot petition, Stewart now has her own petition for a referendum on a different approach to the mail ballot. Stewart's version wants a mail ballot *at the workplace*. In what they called the "Residency Privacy Protection Amendment," UPC members asked the delegates to gather signatures on their version of how the union should conduct elections.

A member of the Rules Election Committee, Sandra Finkel said after the meeting: "Since the Rules Election Committee was not involved in this new petition, where did it come from?"

It is as if everything is emanating from the officers with no input, or checks and balances from union members, delegates, or duly appointed committees.

Stewart's petition is based on the admission that some union members are living outside the city and using fraudulent city address, despite the fact that everyone signed an agreement

to be living in the city or to move into the city as a condition of employment. Now that their petition is public, Stewart and her caucus are planting a time bomb to be used against Chicago teachers and other union members.

"Any time the Daley administration, Arne Duncan, or the mass media decides to begin enforcing the clear residency policies of the Chicago Board of Education and exposing residency 'cheating' by Chicago teachers, they can now begin their stories by quoting the petition of the President of the Chicago Teachers Union," said one long-term observer of union politics and public relations, who asked to remain anonymous. "Stewart was not thinking when she went along with this bizarre plan. Her lawyers had better be ready to defend anyone who is caught in a residency audit. Everyone has signed a legal promise to have city residency. Those who have broken that promise have also broken the law and can be fired if the Board of Education decides to go after them. This thing could lead to days of teacher bashing headlines and bad feelings all around. What was she thinking when she supported this petition?"

Union chiefs take Lynch mail ballot idea, but change it leaving a loophole for fraud

With this new petition, no longer are the union chiefs arguing that the mail ballot would be too difficult for Chicago union members to cope with and voter turnout would be low (seeing as how the unions in major cities use the mail ballot and members cope, and how the AFT recommended the mail ballot to dispel charges of election fraud).

As delegates listened to Stewart try to explain why there should be a mail ballot, but that it not be mailed to members' homes, more questions than answers arose. Earlier, the UPC simply opposed the mail ballot. UPC leaders demanded that the cumbersome school votes (with paper ballots, under the supervision of the school delegate) be continued. This type of election was in place through the 2001 upset victory of Debbie Lynch over Tom Reece. At the dawn of the 21st Century, the technology that was used by the Chicago Teachers Union was an invitation to fraud and a joke. As the 20th Century ended, the union was still using 19th Century voting technology.

Now the crux of the UPC argument regarding the mail ballot has changed. Now the mail ballot is OK, but mailing the ballots to union members at their homes is being opposed by the leaders. The UPC states that it "is inadvisable where there is a mandatory residency requirement or where the addresses of employees have not been kept current for one reason or another."

Stewart admitted in her report that New York and Los Angeles use the straight-to-the-home mail ballot, but claimed that because those cities don't have a residency requirement there should be a difference with Chicago. She said the voter turnout for the mail ballot was extremely low. Her argument for this new petition says, "Mailing a ballot to the workplace is far more practical." She didn't say why the union — with an annual budget of more than \$20 million — couldn't clean up its mailing list in time for a major election which will not take place until 2007.

Problems with the Stewart proposal abound, but are only being discussed in the halls. Yes, I say, if you want to steal an election, it is far more practical to mail the ballots to the schools. Just as there are address irregularities and members might have to make a call if they receive no ballot at their address, there are also many mistakes on what school a union member is at, as many delegates can testify when they receive their rosters of union members. Names appear on the delegates' rosters of members long retired,

Delegates

Continued from Page Nine

or long transferred to other schools, or even long deceased. These ballots can easily then be used to cast a fraudulent vote. Names of members who have long been at a particular school are also often missing from the roster.

Also, as we all know, there are some teachers at every school who, as everyone there knows, do not clear their mailboxes daily and would not miss a ballot. These ballots too can be used to cast a fraudulent vote. And the ballot of any teacher can be surreptitiously removed, and that teacher has the right to get another ballot....You see where I'm going....What happens if the stolen ballot is cast fraudulently?

The officers' petition says, "Elections are the most democratic where the greatest number of participants are afforded the opportunity to vote." Others say, "Elections are least democratic where there is the greatest opportunity for fraud."

Are our officers by their announcements really telling the Board that there are so many union members lying about where they live? And are the *few* who are not living at their addresses-of-record really so dumb that they can't get mail from the Board or the CTU at that address-of-record? If that is the case, then all the Board of Education has to do is send one mailing to those addresses and use the returned mail as the basis for a list of possible residency violators to investigate. And Stewart herself has virtually invited the Board to open this attack on Chicago teachers whenever the Board decides to! The Chicago Board of Education is the largest individual employer in the State of Illinois and maintains computer records of everything from teacher certification to employee payroll and tax records. Like the Chicago Teachers Union, which represents the majority of people who work for that employer, the Board devoted a great deal of time and resources to maintaining an accurate record of the address of every employee of the Board. Members have already given their address of choice to their employers, to their union. All members can be urged by advertisements to make sure that the Board and the CTU have correctly listed their address of choice. And the election is not scheduled for some time.

Partisan shenanigans regarding pension trustee endorsements

Dumping the incumbent pension trustees *who won the mail ballot election for trustee but which election the judge overturned on the narrowest construction of pension by-laws which said there had to be a voting place designated*, the UPC leadership placed the names of their cohorts for endorsement in one of the motions in the Items for Action.

Not endorsed were the winners of the first, now canceled, election: Rose Mary Finnegan, Pat Knazze, and Ernestine Murphy. These three are now the incumbents who have already served a term during the Lynch administration. Yet they were not endorsed because they were associated with PACT. Jackie Price Ward, former Recording Secretary under Lynch, is also a candidate the UPC did not choose to endorse.

Some bragging was done at the meeting from both the stage and the floor about how solvent our pension fund is, and how it has had no scandals.

Al Korach, retiree delegate, asked why the officers were dumping the incumbents then, if they had seemingly worked hard ("worked their butts off," he said), had done a good job, and there were no scandals.

He got a fiery rebuttal from a young UPC partisan whose name, as I heard it, I could not find in the delegates' handbook. She screamed, "What do you mean there was no scandal? These

people sued other trustees who were members of the union and wasted my dues money doing it!" She sat down with a look of great satisfaction.

Unfortunately, there was no one at the next mike to explain that the trustees who were sued (some of them the new UPC endorsees) had spent \$40,000 of the pension fund on a letter to all school employees to create a bogus scare during the great debates over the 2003 contract proposals brought in by the Lynch administration. At that time, they used some sleight-of-hand to get the Pension Board to send a letter claiming there was a line in the proposed contract that might allow for the Chicago pension fund to be merged with the state pension fund (which was poorly funded). This letter was mailed during a heated dispute over the contract, and was a rogue partisan action for which the four other trustees rebuked them.

The motion for the endorsement of the UPC candidate's trustees passed. So did the other four motions which dealt with procedures for compiling contract proposals, retiree pension trustee endorsements, the replacement of Trustee Carolyn Ball with Christian Nze, and contributing \$10,000 for the victims of Hurricane Katrina—note—to the AFT Disaster Fund.

Highlights and Lowlights

In the past, delegates had always been allowed to ask questions after any report that was given and to make pertinent motions. In the past year under the new leadership of President Stewart and team, neither questions nor motions were allowed. They were ruled out of order even though past practice in all the previous administrations had allowed them.

Maybe things are changing. I ventured out of my seat during Recording Secretary Mary McGuire's report to speak about the kind of minutes we were receiving, and she told me to come to the mike. I said that the mikes had been removed to the front, an indication that members cannot speak from them. But then I scampered quickly to the mike so as to use this opening.

I said she had graciously responded immediately to my certified letter asking to see the transcripts of the June meeting — even though she said was undergoing a surgical procedure the next day. McGuire rushed in to say that I should hurry and come to see the transcripts as soon as the minutes for the June meeting were now approved at this September meeting.

Of course, being allowed to see the transcript of a meeting only after the members approve the minutes at the next meeting is useless to me in terms of writing this report as it must go in to be published before that next meeting. For example, I would love to see the transcript to get the name of the delegate who didn't want the trustees of her caucus sued for doing the caucus work while on the pension trustee job.

I said that the "minutes" the delegates were provided violated the union by-laws and the constitution, as they did not state, as is required, what the outcomes of the officers' mo-

tions in the Items for Action were. Nor did they state any motions made by delegates or the outcomes of those motions, as is required. I said that they were just replications of the Agenda for the last meeting, and that she ruled the corrections delegates wanted to make out of order.

McGuire stated that she was avoiding "the *verbosity* that would ensue." While her devotees oooh'd and aaah'd at the fine word, I was trying to make myself heard. I said that there was no verbosity involved, that all she had to do was add the letter *d* to the word *Approve* in most cases to indicate that a proposed motion made by the officers had been approved. I said that she could easily, without much verbiage, give us minutes that reflected what had actually happened at meetings.

We'll see if the outcomes of the motions made by the executive board and in the Agenda, as well as Debbie Lynch's motion and its outcome, actually appear in the October meeting minutes.

On to another subject, not only have I not been allowed to see the transcripts in a timely way for the purposes of writing this report, but I only received my Chicago Union Teacher (CUT) newspaper today (as I am completing this report) at deadline on September 26th. My husband, also a retired Chicago teacher (and a former delegate) still has not received his. I wonder if this is happening to many people who do not receive the newspaper at a school, but in their homes.

Definitely a lowlight at the last June meeting, and one I failed to discuss in my previous report, was the comedy of errors surrounding the presentation of the Allen Wardell Award for 2005. The award is designed to recognize a member of the Union—regardless of sexual orientation—who has helped foster a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.

The June issue of the CUT pictured the honoree Ms. Dominique Martin, a fine arts teacher at Taft High School. The caption stated that "the formal presentation of the award" took place at the House of Delegates June meeting.

Unfortunately, when Ms. Martin tried to get into the hall to receive her award (after not being able to find a legal parking space — a frequent problem), she was not allowed into the meeting room at Plumbers Hall because she did not have a Delegate's badge, according to Geoffrey Carlson, delegate at Taft, who accepted the award in her behalf, even though, as he said, he was not dressed for the occasion.

In the past, security at these meetings was provided entirely by union members appointed to be sergeants-at-arms and wearing armbands to signify it.

Now some of these, as well as some union notables, wear black on black shirts and ties or other variations of what some would call Chicago gangster motifs — and there are now hired security guards as well. I wonder which variety of watchdog stopped the award recipient from entering the hall. Heaven help us all. 🍏



Former American Federation of Teachers President Sandra Feldman died last month. Above, Ms. Feldman as she visited students at Chicago's Dodge school on October 2, 2003. Substance photo by George Schmidt.

Retiree and Pension News

Clout and your pension

By Al Korach

I thought we in Chicago hit the political corruption bottom when in 1999 alderman Larry Bloom got caught up in the Operation Silver Shovel sting. Larry the great liberal was once known as the "Conscience of City Hall." Larry has now faded in disgrace into who knows where.

Alderman Bloom got into trouble over chump change as compared to the amounts of monies involved in the downstate teachers' pension fund debacle. The primary problem — whether it's mayors, governors, lawyers, aldermen union officials or government workers — is the need to raise cash for political ventures such as elections or the plain need to just be able to buy personal stuff.

It is also a known fact that when lower echelon individuals are caught up in a criminal operation, they are in no mood to do long prison time. With few exceptions, they will all cooperate with the Feds so as to obtain a negotiated or reduced sentence by implicating higher-ups.

No one I know of that has received what is usually called "large political donations" does not know the sources of such funds no matter how loud their denials. The former governor of Illinois, George Ryan, will soon be brought to trial while milking the PR from his stand against the death penalty. Much of the information against Ryan came from lower echelon individual trying for a "deal".

In the meantime, the Mayor of Chicago has been called in by the Feds for questioning regarding "jobs for friends" in most city departments. This could cause him his next election. I guess we have to now include Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich in the mix. It seems that another lower echelon fundraiser may have implicated him while trying for a deal.

It appears that Governor Rod has just added \$4 million more at a fundraiser. All good party supporters say these monies seem to come from individuals that expect no more from the Gov then good government. There has long been a trail of jobs, promotions and government business going to large contributors. So what's new? It seems that they now have found more gold in the downstate teachers pension fund.

The full story of the pension fund deal is just beginning to come out. Joseph Cari, a political fundraiser, has been connected to the scandal and has pleaded guilty to one count of attempted extortion. It now seems that a high-ranking state official — only named as "Public Official A" — is involved. A number of unnamed sources have indicated the "Official A" could be the governor. The story is ongoing, and we shall wait and see how it develops.

At the September Chicago Teachers Union House of Delegates meeting, a motion was made to endorse the CTU's endorsed pension fund trustee candidates. I rose to support a no vote. I reminded the group that there have been no problems or scandal and we should stick with the same experienced trustees. I reminded the delegates that there was a mix of both UPC and PACT on the fund.

Well, after I got a good hand from the crowd, all hell broke loose protecting the UPC candidates — led by the highest paid retiree employed by the CTU.

I have to take a moment and compliment the CTU president on her aid to retirees. (That is UPC retirees). It is interesting to note that while they are proclaiming the "New UPC" it seems that she has employed many of the old UPC leadership in high paying positions. A great deal for the favored retired few.

After the Reece UPC team was put out of office, many went to the pension board and retired. They were then all put on the pension rolls. A guesstimate of their yearly pensions should be between \$60,000 and \$75,000. One of them could be making much more than that because she may be combining her teacher retirement with a survivor benefit. All of this is perfectly legal and according to the rules.

The same above individuals, however, have now been re-employed by the CTU at approximately another \$100,000 a year [see also, Letters in this Substance]. I have to use the word approximately because the CTU will not let the membership know what exactly is the pay and benefits of the CTU for employees. To salary, we have added to this mix car allowance, annuity, cell phone allowance, expenses, and medical all of which still remains a secret.

One of the largest unknown factors is the pension contribution. When you become an annuitant (retiree) you, the board, and the CTU no longer send in payments to the pension fund. The employed CTU retirees are entitled to this benefit. Now that they are on pension — but employed by the CTU — what is happening with this large payment? Is the payment not paid or do they receive it in cash as another benefit? Under the Lynch administration, employees who were not in the Chicago teachers' pension fund (or the municipal fund, for ESPs) received 21 percent of their salary into an annuity. If the retirees now working full-time at the union are getting this 21 percent (or some part of it), their annual salaries probably exceed \$130,000.

When you add up the figures they can reach over \$200,000 a year for many of them. Who says that the CTU does not take care of its retirees? If we take this "Let them retire and then re-hire them" policy to its ultimate conclusion, we can see all present field reps eventually retiring and continuing to work at the CTU with pensions and salary. It's no wonder that they want their own endorsed people on the pension board.

My recommendation at this point is to vote for those that are already on the pension board and for retirees to vote for those endorsed by RTAC. I wonder how many of my retiree friends wonder how much gasoline they could purchase if they had the above deals.

On September 21, 2005, the CTU retirees held their monthly meeting in the executive boardrooms. The guest speaker was Mr. Kevin Huber executive director of the Public School Teachers Pension Fund. A speaker followed him from the Alzheimer's Association.

This meeting as usual was well attended due to the subject matter. Mr. Huber reported that the investment earnings were at 14.7 percent, 3 year at 12.2 percent, and 10 year at 9.7 percent. This was well received by the group. We also know that the health insurance rebate went from \$40 million to \$65 million. The fund is at almost \$11 billion while 84% to 86% funded.

Mr. Huber reported that the open enrollment meetings regarding health insurance will be held on October 3 and 4. It is vital for those that are covered by the pension board's plan to totally understand their coverage. Time and place of such meetings can be obtained by calling the pension office.

Reference was made to the problems of the downstate pension fund. Mr. Huber and I come to the same conclusions. Many of the problems are related to the governor's ability to appoint members rather than have them elected by the contributors from a pool of contributors.

During the question period, I inquired as to why the money managers received so much money. I am not sure exactly of Mr. Huber's answer, but it seems to be that that's the way it's done. They are under constant scrutiny by the trustees and so on.

Catherine Pruska from the Alzheimer's Association spoke to the group regarding this debilitating disease. She reminded us that this disease affects 4.5 million Americans. (13.5 million by 2050). She discussed risk factors and paths to prevention.

The pension trustee election will be interesting, as there are many factors involved including the retirees and the active group. The interplay of caucus endorsements and caucus members running without their caucus endorsement should become an interesting factor in the election.

After his talk at the retirees meeting, Kevin Huber, Executive Director of the Chicago Teachers Pension Fund, supplied these answers to questions asked by retirees.

— Kevin Huber said by 2045, the pension fund is to be funded at 90%. When we fall below 90%, the Chicago Board of Education (BOE) and the State of Illinois must make additional contributions. The BOE wants to transfer taxing authority to the State of Illinois because the State of Illinois has unlimited taxing authority. However, if this is done, the state will also want more control.

— Bills to repeal the offset provision are now in the works. Teachers in Illinois are subject to the offset provision of Social Security in which 60 percent of Social Security is lost because of receiving a government pension.

— Medicare coverage requires 40 quarters. However, those who have at least 30 quarters are eligible for reduced fee coverage by Medicare.

— There is no need to enroll in Medicare D. Our drug plan is better than Medicare D.

Open enrollment meetings will be held October 3 at Plumbers Hall and October 4 at the Midway Holiday Inn. If any changes are made, they will be accepted despite pre-existing conditions. Open enrollment meetings are a time to come and ask questions, but not to make rush changes. Application for changes must be by November 1. Those over 65 will go into the Medicare Supplemental Plan.

There are some BOE 2010 changes that affect who pays into our pension fund: Contract schools are not allowed in the pension fund. Administrators on leave are not allowed in the pension fund.

Teachers who are 65, can get coverage under their spouse's Medicare and Social Security Coverage. A marriage had to have lasted at least 10 years for this provision to apply.

Dental coverage is not available through the Pension Fund once we leave COBRA. If dental coverage were added, our medical premiums would increase.

Long term care coverage is also not covered, but, for those over 65, the Pension Fund has supplemental plans.

After the question-and-answer period, Catherine Pruska, a speaker for the Alzheimer's Association, gave a talk and slide presentation about dementia. She plans to return to talk about "How to Maintain the Brain." 🍏

[Marybeth Foley contributed to this article.]

Readers can contact Al Korach directly by Email: Crane 47 @aol.com

Letters

CTU: 'Hose Reports' reflect reality

September 15, 2005

Substance:

How appropriate that the recent Email from the Chicago Teachers Union accidentally exposed the leadership to what they are doing to the members of the CTU.

"Like you, we are forging ahead with plans for a new year with a new outlook, a new CTU website, and new monthly CTU Hose Reports," the message said.

Hose reports? That's how most delegates feel by the time they walk out of the monthly House of Delegates meetings — *we've been hosed*.

The message was loud and clear when the newspaper arrived with the CTU HOSE REPORTS today. They refuse to allow any dissension at the meetings. Debate is quickly brought to a close, so little or no opposition can be heard. Members of their team stand in the hallways and declare that they are united now and that their motions in the house will never be defeated. This is the reason that in the last six months we have witnessed fewer and fewer delegates in attendance at house meetings. Seldom is there a quorum at the time any motions are brought to the floor.

What has disturbed more and more delegates is that Marilyn Stewart and the other members of her "team" don't even pretend to honor the votes of the House of Delegates. In December, we voted overwhelmingly on a motion by South Shore High School delegate Devon Morales to report monthly to the House of Delegates any employee hired at more than \$100,000 per year. Not only did the leadership ignore the vote, but it wasn't even reported the next month in the House reports.

In June, the House voted down the leadership's proposed budget. So the leadership simply flipped the vote and announced that "Yes" was "No" and "No" was "Yes." Now they are spending the money from an illegal budget, and nobody seems to be able to stop them.

Every month, the stranglehold on the House of Delegates is tightened, and more and more people are being let in who seem to have no reason to be there except to add to the chorus of UPC cheerleaders.

The UPC has returned to their old tactics of allowing little or no opposition to get to the mikes before a call to close debate is made. The employees of the union are speaking from the floor, making motions and closing debate. Under the previous administration of Deborah Lynch, union staff members were told not to take the floor except to answer questions. Today, Diana Scheffer, Gail Koffman, and Pam Massarsky are running the meetings, even though all three of them are among the infamous "double dippers." They are drawing enormous pensions from the teachers' pension fund while also being paid more than \$100,000 per year each as full-time patronage workers in the Stewart administration.

Like most delegates, I work all day in a school. Then I have to run downtown, nearly 15 miles in my case, for the House meeting — to get *hosed* on the first Wednesday of most months. I'm more than uncomfortable watching \$100,000-plus employees involving themselves in any activities on the floor of the House of Delegates. Many are receiving pensions (plus salaries which the union refuse to make public), but they constantly put forth their opinions and thoughts from mikes which are wrestled away from teachers who spent a day in a hot classroom — and who dare to challenge their status quo.

We are paying the salaries of these employees. They seem to be in control of the leader-

ship from the floor. During the 2004 election, the officers — Marilyn Stewart and Ted Dallas especially — said that they were not the "Old UPC." Even the so-called "New UPC" realized that the 2001 election had rejected both the policies and the people of the "Old UPC" decisively.

But now that they are firmly in power, the "New UPC" has re-employed more than a half dozen of the old UPC leaders, and the "Old UPC" people are calling all the shots in the House of Delegates. Most delegates don't even know that the people grabbing mikes from them — with the help of "CTU Security" — are making \$50,000 or \$100,000 per year in pensions, plus another \$100,000 per year in salaries paid for by the people they are insulting.

Under the "Old UPC," Pam Massarsky, Diana Scheffer, Gail Koffman, June Davis, Audrey Mae — along with the lawyers Poltrock — and others ran the union along with a staff of field representatives. They spent most of their time criticizing working teachers and ESPs. They spent their days ignoring grievances and calls for help from the schools.

Today, Pam Massarsky, Diana Scheffer, Gail Koffman, June Davis, and Audrey Mae — along with the lawyers Poltrock — are running the Chicago Teachers Union. The same \$100,000-per-year field reps who sabotaged Deborrah Lynch and the union from 2001 to 2004 ignore the members' needs today. Nick Cannella, David Friedman and a dozen other \$100,000-per-year field reps spent three years (protected by a "union contract" of their own, with Teamsters Local 743) while the "Old UPC" was out of power working to undermine the union leadership and bring the "New UPC" into power. Now these same guys are berating the members and blaming every problem in the schools on the Lynch administration.

The former officers, staff, and lawyers who were returned to power when the "New UPC" walked into the CTU offices in August 2004 are drawing our dues money out at salaries totaling over \$1.5 million while refusing to provide the members with accurate information about their pay, benefits, and other perks. Their new hirelings are disgracing the union by telling members every day that there is nothing they can do to help with problems in the schools.

These individuals were thrown out by the membership four years ago. They have no right to be in the union offices today, except that Marilyn Stewart and Ted Dallas seem to be what most members feared all along — puppets for lawyers like the Poltrocks and double dippers like Massarsky, Koffman, Davis and Scheffer.

Why is the "new" leadership so indebted to these individuals? How much in back settlements were paid to dismissed employees who have returned to the CTU offices?

The UPC rode back into power on the name of Jackie Vaughn. I wonder what she would think of the present leadership who said they were experienced from the years of union activities but have used our dues to repay and rehire the Old UPC whom we rejected.

Now, they want to take control of our pension board by forcing through the endorsements of four UPC members against three incumbents who have fought hard to maintain a 90 percent pension fund. Some of their candidates for "teacher rep" on the pension board are no longer teachers. Unlike the Illinois teacher pension board, there is no hint of scandal attached to any of the activities of our Chicago teacher pension board. All the scandal news reports deal with the downstate teachers' fund — a fund that is funded below 70 percent — and the way they invest their members money.

We've already learned the hard way that the "UPC" ("new" or "old") only wants to run the union to spend as much of our money as possible on their patronage. If they gain control of the \$10 billion pension fund, imagine what it will look like in three years. The UPC will not be happy till they can spend our pension money on those individuals who support their interests not ours.

We will be best served by putting Pat Knazze, Ernestine Murphy, Rosemary Finnegan and Jacqueline Ward on the pension board so that we at least remove the presence of the UPC from the pension board. The board will then be acting in the best interest of the teachers whose money they're protecting and not the UPC.

Brian R. Sullivan Fernwood Elementary
30 year delegate to the House of Delegates
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CPS website deletes militarism link quickly

September 12, 2005

Substance:

Score one for power of the press. Even before I saw my copy of the September Substance, when I went on to the CPS web page today I discovered that the www.military.com link has been deleted from the CPS site. Did this happen because the September Substance had raised the issue through my letter?

Congratulations. I hope you do not get too many questions when people go looking for it and can't find it. I hope you were able to download at least the site and the advertising.

Of course, we have issues for the future now that Arne Duncan and Alderman Mary Ann Smith have unilaterally decided to disband the "Senn Tomorrow" Task Force. What part of "We the people..." do they not understand?

Craig Mousin, Chicago
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Continued on the following page

Please e-mail those letters if you can

In recent months, we've received letters by fax and U.S. mail that could have been e-mailed. We may not always have the time on deadline to retype something you've already typed. If you want to increase your letter's chances of being published, send your letter by e-mail. While Substance doesn't get as many letters as The New York Times (which received 15,000 per day), we do receive many, and our volunteer staff can't always handle the load.

Our letters policies are simple.

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- Letters from our regular readers get first priority.
- Letters from readers who are also big shots require a full disclosure of interests.

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(October 2005)

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Letters

Poltrock: '5+5' a 'bullshit grievance'

September 18, 2005
Substance:

This is about the September 7, 2005 Chicago Teachers Union House of Delegate meeting. I was appalled, and I'm sure that every Chicago union member who learns the truth will be too.

During the question and answer period, Debbie Lynch [who is now a member of the House of Delegates because of her recent election as a high school functional vice president] put forward a motion to refile the 5 + 5 pension grievance against the Board of Education. From the podium, Jennifer Poltrock, CTU lawyer who is serving as parliamentarian for the meeting, said, that upon taking office, the new officers had decided that pursuing the 5 + 5 grievance was not "the best way to proceed" (or something to that effect). As the delegates stood to vote on the motion, I took an informal count of the floor vote. My count (from my vantage point on the floor as a voting delegate) was approximately 95 Yes votes in favor of refiling the grievance to 50 No votes against refiling the grievance.)

But when Marilyn Stewart announced the outcome of the vote, she reported it as 72 Yes votes and 90-something No votes! She had completely switched the totals so that she could claim the motion had been defeated. An uproar ensued as delegates, including myself, loudly accused the leadership of lying and fraud. Then a delegate motioned to adjourn and the meeting adjourned.

As I walked to the exit, I saw Larry Poltrock, Jennifer's father and the other main union lawyer, standing at the back of the House. I approached him, and loudly asked him why, as the CTU's lawyer, he didn't prevent Marilyn Stewart from committing fraud and lying to the House of Delegates about the vote totals.

He started yelling back at me, "You're never gonna get anything passed in this House

of Delegates" (that is a direct quote) and, "You know that was a bullshit grievance!" I told him that the House of Delegates had the authority to decide about whether the grievance should be pursued—and had just done so—and he continued to holler, "That was a bullshit grievance and you know it!"

Another noteworthy thing about the meeting was that Pam Massarsky (the former Recording Secretary who is now retired and working in an appointed position for the union) was sitting next to Microphone Two and got up to speak under every single point. Towards the end, she was interrupting just like in the bad old days before 2001 when she used to come down from the stage where she sat as Recording Secretary and would grab a microphone.

During this particular discussion about Debbie's motion, Diana Scheffer also spoke into the microphone trying to tell Marilyn how to handle the motion, and when PACT supporters hollered, "Who is in charge here?" Marilyn said, "I am in charge" and Massarsky and Sheffer sat back down.

At another point during the September House of Delegates meeting, I heard several UPCers clucking their tongues after a delegate spoke up. (I'm not sure but it might have been Sandy Finkel who was asking what had happened to the 2400-plus signatures on petitions she submitted in the May meeting calling for a referendum on a mail ballot.) The UPCers were loudly saying, "And we paid for her dinner?" Apparently meals paid for with CTU members' dues money are designed to purchase the loyalty of school delegates.

I had not stayed through the end of the June House of Delegates meeting and so had not witnessed Stewart's lying about the budget vote totals. Nor did I witness Debbie Lynch's arrest. This September meeting was just shocking to me, and I now see that this is what the UPC leadership seems to have decided to do to keep control of the House of Delegates. Just as Larry Poltrock said, "You're never gonna get anything passed in this House of Delegates". I wonder why they didn't also change the vote putting Debbie on the Executive Board. Perhaps they thought that was going too far.

Norine Gutekanst
Delegate, InterAmerican Elementary School
ngutekanst@hotmail.com

U.S. Constitution: Original meaning not simplistic...

September 13, 2005
Substance:

Recently, a colleague noted "The Brown decision came up today in Senator Kennedy's questioning of Roberts. Had never read the decision before, so I looked it up. Was moved by this sentence from the ruling: 'Where a State has undertaken to provide an opportunity for an education in its public schools, such an opportunity is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.'"

On the Fourth of July, 2004, I went to the National Archives in Washington, D.C.. The building had extended summer hours, but that night all the potential visitors except me were out on the Mall to watch the fireworks. The decision of the Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education was on display in an alcove just off the main hall. Also on display were several documents related to the anti-slavery struggle, including a Quaker petition to the first Congress.

Other famous documents were available for perusal, including the original order of the

Court in Marbury v. Madison, which established the power of the courts to review the constitutionality of laws passed by Congress. For me perhaps the most inspiring paper was one I had never realized existed — the Conference Committee report on the Bill of Rights. With no one else around but the guards, I had time to read the Committee's recommendations, noting where they had taken language from versions passed in the House and in the Senate. Nothing could more forcefully illustrate the importance of carefully crafting language. The Committee's words have, over the centuries, had consequences beyond measure. Looking back, we can be profoundly grateful for the hours of negotiation and revision that produced this draft.

September 17, Constitution Day. Our Constitution is, and always has been, an arena in which powerful interests compete. Much foolishness has been written by reactionaries who seek to freeze the Constitution in a selective version of the "original intent" of its framers. But Abraham Lincoln, who made the Constitution what it is today, said that he never had a political thought that was not grounded in the Declaration of Independence.

The Constitution says little, except in its Preamble and in the Bill of Rights, about the hopes of the governed. It is in the "self-evident" truths of the Declaration that we find the purpose of government, an expansive view of liberty that includes the right to be left alone, and the genesis of that most American idea — equal opportunity. It's worth remembering that Chief Justice Warren wrote the words from the Brown decision on behalf of a unanimous court.

After the September Substance published the shocking data on massive school segregation in Chicago, your editor asked many of us around the country to check out the extent of segregation in our states. Here in California, it is massive, with minorities, usually black and Latino, being segregated into black and Latino public schools.

George Sheridan
Northside School, Cool, California 95614
Learn@jps.net

Continued on the following page

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Letters

Tribune's deceit on NCLB tutoring

September 15, 2005

Substance:

I hope the Tribune gets a new headline writer soon. The August 11th headline stated: "Tutoring study shows promise in key group." I thought, nicely done, CPS, the after school program is a success.

Then I read the article.

Paragraph five: "Yet it is unclear how much of the progress can be attributed to tutoring or better instruction during the school day. And there was virtually no difference between the students who received the extra help and those who didn't. In fact, the study concluded that tutoring 'did not have a large impact on student test gains' during the 2004-05 school year."

So why the very, very positive headline?

Can it be the Tribune cannot cover the Chicago Board of Education objectively? Can it be the Tribune is clueless?

Near the end of the article, the Tribune lists the statistics. "For the tutored group, the students averaged a gain of 1.09 compared with 1.02 for the non-tutored students and a 1.06 for students systemwide."

So, in effect, the Tribune is saying a difference of seven hundredths of one percent is a big deal. I'm sorry, I beg to differ. The headline should have read, "After school tutoring may be helpful to students".

Michael H. Brownstein

Mollison Elementary School, Chicago

mhbrownstein@yahoo.com

Stewart, Massarsky sink 5+5, tout ERO

September 19, 2005

Substance:

The current leadership of the Chicago Teachers Union, under the direction of Pam

Massarsky, does not want members to have the 5 + 5 retirement option (which could benefit over 4,000 members). Although this is part of the CTU contract, they have refused to make the CPS abide by the agreement. Even when the House of Delegates voted to approve a motion to grieve this issue by a count of 92 Yes to 70 no, they announced that the motion was rejected. Instead Ms. Massarsky and Marilyn Stewart are congratulating themselves on negotiating the ERO retirement option for up to 450 members.

I have studied the ERO and cannot help but wonder why the CTU leadership is characterizing this as a benefit to members. If a member opts for the ERO, he/she would pay the pension contribution for the years of service or age to come to full pension. However his/her pension would be based on his/her actual years.

So who really benefits from this? The Pension Board gets lots of money; the CPS doesn't have to pay the pension contribution and can hire someone at half the salary of the retiring teacher thereby saving lots of money; and, the retiring teacher gets to pay lots of money out of pocket (to get their pension contribution to 33.95 but get a pension based on actual years.)

With 5 + 5 members would pay the pension contribution and get their pension based on the years of service they are paying for. In the past, when the ERO was offered, less than 200 members too advantage of it. It seems as though Ms. Massarsky and Ms. Stewart negotiated a good deal for the Pension Board and the CPS, and a really bad deal for the teachers. It begs the question, who are they working for?

Sarah Loftus, teacher, Marquette School

Retired Chicago Teachers
Do you really believe that the current leadership of the Chicago Teachers Union will protect your pension? Last time they had the chance, they gave a big chunk of it away. Subscribe to Substance and get the truth each month.

Oct. 9 Chicago Rally helps plan Nov. 18 Georgia protest

September 14, 2005

Substance:

I hope you and you readers can join us on Oct. 9th at St. Gertrude's for the important event outlined below. Please spread the word. Information on this event follows from a press release.

Peace,

Chris Inserra, Chicago

chrisandcraig@illinoisalumni.org

Chicago Rally to Close the School of the Americas (WHINSEC) and Welcome Back our Prisoners of Conscience

Illinois SOA Watch Rally, to build awareness, widen participation and raise scholarship funding for this year's journey to Ft. Benning, Georgia for the Vigil and Protest to Close the U.S. Army School of the Americas with others from the Illinois

Sunday, October 9, 2005, 2 - 5 p. m.

St. Gertrude's Social Hall

(Lower level of the gymnasium)

1401 W. Granville, Chicago

(SW corner of Granville and Glenwood. On-street parking is available. or take the Red Line and get off at Granville.)

Music by "Voices and Vicios de Papá" (one of Chicago's hot, young Latino bands). Light refreshments will be served. (\$5-\$10 suggested donation (no one will be turned away)

Rally — For this year's Convergence and Mass Civil Disobedience Action November 18 - 20 at Fort Benning, Georgia, to Close U.S. Army's School of the Americas/WHINSEC. Last year, more than 16,000 people gathered at these gates!

Why? Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, "disappeared," massacred and forced into refuge by SOA / WHINSEC graduates who return to their countries to use their training domestically. These graduates are consistently cited for atrocities against their own people. Among those targeted by SOA graduates are educators, union organizers, religious workers, student leaders, and others working for human rights and economic justice.

Welcome Back. . . Two of our 14 friends and human rights activists who were arrested last November for crossing onto the U.S. Army base at Ft. Benning, GA where the School of the Americas/WHINSEC is located. Each was sentenced at trial to 3 months in prison. Hear from: Liz Deligio, Director of Ministry at Misericordia and Catholic Theological Seminary student. Ron Durham, St. Francis Catholic Worker.

Their courageous acts of resistance call the U.S. government to end its policy of training foreign soldiers and to close the SOA's doors forever! Support them with your presence at the October event, as we rally together to close the SOA/WHINSEC!

Gary Cozette, Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America, will provide the latest information on current legislation, HR 1217, to close the school. This bill has over 100 bi-partisan co-sponsors in the House of Representatives! Gary will tell us what YOU CAN DO to ensure its passage!

IL SOA Watch is part of the National SOA Watch organization that seeks to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas/WHINSEC through vigils and fasts, demonstrations and non-violent protest, and media and legislative work. Checks made payable to 8th Day Center for Justice to support the work of IL SOA Watch are tax-deductible. For more information call 8th Day Center for Justice at 312.641.5151 and ask for Stephanie

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Continued on the following page

Letters

Cuba did better job on Hurricane Ivan

September 5, 2005

Substance:

I hope that you will share the following analysis with your readers.

Carol Caref,

Chicago Vocational High School, Chicago

Carolcaref@sbcglobal.net

The Two Americas

By Marjorie Cohn (09/03/05 "t r u t h o u t")

Last September, a Category 5 hurricane battered the small island of Cuba with 160-mile-per-hour winds. More than 1.5 million Cubans were evacuated to higher ground ahead of the storm. Although the hurricane destroyed 20,000 houses, no one died.

What is Cuban President Fidel Castro's secret? According to Dr. Nelson Valdes, a sociology professor at the University of New Mexico, and specialist in Latin America, "the whole civil defense is embedded in the community to begin with. People know ahead of time where they are to go."

"Cuba's leaders go on TV and take charge," said Valdes. Contrast this with George W. Bush's reaction to Hurricane Katrina. The day after Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, Bush was playing golf. He waited three days to make a TV appearance and five days before visiting the disaster site. In a scathing editorial on Thursday, the New York Times said, "nothing about the president's demeanor yesterday - which seemed casual to the point of carelessness - suggested that he understood the depth of the current crisis."

"Merely sticking people in a stadium is unthinkable" in Cuba, Valdes said. "Shelters all have medical personnel, from the neighborhood. They have family doctors in Cuba, who evacuate together with the neighborhood, and already know, for example, who needs insulin." They also evacuate animals and veterinarians, TV sets and refrigerators, "so that people aren't reluctant to leave because people might steal their stuff," Valdes observed.

After Hurricane Ivan, the United Nations International Secretariat for Disaster Reduction cited Cuba as a model for hurricane preparation. ISDR director Salvano Briceno said, "The Cuban way could easily be applied to other countries with similar economic conditions and even in countries with greater resources that do not manage to protect their population as well as Cuba does."

Our federal and local governments had more than ample warning that hurricanes, which are growing in intensity thanks to global warming, could destroy New Orleans. Yet, instead of heeding those warnings, Bush set about to prevent states from controlling global warming, weaken FEMA, and cut the Army Corps of Engineers' budget for levee construction in New Orleans by \$71.2 million, a 44 percent reduction.

Bush sent nearly half our National Guard troops and high-water Humvees to fight in an unnecessary war in Iraq. Walter Maestri, emergency management chief for Jefferson Parish in New Orleans, noted a year ago, "It appears that the money has been moved in the president's budget to handle homeland security and the war in Iraq."

An Editor and Publisher article Wednesday said the Army Corps of Engineers "never tried to hide the fact that the spending pressures of the war in Iraq, as well as homeland security - coming at the same time as federal tax cuts - was the reason for the strain," which caused a slowdown of work on flood control and sinking levees.

"This storm was much greater than protection we were authorized to provide," said Alfred C. Naomi, a senior project manager in the New Orleans district of the corps.

Unlike in Cuba, where homeland security means keeping the country secure from deadly natural disasters as well as foreign invasions, Bush has failed to keep our people safe. "On a fundamental

level," Paul Krugman wrote in yesterday's New York Times, "our current leaders just aren't serious about some of the essential functions of government. They like waging war, but they don't like providing security, rescuing those in need or spending on prevention measures. And they never, ever ask for shared sacrifice."

During the 2004 election campaign, vice presidential candidate John Edwards spoke of "the two Americas." It seems unfathomable how people can shoot at rescue workers. Yet, after the beating of Rodney King aired on televisions across the country, poor, desperate, hungry people in Watts took over their neighborhoods, burning and looting. Their anger, which had seethed below the surface for so long, erupted. That's what's happening now in New Orleans. And we, mostly white, people of privilege, rarely catch a glimpse of this other America.

"I think a lot of it has to do with race and class," said Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. "The people affected were largely poor people. Poor, black people."

New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin reached a breaking point Thursday night. "You mean to tell me that a place where you probably have thousands of people that have died and thousands more that are dying every day, that we can't figure out a way to authorize the resources we need? Come on, man!"

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff had boasted earlier in the day that FEMA and other federal agencies have done a "magnificent job" under the circumstances.

But, said, Nagin, "They're feeding the people a line of bull, and they are spinning and people are dying. Get off your asses and let's do something!"

When asked about the looting, the mayor said that except for a few "knuckleheads," it is the result of desperate people trying to find food and water to survive.

Nagin blamed the outbreak of violence and crime on drug addicts who have been cut off from their drug supplies, wandering the city, "looking to take the edge off their jones."

When Hurricane Ivan hit Cuba, no curfew was imposed; yet, no looting or violence took place. Everyone was in the same boat.

Fidel Castro, who has compared his government's preparations for Hurricane Ivan to the island's long-standing preparations for an invasion by the United States, said, "We've been preparing for this for 45 years."

On Thursday, Cuba's National Assembly sent a message of solidarity to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. It says the Cuban people have followed closely the news of the hurricane damage in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, and the news has caused pain and sadness. The message notes that the hardest hit are African-Americans, Latino workers, and the poor, who still wait to be rescued and taken to secure places, and who have suffered the most fatalities and homelessness. The message concludes by saying that the entire world must feel this tragedy as its own. [Marjorie Cohn, a contributing editor to t r u t h o u t, is a professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, executive vice president of the National Lawyers Guild, and the US representative to the executive committee of the American Association]

Conservatives say: "Impeach Bush!"

September 13, 2005

Substance:

As the following article shows, some capitalist intellectuals (along with media giants like the Chicago Tribune, the NYT and others) now

Continued on the following page

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Letters

Impeach Bush

Continued from the previous page

see George W. Bush's tenure and strategy as a danger to the system's stability and their long-term interests. (Of course, to cover their tracks and make it look like it's just Bush and his neocons, the writer of the following column chooses to ignore the Senate and House's overwhelming majority votes for the Bush budgets that trashed hurricane protection and pushed forward the war in Iraq. Evidently, they share the ABB ("Anybody but Bush") approach, as if it's just about him and the neocons.)

Their fears for their system ring out below. I've been watching such warning articles in the Chicago Tribune for several years now. The very loyal, big capitalist opposition sees this debacle as their opportunity to further isolate Bush's crowd and put them on the defensive. In my opinion, this also motivated the clear and damning pictures and reports we all saw from New Orleans. After all, reporters don't get to make their assignments nor do they control what parts of their stories and pictures make it in. Men who work at the Hoover Institute are not used to writing things like the following against Republican presidents and their governments. Perhaps they know even more about the horrors that await than we realize at this point.

Earl Silbar, Chicago

Red1Pearl@aol.com

Impeach Bush Now, by Paul Craig Roberts

[Paul Craig Roberts. Mr. Roberts is the John M. Olin Fellow at the Institute for Political Economy, a Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and a Research Fellow at the Independent Institute. A former editor and columnist for The Wall Street Journal and columnist for Business Week and the Scripps Howard News Service, he is a nationally syndicated columnist for Creators Syndicate in Los Angeles and a columnist for Investor's Business Daily. In 1992, he received the Warren Brookes Award for Excellence in Journalism. In 1993, the Forbes Media Guide ranked him as one of the top seven journalists.]

IMPEACH BUSH NOW

The raison d'être of the Bush administration is war in the Middle East in order to protect America from terrorism and to ensure America's oil supply. On both counts, the Bush administration has failed catastrophically.

Bush's single-minded focus on the "war against terrorism" has compounded a natural disaster and turned it into the greatest calamity in American history. The United States has lost its largest and most strategic port and thousands of lives, and 80 percent of one of America's most historic cities is underwater.

If terrorists had achieved this result, it would rank as the greatest terrorist success in history.

Prior to 9-11, the Federal Emergency Man-

agement Agency warned that New Orleans was a disaster waiting to happen. Congress authorized the Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control Project (SELA) in order to protect the strategic port, the refineries and the large population.

After 2003, however, the flow of funds to SELA were diverted to the war in Iraq. During 2004 and 2005, the New Orleans Times-Picayune published nine articles citing New Orleans' loss of hurricane protection to the war in Iraq.

Every expert and newspapers as distant as Texas saw the New Orleans catastrophe coming. But President Bush and his insane government preferred war in Iraq to protecting Americans at home.

Bush's war left the Corps of Engineers only 20 percent of the funding to protect New Orleans from flooding from Lake Pontchartrain. On June 18, 2004, the Corps' project manager, Al Naomi, told the Times-Picayune: "The levees are sinking. If we don't get the money to raise them, we can't stay ahead of the settlement."

Despite the dire warnings delivered by the 2004 hurricane season, the Bush administration made deep budget cuts for flood control and hurricane funding for New Orleans. The U.S. Senate, alarmed at the Bush administration's insanity, was planning to restore the funding for 2006. But now, it is too late. Many multiples of the funding that would have saved the city are being spent to rescue it.

Not content with leaving New Orleans unprotected, it took the Bush administration five days to get the remnants of the National Guard not serving in Iraq, along with desperately needed food and water, to devastated New Orleans. This is the slowest emergency response by the U.S. government in modern times. By the time the Bush administration could organize any resources for New Orleans, many more people had died and the city was in total chaos.

Despite the most dismal performance on record, Bush's homeland security secretary, Michael Chertoff, said on Thursday that the Bush administration has done a "magnificent job."

The on-the-scene mayor of New Orleans sees it differently: "They're feeding the people a line of bull, and they are spinning, and people are dying."

"They're thinking small, man, and this is a major, major deal."

It is a major deal, one that will affect Americans far beyond New Orleans. According to reports, 25 percent of our oil and gasoline comes through the New Orleans port and refineries, all out of commission. Needed goods cannot be imported, and exports will plummet, worsening an already disastrous deficit in the balance of trade.

The increased cost of gasoline will soak up consumers' disposable incomes, with dire effects on consumer spending. U.S. economic growth will be siphoned off into higher energy costs. American lives far from New Orleans will be adversely affected.

The destruction of New Orleans is the responsibility of the most incompetent government in American history and perhaps in all history. Americans are rapidly learning that they were deceived by the superpower hubris. The powerful U.S. military cannot successfully occupy Baghdad or control the road to the airport — and this against an insurgency based in only 20 percent of the Iraqi population. Bush's pointless war has left Washington so pressed for money that the federal government abandoned New Orleans to catastrophe.

The Bush administration is damned by its gross incompetence. Bush has squandered the lives and health of thousands of people. He has run through hundreds of billions of borrowed dollars. He has lost America's reputation and its allies. With barbaric torture and destruction of our civil liberty, he has stripped America of its inherent goodness and morality. And now Bush has lost America's largest port and 25 percent of its oil supply.

Why? Because Bush started a gratuitous war egged on by a clique of crazy neoconservatives who

Substance investigates news tips and protects our sources:

Help by sending documents and calling in news tips...

An investigative newspaper exists thanks to the honesty of thousands of average people who work in corrupt systems.

Chicago examples abound:

- Who would have thought, prior to this year, that the City of Chicago would give a new \$20 million school building to a questionable community group that wowed an alderlady with Power Point and glitzy computer promises — while breaking promises made over a decade to an entire community? Yet on September 6, the new Apira middle school opened on Chicago's north side staffed with unqualified teachers and others of questionable record.

- Who would believe that a powerful congressman would use a high school as a haven for patronage jobs and contracts for his buddies?

- Who would believe that the Chicago Teachers Union would return to paying one law firm up to \$1 million per year for routine work much of which could be done by non-lawyers and that that attorney would threaten anyone who criticized him with "ruin" through litigation?

The Hollywood version of insider tips makes the work of democracy seem noble or exciting. It also takes time, energy, patience, and a bit of courage. Take a look at "All the President's Men" or "The Insider" if you want a pretty good Hollywood version of what we do. With your help, we continue.

Substance continues to check out tips from sources who are in the know — and we will continue to protect those sources. The administration of Richard M. Daley is the most corrupt in Chicago history. There are a dozen "hired truck" scandals at the Board of Education, but our colleagues in the Chicago media are ignoring them to promote the 'Education Miracle' hoax they've foisted on the nation. In Chicago, only Substance and the

weekly Reader are willing to investigate and publish the truth about Chicago's "education miracle" fraud. This will not change as long as major corporations and the Business Roundtable set Chicago's education news agenda.

Even with the current attack on press freedom and news sources, we stand by the long and honorable American tradition — a newspaper should afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted. We ourselves paid dearly for our patriotism. With our readers' help, we stood up to a \$1 million bullying from the mayor of the third largest city in the United States and his lackies at the school board. We were bruised, but we didn't blow our sources for the CASE stories.

If you have information about corrupt or scandalous activities in Chicago's public schools (or elsewhere in Chicago government and its crony capitalist buddies), please help us cover that story. Documents with tips are best. That's why CASE was abolished.

We will check every fact. We also protect every news source. We receive a dozen tips for every story we publish. We are small, so be patient.

In 30 years, Substance has never burned a source. Our editor has twice risked jail rather than burn our news sources. Two of our editors were fired by the Chicago Board of Education because they also worked for this newspaper. No other newspaper in Chicago has a record that honorable.

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Gnschmidt @ aol.com (October 2005)

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Impeach Bush

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have sacrificed America's interests to their insane agenda.

The neoconservatives have brought these disasters to all Americans, Democrat and Republican alike. Now, they must be held accountable. Bush and his neoconservatives are guilty of criminal negligence and must be prosecuted.

What will it take for Americans to re-establish accountability in their government? Bush has gotten away with lies and an illegal war of aggression, with outing CIA agents, with war crimes against Iraqi civilians, with the horrors of the Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo torture centers, and now with the destruction of New Orleans.

What disaster will next spring from Bush's incompetence?

[To find out more about Paul Craig Roberts, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate web page at www.creators.com. COPYRIGHT 2005 CREATORS SYNDICATE INC. Originally Published on Tuesday September 6, 2005]

'Naval academy' wrecking Senn H.S.

September 21, 2005

Substance:

I was interested to read [Substance letters, June and September] that some of your readers support the military and take issue with my work in opposition to the militarization of Chicago's public schools. I hope that those same people — including members of the Substance staff — will spend a day or two at Senn High School before they continue their letter writing activities, although expressing their opinions is their right as Americans.

But please, can they at least get on the front lines of this discussion. I only ask them to watch the "educational" program of the "Rickover Naval Academy" in action and con-

trast the opulence which the military "school" has received with the scarcity of almost everything imposed on the majority of students in that same building. Those students still attend "Nicholas Senn High School," which thanks to policies which your pro-military letter writers support now is forced to share its building with a second "school" — the "Rickover Naval Academy."

At this moment, the "Rickover Naval Academy" has 120 students in the Senn building, while Senn High School has well over 1,000 students in the same building. The contrast between what is available to the military and what is not available to the public school is shocking. This is not a theoretical debate, but a question of public policy as it is unfolding in Chicago right now.

At a recent public meeting of the "Senn Tomorrow" committee (which, I understand, is now "Friends of Senn"), I heard appalling stories about what is happening both in Senn and in the new naval academy which has been foisted off on the community in the Senn High School building.

First, on the naval academy. Since when does the staff at "Rickover Naval Academy" have the right to inflict corporal punishment on the students, yell at them in public, and humiliate them in various ways? Doesn't the Chicago Board of Education have strict rules against inflicting corporal and emotional punishment on students? Or does "Rickover" have an exemption to allow its staff to force 13-year-olds to line up and drop for push ups while a large adult hovers over them and refers to some of them as "Pussy Butt" — and perhaps worse?

Why does the "Rickover" staff have the right to have the students march around drilling loudly in the halls of Senn High School — and with drums — when serious academic classes are taking place that they disturb on a regular basis? If any of our neighbors tried this, we would say what they were doing was disturbing the peace.

Why does "Rickover" have the right to tell students from "Senn" that they cannot walk down the halls in the "Rickover" part of the building, while the "Rickover" programs use Senn for everything from drill to classroom instruction? Will a Senn High School student be arrested for trespassing if he goes down the same hallway he used last year to get from one class to another? Or does the "Rickover" staff have the right to detain that students and force him, too, to drop for pushups while being called a "pussy butt"?

Why should the military academy have opened the school year with bright and shiny classrooms, facilities and books, while many of the Senn students and staff have no books, or books that are ten, twenty and thirty years old? What message are we sending to Senn students, many of whom come from all over the world, when the military gets the best classrooms and books and they have to spend hours in run down class room space in numbers that run way over class size limits? Is it true that Senn has been deprived of most computers, while Rickover has new ones? Are these the true priorities of Chicago and our community — money, books, computers, and decent conditions for military training in our public schools, while the general high school students get leftovers *or nothing at all*?

Last year, the majority of residents in our community voted overwhelmingly against the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Today, the majority of Americans oppose these overseas military adventures. Chicago's City Council has voted for withdrawal from Iraq. Every major group at Senn High School and in the Senn community — the local school council, the students, the teachers, and community residents — opposed the imposition of the "Rickover Naval Academy" upon us. And now we are being forced to watch this

tragedy unfold first hand and tolerate the humiliation of public school students "dropping" for push ups and getting their "pussy butts" up?

The campaign to Save Senn must continue. In our community, everyone must join in saying "Rickover Out!" And we should also remind our neighbors that the Daley administration and its allies, like Alderman Mary Ann Smith, are planning further expansions of Chicago's military programs. Have we no decency left.

Neal Resnikoff

Andersonville neighbors for peace

NealBetty@aol.com

Even Tom Reece wasn't this nasty

September 23, 2005

Substance:

We have just read the United Progressive Caucus (UPC) version of the June 1 Debbie Lynch fiasco in the September 2005 issue of the union newspaper. The fact that the leadership felt it necessary to contradict the news media, including Substance, indicates some apprehension on their part. We're glad they have been put on the defensive.

It's a shame that many readers will accept their version of the events. But even people who do not read Substance might have some questions. For example, Ms. Lynch's "associates" are described as "verbally abusive." What, for example, did they say that was so "abusive?" The UPC does not say. Again, the article states that Ms. Lynch has "on several occasions" shouted from the balcony when she "disagreed with something that was occurring." The article does not state what was "occurring." A careful reader might ask why Ms. Stewart felt it necessary to have the police "protect the facility" from Ms. Lynch, who could hardly, even if she had wanted to, make a dent in even one pillar of Plumber's Hall.

As former Substance reporters who covered the House of Delegates meetings for several years, we were often appalled at the lack of democracy and the strong arm tactics engaged in by the UPC. People were cut off in the middle of speeches, UPC members crowded to the microphones and on occasion pushed others away. Valuable question time was taken by speakers who wasted time simply praising the UPC and asking non-questions such as Ted Dallas' "How can we get everybody on board?" Larry Poltrock, when appealed to by a non-UPC delegate as "parliamentarian," would almost always ignore the request and refuse to make a ruling.

However, reading Substance for the past few months, we see that the House meetings are now conducted in a way that even Tom Reece would never have gotten away with. The House of Delegates sounds more like a petty dictatorship than a union meeting. What recourse do Union members have when their dues seem to be going mainly to perpetuate a dynasty which does not seem to have the least interest in the welfare of the people they represent?

We hope Substance readers will share the facts with their colleagues. We hope they will point out the picture of Debbie Lynch in the police car along with the bullying and ineffective Poltrock, whose only interest seems to be to promote the UPC so that his law firm can continue to be awarded lucrative contracts. Continue to tell the truth. Remember, the mills of justice grind slowly, "yet they grind exceeding small." Pat Breitzer and Chuck Wemstrom, Retired Mount Carroll, Illinois
Cpwemstrom@jcwifi.com

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October 2005 Substance

Continued on the following page

Letters

Individual schools in hurricane wake

September 18, 2005

Substance:

Please send this on to colleagues and friends. I received an e-mail from Cindy Elliott, who is a professor at LSU, requesting support for the following schools. Cindy and I have been working together. She is courageous and kind and it is a privilege for me to be working with her. Here's the information Cindy sent to me:

There are two schools that were opened in East Baton Rouge Parish School System that need everything. They don't even have desks and chairs.

Mayfair Elementary (K-6)
9886 Hyacinth Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

This school has about 70 students and processing more every day.

Scotlandville Middle School (K-8)
9147 Elm Grove Garden Dr.

Baton Rouge 70807

The principal at this site is Mrs. Joseph. I do not know the numbers of children that are going here, but at least some of them are from the River Center Shelter.

Denny Taylor, Hofstra University, New York
taylor.d@att.net

Organizing part-time higher education workers

September 21, 2005

Substance:

Friends, colleagues, relatives, fellow activists,

I am sending this form letter email to all my personal contacts and to all the lists I have access to. Excuse the duplication and pardon the self promotion.

I am proud to announce the October (exact date not yet set) publication of my book on organizing contingent (non tenure track, precarious, adjunct, temporary, etc.) college and univer-

sity faculty. Reclaiming the Ivory Tower: Organizing Adjuncts to Change Higher Education is being co-published by Monthly Review Press and the North American Alliance For Fair Employment (the network of groups concerned with contingent work generally).

This book is not just my work, but also reflects the contributions of hundreds who have contributed to the movement (and to me) over many years. It is meant to be an organizing guide, sort of a "Troublemaker's Handbook" for contingent faculty. Because of this, I am not hesitant to ask my friends, colleagues and the whole movement to help me in circulating the book. It is short, paperback and cheap (\$13 or less) so that it can get into the hands of people who can use it.

Here is what you can do to help right now:

1. Go to the new website www.reclaimingtheivorytower.org
2. Order an advance copy (discounted).
3. Get your union or other group to do a bulk order (also discounted).
4. Get your library to order one hardbound..
5. Do a review for your favorite publication, print or online.
6. Send your review and any other comments to the discussion section of the website.

7. Set up an event for me to come and speak, with books, at a bookstore, campus, organizational meeting, or any interested group. See the website section for what events have been set up already. I expect to be traveling with the book in the weeks before and after Campus Equity Week/Fair Employment Week.

8. Plan to use the book (and perhaps me) in your Campus Equity Week activities October 30-November 5, 2005.

9. Send out the book flyer or other notice to your own lists and networks.

I did not write the book mainly to get a Ph.D., though I did get it, nor to get rich or famous (or even employed full-time tenure track). It is probably way too late for that for me. I did it mainly to help the over 500,000 of us organize ourselves. If you think this can help, then give a hand.

I look forward to hearing from you.

In solidarity,

Joe T. Berry

1453 W. Flournoy, #3F

Chicago IL 60607

Phone/fax: 312-733-2172

E-mail<joeberry@igc.org>

Chicago Teachers!

On October 28, you have the chance to vote for a solid future not only for you, but for those loved ones who will survive you. Support proven experience in protecting your pension fund from political raids, patronage hacks, and other predators. The following candidates are recommended by the majority of teachers.

Ignore political patronage bureaucrats.

Cast your ballot wisely for veteran classroom teachers and school workers —

Rose Mary Finnegan *

Patricia Knazze *

Earnestine Murphy *

Jacqueline Ward

Proven leadership and integrity at the time we all need it most.

October 28, 2005

Pension trustee election for teacher representatives on the pension fund.

* Denotes experienced trustee incumbents.

Want your letter published in Substance?

We publish all letters we receive on three conditions:

- (1) letter writers must be regular Substance readers;
- (2) letter writers must sign their names, including city and state (Email address optional);
- (3) letters should be sent by Email unless impossible.

Questions? Call or Email us.
Deadline for the November 2005 Substance is October 20, 2005.

Substance

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E-mail to: Csubstance@aol.com
October 2005

'Small schools', charters do poorly... Merit scholarship semi-finalists show Chicago corporate 'school reform' failed

By George N. Schmidt

The September 13 release of the list of semi-finalists in the National Merit Scholarship competition by the College Board was ignored by the Chicago Board of Education's publicity department and by both Mayor Richard M. Daley and Chicago schools CEO Arne Duncan.

The story was big news in many suburbs, so why was it ignored in Chicago? If, as the prevailing myth claims, ten years of mayoral control over Chicago's massive public school system has showed increasing "gains" in test scores across the board, why was the most important standardized testing program of all — the program administered by the College Board — ignored in Chicago.

Perhaps the reason is that the data released by the College Board show that Chicago's massive nationally lauded corporate version of "school reform" was a failure even in its own terms. When Chicago public high school students take the most significant national test of academic achievement, Chicago high schools can't even compare with any two of the city's wealthiest suburbs.

According to data released by the College Board, Chicago's public schools had 43 National Merit Scholarship semifinalists out of the city's more than 100,000 high school students for the 2004-2005 school year.

These 43 students came from five out of Chicago's 105 "high schools." The five Chicago public high schools that produced National Merit semi-finalists were:

- Lincoln Park (15)
- Whitney Young (12)
- Northside College Prep (9)
- Payton College Prep (5)
- Von Steuben (2)

Even schools that have routinely produced National Merit semi-finalists (like Lane Technical High School and Lindblom high school) are now failing to produce National Merit semi-finalists. Four of the city's six "College Prep Academic Magnet" high schools — Jones, Lindblom, King, and Brooks — failed to produce any National Merit semi-finalists.

By contrast, public schools in Chicago's more affluent suburbs continue to produce large numbers of National Merit semi-finalists.

Seven suburbs saw their public schools produce 150 National Merit semi-finalists.

- Naperville (40)*
- Winnetka (27)
- Hinsdale (21)
- Barrington (16)
- Oak Park-River Forest (16)
- Lincolnshire (16)
- Evanston (13)
- In three public high schools

Although affluence (as measured by the socio-economic indices of the ZIP codes served by the school) are still very good predictors of which public schools will do best in the greater Chicago area on the National Merit Scholarship exams, this is not always true.

Even some of Chicago's less affluent suburbs produced more National Merit semi-finalists than most of Chicago's selective enrollment public high schools. For example, West Aurora High School (Aurora), Eisenhower High School (Blue Island), Maine West High School (Des Plaines), Elgin High School (Elgin), Thornwood



As if to say, "Of course the test scores went up. When I say so everyone makes them go up..." Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley (above right) gesticulates at the June 9, 2005 press conference at the Michell Elementary School to announce that scores in the annual Iowa Tests of Basic Skills had again gone "up" in Chicago (in reading, but not in math). Daley and his entourage deflected questions about why the Chicago Board of Education's testing department had rescored the entire battery of tests after a first scoring showed that both reading and math scores had gone down. A few weeks after the June 9 media event above, the Board of Education dropped the Iowa tests. Substance photo by George N. Schmidt

High School (South Holland), Community High School (West Chicago), and Woodstock High School (Woodstock) each produced at least one National Merit semi-finalist, while Chicago's Lane Tech, Jones College Prep, Lindblom College Prep, King College Prep, and Brooks College Prep produced no National Merit semi-finalists.

Failure of small schools

Despite the recent reams of propaganda about how all high schools should be turned into "small schools", large schools seem to work best in producing Merit Scholars, whether in the city or suburbs. The suburban high schools with the largest number of merit scholars are also those with the greatest variety of course offerings — especially in advanced level courses — and the largest number of sports, extra-curricular, and co-curricular activities.

A growing number of scholars across the country are demanding that a hard second look be taken at those who prescribe "small schools" for urban minority children but don't acknowledge the fact that large, mostly white, suburban schools offer their students more options and variety — from college-level courses to shop training — than the widely praised "small schools"

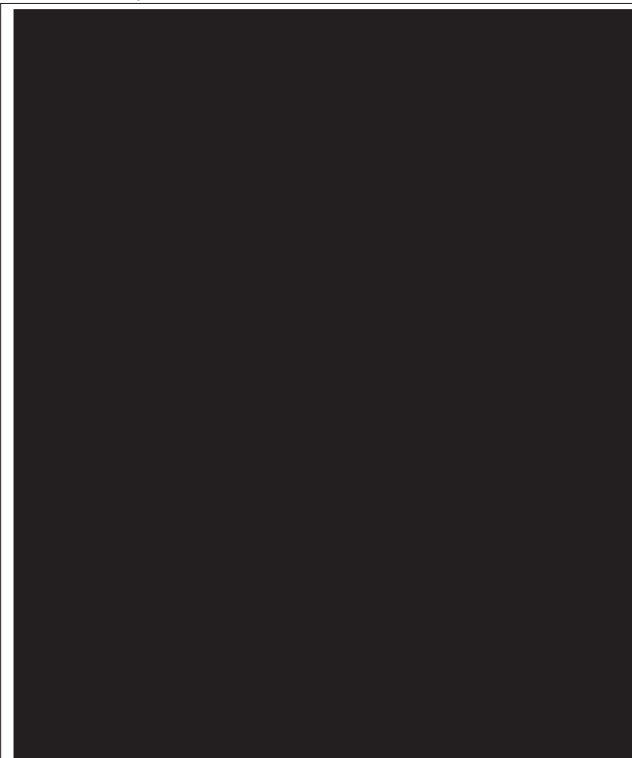
Failure of charter schools

Another Chicago fad that seems to be waning in the suburbs is the charter school. Despite claims that charter schools will provide children and teachers with the kinds of innovation they need to do better in school, charter schools failed completely to produce Merit Scholarship semi-finalists in the recent testing cycle.

And a closer look at Chicago charter schools show that it takes more than big promises and rhetoric to create a successful high school for kids from tough neighborhoods. Despite the routine citing by Chicago school officials of the

promises of certain charter schools, there is simply no evidence that they are actually producing the college-bound success stories their publicity proclaims. Just as a business plan is no substitute for the actual manufacturing and marketing of a product, so glossy "mission statements" are no substitute for classroom performance year after year.

While in Chicago the failure of both the "small schools" and charter school fads is still a long way from being recognized by the mainstream media, the recent Merit Scholarship semi-finalist lists should give those who pay attention to performance and harsh realities — as opposed to propaganda and spin — pause to take a hard second look at Chicago's educational realities during the years of what will some day be called the "Daley test score bubble." 🍏



'Teach Peace' proclaimed the banner outside Chicago's Senn High School September 6, as activists protested another year of militarism at the school. Photo by George N. Schmidt

Union women undivided after the AFL-CIO split...

CLUW Holds Biennial Conference

By Lotty Blumenthal

The Coalition of Labor Union Women held its 13th National Biennial Conference from September 12 to September 17th, 2005. The national organization has chapters both in all states and internationally. The organization may become even more important since the split among unions since its members are from all unions and may become a place for a common meeting ground. The convention theme was: "Union Women Building the Movement."

An early program stressed "Globalization and Its Impact on Women Workers." It included information about how anti-union action by Wal-Mart is having an effect on unions. The opening ceremonies had the flags of the unions presented. Carrying the AFT banner was Chicago's Helen Ramirez Odell and AFT delegates from other States. After the plenary sessions, there were 13 workshops, vendors, exhibits and tours of Detroit Renaissance Place, owned by General Motors (union staffed). The closing invocation was given by Chicago's own union icon Rev. Addie L. Wyatt of UFCW (the United Food and Commercial Workers).

After greetings by Mark Gaffney, President of Michigan State AFL-CIO, Marsha Zakowski (United Steel Workers), new National CLUW President, talked of the difficulties of becoming president at a time with increasing unemployment while there are disagreements in the unions. She added that the great support of vice-presidents of CLUW had helped through tough times. Receiving many cheers when named was Vice-President Connie Cordovilla, an AFT Washington D.C. Staff employee. Rules Committee's co-chairs Sarah A. Puente, IBT, and Lorna Arrington, AFT, both of Texas, reported the rules for speaking.

The main speaker of the first plenary was Michigan Governor Jennifer M. Granholm who was escorted to the stage to the music of "We Are Family" and selected honor guard from various Michigan unions. She said historically — "Women don't whine, they work." She told of the women who had politically important jobs in Michigan government. She spoke of problems in bringing change to the state, especially in terms of education where a new program will pay \$4,000 to each student who completes two years of college. She spoke of the need to eliminate discrimination in the workplace and the need for equal pay. She said she defends a woman's right to choose. As much as those who need help should be supported, especially with health care, the government should not intrude in private lives. She said basic pay should be increased to at least \$7.15 an hour since it takes an hour's pay now to pay for 2 gallons of gas.

She said President Bush should have some of the current profit of gas companies go toward social programs. She advocated teen age girls be encouraged to finish school before getting pregnant. She spoke of the adverse affects of the global economy and the need for a U. S. President who will advocate a fair trade policy to keep our jobs from going out of the U.S.A. "NAFTA and CAFTA have given us the Shafta," she said. She said we need a President who advocates for health care for moral reasons and economic reasons. She said both Japanese and German companies have told her they are looking for workers with job skills.

She told them Michigan could provide 20,000 workers. A new plant for auto engines is being built by a joint effort of Chrysler, Mitsubishi, and Honda because they can provide skilled employees, because of the labor force. The world has changed so in the last five years that our students must go beyond high school. That is the reason that Michigan will guarantee two years of community college for every child. Thus, the \$4,000.00 will cover the cost.

Ron Gettelfinger, President of UAW, said we witness a tragedy when our government failed to meet a crisis, quoting Barack Obama saying "Our government of having an empathy



Chicago's Rev. Addie Wyatt (UFCW) at the 2005 CLUW convention on September 16. Substance photos this page by Lotty Blumenthal.

deficit." While the suffering continues, "Companies are being awarded contracts without bids." These contracts are at the "expense of working men and women."

Meanwhile men, women and resources are sent to Iraq. As labor, we must encourage government, whether large or not, to be good government. Labor must speak up about Social Security, especially since the majority of those over 65 are women. He spoke of horrible work conditions in the garment industry in Bangladesh and China. He said that Labor must stand with workers throughout the world for job justice. He mentioned the largest employer of the sweatshops throughout the world is Wal-Mart. He said that despite the challenges and trials for labor, unions will prevail because we have "unions in our heart,...we will stand together...for equity and justice...we can make a difference, we will make a difference,...solidarity forever."

The afternoon plenary was greeted by Donald Boggs, President of Metro Detroit AFL-CIO. Since 1980, he stated, "Women have out-voted men.... In the labor movement, women



Chicago's Helen Ramirez-Odell holding the American Federation of Teachers banner. Despite the split in the AFL-CIO — which found the AFT on one side and unions like UNITE-HERE on the other — there was unity at the Detroit CLUW meeting.

make up a third of workers in this country." He said gender discrimination is still prevalent today. One of the biggest recent lawsuits is against Wal-Mart for gender discrimination. In Michigan, only 20 percent of women have college degrees, ranking 37 among states. But, recent changes are showing an effect in education growth in Michigan for women. He said both local, national and international unions must elect more women to positions of importance in the labor movement.

Speaker Diana M. Porter, Director of Policy, Alliance for Retired Women — escorted to the stage to the tune of the Beatles "When I'm 65" — told of the need to protect Social Security, relating the number of women depending on it. She told of the problems financially and healthwise of those over 65, such as 59% of income being spent on housing. She stated that both areas are "not how they should be done, but how they are improved..." as the criteria upon which we should evaluate programs. She said when President Bush sees a bad idea, he runs to it and holds on to it. She said he wants his legacy to be the dismemberment of Social Security. She said, "To him we say, "Hell No!"

Numerous panels were also held.

As a member of CLUW, I presented an amendment, adopted later as a friendly amendment, that CLUW members temporarily out of work due to disasters or work stoppages have reduced CLUW dues. Bea Lumpkin, AFT delegate, Chicago CLUW, presented a resolution from the floor later, to be more aggressive in recovering pirated pensions by companies declaring bankruptcies. Helen Ramirez-Odell read a resolution opposing nomination of John Roberts to the U.S. Supreme Court. Ramirez-Odell also co-sponsored a resolution with Sarah A. Puente, of the Teamsters on health issues and "A Mother's Right to Breastfeed." The original resolution to "Stop Pension Piracy" was sponsored by Chicago Chapter President, CLUW, Katie Jordan, (UNITE-HERE) and Mari Wyatt, President Puget Sound CLUW. "Getting It Right For Our Children and Public Education" was sponsored by Connie Cordovilla, AFT.

The Friday Plenary had Nancy Wohlforth, Secretary-Treasurer OPEIU speak about "Pride at Work." Then Senator Diane Savino, New York State Senator, told of the need to both have union women in politics and supporting those in politics. The panel discussion "Organizing Programs Involving Women" was held by May Y. Chen, Vice President, Unite Here, Petee Talley, Secretary-Treasurer, Ohio State AFL-CIO, Denise Osgood, UAW, and JoAnn Johnntony, AFSCME, Ohio Vice President, and discussed strategies. Clearly, despite the split in the AFL-CIO the members of the unions that were now formally on opposite sides of the national split were still working together within CLUW.

After lunch, the 13 workshops were held. The Closing Plenary Saturday featured AFL-CIO Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson, Congresswoman Carolyn C. Kilpatrick, and Michigan State Senator Martha G. Scott (also a CLUW member). The final speakers were Charlene Batchelor (AFSCME) and Dr. Bill Hoffman, Director of the Pharmaceutical Industry Management Association. Afterward, Gloria T. Johnson, Past National President, installed the new officers. Rev. Addie L. Wyatt closed the session, followed by the singing of "Solidarity Forever."

Much to the disappointment of many, the Chicago Teachers Union funded only one of the AFT delegates — a staff member. Other AFT/CTU delegates were Phyllis McGee, Lotty Blumenthal, and Bea Lumpkin.

Later, a reception honoring outgoing President Gloria T. Johnson would have the halls resounding to new words sung to the oldie rock song, "Gloria." Throughout the Convention, Chicago CLUW members Jerilyn (Jerri) Fleming, Sandy Coffee, and Delores Wasserman acted as Sergeants-at-Arms, led by CLUW President Katie Jordan. 🍏

Chicago high schools face 'reform' sabotage

Continued from Page One

that program changes will come after the 20th day of the school year, are fearful that some of the books will not be returned as the classes are churned.

At some schools, such as DuSable and Senn, Duncan's innovations are driving an old school out of existence while aggressive new schools expand within the walls of the old school. Teachers reported that at both schools, materials disappeared over the summer from the general school and wound up at the "new" schools in the building. At DuSable, computers that had been laboriously accumulated over the years were missing from classrooms when teachers returned in late August. At Senn, promises that a computer lab would be in the school as well as the naval academy were not being kept.

One of the biggest problems facing the general high schools was that the Board demanded position closings even though the schools could reasonably expect a large influx of students within the first four or five weeks of the school year. In many cases, projections for enrollment were established as early as April 15, and schools were staffed based on that projection.

Board budget officials claimed a "deficit" which was much larger than could reasonably be projected, and the board refused to examine the calculations that went into its projected "reserve" fund. Substance in the past had exposed the "reserve" as being between \$100 and \$200 million per year. Despite claims that that large a reserve is necessary to maintain the city's bond rating, two years ago the bond rating agencies denied that they required a specific amount in the reserves. Instead, Substance was told that a reserve should be "reasonable" or "prudent," leaving a large amount of leeway in the calculations. Projections for budget "deficits" and screaming headlines in May and June set the stage for layoffs of teachers and cutbacks in staffs that were causing serious problems across the city by August and early September.

Not one high school contacted by Substance during the second and third weeks of the school year expected to continue with its present staffing levels. Every one had numerous classes that were above the contract provisions in Article 28 of the teachers' union contract.

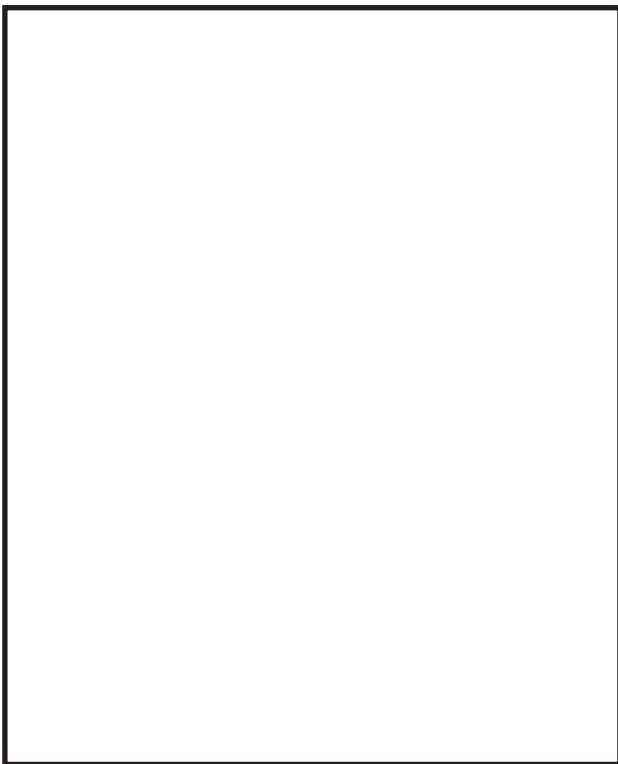
An additional burden on teachers in the general high schools is an ever increasing number of special education students who are placed into regular classes, then not provided with the special services the law says they are supposed to get. The Board of Education plays a cynical game of "catch us if you can" with those who try to oversee the requirements of the special education laws and court decisions, withholding special services, especially to poor children and those without strong families to advocate for them.

Across the city, the massive privatization, charterization, and militarization programs of the Daley administration have also drained resources from all of the remaining public high schools. At the general high schools, oversized classes, short staffing, and other shortages are becoming the norm again, despite the fact that the Board of Education's budget has increased considerably over the past several years, primarily because of increased property assessments.

At the magnet high schools, the squeeze has come in a different way. Teachers have been told that they have to have 28 students in advanced placement and International Baccalaureate classes, making it impossible to program students for these classes based on reasonable academic prerequisites. At one north side high school, Substance was told that students who were in ESL-I classes a year ago have been placed in Advanced Placement English classes this year



Chicago's "Chief High School Officer" Don Pittman (above) has issued programming guidelines which are strangling the city's general high schools and making a mockery of advanced programs and classes such as Advanced Placement (AP) and the International Baccalaureate (IB). Despite complaints from parents, teachers and principals across the city, Pittman forced draconian staff reductions on all the public high schools, resulting in oversized classes and forcing major reorganizations after the 20th day of the school year. When asked during the Farragut High School "redesign" media event how a general high school could offer Advanced Placement courses such as calculus to 28 students when only a dozen or fewer might be ready for such rigorous math, Pittman repeated a Hollywood line that the high schools did not have high enough "expectations" for the students. He claimed that with high enough expectations from teachers and principals, students put into such classes would succeed — and if they didn't it was the fault of the teachers. Substance photo by George N. Schmidt



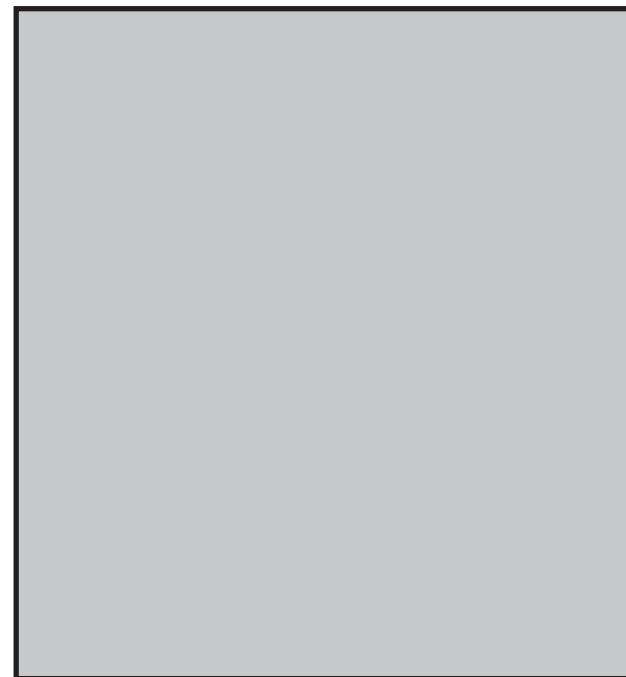
Chicago high schools have faced "Redesign" (1996, above), "Reconstitution" (1997), "Reengineering" (1998-2000), "Intervention" (2000) and various other revisions since Mayor Daley took over the public schools in 1995 and began implementing the neo-conservative agenda to privatize as much public sector activity as possible. Because none of the revisions has recognized the fundamental problems of inner city schools (see the essay beginning on Page Forty of this Substance), each has failed at the majority of the city's high schools. Today, even the magnet schools are facing growing challenges as well-funded propaganda attacks on public education increase from Chicago's political leaders and CEO Arne Duncan. The 2005 "reforms," however, are clearly designed to eliminate most public high schools in Chicago within five years and replace them with privatized, charterized, and for-profit schools.

to make the new quotas. At a more famous north side high school, more than a dozen AP classes have been cancelled because of the new guidelines.

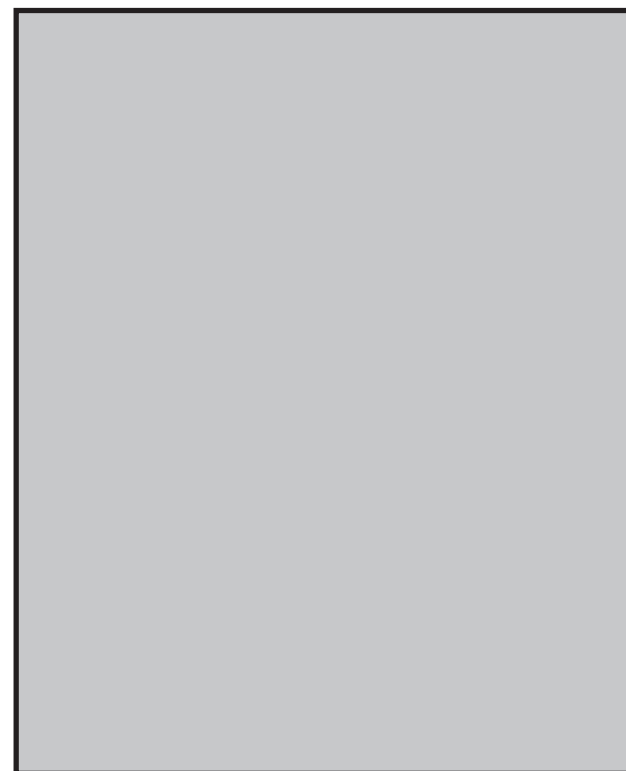
During the two weeks of the review by Substance, principals, teachers and others who looked closely at the realities in the schools asked that they not be quoted on the record. Ten years of a dictatorial CEO model of school management in Chicago has produced a generation of professional teachers and administrators who are aware of the problems and willing to talk about them but who know that there will be consequences if they tell the truth. The fate of whistle blowers in Daley's Chicago is as widely known as the fate of whistle blowers in the Bush administration.

Substance will be monitoring the problems outlined here throughout the school year, and will try to place in context any impact on standardized test scores in the general high schools that results from the policies that the Duncan administration put into place last spring.

Board maintains a blacklist for whistle blowers, but...



Covers up incompetence and lack of qualifications among its \$100,000 per year top dogs...



Boardwatch

May 25th 2005, and June 22, 2005, Board of Education meetings

By Lotty Blumenthal

[Editor's Note: This is an abbreviated report on the public participation portions of the monthly meetings of the Chicago Board of Education in May and June 2005. In November, Substance will have reorganized "Boardwatch" and bring our readers up-to-date. We are also planning to offer a more comprehensive report on the major expenses approved each month by the Chicago Board of Education, a topic that is never reported in the news].

May 25: The Public Participation started at 11:15 a.m. with 27th Ward Alderman Walter Burnett wasting the first two minutes thanking the board members for donating their time. Then he spoke for four more minutes asking for a change in policy for the Skinner and Payton Magnets in his ward. Burnett noted that not enough students from his ward were being allowed to attend these prestigious schools. Since they were built with TIF tax money from his ward alone, he asked that a percentage of enrollment be reserved for qualified students from his ward. May Toy spoke on the same subject of the Skinner, and Arne Duncan replied to them that he would look into the policy of Skinner.

Michelle McFarland Daniels spoke of the loss incurred by her family from what she termed the incompetent handling of her special education child. Patrick Rocks, the Board's new general counsel, said he is starting an investigation.

Reverend Gregory Livingston of the West Side Ministers Coalition asked to be part of the Austin TAC process and proposed that there be an alternative school — a Freshman Academy — in the Austin neighborhood for those being excluded from Austin. The problem began in September 2004, when the Board eliminated 9th grade at Austin, supposedly to allow the school to reorganize during the year. The potential 9th graders were dispersed as far east as Wells High School, where they caused considerable disruption, and to several other schools east of Austin.

This idea would stop the sending of groups of 50 to 100 Austin students to schools far away, often where rival gangs matriculate. It would decrease the violence in those schools (possibly saving taxpayers the increased police and ambulance services) and enable the community which is familiar with its problems to attempt to help the students solve those problems before moving onto the 10th through 12th grades. This proposal would help mitigate problems citywide. Rebecca Sanderson spoke about Austin's after-school program.

Pamela Galloway and Shermaine Brown of Robeson High School spoke of the need for the hole in a wall to be fixed, the roof fixed to reclaim classrooms and other problems with the building. They also asked the board to add security, a counselor, social worker, psychologist, text books, computers, and lockers since their enrollment will increase to 1700 during the 2005-2006 school year because they are getting the 9th graders from Englewood High School.

Adding to the tension, the speakers stated, now there are only 600 lockers at Robeson — with two or three students sharing each of them. One has to wonder, why would you transfer a great number of freshmen in need of much help to a building that is already crowded (1400-1700 is not a small school), has a damaged physical plant, and does not have enough lockers or other resources?

Kathy Smith-Dale returned to the Board to complain about the Principal of King "College Prep High School." She said the principal was suspending and trying to expel her son so she could replace the mother on the LSC. She said

that after she hired a lawyer, Counsel Rocks, with interest shown by Scott, cancelled the suspension after the young man suffered the loss of the ten days. Scott did not say whether the young man's record was expunged or that he received an apology. Some observers noted off-the-record that the situation has been more complex than is being reported at the Board of Education.

Next Enid Becker and Angie Wells spoke of the confusion for those students in the special education programs at LeMoyné. The LeMoyné story was reported extensively in the June Substance (now available on the Substance website at www.substancenews.com).

Gregg Harris, dressed in his professional clown costume, and Okema Lewis spoke about papers for Title 1 financing that were delivered to the Board Offices and had disappeared. They asked that the papers be found or replaced, and then they both asked for restoration of chapter 1 funds for parent training for charter school parents. Lewis likened her request at the Board meeting to be like their going to Springfield, requesting that the funds not "Be categorically denied because of the messenger."

Heather Smith Douglas spoke on behalf of a large crowd from Irving Park School about what she termed "is a city wide problem" — the highly publicized termination of teachers by principals at the end of the school year. She spoke about the new policy that principals can fire teachers without tenure, even those with four or more years honorable service, without cause and reason. According to reports, 1,100 teachers were fired in April.

At Irving Park, the principal who is leaving, fired three third year teachers who the parents, faculty, and all consider superior teachers. Parents standing for the Board meeting agreed. There was no budget problem since five or six teachers are retiring. The principal fired them apparently out of spite for losing her job. Douglas said this left the LSC and the school with the challenge of replacing the principal, the retirees, and three superior teachers as well. She asked the Board for an investigation and the reversal of the firings. She said the firings were "Unwarranted, unwanted, and unjustified." She asked for a committee to be created to monitor principals and the abuse of power. She said "we need a system that makes principals accountable for the decisions that they make."

According to Smith-Douglas, the teacher evaluations for one was Superior for three years. The Board was asked why the evaluations meant nothing. When questioning the system, Board member Norman Bobbins spoke — and spoke as if he weren't listening. He said that LSCs were responsible for principal selection and principals needed to choose a team they could work with. He stated that the Board could not fire principals unless they were caught in malfeasance, apparently ignoring the fact that the principal in question had been replaced by the LSC, and that a Board policy now allowed the principal to retaliate against everyone at the end of the school year.

Observers noted that Bobbins' statement is untrue since principals can be fired for any of the same reasons for which teachers are fired under the Board's employee discipline code. These reasons range from being consistently late or leaving early to criminal activities. Then Michael Scott, defending the "system," said that one should not throw out the baby with the dishwater. A chorus of voices corrected him.

Neal Resnikoff of the Save Senn coalition spoke of the great amount of dislike in the community for adding another military program in their progressive community when many groups in the community do not want it. He blamed the

increase in militarism on the fact that the military is having trouble with their recruiting quotas and the wisdom of separate and unequal treatment of students in the same building. One group of students will have the physical plant renovated, will have new books, computers, and their own librarian, while one librarian was "fired" to make way for one for the naval academy's few hundred enrollees. The changes will leave the remaining librarian to service the 1700 other students. He noted that what remains of Senn — other group of students — will be housed in a building of peeling paint, the only photo copy machine not working, caved in floors, either old or no computers, outdated, ragged books, and overcrowded classes.

Eben Credit who identified himself from the NAACP, repeated his request asking the Board to meet with school leaders and the problems Julian High School was having with CPS administrators. Daryl Wolford also spoke lauding the former principal of Julian High School.

Howard White spoke about Las Casas High School parents not wanting their school to share another facility with another high school.

Ruth Lopez spoke about the fact that the 350 students in an Early Childhood Center on the Northwest Side be kept open even though their building which is rented is going to be sold by the landlord. During the summer, the State of Illinois sent \$11 million dollars to Chicago for early childhood. While closing some public school early childhood sites and taking away 1.2 million in staff from the rest of CPS early childhood places, who or whatever makes such decisions is planning to give the entire 11 million from the State to private early childhood centers with no oversight of the spending. If any of these private locations are religion dominated, that would be an illegal use of public tax dollars.

June 22 Board Meeting. The Public Participation started with a group of speakers from Velma Thomas pre-school, which is completely being closed because it is full day pre-k (no one knows why it is not just being switched to half day). Michael Stewart presented petitions against closing the pre-school. Priscilla Dixon and Gerry Sullivan spoke about the successes of the program and the small amount needed to keep it open. The State of Illinois has given Chicago \$11 million dollars for pre-schools. None of it going to Velma Thomas nor any other Pre-school in danger of being closed. In fact, \$1.2 million in services are being cut from "our" pre-schools in addition to the closings, so funds are not being directed from the closed schools to help the remaining programs. All of it is apparently going to "private" schools with no oversight. Some from Velma Thomas may think this is an agenda.

Diondai Brown of the Austin Alumni cited the school's 115th Anniversary and thanked the Board for eye glasses for students.

Dwayne Truss of Westinghouse talked about the need for ETC (education to careers) programs in the new Westinghouse curriculum development and the importance of deterring unemployment. He said such programs were a necessity on the West side.

Terrance Stroud talked of the CPS owing him money from a paid internship served at King College Prep.

Queen Tiye Searles spoke about the violation of her due process rights when CPS administration used some wrongful procedures when a principal at a high school wrongfully dismissed her from her job. Legal Counsel Rocks felt her statements were erroneous but said he hadn't studied the case. Searles talked of a computer site called justiceforteachers.com. [A letter

Boardwatch

May and June Chicago Board of Education meetings

Continued from Page Twenty-Two

regarding the issue was published in the September Substance.]

Karlene Mostek of the Save Senn Coalition spoke about the facts that have impacted all of Senn because of the invasion of the Naval Academy on the Senn homeland. Mostek said that 18 teaching positions have been lost from the regular staff. Facilities such as a computer lab have been lost to the naval academy, and no new lab has been built for the 1700 regular students, depriving them of their previous educational opportunities. A "campus manager" has been "appointed" so that the naval academy will not be under the school administration. At a meeting at Loyola, which probably has some CPS money paid for the meetings held there, two teachers were threatened with arrest for publicizing Senn college prep programs, while parents were given a talk about how the naval academy was a "college prep" options. Parents voices were not heard, special education class sizes were not counted in the determination of school enrollment statistics. The administration was polite to her, but unswerving in their intention in destroying Senn.

Derrick Harris talked of the difficulty of getting freedom of information requests from the Board. The list of names of consultants for next year's budget has still not been published. FOI requests are being unanswered. PURE has a similar problem with CPS.

Paul McKinley talked about the rules at Mason Elementary resulting in overzealous people sending students to police stations. He told Duncan "You are the problem."

Fred Hampton Jr. made a tirade against Duncan that was an attempt to lure him into a conflict about Mason sending disruptive, disorderly students to jail. Scott made some of the answers and then saw to it that no one like security entered the confrontational demeanor of Hampton.

Then Donna K. Lewis spoke as chairperson of the Mason LSC with the LSC and others from the school backing her. She stated that in various melees the previous speakers gave wrong numbers. No "250 students" were ever arrested or sent to jail at Mason. During various violent actions during the entire year, 14 students were arrested, but not by the school. And she reminded the Board that when there is criminal activity, there are victims as well as those being arrested. She said that parents of attacked students pressed the charges. She said, "The LSC and the school deserve a public apology" from those who made the false allegations. She said "The LSC stands behind this demand 100 percent."

Alfred Rogers spoke about working together at Southwest side schools like Gage Park High School and Morrill.

Consuelo Paredes of Duprey talked of mix ups in the transportation and transfer of students from Duprey and Nixon and back again.

Hoi Huynh, who said she became a fired teacher based on unproven allegations, spoke about the importance of serving society by helping the young.

Lisa Smith and Star Smith spoke of the importance of keeping pre-k programs at Depriest at full day. Remember, CPS is cutting

public pre-schools while giving \$11 million earmarked for pre-k programs from the State of Illinois to only private schools.

This reporter spoke as a taxpayer not wanting any more tax payer money to be spent on "studies" which could have been done in-house. I especially asked that no more funds be given to Melissa Roderick who produced a study under the aegis of a private university that told us what we've known for 20 or more years: Latino students go to college less than other groups.

A public university — the University of Illinois at Chicago — has had a department, LARES, dealing with this problem for over 20 years because it knew of the problem. Critics charged that the numbers in the Roderick study were in error. According to news reports, Duncan told the Chicago City Council Education Committee he wanted to use the study "As a bench mark."

I suggested he find out that statistics that vary can't be a benchmark and that if taxpayers gave Roderick and her group another \$159,000, she might find "round things are wheels." She also criticized students who went to school and took 5-7 years to get a degree — showing she does not understand working one's way through college because you can't get a college loan to supplement Pell Grants because your parents are unemployed. The \$159,000 could have bought 3 bilingual counselors to solve the already known problem or a new CEO for CPS.

Scott he'd be more likely to listen more if I were less sarcastic. Does that mean that he does listen to those who are not sarcastic? 🍏

Enlist in the reportorial irregulars... and join an intellectual militia dedicated to freedom of public information

Substance editors understand that the present regime in Chicago's public schools makes it impossible for most employees to tell the truth. Between the increasing number of highly paid spies on the Vallas patronage payroll and the shrill hysteria with which truth is greeted from 125 S. Clark St., even the most nauseating examples of incompetence, perversity, and corruption must often go unchallenged in most schools and departments.

For this reason, Substance has formed the "Reportorial Irregulars." This is a group of amateur reporters — akin to the Sons of Liberty and similar organizations that have honored truth and justice throughout American history. This militia specializes in accurate timely information.

You can join by providing clear, precise, and accurate information for use in these pages every month. Every day, our office receives material. If the information can be verified from other sources, we will try to run it in our news columns. At other times, we may delay publication because the information provides one more link in a chain of facts and evidence that will lead to interesting news months or years from now.

An example from the history of Substance is the notorious case of James Moffat, whose final story we broke. His sexual crimes were covered up by two generations of Chicago public school and city officials because those officials themselves had been compromised by Moffat's predations — and by their fear of his penchant for recording personal history as it unfolded. Although it took years for justice to be done in that case, each trickle or small stream of information eventually flowed into the river that swept away one of the most evil men ever to hold enormous power in cynical Chicago.

Documents, anecdotes, and first-person materials are the most useful. Information heard second- or third-hand (the stuff of lunchroom chatter) is not usually worth our time. Photographs and audio tapes can tell a story more intensely than a thousand written words. Verification must be possible. Substance does not pay for news tips, interviews, or material. If you want that kind of journalism, go to the Star or National Inquirer.

If you want to help our ongoing work, send your information, in writing or pictorially, to:

Substance
5132 W. Berteau,
Chicago, IL 60641

Setting the historical record straight is now a full-time job for a dozen people. With your help, we'll do it with a lot smaller staff.

As anyone who watches the monthly meetings of the Chicago Board of Education on Cable TV knows, each meeting witnesses a hundred carefully scripted lies about the complex history of the Chicago public school system. According to the current version of reality, Chicago's schools have a prehistoric era — prior to 1995 — during which everything was "bad."

With the appointment of Paul Vallas as CEO and the establishment of the Daley Dictatorship over the school system (and its billions of dollars in potential patronage) in 1995, the era of "good" began. Arne Duncan has continued that fictional version of a harsh reality. With the expensive move of the Chicago Board of Education's headquarters from 1819 W. Pershing Road (and a dozen other locations scattered throughout the city), the destruction of the historical record reached an all-time high. Staff members were ordered to leave behind key documents, which were supposedly going into storage. Most were either left to rot or discarded.

Documents as simple as the old directories of schools and administrative offices are now being destroyed because they show that in previous eras, the public school system of Chicago was capable of maintaining a higher standard of professionalism than in the current era of privatization. Colleagues have reported to us that they cannot even get a complete and accurate list of all of the Chicago Board of Education's schools and other units. A lot of patronage and corruption were buried behind the frenetic fulminations of Paul Vallas and the scripted cliches of his predecessor.

We have acquired additional storage space to maintain our historical archives. If you have old materials — ranging from curriculum guides and Board Reports to directories and school yearbooks — that are in danger of being lost, please find a way to get them to our offices so that we can continue to maintain a bit of the true history of Chicago's public schools during the current era of simple-minded totalitarianism. Thanks.

'The federal No Child Left Behind law is a near perfect case of political spectacle, much more theater than substance...'

Continued from Page Forty

enough what we mean when we talk of poverty, communities of poverty, the very poor, and the like. We also know that the lower social classes and the communities in which they live are not at all homogenous. It is a simplification, and therefore a mistake, to treat a group as if the individuals who comprise that group were the same. I also ask for my readers' tolerance for ignoring these distinctions in what follows.

The Basic Problem of Poverty and Educational Reform

It seems to me that in the rush to improve student achievement through accountability systems relying on high-stakes tests, our policy makers and citizens forgot, or cannot understand, or deliberately avoid the fact, that our children live nested lives. Our youth are in classrooms, so when those classrooms do not function as we want them to, we go to work on improving them. Those classrooms are in schools, so when we decide that those schools are not performing appropriately, we go to work on improving them, as well. But both students and schools are situated in neighborhoods filled with families. And in our country the individuals living in those school neighborhoods are not a random cross section of Americans. Our neighborhoods are highly segregated by social class, and thus, also segregated by race and ethnicity. So all educational efforts that focus on classrooms and schools, as does NCLB, could be reversed by family, could be negated by neighborhoods, and might well be subverted or minimized by what happens to children outside of school. Improving classrooms and schools, working on curricula and standards, improving teacher quality and fostering better use of technology are certainly helpful. But sadly, such activities may also be similar to those of the drunk found on his hands and knees under a street lamp. When asked by a passerby what he was doing, the drunk replied that he was looking for his keys. When asked where he lost them, the drunk replied "over there," and pointed back up the dark street. When the passerby then asked the drunk why he was looking for the keys where they were located, the drunk answered "the light is better here!"

I believe we need to worry whether the more important keys to school reform are up the block, in the shadows, where the light is not as bright. If we do choose to peer into the dark we might see what the recently deceased sociologist Elizabeth Cohen saw quite clearly: That poverty constitutes the unexamined 600 pound gorilla that most affects American education today (cited in Biddle, p. 3, 2001). I think we need to face that gorilla, iconically represented in figure 1.

'The Manufactured Crisis...' is still essential reading...

The classic book by the author of this essay is still available. 'The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud, and the Attack on America's Public Schools' by David Berliner and Bruce J. Biddle (New York: Addison Wesley, 1995) is still widely available from on-line book sellers and at better bookstores everywhere. Anyone trying to understand the current reactionary attack on public schools — and 'No Child Left Behind' — needs to have read 'The Manufactured Crisis.' (The Editor)

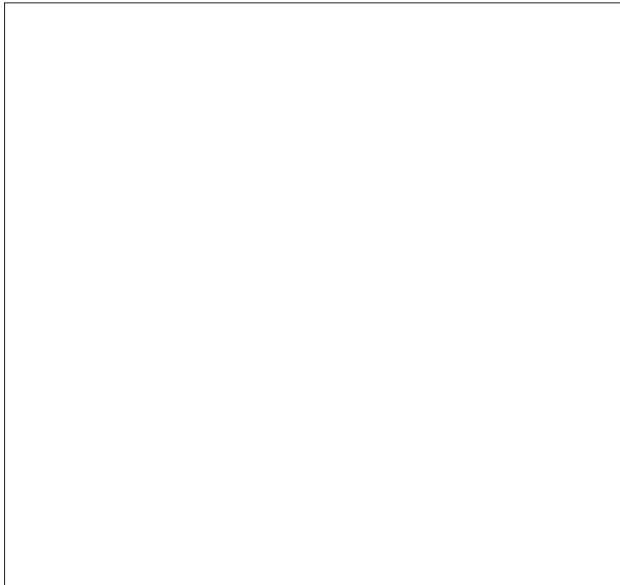


Figure 1. Iconic representation of poverty as a 600-pound gorilla affecting American education. (Photograph used by permission of Getty images).

When I think about that gorilla it immediately seems ludicrous to me that most of what we try to do to help poor youth is classroom and school based. Education doesn't just take place in our schools, a point that Pulitzer prize winning historian Lawrence Cremin tried to make as the reform movement gained momentum in the late 1980's (Cremin, 1990). It is a fact of contemporary American life that many of the poorest of the children who come to our schools have spent no time at all in school-like settings during the first five years of their life. And then, when of school-age, children only spend about 30 of their waking hours a week in our schools, and then only for about 2/3rds of the weeks in a year. You can do the arithmetic yourselves. In the course of a full year students might spend just over 1000 hours in school, and almost 5 times that amount of time in their neighborhood and with their families. That relationship is presented as Figure 2.



Figure 2. Approximate waking hours, per year, for students in school and in neighborhood and with family: 1,000 hours in school; 5,000 other.

For all youth those 5000 hours require learning to be a member of one or more cultural groups in that community, learning to behave appropriately in diverse settings, learning ways to get along with others, to fix things, to think, and to explain things to others. These are natural and influential experiences in growing up. But for poor kids, ghetto kids, what is learned in those settings can often be unhelpful. It was Jean Anyon, among others, who some time ago alerted us to the fact that many of the families in those impoverished neighborhoods are so poorly equipped to

raise healthy children, that the schools those children attend would have a hard time educating them, even if they weren't also so poorly organized and run. Anyon (1995) said

"It has become increasingly clear that several decades of educational reform have failed to bring substantial improvements to schools in America's inner cities. Most recent analyses of unsuccessful school reform (and prescriptions for change) have isolated educational, regulatory, or financial aspects of reform from the social context of poverty and race in which inner city schools are located (p. 69).

"... the structural basis for failure in inner-city schools is political, economic, and cultural, and must be changed before meaningful school improvement projects can be successfully implemented. Educational reforms cannot compensate for the ravages of society (p. 88)."

More recently Anyon (2005, p. 69) bluntly evaluated the pervasive failure of school reform. She says:

"Currently, relatively few urban poor students go past ninth grade: The graduation rates in large comprehensive inner-city high schools are abysmally low. In fourteen such New York City schools, for example, only 10 percent to 20 percent of ninth graders in 1996 graduated four years later. Despite the fact that low-income individuals desperately need a college degree to find decent employment, only 7 percent obtain a bachelor's degree by age twenty-six. So, in relation to the needs of low-income students, urban districts fail their students with more egregious consequences now than in the early twentieth century.

"Oakland, California, where my grandson goes to school, announced recently that its high-school graduation rate is 48 percent (Asimov, 2005). Oakland has been reforming its schools at least since 1973 when I first started working there. Oakland's educators are not ignorant or uncaring, and neither are Oakland's parents. But no one has been able to fix Oakland's public schools. In Oakland and elsewhere, is that because we are looking for the keys in the wrong place?"

As educators and scholars we continually talk about school reform as if it must take place inside the schools. We advocate, for the most part, for adequacy in funding, high quality teachers, professional development, greater subject matter preparation, cooperative learning, technologically enhanced instruction, community involvement, and lots of other ideas and methods I also promote. Some of the most lauded of our school reform programs in our most distressed schools do show some success, but success often means bringing the students who are at the 20th percentile in reading and mathematics skills up to the 30th percentile in those skills. Statistical significance and a respectable effect size for a school reform effort is certainly worthy of our admiration, but it just doesn't get as much accomplished as needs to be done.

Perhaps we are not doing well enough because our vision of school reform is impoverished. It is impoverished because of our collective views about the proper and improper roles of government in ameliorating the problems that confront us in our schools; our beliefs about the ways in which a market economy is supposed to work; our concerns about what constitutes appropriate tax rates for the nation; our religious views about the elect and the damned; our peculiar American ethos of individualism; and our almost absurd belief that schooling is the cure for

Continued on Page Twenty-Five

'...educational reforms cannot compensate for the [economic and social] ravages of society...'

Continued from Page Twenty-Four

whatever ails society. These well-entrenched views that we have as a people makes helping the poor seem like some kind of communist or atheistic plot, and it makes one an apostate in reference to the myth about the power of the public schools to affect change.

James Traub (2000) writing in the New York Times said this all quite well a few years ago. He noted that it was hard to think of a more satisfying solution to poverty than education. School reform, as opposed to other things we might do to improve achievement, really involves relatively little money and, perhaps more importantly, asks practically nothing of the non-poor, who often control a society's resources. Traub also noted that school reform is accompanied by the good feelings that come from our collective expression of faith in the capacity of the poor to overcome disadvantage on their own. Our myth of individualism fuels the school reform locomotive.

On the other hand, the idea that schools *cannot* cure poverty by themselves sounds something like a vote of no confidence in our great American capacity for self-transformation, a major element in the stories we tell of our American nation. Traub notes that when we question the schools' ability to foster transformation we seem to flirt with the racial theories expressed by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein, who argued in *The Bell Curve* (1994) that educational inequality has its roots in biological inequality. But an alternative explanation to Herrnstein and Murray, "is that educational inequality is rooted in economic problems and social pathologies too deep to be overcome by school alone. And if that's true, then there really is every reason to think about the limits of school" (Traub, 2000, p. 54). Schooling alone may be too weak an intervention for improving the lives of most children now living in poverty.

Those who blame poor children and their families, like Herrnstein and Murray, or those who blame the teachers and administrators who serve those kids and families in our public schools, like Rod Paige, Jeanne Allen, Checker Finn, William Bennett, and dozens of other well known school critics, are all refusing to acknowledge the root problem contended with by too many American schools, namely, that there is a 600 pound gorilla in the school house. Figure 3 [bottom of this page] represents that all-too-common presence in many of America's classrooms.

The economist Richard Rothstein understands this. In his recent book *Class and schools* (2004), he states:

"Policy makers almost universally con-

Figure 4. Childhood Poverty Rates in Rich Countries



Figure 4. Childhood poverty rates in rich countries. (Reprinted from UNICEF, 2005, used by permission.)

clude that existing and persistent achievement gaps must be the result of wrongly designed school policies — either expectations that are too low, teachers who are insufficiently qualified, curricula that are badly designed, classes that are too large, school climates that are too undisciplined, leadership that is too unfocused, or a combination of these.

"Americans have come to the conclusion that the achievement gap is the fault of "failing schools" because it makes no common sense that it could be otherwise....This common sense perspective, however, is misleading and dangerous. It ignores how social class characteristics in a stratified society like ours may actually influence learning in schools (pp. 9-10). "

Like Anyon, Rothstein goes on to note:

"For nearly half a century, the association of social and economic disadvantage with a student achievement gap has been well known to economists, sociologists and educators. Most, however, have avoided the obvious implication of this understanding — raising the achievement of lower-class children requires the amelioration of the social and economic conditions of their lives, not just school reform (Rothstein, p. 11)."

Anyon, Rothstein and others provide the framework for the issues I raise in this essay. But first, having raised the spectre of the gorilla, let me provide information on the magnitude of the American problem. I can do that by benchmarking American rates of childhood poverty against the rates in other industrialized nations.

America's Poverty Problem.

The UNICEF report from the Innocenti Foundation, (UNICEF, 2005), which regularly issues reports on childhood poverty, is among the most recent to reliably document this problem. The entire report is summarized quite simply in one graph, presented as figure 4.

In this set of rich nations, The US is among the leaders in childhood poverty over the decade of the 1990s. The only nation with a record worse than ours is Mexico, and, contrary to UNICEF, I would not consider Mexico a rich nation. Using 2003 data to compute Gross National Income per capita (using Purchasing Power Parity [PPP] as the method of comparison), the USA ranked fourth at \$37,750 per capita, while Mexico ranked 80th with \$8,900 per capita (World Bank, 2005). We should not be in the same league as Mexico, but, alas, we are closer to them in poverty rate than to others whom we might, more commonly, think of as our peers.

Figure 3

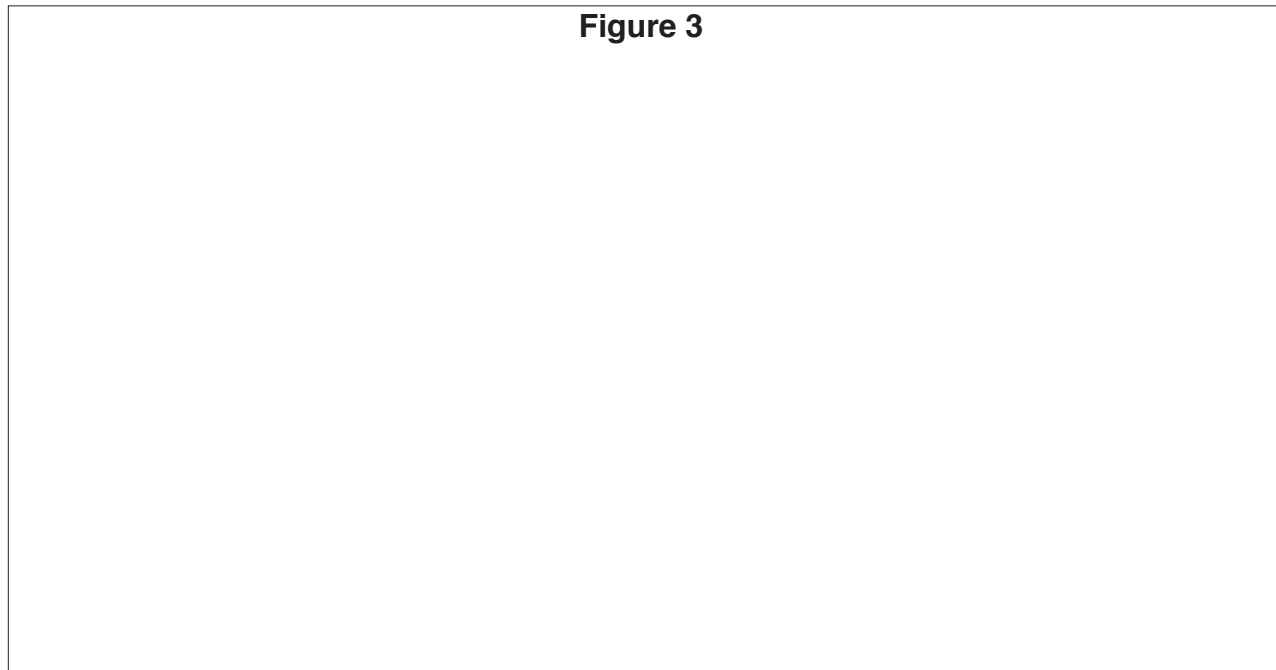


Figure 3. Representation of poverty in the schoolhouse (photographs used with permission of Getty images and the US Government).

Continued on Page Twenty-Six

'...the USA likes to be #1 in everything, and when it comes to the percent of children in poverty among the richest nations of the world, we continue to hold our remarkable status...'

Continued from Page Twenty-Five

Figure 4 [previous page, top] informs us that we have the highest rate of childhood poverty among the rich nations, which is what other studies have shown for over a decade (Berliner and Biddle, 1995). Our rank has been remarkably steady. The USA likes to be # 1 in everything, and when it comes to the percent of children in poverty among the richest nations in the world, we continue to hold our remarkable status.

One bit of good news about poverty in the US is that over the decade of the 1990s we lowered our embarrassing rate of poverty a great deal, almost 2.5 %. So in the graph presented as Figure 4 you are seeing a measure of childhood poverty in the USA after years of improvement!

But there is also some bad news.

Figure 5

Figure 5. Percent of the poor living at half the official poverty rate. (Reprinted from Mishel, Bernstein and Allegretto, 2005. Used by permission of the publisher, Cornell University Press.)

First, the expansion of jobs and income growth in our nation stopped at the end of the 1990s, and the gains that had been made have been lost. With the sharp increase in housing prices that has occurred since then, no noticeable increases in the real wages for the poor, an economic expansion that has failed to create jobs, and a reduction in tax revenues (resulting in a reduction of aid to the poor), it is quite likely that our rate of childhood poverty is back to where it was. That would be about two or more percentage points higher than the figure given in this UNICEF report. Apparently this is about where we as a nation want the rate to be, since the graph makes it abundantly clear that if we cared to do something about it we could emulate the economic policies of other industrialized nations and not have the high rate of poverty that we do.

In Figure 5 we note the percentage of people in the US who are living at half the rate of those classified as merely poor (Mishel, Bernstein & Allegretto, 2005, p. 323, from data supplied by the US Bureau of the Census). These are the poorest of the poor in our nation, constituting over 40 percent of the tens of millions of people that are officially classified as the "poor" by our government. But I need to also note that the classification scheme used by our government is suspect. Almost all economists believe that the level of income at which the government declares a person to be poor misleads us into thinking there are fewer poor than there really are. So it is likely that there are many more very poor people than this graph suggests.

I call attention in Figure 5 to the overall upward trend of the desperately poor in this

Figure 6. U.S. Poverty Rates by Ethnicity

Figure 6. US poverty rates by ethnicity. (Reprinted from Mishel, Bernstein and Allegretto, 2005, by permission of the publisher, Cornell University Press.)

graph, particularly the upturn after 2000. That is why the rates given in Figure 4 may be an underestimate of the conditions that pertain now, in 2005. Something else needs to be noted about the poverty we see among children. It is not random. Poverty is unequally distributed across the many racial and ethnic groups that make up the American nation.

Figure 6 (above right, top of Column Two) makes clear that poverty is strongly correlated with race and ethnicity (Mishel, Bernstein & Allegretto, p. 316, from data supplied by the US Bureau of the Census). Note once again the upward trend for poverty among minorities after the roaring 90's ended. New immigrants, African-Americans, and Hispanics, particularly those among these groups who live in urban areas, are heavily over represented in the groups that suffer severe poverty. Thus, while this is a paper about poverty, it is inextricably tied to issues of race in America. I have found no way to separate the two, though here I focus on poverty, perhaps the more tractable issue.

The UNICEF report (2005, p. 8) also reminds us that there is a charter about the rights of

Table 1

Percent in nation permanently poor

Table 1. Poverty in OECD countries over a three-year period, and permanent poverty, during the 1990s. (Reprinted from Mishel, Bernstein and Allegretto, 2005. Used by permission of the publisher, Cornell University Press.)

children to which 192 UN members have agreed. It is sad, I know, that many member nations sign such a charter and then do little to live up to it. But still, at the very least, signing is an acknowledgment of the underlying concept and only two nations have refused to sign this treaty. One of these nations is Somalia.

Can you guess which is the other nation? You guessed correctly if you chose the United States of America. We will not sign a charter guaranteeing the rights of already born children, though we somehow managed to get a bill through our congress that guarantees the rights of unborn children. As Congressman Barney Frank was said to mutter one day, there are many people who "believe that life begins at conception, and ends at birth!" (Erbe & Shiner, 1997).

Apparently we, the American people, do not agree with such radical ideas as those expressed in article 27 of the UN charter. There it is stated that governments should: "recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development" (UNICEF, 2005, p. 8).

Article 27 also makes clear that parents or others responsible for the child "have the primary responsibility to secure ... the conditions of living necessary for the child's development," but that governments should assist parents "to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programs, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing" (UNICEF, 2005, p. 8).

We actually have many programs to help parents and children, but because they are fragmented, do not cover everyone eligible, are subject to variability in funding, they end up not nearly as good nor as serious in intent as those in many other countries. While school critics delight in talking about our inadequate achievement vis-a-vis other nations, it seems just as important to talk about other nations' attention to the poor and the mechanisms each has for helping people out of poverty as soon as possible. This should also be an important indicator for judging one nation's performance against another. If we do that, our country does not look good.

Table 1 shows that we are a leader among the rich nations of the world in terms of failing to help people exit from poverty once they have fallen in to poverty (Mishel, Bernstein & Allegretto, p. 409, from data supplied by the OECD). One column in this table shows the percent of individuals who became impoverished once in a three years time period, say through illness, divorce, child-birth, or job loss — the big four poverty producers among those who had been non-poor. There we see that the US rate is quite high, but not much different than that of many other nations. Poverty befalls many people, in many countries, once in a while.

Our national problem shows in the next column, displaying the percent of people who stayed poor for the entire three years after they had fallen into poverty. At a rate roughly twice that of other wealthy nations, we lead the industrialized world! Unlike other wealthy countries, we have few mechanisms to get people out of poverty once they fall in to poverty.

In the last column of Table 1 we can see how awful it can be to stumble into poverty in the US compared to other nations. In that column we see the percent of people who stayed below the poverty level on a relatively permanent basis.

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‘...our poor students are not competitive internationally, while our middle class and wealthy public school children are doing extremely well in comparison to [other countries]...’

Continued from Page Twenty-Six

The US likes to lead the world, and here we are, champs once again! We can claim the highest rate of the permanently poor of all the other industrialized nations! If you compare the data from Denmark, Ireland or the Netherlands to that of the US it is easy to see the difference between societies that abhor poverty, and one such as ours, that accepts poverty as a given.

Poverty and Student Achievement

I have now pointed out that in the US the rates of childhood poverty are high, poverty is racialized, and that those who once get trapped in poverty have a hard time getting out of poverty. But what does this mean for us in terms of student achievement? There are, of course, thousands of studies showing correlations between poverty and academic achievement. Nothing there will

Table 2

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Table 2. Fourth and eighth grade mathematics and science scores from TIMMS 2003 (Gonzales, et al., 2004).

surprise us, though I do wonder why, after hundreds of studies showing that cigarettes were related to a great number of serious illnesses we eventually came to believe that the relationship between smoking and cancer, or smoking and emphysema, was causal. And yet when we now have research establishing analogous connections between poverty and educational attainment we ignore them. Instead we look for other causal mechanisms, like low expectations of teachers, or the quality of teachers' subject matter knowledge, to explain the relationship. Of course the low expectations of teachers and their subject matter competency are important. But I keep thinking about that 600 pound gorilla out there asking for more attention than it is getting. That big ape may be causal in the relationships we consistently find between poverty and achievement.

Since the relationship is well known let us look briefly at how US poverty is related to student achievement in just the international studies, since it is our international competitiveness that worries so many in industry and government, and it is those worries that kindled the reform movement in education. We can start with the recent Trends in International Math-

ematics and Science Study, known as TIMSS 2003, released just a few months ago (Gonzales, Guzmán, Partelow, Pahlke, Jocelyn, Kastenber, & Williams, 2004). Table 2 presents data on mathematics and science scores for American 4th and 8th grade youth disaggregated by the degree of poverty in the schools they attend.

In this table three aspects of our performance with regard to other nations are instructive. First, our scores in both subject areas and at both grade levels were correlated perfectly with the percent of poor students who attend a school. In the five categories presented, schools with the wealthier students had the highest average score, the next wealthier set of schools had students who had the next highest average score, and so forth, until we see that the schools with the poorest students had the students who scored the lowest. This pattern is common.

The second thing to note is that the average scores for the schools with less than 50 percent of their students in poverty exceeded the US average score, while the average scores for the schools with greater than 50 percent of their students in poverty fell below the US average score. This tells us who is and who is not succeeding in the US.

The third thing to notice pertains to the schools that serve the most impoverished students, where 75% or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. That is, almost all the students in these schools live in extreme poverty and those are the students that fall well below the international average obtained in this study. In general, Table 2 informs us that our poor students are not competitive internationally while our middle classes and wealthy public school children are doing extremely well in comparison to the pool of countries that made up TIMSS 2003.

As we go through these data and learn that poor students are not doing well in international competitions, the question we seem unable to raise and debate intelligently, is this: Why do we put so much of our attention and resources into trying to fix what goes on inside low performing schools when the causes of low performance may reside outside the school? Is it possible that we might be better off devoting more of

Table 3

Empty table content

Table 3. Mathematics scores (mean 500) from PISA 2000 (Lemke, et al., 2001).

Table 4

Empty table content

Table 4. Literacy scores (mean 500) from PISA 2000 (Lemke, et al., 2001).

our attention and resources than we now do toward helping the families in the communities that are served by those schools? That would certainly be a competitive strategy for solving the problem of low academic performance if it is simply poverty (along with its associated multitude of difficulties) that prevents most poor children from doing well.

There are more international data to examine. The OECD has instituted a three-year cycle for looking at reading, mathematics, and science for 15 year olds, called the PISA studies — The Program for International Student Assessment (Lemke, Calsyn, Lippman, Jocelyn,

Table 5

Empty table content

Table 5. Science scores (mean 500) from PISA 2000 (Lemke, et al., 2001).

Kastberg, Liu, Roey, Williams, Kruger, & Bairu, 2001). Unfortunately PISA doesn't do a very good job of breaking down the data by social class. So I report on ethnicity and race to discuss the effects of poverty on achievement. Given the high inter-correlations between poverty, ethnicity, and school achievement in our country, it is (sadly) not inappropriate to use ethnicity as a proxy for poverty.

Continued on Page Twenty-Eight

‘...almost all African American and Latino students, usually poorer than their white age-mates, are in schools where there are students very much like them racially and socio-economically...’

Continued from Page Twenty-Seven

Tables 3, 4 and 5 [previous page] display the performance in 2000 of US 15 year olds in mathematics, literacy, and science, in relation to other nations. What stands out first is a commonly found pattern in international studies of achievement, namely, that US average scores are very close to the international average. But in a country as heterogeneous and as socially and ethnically segregated as ours, mean scores of achievement are not useful for understanding how we are really doing in international comparisons. Such data must be disaggregated. I have done that in each of the three tables presenting PISA data. From those tables we see clearly that our white students (without regard for social class) were among the highest performing students in the world. But our African American and Hispanic students, also undifferentiated by social class, were among the poorest performing students in this international sample.

Looking at all three tables reveals something very important about inequality in the US. If the educational opportunities available to white students in our public schools were made available to all our students, the US would have been the 7th highest scoring nation in mathematics, 2nd highest scoring nation in reading, and the 4th highest scoring nation in science. Schooling for millions of US white children is clearly working quite well. On the other hand, were our minority students “nations,” they would score almost last among the industrialized countries in the world.

Given these findings, and a scientific attitude, we should be asking what plausible hypotheses might differentiate the education of white, African American, and Hispanic students from one another? Segregated schooling seems to be one obvious answer. Orfield and Lee (2005) in their recent report on school segregation make clear how race and schooling are bound together, as is shown in table 6.

Table 6

[Table content obscured]

Table 6. Minority makeup of schools attended by different racial/ethnic groups (Orfield & Lee, 2005).

Orfield and Lee’s data suggests that segregation is an overriding contributor to the obvious scoring disparities that exist between races. Only 12 percent of white children go to schools where the majority of the students are not white. And only one percent of white students go to schools that are over 90 percent minority. Eighty-eight percent of white children are attending schools that are majority white. In contrast, almost all African American and Latino students, usually poorer than their white age-mates, are in schools where there are students very much like them racially and socio-economically. Latinos and African Americans are as segregated by poverty, as they are by race and ethnicity, which may be the more important issue with which our schools have to deal.

In the 2003 PISA studies that just came out a few months ago the US position relative to other OECD nations slipped. No one is sure why this

happened, and we will have to see if this holds up when the 2006 PISA results are analyzed. But relative positions of white, African American, and Hispanic students remained the same and quite discrepant. For example, Table 7 presents the PISA 2003 scores in mathematics literacy, the latest international scores we have. These data are disaggregated by both race and social class (Lemke, Sen, Pahlke, Partelow, Miller, Williams, Kastberg, & Jocelyn, 2004).

Table 7

[Table content obscured]

Table 7. Mathematical literacy scores in PISA 2003, by both race and social class (Lemke, et al., 2001).

The pattern of results in Table 7 looks familiar, regardless of whether we examine race or social class. White students (disregarding social classes) and upper income students (of all races) score well. Their test scores in mathematics literacy are significantly above the international average. But lower social class children of any race and black or Hispanic children of all social classes are not performing well. They score significantly below the international average. Clearly those who are poor do not have the mathematical skills to compete internationally, and those particular children are often African American and Hispanic. Poverty, race and ethnicity are inextricably entwined in the USA.

One more study is informative in this brief look at poverty and the performance of US students in international comparisons. This is the PIRLS study (Ogle, Sen, Pahlke, Jocelyn, Kastberg, Roey, & Williams, 2003). PIRLS stands for Progress in International Reading Literacy, a reading assessment administered to 9 and 10 year olds in 35

nations. The data from this comparison are presented in Table 8. The US did quite well. Our nation ranked ninth, though statistically, we tied with others at third place. This is quite heartening since these data prove our President and former Secretary of Education wrong in their belief that teachers in the US cannot teach reading.

But PIRLS revealed more than the fact that for the second time in about a decade US 9 year olds showed remarkably high literacy skills. For instance, the mean score of US white children, without any concern about their social class status, was quite a bit higher than that of the Swedish children who, it should be noted, are also a very white group, and in this study the leading nation in the world. Once again we see that millions of US white children are doing well against international benchmarks. Further, when we take social class into consideration by looking at the scores of students who attend schools where there are few or no children of poverty, we learn that this group of public school children performed quite well. In fact, these higher social class children from the US walloped the Swedes, scoring 585, an average of 24 points higher than the average score obtained by Swedish students. Public school students by the millions, from US schools that do not serve many poor children, are doing fine in international competition.

But the scores obtained by students attending schools where poverty is prevalent are shockingly low. The mean score in literacy in schools where more than 75% of the children are on free and reduced lunch was 485, 100 points below the scores of our wealthy students, and well below those of many nations that are our economic competitors. The PIRLS study also informed us that, compared to other nations, the USA had the largest urban/suburban score difference among the competing nations. In that finding, as in the segregation data, we see a contributor to many of our nations’ educational problems. The urban/suburban social class differences in the US result in de facto segregation

Continued on Page Twenty-Nine

Table 8

[Table content obscured]

Table 8. Highest scoring nations in reading literacy for nine- and ten-year-olds in 35 countries (PIRLS 2001, Ogle et al., 2003).

...One [study] ...demonstrated that poverty, pure and simple, prevents the genes involved in academic intelligence to express themselves...'

Continued from Page Twenty-Eight

by race and ethnicity. Middle- and upper-class white families in the suburbs live quite separately from the poor and ethnically diverse families of the urban areas. School and community resources differ by social class, and therefore differ also by race and ethnicity.

From these recent international studies, and from literally thousands of other studies both domestic and international, we learn that the relationship between social class and test scores is positive, high, and well embedded in theories that can explain the relationship. This suggests a hypothesis that is frightening to hear uttered in a capitalist society, namely, that if the incomes of our poorest citizens were to go up a bit, so might achievement scores and other indicators that characterize a well-functioning school. Sometimes a correlation exists precisely because causation exists.

How poverty affects achievement

Can a reduction of poverty improve the achievement of the poor and the schools they are in? I will only mention a few of the many studies that have caught my attention while thinking about this issue. One that impressed me greatly demonstrated that poverty, pure and simple, prevents the genes involved in academic intelligence to express themselves (Turkheimer, Haley, Waldron, D'Onofrio, & Gottesman, 2003).

We all have heard of the occasional feral child, or about the child kept locked in a closet for some years. We learned from those cases that under extreme environmental conditions whatever genetic potential for language, height, or intellectual functioning a child had, that potential was unable to be expressed. The powerful and awful environment in which such children lived suppressed the expression of whatever genes that child had for complete mastery of language, for full height, for complete intellectual functioning, for competency in social relationships, and so forth.

This is the same point made by evolutionary biologist Richard Lewontin (1982), who discussed how two genetically identical seeds of corn, planted in very different plots of earth would grow to very different heights. In the plot with good soil, sufficient water, and sunshine, genetics accounts for almost all of the noticeable variation in the plants, while environment is much less of a factor in the variation that we see. On the other hand, when the soil, water, and sun, are not appropriate, genetics do not account for much of the noticeable variation among the lower-growing and often sickly plants that are our harvest. Genes do not have a chance to express themselves under poor environmental conditions.

Lewontin's example now has a human face. There is strong evidence that the influence of genes on intelligence is quite dependent on social class. For example, Turkheimer and his colleagues determined the heritability of IQ for those who were and were not economically advantaged. The total sample studied began with almost 50,000 women, followed from pregnancy on, in the National Collaborative Perinatal Project. These women gave birth to hundreds of twins, both mono- and di-zygotic.

At the lowest end of the socioeconomic spectrum were families with a median income of \$17,000 a year in 1997 dollars. One in five of these mothers was younger than 21, one-third of them were on public assistance, and more than one-third did not have a husband. These were the most impoverished of the family groupings studied, the kind of people that we ordinarily refer to

as very poor. Unlike most other studies of heritability in twins there were enough of these families in the sample to do a separate estimate of the heritability of IQ in their children. Wechsler IQ was measured for the twins when they were 7 year-old, old enough to get a good fix on what their adult IQ was likely to be. The findings are clear and presented in figure 7.

**Figure 7:
IQ Variations Attributable to Genes**

Figure 7. Percentage of variation in IQ attributable to genes, for various levels of socioeconomic status (Turkheimer, et al., 2003, used by permission of the authors).

Figure 7 presents the smoothed curve of the relationship between genotype and phenotype, between heritability and its expression. It shows that at the low end of the 100 point scale that was used to measure socioeconomic status, the heritability of IQ was found to be about 0.10 on a scale of zero (no heritability) to one (100 percent heritable, as is eye-color); at the other end of the SES scale, we see that for families of the highest socioeconomic status, the heritability was estimated to be it 0.72.

That is, among the lowest social classes, where the mean IQ is quite a bit lower than that of those in the higher social classes, only 10 percent of the variation we see in measured IQ is due to genetic influences. Thus, the environment accounts for almost all the variation in intelligence that we see. Just as in Lewontin's corn growing example, genetic variation in intelligence in these impoverished environments is not being expressed in the measures we use to assess intelligence. And also as in Lewontin's example, at the top end of the SES scale, almost three quarters of the variation we see in measures of intelligence is due to genetic influences. These findings suggest a number of things.

First, put bluntly, poverty sucks. Among the poor the normal variation we see in academic talent has been sucked away, like corn growing in bad soil.

Second, all charges of genetic inferiority in intelligence among poor people, minorities or not, have little basis. Genes are not accounting for much of their phenotypic IQ. Environment is the overwhelming influence on measured IQ among the poor. This suggests that unless environments for the most impoverished improve we will not see the expression of the normal human genetic variation in intelligence that is expected. The problem we have, however, is that we don't yet know with much certainty how to improve those environments, because we don't yet know what it is about those environments that is so debilitating. However, Occam's razor, suggests that the

simplest explanation should be given precedence when attempting to explain any phenomenon. The simplest explanation available is that poverty, and all it entails, causes a restriction of genetic variation in intelligence. We do not need to wait until we understand the micro-environments of the poor to know that the macro-environment of the poor needs to be changed if we desire to let all the genetic talent that exists among the poor flower.

A third thought arises from this study, and others like it. That is, if genes are not accounting for a great deal of variation in IQ among the poor, and environment is, then environmental interventions for poor people are very likely to change things. In fact, environmental changes for poor children might be predicted to have much bigger effects than similar changes made in the environments for wealthier children. This often appears to be the case, a conclusion reached by Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (2001) using different data. When I look at the studies of the effects of small class size for the poor, or the effects of early childhood education for the poor, or the effects of summer school programs for the poor, the largest effects are found among the poorest children. Thus it seems to me that Turkheim et al., bring us remarkably good news from their study of genetic influences on IQ. The racism and pessimism expressed in the *Bell Curve* by Herrnstein and Murray (1994) can now be seen as completely unjustified because among the very poor genes are not very powerful influences on intelligence, while environments are.

Point four arising from this study is derived from figure 8, also taken from the Turkheimer et al. study. This graph informs us that most of the variation in IQ at the bottom of the SES ladder is due to the environments shared by family members, and that the family's role in the expression of intelligence is less and less important as you go up in social class standing.

**Figure 8:
Variation Attributed to Shared Family Environment**

Figure 8. Percentage of variation in IQ attributable to shared family environment, across various levels of socioeconomic status (Turkheimer, et al., 2003, used by permission of the authors).

Figure 8 is the inverse of what was presented in figure 7. Here we see that the variance in intelligence that is due to shared family factors is four times larger among the poor than it is among the rich. This is another way of saying that environments matter a lot more in the determination of IQ for poor children than they do for

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'...Do millions of children affected in small and big ways by lead poisoning have anything in common?...They are mostly poor and mostly children of color...'

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wealthier children. After a certain point of environmental adequacy is achieved by means of economic sufficiency, it apparently doesn't much matter what gets added to the environment. A healthy childhood environment supported by adequate family economics is an amalgam of many factors, but probably includes a regular supply of nutritious food, stability in feelings of security, quick medical attention when needed, high quality child-care, access to books and exposure to rich language usage in the home, and so forth.

Children with these kinds of environments were planted in good soil, and under those conditions the variation we see is mostly genetic and not environmental, however counter intuitive that seems. But the flip side of this is that positive changes in environments for the poor, say high quality child care, are expected to have much bigger effects on outcomes we value than they would have when provided to middle-class and wealthier students. That is why high quality child-care, good nutrition, and medical attention don't just matter for the poor: They matter a lot!

School reformers are doing their best. But they are often planting in poor soil. While you can eek out a living doing that, and occasionally you even see award-winning crops come from unlikely places, we all know that the crops are consistently better where the soil is richer. Healthy trees do not often grow in forests that are ailing, though there are always some resilient ones that thrive, making us forget that most do not. Resilient children and the occasionally exemplary school that exists amidst poverty should be lauded and supported. But the focus of our attention must be on the fact that most children in poverty and most schools that serve those children are not doing well.

The simplest way to get a healthier environment in which to raise children is to provide more resources for parents to make those changes for themselves. Despite the shortcomings of many parents at every level of social class, I still believe the proper place to begin solving the problem of low achievement among poor families is by making those families less poor. I am not talking about a government giveaway. I seek only employment that can supply families with the income that gives them the dignity and hope needed to function admirably, allowing them to raise their children well.

How money affects school achievement

How would a bit more income per family influence educational attainment? The two answers that immediately spring to mind about health and neighborhood, which I address next.

Health issues affecting the poor. The many medical problems that are related to social class provide obvious and powerful examples of problems affecting school achievement that are remediable with a little extra money. For example, at the simplest level are medical problems such as otitis media and those associated with vision.

Otitis media is a simple and common childhood ear infection, frequently contracted by rich and poor children alike between birth and three years of age. In a number of studies, recurring otitis media in the first three years of life has been related to hearing impairments, and thus to language development, and thus to reading problems in school, and therefore to deficits on tests such as the Stanford-Binet intelligence test. Otitis media is also implicated in the development of ADHD (see, for example, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2005; Hagerman & Falkenstein, 1987; Knishkowsky, Palti, Adler &

Tepper, 1991; Luotonen, Uhari, Aitola, Lukkaroinen, Luotonin, Uhari, & Korkeamaki, 1996). This literature makes clear that poor children have more untreated cases of otitis media than do those that are financially better off, especially those with medical insurance. The cause of otitis media may not be directly linked to poverty, but its prevalence and lack of treatment in children is quite clearly affected by poverty.

For example, recurrent otitis media as well as other childhood diseases before age three are found to be strongly and negatively related to breast-feeding — the less breast feeding, the greater the rate of a number of childhood diseases. But breast-feeding of infants in America is done significantly less frequently by women who are poor (Center for Disease Control, 2005). Breast-feeding is also done significantly less often by those who only have high school degrees or have not finished high school and by those mothers who are under 19 and who are not married (Center for Disease Control, 2005).

In other words, poverty affects otitis media and other childhood diseases indirectly through home practices that are more common among the poor and less common in the middle class. Another example makes this point as well. The relationship to recurring otitis media is also strongly positive for pacifier use (Niemela, Pihakari, Pokka, Uhari, & Uhari, 2000). Pacifiers are used more commonly, and for longer periods of time, among the lower social classes.

In the final analysis, while otitis media isn't a disease of the poor, the characteristics of child rearing and of home environment among the poor of all races and ethnicities leads to more medical problems for the children of the poor. And then, since the poor often lack proper medical insurance, they have a much greater chance of having hearing handicaps at the stage of their lives where language is being developed. In just a few years those handicaps will emerge as reading problems in the classroom.

Otitis media is precisely the kind of problem that is likely not to be much of a factor if the

poor were a little richer and in possession of adequate health insurance. Note also that the norms regarding breast-feeding and pacifier use influence all who live in middle-class neighborhoods in a positive way, while the neighborhood norms for these same factors result in negative effects on children in the communities of the poor. A little more money in the lives of the poor would buy them neighborhoods with healthier norms for behavior, as well as medical insurance.

Vision is another simple case of poverty's effects on student behavior outside the teachers' control. For example, two different vision screening tests, one among the urban poor in Boston and one among the urban poor in New York each found that over 50 percent of the children tested had some easily correctable vision deficiency, but most such cases were not followed up and corrected (Gillespie, 2001).

An optometrist working with poor children notes that the mass screening vision tests that schools typically use rarely assess the ability of children to do close up work — the work needed to do reading, writing, arithmetic, and engage in computer mediated learning (Gould & Gould, 2003). What optometrists point out is that a better set of mathematics standards seems less likely to help these students improve in school than does direct intervention in their health and welfare, perhaps most easily accomplished by ensuring that the families of these children earn adequate incomes and are provided medical insurance.

The complexity of the medical problems increases when we discuss asthma. Asthma has now reached epidemic proportions among poor children. One survey in the South Bronx found a fourth grade teacher where 12 of his 30 students have asthma and 8 of those have to bring their breathing pumps to school every day (Books, 2000). Seven years ago, according to the National Institutes of Health, asthma alone resulted in 10 million missed school days a year, with many individual children missing 20 to 40 school days

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Figure 9

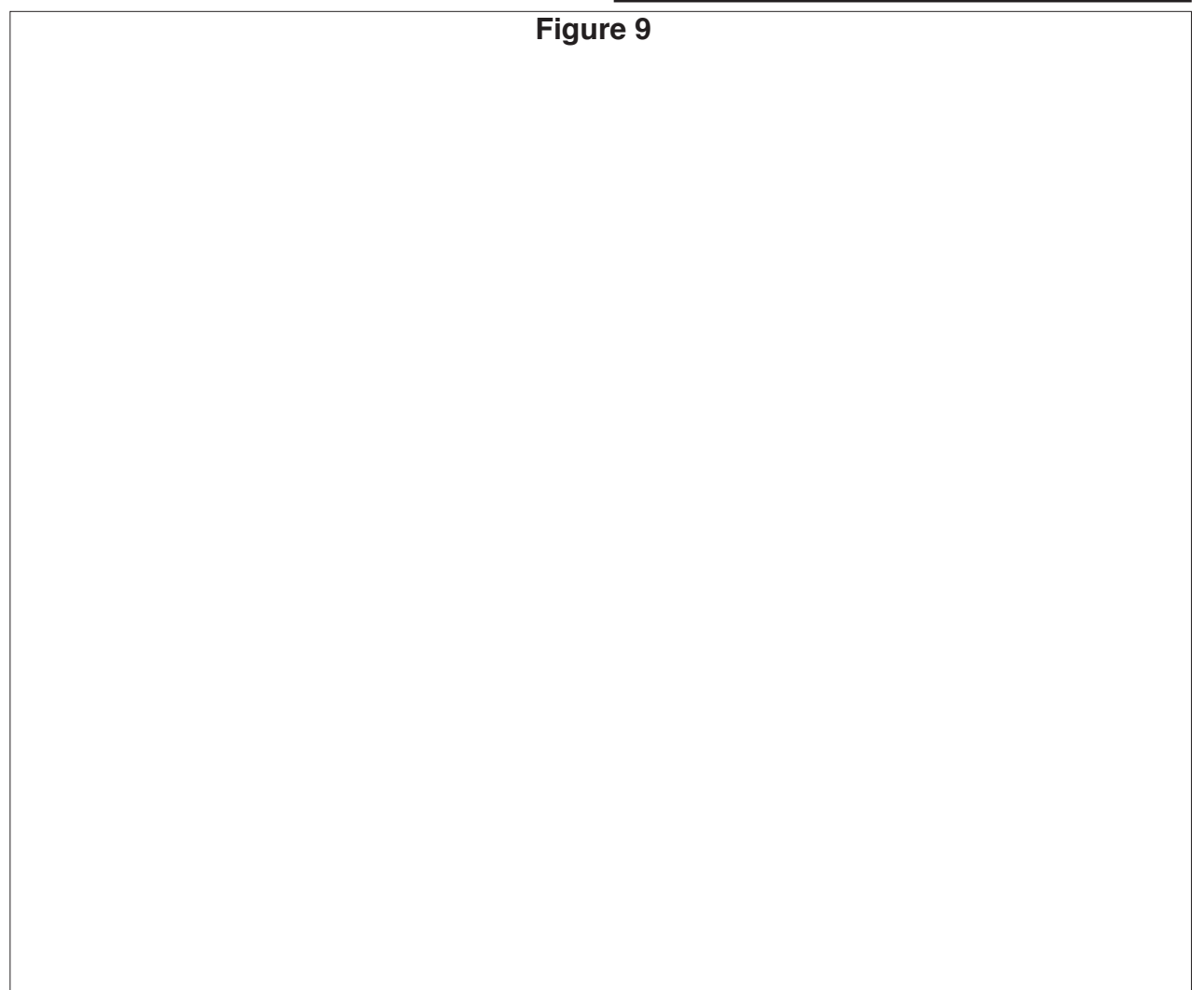


Figure 9. Percent of California public elementary schools with various levels of lead paint and lead deterioration, by age of school. (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2003, based on data from the late 1990s.)

'...there's a very large number of kids who find it difficult to do analytical work or even line up in the cafeteria because their brains are laden with lead...'

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a year (National Institutes for Health, 1998, cited in Books, 2000). This year, however, a survey puts missed school days due to asthma at 21 million (Children & Asthma in America, 2005). Asthma is simply preventing millions of children of all social classes from attending school and studying diligently. But asthma's effects on children from middle-income families are not nearly as severe as they are on the children of low-income families. Time-on-task, as we all know, is one of the strongest predictors of learning in schools. So it is no great leap of logic to point out that poor children, compared to their middle class counterparts, will be missing a lot more school because of asthma, and thus will be learning a lot less.

Another level up in the seriousness of the medical problems that afflict the poor has to do with the effects of lead on mental functioning. Michael Martin (2004) of the Arizona School Boards Association has convinced me that this is much more of a problem than I had thought. No one I could find in the medical profession disputes the fact that very small amounts of lead can reduce intellectual functioning and diminish the capacity of a child to learn. The damage that lead does is almost always permanent. The good news is that lead poisoning is in decline. The bad news is that the Centers for Disease Control still estimates that some 450,000 children in the United States between 1 and 5 years of age show levels of lead in their blood that are high enough to cause cognitive damage (Center for Disease Control, 2004). A simple extrapolation gives us a K-6 schooling population of another half million students with levels of lead in the blood high enough to cause neurological damage. The epidemiological data suggests that another half million brain damaged students are enrolled in our middle and high schools. The effects of lead poisoning may be small or large, but whatever damage is done by the lead in the system, it is usually permanent.

Do the millions of children affected in small and big ways by lead poisoning have anything in common? They sure do. They are mostly poor and mostly children of color. The poor live in older inner city buildings where lead contamination from paint, and lead dust from many other sources, is prevalent. But the poor cannot move and cannot afford the paint removal costs since they do not have the income to do so.

Figure 9 [previous page] presents data from California showing the age of the school and the lead that children are exposed to. It is likely to be the case that the relationship shown in figure 9 holds for all states. Essentially what is demonstrated there is that children attending schools built since 1980 are not being exposed to lead in the schools or in the soil around the schools, while the children in older schools are exposed to toxic levels of this dangerous metal. The children who attend new and old schools are not a random selection of children from the population. The poor are exposed to lead's toxicity many times more than the rich.

The literature on the symptoms of lead poisoning remind me of the problems new teachers tell me about when they teach in schools that serve the poor. A lead-damaged nervous system is associated with a variety of problems including learning disabilities, ADHD, increased aggression, and lower intelligence, and those symptoms among older children are also linked with drug use and a greater likelihood of criminal behavior (see reviews by Books, 2000; and Rothstein, 2004).

Though a reduction of, say, four or five IQ points is not disastrous in a single poisoned child, that IQ reduction in a population will increase by

50 percent the number of children who qualify for special education, just about what we see in the schools serving the poor. Bailus Walker, a member of both the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine says:

"The education community has not really understood the dimensions of this because we don't see kids falling over and dying of lead poisoning in the classroom. But there's a very large number of kids who find it difficult to do analytical work or [even] line up in the cafeteria because their brains are laden with lead (cited in Martin, 2004)"

Space limitations do not allow me to discuss mercury poisoning — a terribly powerful neurotoxin that gets into the air around medical waste disposal plants and coal fired power plants. But just ask yourselves who lives in the vicinity of the big urban medical waste facilities or are downwind of a coal-fired power plant? The answer, of course, is that poor families, mostly Hispanics and African Americans, are those who live closest to these toxic facilities. That is the basis for charges about environmental racism.

Perhaps it is even more accurate to call it environmental classism, because the poor feel the brunt of these problems regardless of ethnicity. What is clear is that poor children and their parents are getting more lead and more mercury in their systems than their wealthier kin.

What is also important to note is that the symptoms presented by lead and mercury exposure, like ADHD, irritability, problems of concentration, and the like, are problems that display degrees of impairment. It is not like being pregnant, where a woman either is or is not. So if the lower classes suffer from exposure to lead and mercury more than those in the higher social classes, then there will be more impairments that are slight, as well as those that are more obviously noticeable. In fact at least one recent study of lead effects claims that there is absolutely no safe level for lead. It *always* causes negative cognitive and behavioral effects (Lanphear, Dietrich, Auinger, & Cox, 2000). These invisible medical problems often translate into misbehavior in school, probably resulting in more poor children receiving punishment and having negative school experiences than might their healthier middle-class peers.

The set of environmentally caused problems, both small and large, become teacher and school problems that cannot be fixed by administrators and teachers. Yet we have many politicians who worry little about environmental pollution but are quick to blame educators for the poor achievement of some schools, although that poor achievement may be, in part, a result of problems they could help to solve. I believe that more politicians need to turn their attention to the outside-of-school problems that affect inside-of-school academic performance.

There is another medical problem that is directly related to poverty. Premature births and low birth weight children are much more common problems among the poor. Neural imaging studies show that premature and low birth weight children are several times more likely to have anatomic brain abnormalities than do full-term, full birth weight controls (Peterson, Anderson, Ehrenkranz, Staib, Tageldin, Colson, Gore, Duncan, Makuch & Mendt 2003). Quantitative comparisons of brain volumes in eight-year-old children born prematurely, and age-matched full-term control children also found that brain volume was less in the prematurely born. The degree of these morphologic abnormalities was strongly and inversely associated with measures of intelligence (Peterson, Vohr, Staib, Cannistraci,

Dolberg, Schneider, Katz, Westerveld, Sparrow, Andersobn, Duncan, Makuch, Gore, & Mendt, 2000). Unfortunately social class and birth defects have been found to be significantly correlated in hundreds of studies. Some of the relationships seem associated with life style problems (drug and alcohol use, vitamin deficiencies), while some seem neighborhood related (waste sites, lead, pesticides). But in either case, the children will still go to public schools five years later.

How neighborhoods affect the poor.

Neighborhoods communicate norms for behavior, such as in the case of drugs and alcohol, breast-feeding or pacifier use, and achievement. For example, Garner and Raudenbush (1991) looked at student achievement in literacy in 16 secondary schools and in 437 neighborhoods in a set of school districts. The neighborhoods were scaled to reflect socio-demographic characteristics, precisely the kinds of things that make one choose to live in (or not live in) a neighborhood. These included overall unemployment rate, youth unemployment rate, number of single parent families, percent of low earning wage earners, overcrowding, and permanently sick individuals. When Hierarchical Linear Modeling was used to analyze these data, significant school-to-school variance was found even when controlling for family background and neighborhood. Happily, this tells us that we should continue working on making schools better. This study and many others demonstrate that school effects are real and powerful: Schools do exert positive influences on the lives of the poor.

But the analysis did not stop there. The neighborhood deprivation variable showed a negative effect on educational attainment even after variation in the individual students and the schools they attend were stringently controlled. This was not a trivial statistical finding. For two students with identical prior background in achievement, with identical family backgrounds, and even with identical school membership, the differences in their educational attainment as a function of their neighborhood deprivation was estimated to be a difference of between the 10th and the 90th percentile on an achievement tests.

More recently sociologists Catsambis and Beveridge, verified these finding using NELS 88 data with mathematics achievement as the outcome (2001). They found that neighborhood had significant direct and indirect effects on achievement, often by depressing parental practices that were usually associated with better student achievement.

The combination of home circumstances, neighborhood, and school are powerful influences on a secondary students' life circumstances. But independent of the other factors, neighborhood deprivation showed powerful effects on its own. Tragically, good parents too frequently loose their children to the streets: neighborhood effects are strong. Families who have enough money to move out of a dysfunctional neighborhood do so. On the other hand, poverty traps people in bad neighborhoods that affect their children separately from the effects of home and school.

Jeanne Brooks-Gunn and her colleagues (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealant, 1993) also found that neighborhood effects rival family effects in influencing child development. In addition they found that the absence of more affluent neighbors is more important than the presence of low income neighbors (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealant, 1993). This means that well-functioning adult role models are needed

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'...another way to harness neighborhood effects on achievement is ensuring that low-income people have access to better paying jobs so they can make more and thus spend more on decent housing...'

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in low-income neighborhoods, and that such positive role models count for a lot in the lives of poor children.

In sum, zip codes matter. Zip codes can determine school achievement as much or more than does the influence of a person's family, and they often have more power than the quality of the school a child attends. While family involvement and school improvement programs are each to be supported, and some have garnered success (Comer, 2004), they cannot be expected to do all that needs to be done. Most low performing schools serve poor children who live in neglected neighborhoods and we pay a price for our communal neglect.

We all know that urban segregation of the poor, along with segregation of language minorities and ethnic groups, is the reason that zip codes matter. Since the end of World War II there has been a gradual decline of white middle and upper class families in large metropolitan centers. As those families moved to suburbs or small cities the white middle class students in the schools of the central cities were replaced by large concentrations of black and Latino students. As Orfield and Lee point out (2005), these minority and poor communities had to cope with inadequate and decaying housing, weak and failing urban infrastructures, shortages of jobs, and perhaps among the most important of these problems, a critical lack of mentors for urban youth. As Rumberger (1987) noted some time ago, without strong positive peer influences, children attending high poverty schools are not likely to achieve well. Zip codes do matter. They determine who is around to exert an influence during a child's formative years.

The zip codes of the middle class have influence too. Several empirical studies have found that attending a middle class school exposes minority students to higher expectations and more educational and career options. One team of researchers studied voluntary transfer policies in metropolitan St. Louis (Wells & Crain, 1997). They observed that minority students who attend middle- and upper-class schools had higher educational achievement and college attendance rates than their peers in schools where poverty was concentrated. Studies of Boston students who attended suburban public schools revealed that they had access to knowledge and networks of knowledge that their peers in inner city Boston lacked (Eaton, 2001). These experiences increased

their educational and professional opportunities. The famous Gautreaux study of Chicago made this plain years ago (Rubinowitz & Rosenbaum, 2000). In that natural experiment a random set of families received vouchers to move from the 'hood to the 'burbs. Their children succeeded much better than did an equivalent control group. The Gautreaux study provides convincing evidence of the power of neighborhood, and the schools available to those neighborhoods, to influence our nation's youth.

Although we have no idea what the micro-elements of a middle class culture are, when such a culture is well entrenched in a neighborhood, it is the best insurance that the schools in that neighborhood will have the quality and the student norms of behavior that lead to better academic achievement. Perhaps it is because middle class and residentially stable neighborhoods often manifest a collective sense of efficacy and that, in turn, determines the ways that youth in those neighborhoods are monitored as they grow up (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997).

On the other hand, neighborhoods that perpetuate the culture of poverty cannot help but have that culture spill over into the schools their children attend. Obviously, one way to help the American schools achieve more is to weave low-income housing throughout more middle class zip codes. This would provide more low-income people with access to communities where stability exists, efficacy is promoted and children have access to a variety of role models. But we are an economically segregated country, a condition perpetuated in various ways by the more affluent and powerful in the nation. So this is not likely to happen.

Yet another way to harness neighborhood effects on achievement is ensuring that low-income people have access to better paying jobs so they can make more and thus spend more on decent housing. Poverty is what drives families into zip codes that are not healthy for children and other living things. And all those unhealthy things they experience end up, eventually, to be dealt with inside the school house. Figure 10 represents this all-too-common state of affairs.

I could go on. The rates of hunger among the poor continue to be high for an industrialized nation (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2004). In 2003 about 12.5 million households, around 36 million people, suffered food insecurity. About 4 million of those households, or around 9.5 million people, actually went hungry some time in that year. And

sadly, one-third of this group experienced *chronic* hunger. Seventeen percent of the households with food insecurity have children, and these children do not ordinarily learn well. Perhaps equally unfortunate is the fact that the neighborhood norms for people who are poor promote non-nutritional foods and diets that lead to medical problems. Anemia, vitamin deficiencies, obesity, diabetes and many other conditions that affect school learning help to keep the academic achievement of poor children lower than it might otherwise be.

The lack of high quality affordable day care and quality early childhood learning environments is a problem of poverty that has enormous effects on later schooling. The early childhood educational gap between middle class and poor children is well documented by Valerie Lee and David Burkham in their book *Inequality at the starting gate* (2002). More recent studies of the economic returns to society of providing better early childhood education for the poor have looked at the most famous of the early childhood programs with longitudinal data. From projects such as the Perry Preschool, the Abecedarian Project, the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, and the Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project, scholars find that the returns to society range from \$3 to almost \$9 for every dollar invested. Grunewald and Rolnick (2004, p. 6) of the Minneapolis Federal Reserve noted that when expressed as a rate of return "the real (adjusted for inflation) internal rates of return on these programs range from about seven percent to above 16 percent annually" (see also Lynch, 2004, for a similar argument). Thus, since the return on investment to society for making high-quality early childhood programs available to all of our nation's children is remarkably large, why are we *not* making those investments? A plausible answer is that we won't invest in poor children's futures, nor our own, due to simple mean spiritedness. It is clearly not due to economics!

Income also plays a role in determining the learning opportunities that are available to children during the summer months. Children of the poor consistently show greater learning losses over summer than do children of the middle-class (Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay & Greathouse, 1996). Middle class children apparently get a more nutritious cultural and academic diet during the summer than the poor. This results in middle class children gaining in reading achievement over the summer, while lower class children lose ground. Every summer the gap between the affluent and the poor that shows up on the first day of kindergarten gets larger and larger.

The effects of smoking, alcohol and other drugs, lack of adequate dental and medical care, increased residential mobility, fewer positive after school groups in which to participate, and many other factors all take their toll on the families and children of the poor. While these factors all interact with the quality of the teachers and the schools that poor children attend, these social, educational, medical, and neighborhood problems are also independent of the schools, and thus beyond their control. Poverty severely limits what our schools can be expected to accomplish.

Let me take stock here so my argument is clear. I have provided reliable information that (a) we have the largest percentage of poor children in the industrialized world, (b) people stay poor longer in the US than elsewhere in the

Figure 10

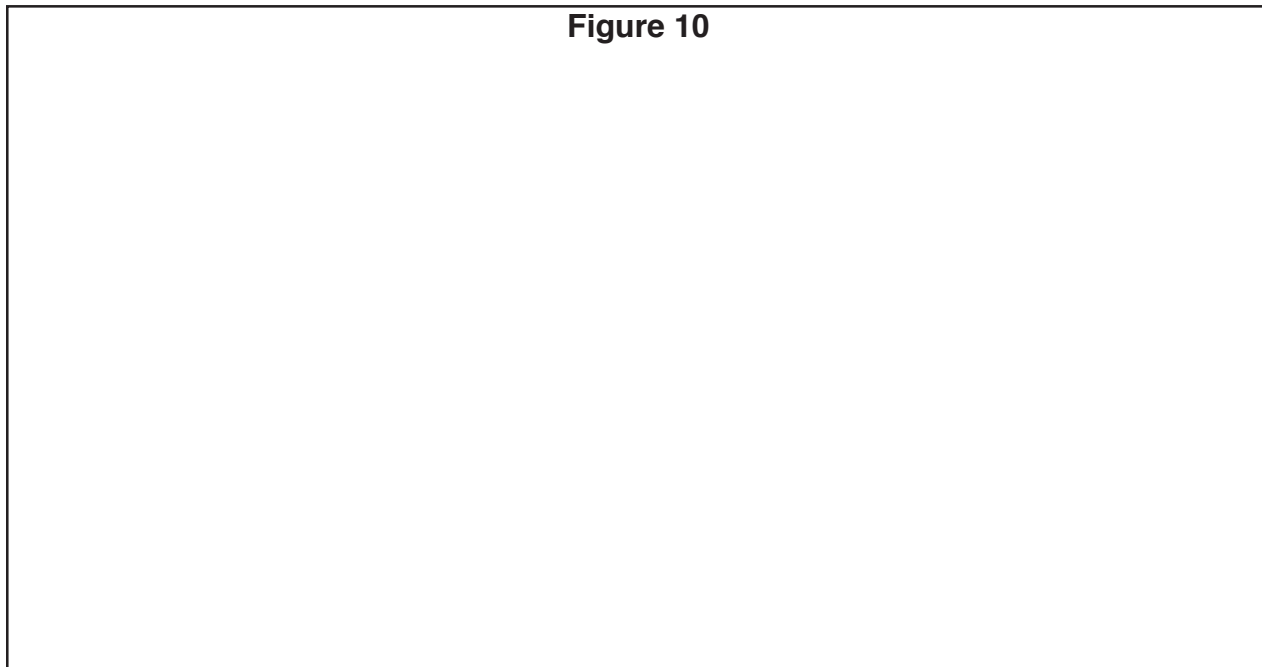


Figure 10. Representation of some of the ways that poverty affects schooling. (Photograph used by permission of Getty images.)

'...the poor children in families whose incomes went up, ended up scoring as well as the students who had never been poor. This was true even though the set of families who were not poor earned considerably more money than those who had been poor...'

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industrialized world, (c) poverty is negatively related to school achievement and poverty's effects on our international competitiveness appear to be serious, (d) poverty has powerful effects on individuals that limit the expression of genetic diversity as well as strongly influencing the health and place of residence in which children are raised, and (e) improvement in the school achievement of students from low income families will have to come as much from improvements in their outside-of-school lives as from their inside-of-school lives.

Because the out-of-school environment is so important an influence on the academic attainment of poor people, there is every reason to suspect that changes in the income of poor families will lead to changes in the school related behavior and achievement of their children. So let us now examine my thesis, namely, that the simplest way to deal with poverty's effects on achievement is to increase the income of poor people so that they are less poor.

How increased family income affects student behavior and school achievement.

Two studies from a growing number about the effects of income growth on families and children have impressed me. First is the study by Dearing, McCartney, and Taylor (2001), who used as a measure of poverty the ratio of income available to the needs faced by a family. A ratio of 1.00 means that the family is just making it, that their family income and their needs such as housing, food, transportation, and so forth, are matched. A ratio of 3.00 would be more like that of a middle class family, and a ratio of .8 would indicate poverty of some magnitude. A large and reasonably representative sample of poor and non-poor families were followed for three years and their income-to-needs ratios computed regularly, as were their children's scores on various social and academic measures. What was found was that as poor families went from poor to a lot less poor, for whatever reasons, their children's performance began to resemble that of the never poor children with whom they were matched.

Figure 11 presents data illustrating the performance of poor children on a measure of school readiness, as the income of poor and non-poor children changed over these three years. The mean change in income-to-needs ratios over the time period of the study is where the lines cross. That is, the mean change in income-to-

needs was a positive .73, though some families went up more and some families lost ground over this time period. Plotted against a measure of school readiness, the slope of the non-poor children is seen to hardly have changed at all. Whether family income-to-need ratios went up or went down seemed unrelated to the school readiness scores of the non-poor. But the slope of the poor children showed quite a large change. Poor children in families experiencing loss of income over the three years lost ground to the non-poor on this measure of academic readiness. But children

a measure of social behavior, a non-academic measure that identifies children whose presence in classes will promote or impede the work of their teachers.

Figure 12 illustrates that as income-to-need ratios changed for the poor and the non-poor, the poor again showed significant slope changes and the non-poor once again did not. Furthermore, poor children in families experiencing growth in income over the three years once again ended up scoring as well in social behavior as the children who had never been

Figure 12

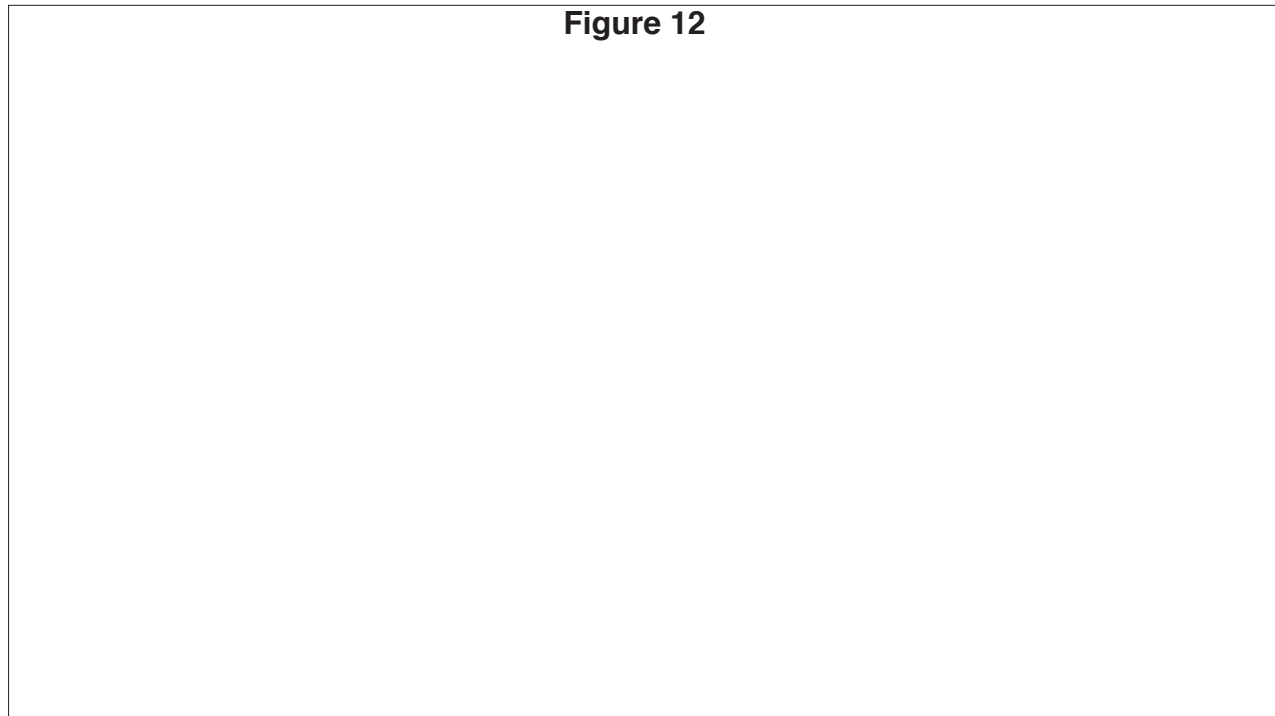


Figure 12. The relationship between positive social behavior and income change among poor and non-poor families (reprinted from Dearing, McCartney, & Taylor, 2001, used by permission of the authors).

in families whose income improved showed growth in school readiness over the three years. Most interesting of all, the poor children in families whose income went up, ended up scoring as well as the students who had never been poor. This was true even though the set of families who were not poor earned considerably more money than those who had been poor. Although there are many possible explanations for this, a reasonable one is that rising incomes provide families with dignity and hope, and these in turn promote greater family stability and better childcare.

An almost identical relationship was found when plotting change in income-to-needs ratios against other academic-like outcome measures such as measures of a child's expressive language, or of their receptive language. And in Figure 12 we see the same relationship shown for

poor.

As noted earlier, bigger changes are expected to occur for the poor than the non-poor as positive changes in their environments occur. We see that here. Also worth noting is that Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (2001) found that the greatest impact of family income on children's academic outcomes is when they are the youngest, and this was a study of children from birth to three years of age.

In an interesting follow-up to the original study, these researchers went on to estimate the effect size of making the income changes that had occurred permanent in the sample of poor families, and comparing that effect size to those that the Department of Health and Human Services estimates for the early head start program (Taylor, Dearing & McCartney, 2004). Both in the Head Start study and this one the same Mental Development Index was used to look at intellectual functioning and both studies measured students' negative behavior, as well. Those interesting findings are presented as Table 9.

Table 9

Table 9. Comparison of the effects of traditional head start and simple growth in family income on children's cognitive and affective behavior (reprinted from Taylor, Dearing, & McCartney, 2004, by permission of the authors).

Figure 11. The relationship between school readiness and income change among poor and non-poor families...

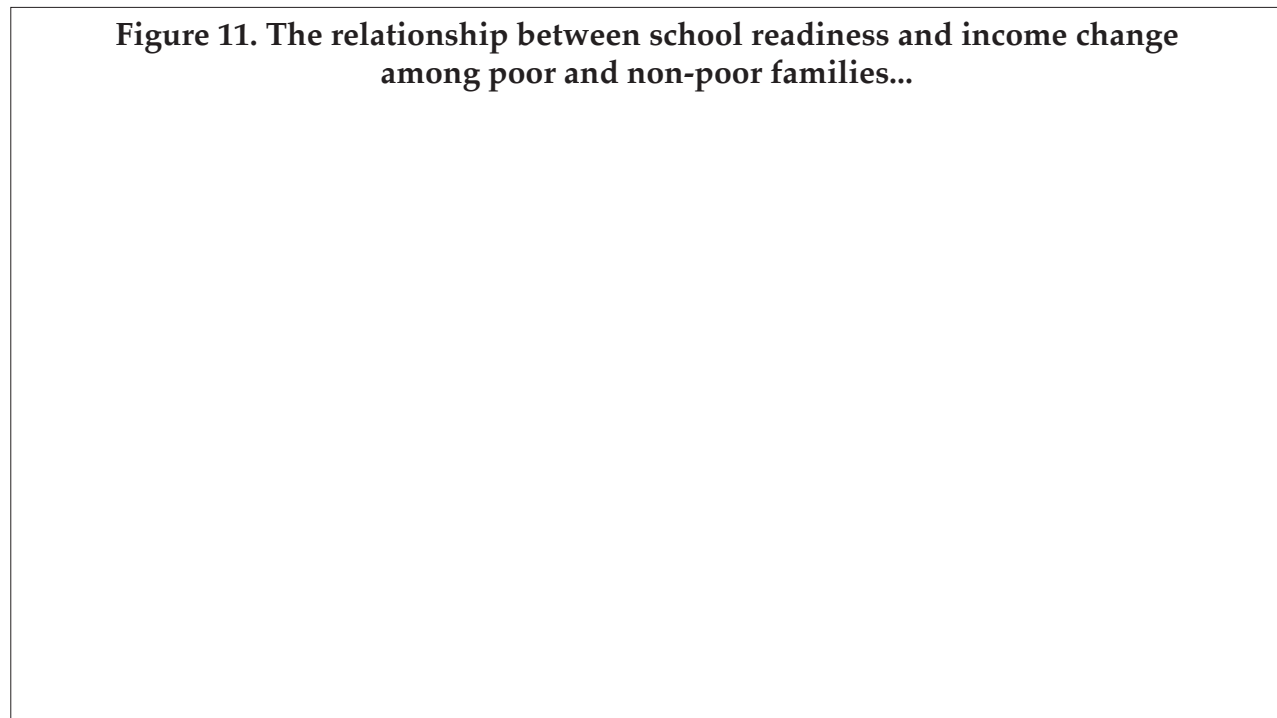


Figure 11. The relationship between school readiness and income change among poor and non-poor families (reprinted from Dearing, McCartney, & Taylor, 2001, used by permission of the authors).

'...the researchers discovered that moving out of poverty was associated with a decrease in frequency of psychiatric symptoms over the ensuing four years...'

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In the first row of table 9 we see that Head Start researchers estimate that children enrolled in that program increased between 12 and 15 percent of a standard deviation on the Mental Development Index. These children also showed a decline of 10-11 percent of a standard deviation in their negative behavior. Those outcomes are socially significant and large enough to claim effectiveness for the gigantic Head Start apparatus. The second row of this table are Taylor, Dearing & McCartney's (2004) estimates of what would happen were the income of the poor families in their study increased one standard deviation, or about \$13,000 per year. This estimate shows that the children for low income families would have had gains in IQ of about 15 percent of a standard deviation, and that the children would decline in negative behavior about 20 percent of a standard deviation.

The success brought about by an increase in the incomes of poor families apparently matches or exceeds the success our nation obtains from running a giant program like Head Start, that enrolls only about 60 percent of those that are eligible. Equally intriguing in this study was that raising the income of families to improve the lives of poor children was actually a bit less expensive than the annual cost per-child of attending Head Start. It is impossible not to speculate about what the results might be for our society if we combined both approaches to school improvement, providing both high quality early childhood programs and better incomes for the poor!

The second study of income change and school success is from North Carolina and is almost a natural experiment in income redistribution (Costello, Compton, Keeler, & Angold, 2003). A Duke university team noticed that their study of psychiatric disorders and drug abuse within a rural community included a group of people who had risen out of poverty because of the income derived from a recently opened gaming casino. During these changes the researchers had been giving annual psychiatric assessments to about 1,400 children, 350 of them American Indians, and they did so over an eight-year period. The children ranged in age from 9 to 13 and were in three distinct groups: those who had never been poor, those who had been persistently poor, and a group that had been poor until the casino came to the reservation.

The researchers discovered that moving out of poverty was associated with a decrease in frequency of psychiatric symptoms over the ensuing four years. In fact, by the fourth year, the psychiatric symptom level was the same among children whose families moved out of poverty, as it was among children whose families were never in poverty. A small replication of the findings was available for a group of non-Indians that also moved out of poverty over this same time period. Once again, as in the Dearing, McCartney and Taylor (2001) study, and in the main part of this study, negative psychiatric symptoms disappeared as income rose. The researchers offered an explanation for these findings, namely, that relieving poverty appeared to increase the level of parental supervision of children. One last finding of interest from this study is that additional income for the families of the never-poor had no effect on frequency of behavioral or emotional symptoms. As is common in this area of research, and noted earlier, improving the income of the very poor has large effects, while improving the income of the less poor has negligible effects.

Although the literature is not voluminous, these are not the only studies to show that

a lessening of poverty helps young children succeed better at school and in life. The negative income tax was studied 20 years ago and it revealed that increases in family income resulted in increased school attendance and better school achievement for the families that gained in income (Salkind & Haskins, 1982). The work assistance programs of the 90s have also been examined and again there is some evidence that as family income went up the achievement and behavior of children in those families improved (Huston, Duncan, Granger, Bos, McLoyd, Mistry, Crosby, Gibson, Magnuson, Romich, & Ventura, 2001). The evidence of the positive influence on student achievement when families are able to leave poverty is consistent and replicable, suggesting that inside-of-school reform needs to begin with outside-of-school reform. Otherwise, like the drunk in the allegory I began with, we will be looking for our keys in the wrong place.

What we need to do

Poverty, through its many connections to other parts of people's lives, is an obstacle that is not easy for most educators to overcome. Poverty in a community almost ensures that many of the children who enter their neighborhood schools cannot maximally profit from the instruction provided there. Helping to eliminate some of that poverty is not just morally appropriate, though it is that, first of all. But to a convincing degree finding ways to reduce poverty to improve schooling is evidence based: It takes no great wisdom to realize that families with increasing fortunes have more dignity and hope, and are thus able to take better care of their children, than do families in more dire straits, where anxiety and despair are the more common emotional reactions.

So when we push for higher qualifications for the teachers of the poor, as we should, we also may need to push ourselves and others to stop shopping at companies like Wal-Mart. The logic of this is simple: if we want to primarily hold our teachers responsible for increasing their students' educational attainment, then we need at a minimum to provide those teachers with children who enter their classrooms healthy and ready to learn. Twenty years ago this was one of our national goals, to be reached by the year 2000. But one of the impediments to reaching that goal was Wal-Mart, now the largest employer in the USA. Wal-Mart and companies like them do not provide the great majority of their employees the income, medical insurance or retirement plans needed to promote healthy families or raise healthy children. Wal-Mart and companies like it have a terrible record in its treatment of woman with children, a group who make up a big share of the poor households in this country (Shulman, 2003). Thus Wal-Mart is an impediment to school reform and although it is not usually noted, Wal-Mart is one reason we did not reach our national goal.

There are so many other problems we need to address, as well. When we push for more rigorous standards in our schools we should also push for a raise in the minimum wage, or better yet, for livable wages. If we do not do this then we will ensure that the vast majority of those meeting the increasingly rigorous requirements for high school graduation will be those students fortunate enough to be born into the right families. If we really want a more egalitarian set of educational outcomes requires, our nation needs a more equalitarian wage structure.

For these same reasons when we push for more professional development for teachers and mentoring programs for new teachers, we need

also to demand that woman's wages be set equal to those of men doing comparable work, since it is working woman and their children who make up a large percentage of America's poor.

When we push for advanced placement courses, or college preparatory curricula for all our nation's students, we must simultaneously demand universal medical coverage for all our children. Only then will all our children have the health that allows them to attend school regularly and learn effectively, instead of missing opportunities to learn due to a lack of medical treatment.

When we push for all-day kindergarten, or quality early childhood care, or de-tracked schools we need also to argue for affordable housing throughout our communities, so neighborhoods have the possibility of exerting more positive influences on children and people can move from lead and mercury polluted areas to those that are less toxic, and thus less likely to cause birth defects. This goal requires educators, parents and other concerned citizens to be in the forefront of the environmental fight. To fight for clean air and water, and for less untested chemicals in all our food products, is a fight to have more healthy children for our schools to educate. The psychological and financial costs on families and the broader society because of students needing special education can be markedly reduced by our demands for a healthier environment.

In my estimation we will get better public schools by requiring of each other participation in building a more economically equitable society. This is of equal or greater value to our nation's future well-being than a fight over whether phonics is scientifically based, whether standards are rigorous enough, or whether teachers have enough content knowledge.

Conclusion

All I am saying in this essay is that I am tired of acting like the schools, all alone, can do what is needed to help more people achieve higher levels of academic performance in our society. As Jean Anyon (1997, p. 168) put it "Attempting to fix inner city schools without fixing the city in which they are embedded is like trying to clean the air on one side of a screen door."

To clean the air on both sides of the screen door we need to begin thinking about building a two-way system of accountability for contemporary America. The obligation that we educators have accepted to be accountable to our communities must become reciprocal. Our communities must also be accountable to those of us who work in the schools, and they can do this by creating social conditions for our nation that allow us to do our jobs well. Accountability is a two way process, it requires a principal and an agent. For too long schools have thought of themselves only as agents who must meet the demands of the principal, often the local community, state, or federal government. It is time for principals (and other school leaders) to become principals. That is, school people need to see communities as agents as well as principals and hold communities to standards that insure all our children are accorded the opportunities necessary for growing well.

It does take a whole village to raise a child, and we actually know a little bit about how to do that. What we seem not to know how to do in modern America is to raise the village, to promote communal values that insure that all our children will prosper. We need to face the fact that our whole society needs to be held as accountable for providing healthy children ready

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to learn, as our schools are for delivering quality instruction. One-way accountability, where we are always blaming the schools for the faults that we find, is neither just, nor likely to solve the problems we want to address.

I am tired, also, of those among us who say the poor are not really bad off, as claimed recently in a lengthy research report from the Heritage Foundation (Rector & Johnson, 2004). Our poor today, they say, are really much better off than the poor in other countries, or compared to the immigrant poor at the turn of the 20th century. Because of refrigerators, televisions, and automobiles, the poor in America today actually might live as well or better than royalty did in the 13th century. But that completely fails to capture what poverty is like for poor children. As a reminder about the reality of poverty, and to shame the Heritage Foundation and all who vote to keep income inequality as it is, I want to close this essay with the introduction to *Amazing Grace*, by Jonathan Kozol (1995). In doing this I move away from the analytic and quantitative ways to think about poverty and its effects, and move to the only way we might actually comprehend the reality of poverty for our young, though the use of narrative.

Jonathan Kozol writes:

The number 6 train from Manhattan to the South Bronx makes nine stops in the 18-minute ride between East 59th Street and Brook Avenue. When you enter the train, you are in the seventh richest congressional district in the nation. When you leave, you are in the poorest.

The 600,000 people who live here and the 450,000 people who live in Washington Heights and Harlem, which are separated from the South Bronx by a narrow river, make up one of the largest racially segregated concentrations of poor people in our nation.

Brook Avenue, which is the tenth stop on the local, lies in the center of Mott Haven, whose 48,000 people are the poorest in the South Bronx. Two thirds are Hispanic, one third black. Thirty-five percent are children. In 1991, the median household income of the area, according to the *New York Times*, was \$7,600.

St. Ann's Church, on St. Ann's Avenue, is three blocks from the subway station. The children who come to this small Episcopal Church for food and comfort, and to play, and the mothers and fathers who come here for prayer, are said to be the poorest people in new York. "More than 95 percent are poor," the pastor says — "the poorest of the poor, poor by any standard I can think of."

At the elementary school that serves the neighborhood across the avenue, only seven of 800 children do not qualify for free school lunches. "Five of those seven," says the principal, "get reduced-price lunches, because they are classified as only 'poor,' not 'destitute.'"

In some cities, the public reputation of a ghetto neighborhood bears little connection to the world that you discover when you walk the streets with children and listen to their words. In Mott Haven, this is not the case. By and large, the words of the children in the streets and schools and houses that surround St. Ann's more than justify the grimness in the words of journalists who have described the area.

Crack-cocaine addiction and the intravenous use of heroin, which children I have met here call "the needle drug," are woven into the texture of existence in Mott Haven. Nearly 4,000 heroin injectors, many of whom are HIV-infected, live here. Virtually every child at St. Ann's knows someone, a relative or neighbor, who has died of AIDS, and most children here know many others who are dying now of the disease. One quarter of the women of Mott Haven who are tested in obstetric wards are positive for HIV. Rates of pediatric AIDS, therefore, are high.

Depression is common among children in

Mott Haven. Many cry a great deal but cannot explain exactly why.

Fear and anxiety are common. Many cannot sleep.

Asthma is the most common of illness among children here. Many have to struggle to take in a good deep breath. Some mothers keep oxygen tanks, which children describe as "breathing machines," next to their children's beds.

The houses in which these children live, two thirds of which are owned by the City of New York, are often as squalid as the houses of the poorest children I have visited in rural Mississippi, but there is none of the greenness and the healing sweetness of the Mississippi countryside outside their windows, which are often barred and bolted as protection against thieves.

Some of these houses are freezing in the winter. In dangerously cold weather, the city sometimes distributes electric blankets and space heaters to its tenants. In emergency conditions, if space heaters can't be used, because substandard wiring is overloaded, the city's practice is to pass out sleeping bags.

"You just cover up...and hope you wake up the next morning," says a father of four children, one of them an infant one month old, as they prepare to climb into their sleeping bags in hats and coats on a December night.

In humid summer weather, roaches crawl on virtually every surface of the houses in which many of the children live. Rats emerge from holes in bedroom walls, terrorizing infants in their cribs. In the streets outside, the restlessness and anger that are present in all seasons frequently intensify under the stress of heat.

In speaking of rates of homicide in new York City neighborhoods, the *Times* refers to the streets around St. Ann's as "the deadliest blocks" in "the deadliest precinct" of the city. If there is a deadlier place in the United States, I don't know where it is.

In 1991, 84 people, more than half of whom were 21 or younger, were murdered in the precinct. A year later, ten people were shot dead on a street called Beekman Avenue, where many of the children I have come to know reside. On Valentine's Day of 1993, three more children and three adults were shot dead on the living room floor of an apartment six blocks from the run-down park that serves the area.

In early July of 1993, shortly before the first time that I visited the neighborhood, three more people were shot in 30 minutes in three unrelated murders in the South Bronx, one of them only a block from St. Ann's Avenue. A week later, a mother was murdered and her baby wounded by a bullet in the stomach while they were standing on a South Bronx corner. Three weeks after that, a minister and elderly parishioner were shot outside the front door of their church, while another South Bronx resident was discovered in his bathtub with his head cut off. In subsequent days, a man was shot in both his eyes and a ten-year-old was critically wounded in the brain.

What is it like for children to grow up here? What do they think the world has done to them? Do they believe that they are being shunned or hidden by society? If so, do they think that they deserve this? What is it that enables some of them to pray? And when they pray, what do they say to God?1

Notes:

1 My thanks to Jonathan Kozol for permission to use this lengthy quote. His insightful and poignant writing has educated and moved so many of us, but as is clear, not yet enough of us.

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I want to thank AERA president Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Program Chair Anna Maria Villegas for the honor of having been invited to give the 2005 Presidential Speech to the American Educational Research Association, meeting in Montreal, Canada, May, 2005. That speech has now been transformed into this paper. I want to also thank my wife, Ursula Casanova, for the many thoughtful ideas that helped shape this paper, and for her skill and kindness as an editor. ♣

Daley's bad hops...

Privatization and Daleyism endangering city baseball players

By George N. Schmidt

The are ubiquitous, called "the curb in the infield" by some players and coaches. More important in the lives of the average Chicago family than any of the garish artifacts in Millennium Park, they are invisible to the public because of the blackout on the news behind the news in Chicago.

Chicago's official version of reality doesn't allow for the existence of the "pitcher's rubber" (or "pitcher's plate") that pokes four inches out of the mound at dozens of parks and school diamonds where thousands of Chicago children and teenagers play baseball. The curb creates nighmarish bad hops for infielders, endangers pitchers from Pony League through young adults, and is virtually ignored because, after all, the perils of being working class and poor in Chicago pale by comparison with whether the Bean shines or not.

A Substance survey of more than a dozen Chicago public high schools and an additional dozen Chicago Park District baseball diamonds reveals one of the many dangerous but unnoticed results of privatization and nearly two decades of rule by Richard M. Daley.

No matter how many studies show that baseball is growing in popularity across America, in Chicago high school and young adult players

play at their own risk in poorly maintained or dangerous fields, some of which have to be maintained by students and teachers. Meanwhile, private schools and the suburbs provide some of the best facilities available in the United States for suburban and privileged baseball players.

Despite claims by Arne Duncan that the Board of Education is expanding extra-curricular and co-curricular activities and programs for Chicago high school students, the facts point otherwise. Every year, Chicago coaches have to decide whether to coach another year, despite the pay inequities vis a vis their suburban counterparts. And many high schools do not have playing fields nearby, so even doing practice becomes a major chore. While suburban high schools — even some of the smallest, like Ridgewood in suburban Norwood or Elmwood Park in Elmwood Park — offer baseball players two well maintained regulation fields, while the scoreboard at Lane Tech rusts.

Privatization of Park District maintenance rewarded the mayor with plaudits in the press, but nobody ever went across the city to see how many baseball fields were maintained well enough to avoid dangerous bad hops, and how many pitcher's mounds were teetering like a pile of bricks under the ankles of teenage athletes. ♣

Be an investigative sports reporter for Substance
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A Grim Fairy Tale

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parents that everything was just fine and dandy — just as written in the memos, visionary plans, and “Learning is Churning” press releases.

The Bored had cut thousands of old timers and hired thousands of new timers (“new blood” was being erased as the catch phrase after a few early incidents in a couple of the more violent high schools had given it graphic meaning). Soon, many of the new timers were back on line in the dead of night filling out suburban Internet job applications long before October began. So the Bored found that it didn’t have enough teachers anywhere except in the charter, private, contract, compact, university, small, smaller, smallest, new, newer and newest schools.

And every day, the teachers who remained during the hottest September in memory were facing new students walking into their already overcrowded classrooms.

“It’s only one more,” the principals told teachers who dared to ask. (Most didn’t dare).

“One more every four hours!” Ewenice had snapped on a Thursday, when the 38th student walked into her classroom just as she had carried the 37th seat from the first to the third floor in for the last “one more.”

And when Millicent had tried to call the offices of the CTEwe, she had gotten a recording plus music. “Please hold. Your call is important to us” the union message repeated, with Montavoni in the background. Finally, Millicent had to go to her next class and slammed down the phone.

“What did you expect?” Nancy had said. “Because of all the money Debbie wasted, they had to let go of some of the receptionists and replace them with an automated system... Besides, this is new technology and visionary. It’s preparing us for the Global Economy.” Trounce burped.

Meanwhile, baack at the opulent offices of the CTEwe, located in the famous Merchandise Maaart, Pammy Pretty was engaged in one of her typical daily activities. She was screaming at Teddy the Obsequious Toady.

“What did I tell you about talking about our contract with ‘Daley Dozen’?” she shrieked.

“Nothing,” he cowed. “I thought it was something you were proud of. You said so that night.”

“That was a different kind of conversation, you fool! Well now YOU can figure out how to get everyone who talked about it after YOU gave them the OK with THAT TABLOID COMMIE RAG to take back what they said... NOW!!! With that kind of story, even our friends at the Scum Times across the street could connect the dots!”

Teddy immediately sat down in front of his word processor and begin searching for the SQUEEZ ‘EM files. Two more members would receive a letter from him demanding that they write letters to the CUT retracting verified facts they had provided another newspaper the name of which was never allowed to be spoken at CTEwe. One of the new editorial slogans on the wall at CUT was “Facts are fungible.”

The story upsetting Pammy was only three paragraphs long, in a small circulation newspaper. It noted that the CTEwe had reengineered its offices and outsourced some of its receptionist duties. The article also noted that every 30 feet at the union offices there was now a designer sidebar for coffee and treats contracted from ‘Your Daley Dozen’ catering. The special lattes in the newly refurbished ‘Conference Room N’ were for the special trainees like Nancy. And it reported, accurately again, that everyone on the corporate records of ‘Your Daley Dozen’ was a third- or fourth-generation Daley. “They can’t all sell insurance,” said one unnamed source.

After her daily dose of Dallas Discipline,

Pammy clicked her heels and returned to her suite, only to be stopped at its designer door by a sulphurous scent she knew well. She entered apologetically, hoping she wouldn’t be asked to get down on her knees again.

“How could I know that nose-picking fool couldn’t even spell ‘Daily’?” Pammy muttered into the shadows of her opulent Mart Suite — which was not to be confused with her shadowy SSSpringfield office, which was not to be confused with her bright North Side and South Side ‘Legislative Priorities’ offices...

“It was your job to proofread the final advertising copy,” said an accented voice from across the darkness. Two pinky rings reflected the dim light. “You’re the one who supposedly studied journalism in college 50 years ago, remember! Typewriters and all that cool stuff. *You told me you knew all those little proofreading squiggles and could do the job yourself.* I needed someone I could trust. And you missed it! Now even the Scabune reporters can connect the dots!”

“But there was a booger on that word, and I didn’t have anyone from the secretarial staff to scrape it off. Teamster Local 743 rules say that booger scrapers get overtime, and that no administrative personnel can scrape boogers. It was a big one, too...” she said, her voice quickening with each syllable until she became breathless. She suddenly stopped when two more diamond pinky rings glared into her eyes.

“We wouldn’t have filed a grievance on it, you fool,” the voice changed, now sounding like a cross between Darth Vader and Donald Trump. Pammy tried a move, but heard a hiss of warning that was accompanied by more sulphur. She snapped to attention in her Gucci spikes.

“One more chance because you’ve done such a good job,” said the huge figure as he stood at the window. He was gesturing toward the Chicago River, which now ran below the ‘Executive Wing’ of the newly expanded CTEwe offices. “One more chance...” the words rumbled in the darkness, as a hand resplendent with pinky rings gestured toward the murky waters outside. “Another mistake like that and you’ll be part of the sludge they find next time we need a flood to keep our insurance active...”

Suddenly, the slouching figure was gone. Pammy, pecking her way down the hall on her three-inch spiked heels, was in full throat: “TEDDY! NOW!”

There was later a rumor among the highly paid lowerarchy at the CTEwe headquarters that at “NOW!” President Mumbles had wandered out of her office and into Pammy range, only to be hit with a wedge of plaster that had cracked and fallen from the wall at the moment “NOW!” reached 170 decibels. According to legend, Mumbles fell into a heap at Pammy’s feet, eyes glazed like she, too, had been drinking the latte. While Pammy teetered on her heels, several newly hired field drips came running, surrounding the prone president. “Well do something,” she shrieked. “Why am I paying you \$120,000 a year! We need her for the show each month...”

“No. Nothing. Never!” three of them chanted at once as Mumbles began frothing from the lips.

“Not here you fools!” Pammy shrieked at them again. “That’s for the schools — except the ones that contracted with Kraven Karlene — not for here. You’re supposed to say ‘NO, we can’t do anything about that!’ if you have to answer a phone call from THEM. If they get through on a second call or catch you out there in the field, you smile and say ‘NOTHING we can do. It’s all Debbie’s fault.’ And if they really ask when something will change, you say ‘NEVER. Debbie did it all.’”

“No. Nothing. Never!” the chants continued as Mumbles continue to foam. “No! No! No!”

Pammy shrieked again. “The ‘Never’ is only for those who demand to know when we’re going to do something about those overcrowded classrooms, understaffed schools, and overheated work spaces. NEVER is NOT FOR NOW!”

“No. Nothing. Never!” the chant continued. Suddenly, Pammy heard a familiar voice and breathed her heavy-petting sigh of relief. Mumbles stopped foaming and stood up slowly.

“No. Nothing. Never!” the CTEwe President-for-life chanted, joining the chorus from the field drips.

Pammy smiled. “Not bad. Not bad at all,” she said. Then, after a military about-face, she made her way down the hall back to her suite. In her rapture over the revival of Mumbles and the evidence that Mumbles had finally mastered her lines, Pammy had even forgotten about the Toady, who had been cowering behind his office door.

Back at school, the temperature was going up and the clocks that worked were moving forward: the beginning of the first class of the day.

Scott was looking into the bottom of Nancy’s latte cup, having poured the contents into EWenice’s beaker.

“Nancy, does this look familiar?” he asked, holding up a mini-CD still dripping with brown liquid.

“Give me my property back or you’ll be sued again for another million dollars,” Nancy shrieked, almost lunging across the table. “THAT IS MY PROPERTY!” she shrieked again in her Pammy voice, this time so loudly that security aides came running until they saw Scott smile.

“Don’t be ridiculous,” Scott said, waving them away. He took the CD and put it into his I-Pod translator, which he kept in the pocket he used to use for cigarettes before he stopped smoking. His smile became brighter as he passed along his Wi Fi headphones to the others at the table.

All began smiling, then laughing. “No. Nothing. Never!” they chanted in unison.

“So that’s how you get National Board Certification and those American Federation of Teachers Top Gun NCLB Unionist certificates in one weekend,” said Millicent. “Mission Accomplished?”

“I read about that in the Union newspaper, but when I called about it I kept getting that message that said ‘Your call is important to us,’” sighed EWenice.

“That’s because you didn’t have the real number and the secret password from Nasty Nick and Kraven Karlene” smiled Scott. “Isn’t that true, Nancy? Secret passwords and cool stuff?”

“But what about the ‘The ‘Kenny Boy Who?’ and ‘Heckuva Job, Brownie’ stuff you were talking about earlier?” asked Millicent.

“That’s for next month,” said Scott. “How do you think the CTU gets such talent for field drop jobs?” He smiled. “Didn’t you get to the part about all union staff being screened by FEMA and CEMA?” asked Scott.

“CEMA?” asked Trounce.

“CEMA — Chicago Emergency Management Agency,” said Scott. “It was set up by the Daley family ten years ago under some guys and gals named Reyes after another guy named Reyes made sure the tunnels flooded on schedule after getting a wink and nod from a guy named Daley. Everyone at CTEwe heard the thump into the riverbed at precisely the time planned. Remember, long before Hurrican Katrina’s big time New Orleans floods, Chicago floods began right downstairs from the CTEwe right here in Chicago.”

“Any proof?” snarled Nancy sullenly.

“We’ve got Wi Fi at more locations now than just the ‘Learning is Churning’ offices,” said Scott, winking. “Remember the buzz you heard at midnight in that union bed at the Hyatt?”

“Oh, we see,” they laughed. “O.I.C.” 🍎

A Grim Fairy Tale



Union redesign in Chicago...

No Nothing Never

By Sister Grim



Once upon a time it was the beginning of school in the city of Chicago, located in the sorry scandal-ridden Cheapskate State of Ill-A-Noise.

Every day another buddy of Hizzoner Da Mare was going to prison and being treated to the "Kenny Boy Who?" syndrome at City Hall.

"The 'Kenny Boy Who Treatment?'" asked Millicent Militant wearily. Millicent was unusually peaked this year, when usually her basic mode was pique. "Trying to teach those 45 kids in that 95-degree classroom on the third floor makes me need two showers and a two-hour nap by the time I get home at night..." she said wearily downing her second cup of caffeine.

"The 'Kenny Boy Who Treatment' is a variation on the 'Heckuva Job, Brownie' backslap," said Scott Skeptic, the journalism teacher in exile. Scott had stopped by for what he called "that unforgettable Board of Education coffee." He always hoped that Board of Education pizza would be on the breakfast menu as well.

"You're out of luck today, Scott," said the equally weary Trounce Trackman, the combination football, track, and volleyball coach. All the other coaching positions had been cut, while Asinine Arne the CEO arranged for motivational speakers from the Bogus Basketball Alumni League, of which he was a founding member.

"They're privatizing the pizza services — so no more Board pizza," Trout continued. "Haliburton and an outfit called 'Your Daley Dozen' are providing MREs to lunchrooms... No more pizza. No butter cookies. We've got to prepare our students for the Global Gastronomy..."

"You're so cynical all the time," groused Nancy Naïve, who had just sat down with her *Double Grande Museum Campus Latte*. "Can't you ever say anything nice about anyone. You're all so negative..."

Scott started to ask where the *Double Grande Museum Campus Latte* had come from when Millicent roused herself and shot back: "You'd be negative, too, if you had to work in those third floor classrooms or that ancient gym all day! Your only complaint last week was that only one of the two air conditioners in your classroom was working. By the way, how did you say you got those air conditioners over the summer...?" she said watching Nancy sip latte.

"No. *Nothing. Never*," Nancy mumbled.

"I've heard that chant before," Scott said.

"No. *Nothing. Never*," Nancy said again, trying to stop her lips from moving. "No. *Nothing. Never*."

"That the new official CTEwe training mantra!" snapped Scott. "You've been spending quality time with Nasty Nick, Kraven Karlene and Pammy Pretty again, haven't you?"

"No," she said. "I have nothing to do with them. I'd never spend a weekend at the Hyatt with them just to get a fast track SuperTeacher Certificate..." Her head snapped back as Scott clapped his hands loudly, but her eyes were still glazed. "*No. Nothing. Never*," she continued.

"Whistle!" Scott snapped at Trounce, who took the whistle from his thick neck and blew it in Nancy's face. Slowly, she came out of the trance.

"So soft those beds, with the right setting, those beds that can be softer on one side than on the other," she continued. "No. Well, maybe..."

"Where am I?" she suddenly asked.

Scott sniffed her *Museum Latte*. "Where did you get this stuff?" he asked, handing the cup to Millicent, who wrinkled her nose.

"Smells pharmaceutical to me," agreed Millicent, passing the cup to Ewenice Toonice. Ewenice, the combination math, science, and wood shop teacher had arrived, apologizing for being late to the morning caffeination.

"Sorry I'm late," she said, dusting chalk dust off her left sleeve and sawdust off her right. "I'm just having trouble sleeping trying to figure out how to do lessons for those 35 kids they put in my AP calculus class. Some haven't really gotten carrying and borrowing, but the Board said..." suddenly she stopped talking and put the *Latte* under her nose again. "What's this concoction?" Ewenice confirmed the diagnosis. "We'll win a prize at Science Fair with an experiment on the content of this stuff. What's 'Daley Dozen...?'" she asked, holding out the cup. "And what's this?" she asked, holding the cup away to read the fine print. The print said the cup had been designed and copyrighted by something called 'Design Interventues'... "Didn't there used to..."

"Nancy's been drinking the Boss's latte again," Scott interrupted Ewenice's question, smiling. "And sleeping in..."

"Not!" Nancy interrupted and pouted peevishly.

The membersheep of the CTEwe, most of whom had been relatively happy baaack in June, July and August, when they could voluntarily decide when to baaake in the sun and when to relaaax under air conditioning, had tried to face the sad reality that school was starting once again with a smile. But so many of them had been let go, terminated, re-placed, re-designed, re-constituted, re-engineered, re-moved, re-naissanced and/or just plain fired that every morning the empty seats at the Breakfast Club reminded them of how low their lot had fallen. And that was even before they repaired to their sweltering classrooms and the extra kids who arrived a week

before the seats for them to sit in.

There was also the head-spinning cascade of proclamationis, memos, press releases, and revised memos to "staff" and to the media from downtown. Teachers noticed that each issuance had two editions — the official version and the school version.

According to the official version, every school had every teacher in every classroom on the first day and learning was churning. (In fact, the slogan "Learning is Churning" had been trademarked by a teacher turned pub owner who was then hired, at \$95,000 a year, to work in the Board's propaganda department, which didn't officially exist). Teacher recruiting was at an all-time high, the official version claimed.

In the schools themselves — especially in the high schools — realities were a bit different. Many prospective young teachers had decided that "Learning was churning" at higher pay in the suburbs, and without the risks. After a flash of urban idealism, they decided that joining the Chicago Public School (CPS™ — also trademarked) system would not be a good career move after all. By the end of the second week of school, there was beginning a membersheep stampede out the doors. Despite all the administrative talk about "new blood," the new blood was flowing away from the arteries of CPS™ once again. Large numbers had left even before the 40th student arrived in a room with 35 desks and space for 25 teenagers, while some of the remainder lurched into Breakfast Club coffees with the veterans on Monday mornings to be reassured that their four a.m. nightmares would go away in four or five years — if they lasted that long.

Although the reality 'on the ground' was different from the public relations memos, few media people ever spent time on the ground. Every day there was a new 'Arne Event' (as they were called) demanding coverage by TV. When Arne Events were scarce, someone would host a gang fight, shooting, or riot to keep the cameras rushing from one part of town to the other. Classrooms were as boring as floating bodies in southern cities. And mere teachers were even moreso.

Buildings full of angry teenagers, often with no teachers, spread out across an entire city just weren't "news" — unless one of the teachers jumped out a high window or one of the kids shot another kid for uttering the wrong syllable or posting the wrong hieroglyphic on a desktop. Of course, not everyone in a school was sweltering in a hot classroom. Administrators, because there were almost always enough of them, had ample time to reassure inquiring reporters and

Continued on Page Thirty-Seven

Subscripts

...Question: When is an arrest not an arrest? Answer: When the Chicago Teachers Union says so. To virtually every news organization, an "arrest" is when the police take a person into custody and the person can't leave without the police releasing that person. This common sense distinction is so straightforward in American journalism that most widely used news style books (including the Associated Press, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and the Chicago Tribune, all of which we checked as this bizarre story unfolded in Chicago) don't even think it worth noting in their style books. If a reporter sees the police taking someone away, that person is being *arrested* as far as a news editor is concerned. An "arrest" takes place when the police take someone into custody and the person can't leave without the police letting the person go. Indictments, formal charges, bail, and other things are separate from the arrest, which is done by the cop on the scene. An arrest is what happened at Chicago's Plumbers' Hall on June 1, 2005. Until September 2005, that common sense definition of an "arrest" was enough for most intelligent people in Chicago — including news reporters and editors. Then the Chicago Teachers Union continued its attempt to rewrite reality to its liking. In a flourish of words, the Chicago Union Teacher, the CTU's monthly newspaper, ran a news story (without a byline) in its September 2005 issue. The story was headlined "Former president removed from June House meeting." The CTU "news" report began with the following sentence: "Despite reports to the contrary — including some that appeared in the Chicago media — former CTU President Deborah Lynch was *not arrested* at the June House of Delegates meeting. Rather, she was *removed* from the building by police for causing a disturbance." [Emphasis ours].

Why Substance posted this story on the Web a month early. When the Chicago Union Teacher story appeared, Substance staff decided to post the September Substance (print edition) page one story and photographs of the Lynch arrest on our website (www.substancenews.com, go to "Latest News" then to "Home"). We posted our story and photographs immediately so that at least a few additional people would have access to the facts, with the dramatic photographs of the event. By September 17, we were receiving calls from teachers and some honest union members, saying that the union newspaper had published "the truth" and asking why people were continuing to repeat "Debbie Lynch's lies." By the middle of September, approximately 40,000 people — the number to whom the Chicago Union Teacher is distributed each month at the members' expense — were receiving the fictionalized version of "news" being offered by the CTU.

Removal versus arrest in the real world. Removing people from union meetings is nothing new in Chicago. Calling the cops and arresting them is, and that distinction makes a world of difference. As in many other things, the current leaders of the 36,000-member union are making up the rules as they go along and violating standards of decency and honesty that most union members thought were basic to the social contract between the union leaders and its members. Prior to the secret deputization of outsiders for House "security", order was maintained at Chicago Teachers Union meetings by sergeants at arms. During the Lynch administration, the sergeants at arms came from both major political factions in the union (as UPC member John O'Brill would testify, if under oath). As regulars at Chicago union meetings know, from time to time the union's sergeants at arms have removed people from the meetings because those people became disruptive. For a few months last year, it

was common for one particular union member to be led to the lobby of Plumbers Hall within an hour after the meeting began. His removal was usually because he was cat calling and shouting from the "Visitor's Section." The "Visitor's Section" is where the members who are not delegates are supposed to sit. Prior to the publication of the September issue of the Chicago Union Teacher and its distribution at Union expense to more than 40,000 people (including all union members and every elected official in Illinois), to be "removed from the ... House meeting..." meant that the sergeants at arms escorted a person out. No cops.

An unprecedented attack on union democracy. *Never in anyone's memory had the police been called to "remove" a union member from a union meeting — until June 2005 when Marilyn Stewart's team called the cops on Debbie Lynch.* Substance — along with the Chicago Tribune and at least one TV station — joined the "media" that reported, accurately, that the Stewart administration had had Lynch *arrested*. During the 20 minutes to a half-hour or more when Lynch was in police custody, she was not allowed to exit the vehicle. She would have been restrained by police (and probably faced an additional charge of "resisting arrest") had she attempted to do so. In anybody's book (and in any media style book) that's an *arrest*. The Orwellian locutions and fictional news reports issued by the Chicago Teachers Union don't change that. The circulation of those fictions (along with made-up quotes and made up "facts" — including one fictional quote attributed to Lynch herself) to more than 40,000 people compound the dishonesty that is disgracing the once proud union. As the mendacious machinations of the Stewart administration, led in many cases by its million dollar lawyers (one of whom we photographed in the midst of the arrest) continue, we will do our best to report them, in our print edition and on the Internet, every month. Feel free to join our reporting staff if you wish. Or join those whose "Letters to the Editor" are making Substance and even more vibrant source of truth in a swirling tsunami of lies and spin from City Hall, from the Board of Education, and from the Merchandise Mart offices of the Chicago Teachers Union...

...Substance is expanding our local "Union News" section beginning next month. Each month we are going to publish the most creative excuse given by the union's staff for selling out your members. Share your favorite stories here..

...If there was ever an example of the Gang that Couldn't Shoot Straight, it's the current bunch running the Chicago Teachers Union. On a weekly basis, the CTU sends out information that thousands of people rely on. On a weekly basis, the CTU has to correct the information it sends out because the information sent out the first time is wrong. Typical from September was the "Who's on First?" comedy about the ERO, a very important topic for thousands of teachers between the ages of 55 and 60. On September 15, for example, CTU members received the following note: "Please be advised that there is an error in the September Legislative Update pertaining to the ERO. A teacher must be at least 55 years old to take advantage of the ERO. The update should read: '450 teachers ill be able to take early retirement without the penalties imposed by being younger than 60 or having fewer than 33.95 years of teaching.'"

...One of the more mind-boggling examples of the racism of the Daley administration has Arne Duncan as an unlikely collaborator. We're talking about the demolition of basketball sites north of North Ave. and the careful planning — by CPS, the Park District, and the Public Building Com-

mission, among other outposts of the Daley Dictatorship — of recreational venues that do not have outdoor basketball facilities. It's an open secret around City Hall that Daley has ordered that basketball hoops not be installed in locations where the "majority" population doesn't seem to play as much basketball as people in other parts of town. But Arne Duncan himself is proof that white guys can jump, if they are given the chance. Let's go from the nitty to the gritty. At Portage Park (Irving and Central) on Chicago's northwest side, there are no outdoor basketball hoops for kids to play. Portage Park has a "Nature Walk" where people can find unusual procreative activities going on among the dominant mammals, hear exotic language from Eminem wannabes, and catch an herbal whiff of hemp by-products many hours of the days and nights. That's OK. But for some reason, outdoor basketball isn't. There is an indoor gym there. As you swing across the north side (i.e., north of North Ave.), the same proves true for many parks and school play areas. No outdoor basketball. Go to where the African American people are, however, and you suddenly see hoops sprouting like sludge water in the poorer wards of New Orleans...

...No, Arne Duncan did not get his job through the same agency that provided Michael Brown to FEMA. Although Duncan was as unqualified to lead a major urban public school system as the 'Arabian Horse' was to lead the nation's emergency management systems, Duncan knows better than to ad lib when reporters are around. But Richard M. Daley, the only qualification Duncan needs to keep his job, is no more loyal to his minions than George W. Bush is to his...

...Considering that he has a lucrative lifetime appointment and is now in an emeritus position, U.S. District Chief Judge Charles Kocoras doesn't need to spend as much time cultivating his media image as he does. As things heat up in the segregation case now before him and Kocoras nudges closer to giving his stamp of approval to the most massively segregated school system in the USA, maybe he'd at least pay attention to some of the other facts he misses regularly when he pontificates. Twice in the past two months, Kocoras has stated that finances are "tight" at the Chicago Board of Education. That's simply not true. Kocoras's untrue version of public school finances in Chicago is no excuse to deny poor kids an extra \$17 or \$34 million (out of a total budget of \$5,000 million — \$5 billion — remember), as the Board of Education is asking Kocoras to do. Apparently Kocoras reads the papers too much and the balance sheets too little (although we know from his case record that he is easily able to understand when accountants are lying in corporate malfeasance cases). With the Chicago Board of Education generating cash "reserves" of between \$150 million and \$250 million annually for the past several years, the question isn't whether the money is there but how it's going to be spent (or in the case of the reserves, not spent). Chicago, with Kocoras's blessings, will doubtless keep its position as Number One in what our colleague Jonathan Kozol calls "American Apartheid." We don't think Kocoras has to add his imprimatur to the Board of Education's Enronesque budget fictions as well...

...In the coming months, Substance will try to publish a "Memo of the Month" from a prominent Chicago Board of Education bureaucrat. Although we might consider publishing some of the sillier stuff that comes from principals, we find more interesting (and semi-illiterate) materials at 'higher' levels. The infamous "Pittman Memo" of mid-September 2005 (denying high schools new teachers) qualifies. Fax or Email them to us at 773-725-7503 or Csubstance@aol.com...

AfterThoughts

Poverty and its impacts on the children we teach in urban public schools...

Our impoverished view of education reform

[The following article appeared on August 2, 2005, in Teachers College Record. <http://www.tcrecord.org>. ID Number: 12106. It has also appeared on line from Arizona State University and through a discussion out of the University of Texas. Reprinted here with permission. Copyright 2005 Teachers College Record, all rights reserved. As noted, a version of this lecture was delivered at the 2005 conference of the American Educational Research Association (AERA)].

By David C. Berliner

This analysis is about the role of poverty in school reform. Data from a number of sources are used to make five points. First, that poverty in the US is greater and of longer duration than in other rich nations. Second, that poverty, particularly among

urban minorities, is associated with academic performance that is well below international means on a number of different international assessments. Scores of poor students are also considerably below the scores achieved by white middle class American students. Third, that poverty restricts the expression of genetic talent at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. Among the lowest social classes environmental factors, particularly family and neighborhood influences, not genetics, is strongly associated with academic performance. Among middle class students it is genetic factors, not family and neighborhood factors, that most influences academic performance. Fourth, compared to middle-class children, severe medical problems affect impoverished youth. This limits their school

achievement as well as their life chances. Data on the negative effect of impoverished neighborhoods on the youth who reside there is also presented. Fifth, and of greatest interest, is that small reductions in family poverty lead to increases in positive school behavior and better academic performance. It is argued that poverty places severe limits on what can be accomplished through school reform efforts, particularly those associated with the federal No Child Left Behind law. The data presented in this study suggest that the most powerful policy for improving our nations' school achievement is a reduction in family and youth poverty.

Over the last three years I have co-authored three reports about the effects of high-stakes testing on curriculum, instruction, school personnel, and student achievement (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Nichols & Berliner, 2005; Nichols, Glass & Berliner, 2005). They were all depressing. My co-authors and I found high-stakes testing programs in most states ineffective in achieving their intended purposes, and causing severe unintended negative effects, as well. We believe that the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law is a near perfect case of political spectacle (Smith, 2004), much more theater than substance. Our collectively gloomy conclusions led me to wonder what would really improve the schools that are not now succeeding, for despite the claims of many school critics, only some of America's schools are not now succeeding (Berliner, 2004).

I do not believe that NCLB is needed to tell us precisely where those failing schools are located, and who inhabits them. We have had that information for over a half century. For me, NCLB is merely delaying the day when our country acknowledges that a common characteristic is associated with the great majority of schools that are most in need of improvement. It is this common characteristic of our failing schools that I write about, for by ignoring it, we severely limit our thinking about school reform.

This is an essay about poverty and its powerful effects on schooling. So these musings could have been written also by Jean Anyon, Bruce Biddle, Greg Duncan, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Gary Orfield, Richard Rothstein, and many others whose work I admire and from whom I borrow. Many scholars and teachers understand, though many politicians choose not to, that school reform is heavily constrained by factors that are outside of America's classrooms and schools. Although the power of schools and educators to influence individual students is never to be underestimated, the out-of-school factors associated with poverty play both a powerful and a limiting role in what can actually be achieved.

In writing about these issues I ask for the tolerance of sociologists, economists, child development researchers, and others who read this essay because I discuss variables that are the subject of intense debate within the disciplines. Although scholars dispute the ways we measure the constructs of social class, poverty, and neighborhood, we all still manage to have common enough understandings of these concepts to communicate sensibly. That will suffice for my purposes. In this essay it is not important to argue about the fine points at which poverty is miserable or barely tolerable, or whether a person is stuck in the lowest of the social classes or merely belongs to the working poor, or whether families are poor at the federal poverty level or at 200% of the federal poverty level (which is still poor by almost everyone's standards). We know well

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