A Social Capital Framework for Understanding the Socialization of Racial Minority Children and Youths

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In this article, Ricardo Stanton-Salazar offers a network-analytic framework for understanding the socialization and schooling experiences of working-class racial minority youths. Unlike many previous writers who have examined the role of "significant others," he examines the role that relationships between youth and institutional agents, such as teachers and counselors, play in the greater multicultural context in which working-class minority youth must negotiate. Stanton-Salazar provides the conceptual foundations of a framework built around the concepts of social capital and institutional support. He concentrates on illuminating those institutional and ideological forces that he believes make access to social capital and institutional support within schools and other institutional settings so problematic for working-class minority children and adolescents. Stanton-Salazar also provides some clues as to how some working-class minority youth are able to manage their difficult participation in multiple worlds, how they develop cultural strategies for overcoming various obstacles, and how they manage to develop sustaining and supportive relationships with institutional agents.

A number of scholars have been working to elaborate new conceptual models for understanding the socialization of racial minority children and youths, particularly African American and Latino youth from economically disenfranchised urban communities. Such models are critical precisely because notions of socialization often govern how we deal with the persistent problems experienced by so many minority children in our school system. The impetus behind recent scholarship on minority socialization has been
a certain frustration with the mainstream of American psychology, which has traditionally neglected or de-emphasized those societal forces that make minority socialization distinct from that of middle-class Euro-American children and youths.

In the United States, classical models of early socialization delineate a process by which children and youth come to internalize, identify with, and conform to the norms, values, and ideals of American society (Sampson, 1977, and Bandura & Walters, 1963, cited in Boykin & Toms, 1985). Although such norms and values are typically depicted in universalistic terms, Boykin and Toms (1985) argue that such models carry heavy ideological overtones, having traditionally served to promote ideals and outcomes consistent with dominant Anglo-Saxon cultural standards. More contemporary writing on socialization emphasizes the acquisition of skills and competencies needed to become psychologically resilient, problem-solving, and productive adults in a complex society (Wynn et al., 1987). Here again, the developmental challenges associated with growing up within a racialized social order are seldom addressed.

Contemporary scholars who study minority children and youth have tried to address the lack of attention to racial variations in socialization, bringing to light the developmental challenges this group faces in having to participate in multiple and often conflicting and contradictory social systems and contexts (Boykin, 1986; Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1993). The framework proposed in this article moves in this same direction; however, the impetus underlying its development arises out of my own dissatisfaction with the prevailing liberal theories of inequality in my own disciplinary domain, the sociology of education. My concerns have mainly had to do with the perspective by which liberal sociology has traditionally viewed the role of significant others (e.g., parents, peers, and teachers) in the status attainment process (Sewell & Hauser, 1980).

The prevailing view of social relations between “significant others” and youth, and the corresponding liberal view of achievement in society, must be historically situated within the highly individualistic tradition of functionalist sociology, with its nearly singular focus on innate ability, merit, and individual motivational dynamics. Within this tradition, the potential for institutional promotion and individual mobility is evaluated on the basis of the student’s early (homespun) attitudes, abilities, and behaviors, and on the congruence of these traits with “universalistic” institutional standards. The greater this congruence, the greater the probability that the student will internalize the proper academic norms and values and exhibit the proper motivational dispositions, which in turn heighten the probability that teachers and academically oriented peers, acting as significant others, will identify the individual as having “talent” and communicate high expectations while providing moral support and encouragement. Such socializing behavior is

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seen as playing an important and necessary role in heightening the individual’s motivation, educational and occupational aspirations, and life goals, which in turn are viewed as instrumentally tied to eventual adult attainments.

Implicit in this perspective is the belief that high academic performance and mastery, and eventual mobility, rest squarely on the proper development of internal motivational dynamics, geared toward a heightened sense of personal control, a myopic focus on the importance of individual effort and merit, and the internalization of individualistic and extrinsic motives (McClelland, 1961). While the nuclear family carries the responsibility for initially engendering the appropriate motivational dispositions, school agents are viewed as either enhancing these traits or providing disadvantaged youth with a second opportunity for their development (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989). Thus, the power invested in school-based agents is understood not only in terms of moral support, but also in terms of their capacity to initiate and foster the development of the proper dispositions and motivational dynamics. Once these are in place, individual effort and talent are left to account for outcomes. As with socialization models in mainstream psychology, the conventional emphasis on social psychological influences and individual actors in liberal sociology has usually been accompanied by a certain distaste for addressing the role of underlying exclusionary forces located in and across institutional domains.1

The framework featured here presents a quite different account of the attainment process, concentrating on how social antagonisms and divisions existing in the wider society operate to problematize (if not undermine) minority children’s access to opportunities and resources that are, by and large, taken-for-granted products of middle-class family, community, and school networks. Specifically, this framework attempts to extend the latest advances made by scholars of minority socialization by integrating two broad yet still distinct areas of scholarship. The first area entails the systematic analysis of interpersonal networks in the social sciences. This area offers us some important new conceptual tools, as well as a window exposing a set of fundamental social relational processes that appear to be represented in all major societal institutions, including the educational system (e.g., Burt, 1982; De Graff & Flap, 1988; Fischer, 1982; Flap, 1991; Granovetter, 1974, 1982; Lai, Lueng, & Lin, forthcoming; Lin, Vaughn, & Ensel, 1981). The second broad area informing the development of this framework entails the constellation of theoretical and empirical works that have unmasked a plethora of mechanisms in contemporary institutional life, which operate in subtle yet powerful ways to engineer, and to continually reproduce, the exclusion and subordination of people on the basis of racial, class, and gender distinctions (e.g., Fine, 1991; Lipsitz, 1995; Valenzuela, forthcoming; Wilcox, 1982). In my assessment of these works, networks are implicated at every turn.

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The Social Significance of Social Networks

A network-analytic approach to social inequality in society takes as its starting point what Wellman (1983) refers to as the *social distribution of possibilities*, a term that refers to the unequal distribution of opportunities for entering into different social and institutional contexts and for forming relationships with agents who exert various degrees of control over institutional resources, such as bureaucratic influence, career-related information, and opportunities for specialized training or mentorship. The importance of such institutional agents and advocates can be illuminated by looking at how dominant group members consistently depend on these social ties to secure their successful and privileged participation and mobility within mainstream institutional arenas.

Furthermore, personal access to many valued resources and opportunities in society — by way of social networks — occurs through the messy business of commanding, negotiating, and managing many diverse (and sometimes conflicting) social relationships and personalities, and which usually entails skillfully negotiating the rules and constraints underlying the social acts of help-seeking and help-giving (Boissevain, 1974). The processes of network construction, negotiation, and help-seeking are known to be quite different across social classes and other status groups (e.g., across various ethnic and gender groups). For lower status group members, attempts at help-seeking and network development within mainstream spheres usually occur within the context of differential power relations and within social contexts that are culturally different from, if not alienating to, cultural outsiders (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984). Also, whereas working-class community networks are organized on the basis of scarcity and conservation, the cosmopolitan networks constructed by middle-class members are oriented toward maximizing individual (and group) access to the mainstream marketplace, where institutional resources, privileges, and opportunities for leisure, recreation, career mobility, social advancement, and political empowerment are abundant, yet exhaustingly distributed across many social spheres (Fischer, 1982).

The structural features of middle-class networks are analogous to social freeways that allow people to move about the complex mainstream landscape quickly and efficiently. In many ways, they function as pathways of privilege and power. Following this metaphor, a fundamental dimension of social inequality in society is that some are able to use these freeways, while others are not. A major vehicle that allows for use of such freeways is an educational experience that is strategic, empowering, and network-enhancing. Cochran and associates (1990) have stressed that strategic educational experiences can "produce attitudes and activate behaviors that are particularly conducive to network building and maintenance" (p. 303). Empowering educational experiences can broaden young people’s social frame of reference, “expand their access to a larger number and variety of potential network members.”
and “develop the necessary skills for both initiating and maintaining network relations” (Cochran, Larner, Riley, Gunnarsson, & Henderson, 1990, p. 303). The question I pose here is whether urban minority students have ever had this kind of “strategic education?” Decades of educational research strongly suggest that urban/metropolitan, working-class schools have historically not been strategically oriented toward the development of students’ social support networks. It may, therefore, be reasonable to intimate that conventional educational provisions for working-class minority students, while officially designed to educate, may have always played an inadvertent yet key role in reproducing social inequality. Such reproductive processes, however, have never been self-evident, mainly because the lenses we have used to study urban schools have not been network-analytic.

The connections between schooling, network development, and adult attainment have only become fathomable in light of contemporary sociological research on adult social networks, which has demonstrated that consistent and predictable structural variations in the interpersonal networks of people from different social classes and status groups usually translate into differential access to highly valued institutional resources, opportunities, and privileges. Yet, the role that social networks play in society is far more complex. While they function primarily as conduits for transmitting the effects of socioeconomic background, race, and gender, they may also function as lifelines to resources that permit low-status individuals to overcome social structural barriers and to experience healthy human development, school achievement, and social mobility (Cochran et al., 1990; Hansell & Karweit, 1983; Lin, 1990; Wellman & Berkowitz, 1988; Williams & Kornblum, 1985).

A network-analytic approach to the socialization of children and adolescents has been recognized as highly innovative and insightful (Cochran et al., 1990; Wynn et al., 1987). Applying this approach to working-class minority youths would necessarily place a great deal of importance on the formation of supportive ties or relations with various types of institutional agents, gatekeepers, and informal mentors, particularly within the school. More importantly, whereas existing methods of network analysis highlight the ubiquity of network paths to privilege and opportunity among the middle classes (e.g., Fischer, 1982), my own research on the school and community experiences of minority youth reveals the opposite — that is, the ubiquity of network barriers and entrapments.

The most prominent feature of the framework proposed here is the notion of social capital, derived mainly from the work of Bourdieu (1977, 1986) and Coleman (1988). As used here, the concept focuses on the degree and quality of middle-class forms of social support inherent in a young person’s interpersonal network. A network-analytic model of socialization and youth development not only allows us to address directly structural constraints on young people’s access to institutional privileges and resources, but it also
allows us to consider the role of individual and cultural agency (Boissevain, 1974).

In the pages that follow, I lay down a conceptual framework built around the concepts of social capital and institutional support. I concentrate on those institutional and ideological forces that I believe make access to social capital and institutional support within schools and other institutional settings so problematic for minority children and adolescents. I also provide some clues as to how some minority youth are able to manage their difficult participation in multiple worlds, and how they overcome various obstacles in order to develop sustaining and supportive relationships with institutional agents.

Analytical Framework: The Importance of Social Capital and Institutional Support

The principal thesis of this article can be elaborated in two statements. First, for all children and youths, healthy human development, general well-being, school success, and economic and social integration in society depend upon regular and unobstructed opportunities for constructing instrumental relationships with institutional agents across key social spheres and institutional domains dispersed throughout society (Wynn et al., 1987). Second, for low-status children and youth, the development of supportive relations with institutional agents outside the immediate kinship unit is systematically problematic. Why this is so has to do with a number of overlapping problems or social forces that I intend to address in this article; for now, a number of definitions and elaborations are necessary.

Institutional agents can be formally defined as those individuals who have the capacity and commitment to transmit directly, or negotiate the transmission of, institutional resources and opportunities. For children and adolescents, resources can include information about school programs, academic tutoring and mentoring, as well as assistance with career decisionmaking and college admission. Institutional agents can include middle-class family members, although this term generally draws attention to such people as teachers and counselors, social service workers, clergy, community leaders, college-going youth in the community, and others. School peers may also act as institutional agents — for example, when working-class youth obtain informational resources from their middle-class peers. Through relationships with institutional agents, a segment of society gains the resources, privileges, and support necessary to advance and maintain their economic and political position in society.

The most important social spheres for children and youth are the extended family, the school, community organizations (e.g., the church), and the peer group. Similar to what Grubb and Lazerson (1988) have eloquently argued, the thesis statement above treats the traditional notion of the nuclear family as a self-contained, independent unit, not only as mythical and
extremely simplistic, but also ideologically geared to preserve the status quo. Children are seldom raised exclusively within the confines of their nuclear families; rather, they are raised embedded in social networks, which extend out into various social worlds where a wide variety of socialization actors and spheres are found (Ianni, 1989; Phelan et al., 1993; Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994; Wenn et al., 1987). These social networks exhibit their potential to empower young people according to the number and quality of relationships potentially available within them. Such relationships become key precisely because they represent interpersonal ties to people committed to and capable of transmitting vital, diversified resources. These resources range from those necessary for the development of resiliency (Garrettsey, 1991; Werner & Smith, 1982) to those necessary for school success and social mobility (Lin, 1982, 1990; Mehan, Villanueva, Hubbard, & Lintz, 1996; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995; Stanton-Salazar, Vásquez, & Mehan, 1996). Mobility-related resources are best embodied (though not always) in middle-class social capital, that is, in relationships with high-status institutional agents, while the resources associated with healthy human development are best embodied in relations with protective agents, located principally in family- and community-based networks (e.g., parents, grandparents, and other relatives, caring neighbors, prosocial peers). While access to protective agents transcends all social classes (Cochran et al., 1990; Coleman, 1988; Garbarino, Durow, Kostelny, & Pardo, 1992), personal and reliable access to committed institutional agents does not. For purposes of analytical clarity, the term “social capital” is reserved for instrumental or supportive relationships with institutional agents; it is these relationships that represent the principal unit of analysis in the framework elaborated here.

I have tried to account for why the accumulation of social capital is so problematic for low-status children and youth by identifying five overlapping problems that I understand to be institutionalized in society. I list them below and will discuss them in further detail later in this article:

1. the differential value accorded children and youth in contemporary society, depending upon their social class, ethnicity, and gender;
2. the barriers and entrapments that make participation in mainstream settings a terribly uncomfortable experience for minority children and youths;
3. evaluation and recruitment processes by which school-based agents evaluate and select minority students for sponsorship; such selection processes largely entail perceptions of the student’s ability and willingness to adopt the cultural capital and standards of the dominant group;
4. what I call the institutionalization of distrust and detachment, or the institutional engineering of conditions and prescribed roles that are antithetical to the development of social capital;
5. ideological mechanisms that hinder help-seeking and help-giving behaviors within the school.

It is my argument that these structural problems are not unfortunate quirks in the system that have yet to be fully resolved; rather, they are mechanisms intrinsic to the inner workings of mainstream institutions that function both to problematize the social development of working-class minority youth and to engineer their failure in school.

**The Concept of Social Capital**

Relationships with institutional agents, and the networks that weave these relationships into units, can be understood as social capital. This concept represents a central feature of the framework presented here and is derived in part from Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction (1977, 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), as well as from Coleman's (1988) work on rational action. The value of social capital, as a concept, lies in the fact that it identifies properties (or laws) of social structure that are used by actors to achieve their interests. Social relationships (or ties) and networks are societal entities governed by social structure; we can regularly depend upon these entities for resources and support precisely because of their social structural properties.

Bourdieu (1986) has argued that the laws governing the exchange of economic capital are applicable to human social relations in all their various forms. Thus, social capital 1) is cumulative, 2) possesses the capacity to produce profits or benefits in the social world, 3) is convertible into tangible resources or other forms of capital, and 4) possesses the capacity to reproduce itself in identical or in expanded form. Just as a twenty-dollar bill represents a form of capital that can be converted into a desired service or product, a social relationship, or a network of relationships, also represents forms of capital that can be converted into socially valued resources and opportunities (e.g., emotional support, legitimated institutional roles and identities, privileged information, access to opportunities for mobility). Simply stated, social ties and networks carry the potential to generate valued resources.

The accumulation and conversion of social capital appears as a routine aspect of daily life. As Boissevain (1974) tells us, interpersonal relations are structured and influenced by people's entrepreneurial impulses, where people seek to manipulate their ties to attain goals and solve their problems, and where they organize and coalesce to achieve collective ends:

The subject matter is familiar: the network of friends, relatives and workmates; the visiting, bargaining, gossiping and maneuvering that goes on between them; the impact on these of promotion, ideology, and conflict; the steps an ambitious man takes to build up his fund of credit among useful relations; and the operation of
neighborhood and workplace cliques and factions. These are the processes and situations with which we are all involved and they are the basic stuff of life. (p. 4)

Exactly what properties of social structure make social ties and networks cumulative and convertible into resources and support? Coleman (1988) calls attention to the obligations (social debts), expectations, and trustworthiness that can inhere in relationships and that make it possible that the resources and forms of support possessed by network associates will be made available to ego, either upon request or perceived need, or within an ongoing exchange relationship. In the world of commerce, forms of support can range from financial assistance, to business advice, to lobbying within business circles. Access to such support depends not only on good relations with people capable of providing such support, but also on a certain built-up trust, and often on certain obligations that bind one to the other. Coleman (1988) provides an example of New York City’s diamond market, pointing out how dependent merchants are upon informal business relations in which mutual trust is paramount and without suspicion. In this case, binding relations among merchants are developed by common overlapping ties based on ethnicity, religion, synagogue, and neighborhood. Gottlieb’s (1975) network study of high school seniors shows how relations between the school’s elite cadre of star students and athletes and their teachers, guidance counselors, and coaches embody implicit expectations that the latter will act as personal agents, channeling the resources this cadre will need to insure their future success.

The provision of scarce resources and privileges is not the only form of social support potentially residing in social ties and networks. Coleman (1988) also speaks to the fact that people often organize into networks for the purpose of exerting social control over themselves or others by way of shared and enforced norms. For example, immigrants organize into networks to exert control over their children’s exposure to mainstream norms and values and to continue their children’s enculturation into linguistic conventions and traditional folkways (Buriel, 1984). Returning to Coleman’s example, a diamond merchant’s dishonesty would not only lead to expulsion from the diamond business, but also ostracism from synagogue and community.

Coleman’s framework, like the work of other network analysts, unfortunately tends to neglect or deemphasize those forces that make the accumulation of social capital extremely problematic. Although social ties and networks embody aspects of social structure that allow such relations to be highly productive, social relations that may carry the potential for support may also embody exclusionary and even symbolically violent properties rooted in the macro-social structures of society. The potential for the development of supportive ties is always set in the context of interlocking class, race, and gender hierarchies. Illustrations are plentiful in the literature. In
situations in which affirmative action policies select qualified women or minorities for promotion, other employees may become resentful and socially withdraw (Rosen & Mericle, 1979). Possible mentors in the organizational hierarchy may resist forming supportive relations with these recruits, presuming the promotion was based on enforced affirmative action policies rather than on their talent and merit (Noe, 1988). Whether such relations manifest their supportive potential or instead express their exclusionary potential greatly depends upon the social and institutional contexts in which relations form, as well as upon the subjectivities and ideological commitments of individual agents.

In the present framework, the pattern of circumstances that either facilitates or restricts opportunities for the accumulation and conversion of social capital is elaborated in terms of structures of inclusion and exclusion, particularly in regard to child- and youth-centered institutions (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). While most of the scholarly attention to social relationships and networks in the field of education and socialization has focused either on issues of social control (e.g., Coleman, 1988; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987), or on encouragement and role modeling (Sewell & Hauser, 1980), the framework proposed here focuses instead on access to tangible institutional resources and opportunities, defined in specific terms below. Much of what I wish to discuss here has to do with addressing structural and ideological constraints on young people’s access to critical institutional resources. Yet, it is my intention that the framework proposed here also allows us to consider the important role of individual and cultural agency — that is, how children and youth learn to overcome exclusionary forces and to accumulate valuable and highly productive social capital.

**Conceptualizing Institutional Support**

The importance of supportive ties to institutional agents in the social development, school success, and status attainment of children and youth is articulated here using the concept of institutional support, which refers to key forms of social support that function to help children and adolescents become effective participants within mainstream institutional spheres, particularly the school system. Such support enables young people to become successful consumers and entrepreneurs within the mainstream marketplace, to manage effectively the stresses of participating in mainstream settings, and, in general, to exercise greater control over their lives and their futures.

In this light, social capital embodies social relationships with agents capable of and oriented toward providing, or negotiating one’s access to, institutional support. The possession of social capital does not imply the utilization of support, but rather the potential for such utilization. The process by which individuals convert their social capital into institutional support for the express purpose of reaching certain goals has been termed instrumental action
by Lin (1982, 1990). Middle-class children and adolescents are systemically embedded in familial and school-based networks replete with opportunities for institutional support. Within institutional arenas such as the school, they and their parents are known to engage regularly in instrumental actions directed toward privileged access of special services and opportunities (Lareau, 1987).

For all children and youths, whether from middle-class communities or from communities that are economically depressed and ethnically segregated, the support of institutional agents may come in a variety of forms. For children and youths from working-class minority communities, social ties with institutional agents are at the same time potentially life-altering and problematic. Sennett and Cobb (1972) state that the power of institutional agents lies in their ability to give or withhold knowledge. I would add that their power also comes from their ability to situate youth within resource-rich social networks by actively manipulating the social and institutional forces that determine who shall “make it” and who shall not (Mehan et al., 1996; Stanton-Salazar et al., 1996).

I introduce six key forms of institutional support in the present framework, and describe them as key ingredients for social integration and success within the school system and in other mainstream institutional spheres: 1) the provision of various funds of knowledge associated with ascension within the educational system (this form of support includes implicit and explicit socialization into institutional discourses that regulate communication, interaction, and exchange within mainstream institutional spheres); 2) bridging, or the process of acting as a human bridge to gatekeepers, to social networks, and to opportunities for exploring various “mainstream” institutions (e.g., university campuses); 3) advocacy and related forms of personalized intervention; 4) role modeling; and 5) the provision of emotional and moral support. Closely related to the provision of knowledge funds is the context and process by which such support is extended; thus, the sixth key form of institutional support entails the provision of regular, personalized, and soundly based evaluative feedback, advice, and guidance that incorporate the thoughtful provision of institutional funds of knowledge, as well as genuine emotional and moral support. I will discuss only the first form of institutional support in this article — the provision of various institutional funds of knowledge.

**Funds of Knowledge**

Outlined below are seven principal forms of institutionally based funds of knowledge:

1. *Institutionally sanctioned discourses* (i.e., socially acceptable ways of using language and communicating)
2. *Academic task-specific knowledge* (e.g., subject-area knowledge)
3. **Organizational/bureaucratic funds of knowledge** (e.g., knowledge of how bureaucracies operate — chains of command, resource competition among various branches of bureaucracy)

4. **Network development** (i.e., knowledge leading to skillful networking behavior; e.g., knowledge of how to negotiate with various gatekeepers and agents within and outside of the school environment; knowledge of how to develop supportive/cooperative ties with peers who are well integrated in the school’s high-status academic circles)

5. **Technical funds of knowledge** (e.g., computer literacy, study skills, test-taking skills, time-management skills, decisionmaking skills)

6. **Knowledge of labor and educational markets** (e.g., job and educational opportunities, requisites and barriers to entree; knowledge of how to fulfill requisites and how to overcome barriers)

7. **Problem-solving knowledge** (i.e., knowing how to integrate the first six knowledge forms above for the purpose of solving school-related problems, making sound decisions, and reaching personal or collective goals)

Of the seven forms of knowledge listed above, *institutionally sanctioned discourses* deserves special attention. Simply stated, discourses are socially accepted ways of using language and engaging in communicative behavior. Gee (1989) differentiates between primary discourses — found in home and community — and secondary discourses — found within formal institutional contexts that allocate social “goods” (money, prestige, status, credentials, etc.). As Gee (1989) proposes, “a Discourse is a sort of ‘identity kit’ which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize” (p. 7). Notions of power and exclusion are explicit in Gee’s notion of dominant discourses, which he states are used to identify individuals who share in the values, ideologies, and interests of the group in power, and, thus, identify people entitled to the group’s privileges.8

The notion of institutional Discourse plays a vital role in understanding how networks are deeply implicated in the social reproduction of inequality. Control over institutional Discourses is often a prerequisite for participation in networks that yield institutional supports necessary for success in school and society. As we shall see, for low-status children and youth, opportunities for acquiring institutional Discourses as well as consistent and routine access to other institutional knowledge forms are problematized by two key factors. The first pertains to the difficulties these children and youth experience in their receptivity to such knowledge (i.e., whether knowledge is interpretable, and whether it is perceived to be meaningful and relevant to one’s experiences and anticipated life chances). The second pertains to the structural dependence upon nonfamilial institutional agents and school-based net-
works for the acquisition of institutional Discourses. I address these two factors below.

All children, regardless of background, bring to school the cultural knowledge, primary discourses, and accumulated information that exist in households and neighborhoods, and that are used by members of the community for successfully negotiating everyday life (Moll, Amanti, & Gonzalez, 1992; Vásquez, Pease-Alvarez, & Shannon, 1994). Yet, as Bourdieu (1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) and Bernstein (1975) have argued, key structural advantages exist for middle-class children; that is, their schooling experiences are normally shaped by the school’s routine mobilization and immediate integration of family- and community-based discourses and funds of knowledge. The use of such cultural and linguistic knowledge in instruction, curriculum, and classroom comportment validates its importance in the lives of children from middle-class families and builds respect and appreciation for the dominant culture and for society’s institutions. Most importantly, the cognitive and language skills that are critical to performing conventional academic tasks are built upon the foundations of White, middle-class, community-based cultural and linguistic knowledge and cultural style (Bernstein, 1975; Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Boykin, 1986).

Success within schools (or other mainstream institutions), therefore, has never been simply a matter of learning and competently performing technical skills; rather, and more fundamentally, it has been a matter of learning how to decode the system. Following an intellectual tradition set by such scholars as Bowles and Gintis (1976), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), and Gee (1989), it is understood that such decoding requires either an explicit or implicit understanding that the rules governing social advancement, particularly the official assessment of “having scholastic ability,” have much to do with acquiring and exhibiting the dominant Discourse in social interaction. What this means is not only that the ways of institutional life are encoded in the cultural capital and ethos of the dominant group, but also that dominant-group children begin learning the rules of institutional life in the context of early socialization experiences within the home and community (Stanton-Salazar et al., 1996). Thus, the institutional knowledge forms cited above, as keys to school success, are in large part funds of knowledge that are socially constructed and transmitted using the primary and institutional discourses of the dominant group. For members of subordinate groups to fully access these funds of knowledge and to use them productively for instrumental purposes requires no less than tapping into the cultural logic of the dominant group — however arbitrary it may be. Decoding the system begins with “making sense” of this cultural logic; it entails knowing how to role-play using the institution’s “identity kit.”

This issue is certainly not exclusive to minority or working-class children and youth; Hanagan (1977) speaks, for example, of the male-based mana-
gender and executive culture of most commercial/corporate enterprises, a
place where women find themselves in “an alien land with customs, tradi-
tions, security forces, and mores of its own. What’s more, the natives speak
a strange, oblique tongue, and the signposts are in cryptic ciphers” (p. 15).
In specific reference to male managers and executives, she goes on to say
that “their communication patterns, physical gestures, group affiliations,
dress customs, cultural artifacts, game skills, avocations, and competencies
[do] indeed reflect dissimilar cultural values and norms from those around
them” (p. 23). Although participation within this culture may come naturally
for dominant-group males, it is an enormous challenge for members of work-
ing-class and minority communities, and for women in general, accomplish-
able only with the proper resources, support, and psychological orientation.

Two other dimensions of the decoding process are highlighted here. The
first has to do with engaging “power-ful” adults in ways that will lead them
to act as agents (i.e., as coparent, advocate, informal mentor, etc.), and the
second has to do with knowing how to problem-solv within institutional con-
texts such as the school. Let me proceed by first commenting on the ex-
change process between agents and children, then follow with an elabora-
tion of what I mean by problem-solving skills.

The strict adherence to cultural rules, the display of appropriate cultural
and linguistic capital, and the enactment of prescribed cultural competen-
cies within schools’ domains is critical precisely because such instances of
decoding behavior activate crucial exchanges with institutional agents, who
respond to the display of mainstream cultural and linguistic capital by pro-
viding not only enriched academic subject knowledge, but also those forms
of institutional support viewed here as crucial to school success, including
those institutional funds of knowledge cited above (Stanton-Salazar & Dorn-
busch, 1995).10 These institutionally based forms of support are transmitted
through a process of socialization that is usually implicit in the kinds of
activities and interactions that are made available in school contexts, at least
to privileged children and youth. A number of scholars have shown how
some classrooms and school activities (e.g., middle-class schools and class-
rooms) are socially organized to enhance the type of tacit socialization most
associated with the transmission of privileged knowledge and the develop-
ment of middle-class competencies (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Simpson & Rosen-
holtz, 1986; Wilcox, 1982).

Wilcox’s (1982) important ethnographic study of two first-grade class-
rooms provides an excellent illustration of how teachers, given the appropr-
iate cues, act as key transmitters of institutionally sanctioned discourses. The
first classroom contained children from predominantly upper-middle-class
families (i.e., professional class), while the second classroom, located in a
different school, contained children from lower-middle-class families (i.e.,
skilled, nonprofessional class). Wilcox studied and compared the communi-
cative structures governing teacher-student interactions in each classroom and found significant differences. Relying on Bowles and Gintis's correspondence theory, Wilcox suggested that the communicative structures of each classroom were shaping both the abilities and subjectivities of the students (e.g., self-presentation skills, relationship to authority) in ways commensurate with their respective family/class background and expected occupational destinies.

Since schools rarely provide working-class minority students with the necessary training for effective decoding, such children are systematically denied true opportunities for long-term success. To provide such training as an explicit agenda would essentially blow the schools' ideological cover, thereby undermining the myth of meritocracy upon which the entire school system rests. Not only do schools fail to institute such training, but the practices of ability grouping and curriculum tracking further insure that those students within lower groups and tracks never become equipped with the necessary funds of knowledge to decode the system themselves, thereby never learning that the school system and its agents can be socially engaged in ways that could engineer their success (Oakes, 1986). Lastly, to say that middle-class White children come to school equipped with the proper decoding skills does not mean that low-status children know nothing about decoding. Working-class minority children arrive at school with different cultural resources; they are competent, perhaps masterful, decoders in any number of cultural domains within their communities, but usually not within mainstream institutions, including the school.

In sum, the development of social ties to institutional agents is crucial to the social development and empowerment of ethnic minority children and youth precisely because these ties represent consistent and reliable sources from which they can learn the appropriate decoding skills and from which they can obtain other key forms of institutional support. Just as with middle-class children, the normal transmission of institutional support to working-class racial minority children likewise occurs tacitly; yet, institutional agents take on great importance in the framework presented here precisely because such agents can choose, and do often choose, to transmit institutional support as part of an explicit and strategic agenda, and because, when they do so, the impact on minority children and youth is considerable, if not life-altering (Delpit, 1988; Stanton-Salazar et al., 1996; Williams & Kornblum, 1985).11

When institutional agents are not acting upon an explicit agenda (e.g., formal mentorship), the role of initiative on the part of children and youth to engage agents in supportive interactions, particularly within the school, increases in importance (Cochran et al., 1990). This leads us into another key dimension of skillful decoding involving problem-solving skills that rely heavily on instrumental interactions with institutional agents. Even for low-status children and youth, the competencies entailed in activating the sup-
portive potential of institutional agents as a crucial dimension of decoding usually stem from key socialization experiences derived from family and community networks. Investigations into the developmental experiences of resilient children have revealed the critical role of early attachment experiences; specifically, "a stable emotional relationship with at least one parent or other reference person" (Garbarino et al., 1992, p. 103). Garbarino and associates' (1992) review of cross-cultural studies emphasizes early supportive experiences within the school, as well as the presence of a parental model of behavior that encourages constructive problem-solving and the seeking of social support from persons outside the family.

Thus, obtaining various forms of resources and support within various nonfamily institutional domains requires that low-status children and youth possess, on the one hand, knowledge and skills related to human relations in politicized contexts (ranging from deference to diplomacy) and, on the other, knowledge and skills most easily associated with rational problem-solving within impersonal bureaucracies. The list below is an elaboration of the seventh knowledge form cited above (i.e., problem-solving knowledge) and emphasizes the integration of knowledge and competencies many children and youth are unable to develop effectively within the school system. While privileged children are usually spared the potentially deleterious consequences of their occasional ignorance, largely due to their embeddedness in a network of advocates and agents (Ianni, 1989), such is not the case with working-class minority youth.

Problem-solving knowledge:

1. the accurate perception and assessment of the problem;
2. knowledge of the types of resources that may ameliorate the problem;
3. knowledge of which agents control such resources;

The following knowledge forms include the effective use of institutional discourses:

4. knowledge of how to articulate convincingly both the problem and the necessary and desired resources — using the right "discourse";
5. knowledge of how to justify one's entitlement to these resources;
6. knowledge and social competencies relevant to getting agents to act on one's behalf;
7. knowledge necessary to evaluate soundness of resources;
8. knowledge and competencies of how to apply effectively obtained resources to solving the problem.
Exclusionary Structures Affecting the Accumulation of Social Capital

Thus far, I have tried to argue that the accumulation of social capital, and its conversion into institutional support, depends upon successful interactions with various agents, primarily within school domains. I have also argued that successful interactions leading to institutional support are quite problematic for working-class minority youth, for reasons that are rooted in differential opportunities for developing middle-class mainstream discourses and decoding skills. I will now argue that opportunities for the successful development of supportive relationships with institutional agents are systematically undermined by institutional structures that are deeply alienating and exclusionary. I elaborate below on the nature of these exclusionary mechanisms.

The Institutionalization of Distrust and Detachment

The central problem at the core of the analysis of relationships between minority children and adolescents and institutional agents is the construction of interpersonal trust, solidarity, and shared meaning in the context of institutional relations, which are defined, on the one hand, by hierarchical relations of power and institutional “barriers,” and, on the other, by institutionalized dependency. Given that working-class minority children and youths are structurally more dependent on nonfamilial institutional agents for various forms of institutional support, the problematics of interweaving extended trust and solidarity become ever so salient, especially because in the absence of such solidarity, institutional support rarely occurs (Meahan et al., 1996; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995).13

The school and other mainstream settings that harbor children do not, of course, operate on the basis of calculated market exchanges; institutional agents are not merchants or professional agents who impersonally exchange goods for capital. Even the commercial marketplace is imbued with nonrational, emotional commitments (Coleman, 1988; Smelser & Swedberg, 1994). As I have already stressed, institutional resources are transmitted as much on the basis of subjective biases and interpersonal histories as on the basis of objective (supposedly fair) criteria and rational procedures.

The problem of establishing and institutionalizing trusting relations between minority children and adolescents and school agents cannot be underestimated, since it represents a root cause for why the former disengage (psychically or physically) from the school. As Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) state, “most of the studies of such relationships (i.e., friendships, patron-client relations) also indicate that the very attempts to construct such a realm of trust or solidarity entail some basic tensions or contradictions which are
focused above all on the ambivalence to the institutional order in which they develop and to their own institutionalization" (p. 15).

The primary of bureaucratic processes over the needs of children. The primary problem has to do with the "tension between the stress on pure trust and pristine values as against the more formalized, institutionalized relations contaminated, as it were, with power and instrumental orientations" (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984, p. 15). With regard to school personnel, teachers and counselors may at moments take on aspects of parents and mentors, yet their support remains fundamentally conditional and ever subject to "bureaucratic policies, rules, procedures and normative practices and codes" that, in the name of administrative efficiency and organizational problem-solving, take precedence over the individual needs of students (Fine, 1991, p. 180). In other words, the construction of authentically supportive relations is subject to the forces of institutionalized exclusion.  

The inconsistent, contradictory, and ambiguous roles of teachers and other agents. Closely related to this problem are the inconsistencies, contradictions, and, at times, ambiguities that characterize the multiple roles filled by various school agents. Teachers, for example, are pedagogists, coparents, informal mentors, child advocates, informal psychologists and counselors, and friends. In many ways, they serve as consistent sources of emotional and social support. Yet, the established social order also obligates teachers to act as purveyors of unequally distributed rewards and punishments, as gatekeepers and controllers of scarce resources, as self-interested and self-advocating members of unions, and as representatives, and often unwilling "agents," of a classist, sexist, and racialized societal order. Over time, such contradictory roles can produce resignation in teachers and ambivalence in students.

The contradictory nature of the teacher role is exacerbated by reliance on instructional methods and evaluation procedures rooted in the cultural capital of the dominant group. Since such methods and procedures do not function to highlight the intellectual resources and talents of low-status children, these children are often assessed as poor performers (i.e., students with low intellectual/academic "ability"); such an assessment has historically translated into lower entitlements to institutional supports (Levin, 1988). The practice of shifting institutional support toward high performers serves to alienate further institutional agents from those most in need of their support.

The institutionalization of superficial, transitory relations. The tensions cited above combine with another kind of shared ambivalent attitude toward the established order, an ambivalence rooted in the recognition that although trusting attachments between children and school agents are possible and desirable, and that although opportunities for emotional bonding and for
the expression of parent-child/child-parent sentiments and behaviors are abundant during the course of the school year, in the final analysis, such relationships are by nature fragile and temporary. The established social order in schools does not allow the consummation or formalization of long-term committed relations. All relationships remain superficial, transitory, and interwoven with hidden and not-so-hidden forms of hierarchical power and institutionalized inequality. Successful attachments between students and school agents, when they do occur, are achieved by emphasizing the affective and moral qualities of the relationship, and by ignoring the unsavoury realities of the institutionalized social order. As mentioned above, such unsavoury realities have to do with teacher’s contradictory roles as gatekeepers, implementors of school policies, and self-interested employees. Organizational constraints within junior and senior high schools also contribute to the noncommittal and transitory nature of relations between teachers and students. Examples include scheduling limitations, the busy, often hectic schedule of school staff, and the competition for a teacher’s time and attention in large classrooms. The short time students spend with highly supportive teachers is another constraint, with the end of the semester bringing an end to regular opportunities for sustained interaction. It often takes an entire semester to build the kind of trust and rapport that enables students to actively seek help (Stanton-Salazar, 1995). It would seem, therefore, that trust and attachment, when they do occur, essentially require some form of resistance to the social order, the necessity of pretending as if things were different, together with a self-induced mindset that represses the awareness that the relationship is fundamentally noncommittal and transitory.

Lack of opportunities for “generalized exchange.” Another constraint on the establishment of trust and attachment has to do with ideological and normative “barriers” that limit the kinds of possible relationships that can be constructed. Although relations between young people and institutional agents are insulated from both rationalistic market-like exchanges, as well as the exploitative arrangements found within the social division of labor, these parties are not able to engage in the ritual exchanges traditionally reserved for the construction of solidarity and mutual support. These traditional arrangements, associated most often with kinship, but also with friendship and patron-client relations, have been identified as generalized exchange in the classical social science literature (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1984). Such exchanges have as their latent “function” or purpose the incorporation of an individual into another’s social system and support network; the rituals through which such exchanges are made function to establish trust, to communicate tacitly unconditional commitments of support, and to activate cultural norms of reciprocity. As Eisenstadt and Roniger (1984) state, “From the point of view of the individuals participating in any social activity, the
various mechanisms of generalized exchange assume the functions of security or insurance systems against the risks of uncertainties of the 'open' market or power interchange or struggle" (p. 34).

The established social order of the school, and of the educational system of which it is a part, precludes such generalized exchanges between students and school agents, mainly because it conflicts with the institution's ideological foundations (e.g., egoistic individualism, meritocracy, equal opportunity, and fair competition). I will say more about the individualistic ideology of the school shortly. For now, let me state that, given the challenges and cultural barriers working-class minority children face within the social world of the school, and given their greater structural dependency on nonfamilial institutional agents for institutional support, generalized exchanges leading to authentic mentorship relations would, in fact, be one way to compensate for the problematized position in which these children find themselves (Stanton-Salazar et al., 1996). A primary mechanism underlying the social reproduction of inequality within our school system may in fact entail the institutionalization of compensatory education programs that fail (and have always failed) to act as true "insurance systems," and which have rarely embodied unproblematized relations of generalized exchange and, most especially, commitments of "institutional support."

The institutionalization of class- and ethnic-based antagonisms. So far my discussion of the problems regarding the difficulty of establishing supportive and committed relations with institutional agents has emphasized barriers that appear rooted in the institutional setting itself. Yet many of these barriers are rooted not in the institution (e.g., the school), but in exclusionary social forces that pervade the entire society. The tensions and constraints underlying the construction of trust and solidarity between minority children and youth and school-based institutional agents, in particular, cannot be divorced from the often distrustful and conflictive relations between ethnic minority communities and the corporate bodies that represent the dominant group's interests (e.g., school boards, city councils, chambers of commerce, residential associations, state lobby groups, business organizations, the media).

The school system has always attempted to establish a buffer between its young people and the racism and all other "isms" on the outside; yet such negative forces have always found a way to permeate the social world of the school. This is to say that the social distance, distrust, and latent — and not-so-latent — antagonisms rooted in our stratified society can and do manifest themselves in subtle ways in the interpersonal relationships between minority children and adolescents and institutional agents. It is therefore quite reasonable to suggest that the development of supportive relations between minority students and agents inside and outside the school must be understood in the context of social worlds separated by borders that are politicized, and problematized, by exclusionary forces and antagonistic so-
societal relations. Attempts to institutionalize relations of trust and solidarity by committed teachers, administrators, and other school agents run up against the long-standing institutionalization of distrust between minority members and the official agents of school systems, often perceived by the former as representing dominant group interests (e.g., McDermott, 1974; Ogbu, 1991; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986).

The Special Challenges of Minority-Youth Socialization

I turn now to the socialization of minority and bicultural children and youth, which is viewed here as inherently problematic in our society precisely because of the psychic challenges and institutional forces these children and youths face in forming instrumental relations with various institutional agents, particularly those situated within our schools. Such a claim, of course, requires empirical verification, although a core of studies now exists to justify it (Ianni, 1989; Phelan et al., 1993; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995; Stanton-Salazar et al., 1996; Williams & Kornblum, 1985). Yet, at this moment in time, what is most wanting is a vocabulary and grammar for articulating those processes that make the accumulation of social capital problematic for minority children and youth. Without such tools, investigators will continue to overlook what needs to be further examined, with the consequence that additional evidence will be slow in accumulating.

Building on the work of A. Wade Boykin (1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985) and Phelan and associates (1993), I propose to cast socialization as the process by which young people learn to negotiate, and participate in, multiple and simultaneously existing social worlds. Phelan and her associates define “world” as the “cultural knowledge and behavior found within the boundaries of students’ particular families, peer groups, and schools,” with each world containing “values and beliefs, expectations, actions, and emotional responses familiar to insiders” (p. 53). This definition is reminiscent of the writing of Barth (1969), who identified ethnic groups in terms of their social boundaries, and spoke of the criteria associated with insidership:

The identification of another person as a fellow member of an ethnic group implies a sharing of criteria for evaluation and judgement. It thus entails the assumption that the two are fundamentally “playing the same game,” and this means that there is between them a potential for diversification and expansion of their social relationship to cover eventually all different sectors and domains of activity. (p. 15)

Yet, boundaries are also utilized for identifying outsiders:

On the other hand, a dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest. (p. 15)
Sociocultural worlds can also be distinguished by the kinds and quality of support they offer, and by the extent to which the supports available are oriented toward fostering empowering forms of human development. Sociocultural worlds are also distinguishable by whether they encompass social settings that facilitate the accumulation and active utilization of diversified social capital.

My treatment of socialization as a distinct issue is intended to extend the discussion of networks and low-status children and youth beyond a focus on school-based ties and supports, and into a discussion of how effective development for this group is especially dependent upon effective movement across different sociocultural worlds. Let me propose, then, that for minority children and youth, successful socialization is intimately associated with the exigencies of outsidership, and must be understood not only in terms of effectively decoding mainstream institutional settings, but also in terms of the development of various abilities to participate effectively in multiple cultural worlds. Key among these is the ability to cope effectively with institutional and environmental forces that threaten to compromise their human development and their life chances. Following the logic of the present framework, such abilities emerge and develop in the context of carefully structured participation in various worlds and in the context of "apprenticeship" relationships with a variety of agents (both protective agents and institutional agents, including peers in both cases).18

**Borders and Barriers**

A new complexity emerges when we see that entree into different sociocultural worlds and settings necessarily requires crossing "borders" ("boundaries" in Barth's [1969] terms), defined as real or perceived lines that demarcate one world or setting from others.19 Borders functions to alert people to the rules and requirements necessary for effective participation within the respective world or social setting. The requirements essentially entail the acquisition and employment of a particular sociocultural and institutionally sanctioned discourse necessary for effective social relations and problem-solving.

Borders may be neutral or they may be stressful and obstructive. When borders are neutral, "movement between worlds occurs with relative ease — social and psychological costs are minimal" (Phelan et al., 1993, p. 53). When borders are stressful and obstructive, as they often are for minority children and youth, movement is difficult, and adaptation within alien terrain is problematic. Although it is possible for many of these young people to learn to navigate these borders, without proper intervention (or apprenticeship) the personal and psychic costs of crossing stressful borders can be great, cumulative, and, in terms of young people's human and social development, either inhibitive or degenerative.
Bovkin (1985, 1986) has attempted to capture this multiple border reality in his discussion of the socialization of African American children, casting it in terms of “the interplay among three realms of experiential negotiation: the mainstream experience, the minority experience, and the Black cultural experience,” phrased succinctly as “the triple quandary” (1986, p. 65). Each realm of experience corresponds to a “world” dictating a distinctive socialization agenda. Bovkin argues that Black families experience enormous challenges in preparing their children for effective participation in the mainstream world due to the fact that the two other principal realms of experience, or worlds, demand socialization attention as well.

Bovkin presents a detailed argument that delineates how Black psychological functioning, modes of behavior, and cultural style can be understood neither as an approximation (or misapproximation) of Euro-American norms, nor simply as a reaction to long-term racial oppression. He presents nine interrelated but distinct dimensions, rooted in West African culture, that find expression among African Americans (e.g., communalism) and that are, in effect, in opposition to the qualities rewarded in White society (e.g., acquisitive individualism). In other words, the decoding skills appropriate for social life within many African American communities are not effective for decoding mainstream worlds and settings (and visa versa).

Although these enduring cultural orientations and decoding skills provide African Americans with the elements of a distinctive and authentic cultural experience, Bovkin argues that the exigencies of historically based racial oppression thrust them into still another world, termed “the minority experience.” Competency within this world requires the development of “adaptive reactions, coping styles, and adjustment techniques” (Bovkin, 1986, p. 66) that have become part and parcel of the border reality of all oppressed minorities (and which represent still another set of decoding skills).

Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi (1986) distinguish cultural differences according to the realm of experience in which they are rooted. Primary cultural differences are those enduring different cultural features rooted in people’s country of origin that are transplanted to a new land. “Secondary cultural differences are, in contrast, those different cultural features that came into existence after two populations have come in contact, especially in contact involving the subordination of one population by the other” (p. 97). In a very real sense, secondary cultural differences develop as a response to movement across worlds (i.e., realms of experience) characterized by stressful and obstructive borders. Secondary cultural differences or attributes represent “the minority experience” delineated in Bovkin’s conceptual model.

Let me at this point elaborate on the obstructive nature of many mainstream borders. Borders are not inherently obstructive and disempowering, but they are so when they become defined by the institutionalization of different kinds of barriers that impede people’s successful integration within
mainstream institutional settings and that problematize their access to social capital and institutional resources. I would like to focus on four barriers that are discussed by Phelan and her associates (1993) as part of their "multiple worlds" study: sociocultural barriers, socioeconomic barriers, linguistic barriers, and structural barriers. Each of these barriers carries the potential to induce in minority children and youths experiences of "anxiety, depression, apprehension, or fear," feelings that not only disrupt their ability to perform school- and classroom-related tasks, but that also hinder their social development, particularly their ability to establish instrumental or supportive relationships with teachers, peers, and other institutional agents within the school environment (Phelan et al., 1993, p. 57).

Sociocultural barriers are erected when the cultural components in one world (e.g., the home, the ethnic community) are viewed as less important than in another, or worse yet, when they are denigrated or tacitly cast as inferior. The weight of stigmatization can be terribly heavy for adults as well as for children (Goffman, 1963). Socioeconomic barriers are erected when economic circumstances prevent the young person from fully participating in the daily life of the school's social world, especially those circumstances that impede the formation of prosocial and supportive relations with adult agents and higher status peers. These circumstances may have to do with working outside the home, with not having the economic resources to participate in the school's extracurricular activities, or with being treated as an inferior because of visible markers that communicate the student's low socioeconomic status (e.g., dress, speech, family automobile). Linguistic barriers are those that obstruct the development of empowering bilingualism — that is, the process by which children are able to develop full mastery of two languages and communication styles, and, more profoundly, to develop fully decoding skills in two or more sociocultural systems. Such barriers have to do with institutional messages that invalidate this ideal, and that cast the use and development of the primary language as problematic. Finally, Phelan and associates (1993) describe structural barriers as "features in school environments that prevent, impede, or discourage students from engaging fully in learning — social or academic" (p. 59). One example they provide of such barriers is when school environments lack "adequate resources and supports to meet students' needs," for instance, "inadequate tutoring, no counselors, insufficiently equipped libraries, inadequate second language training, and so forth" (p. 59). Together, the barriers described by Phelan and her associates complement my discussion of institutional support; that is, barriers operate to problematize and even thwart access to institutional support and therefore to key institutional resources.

For working-class minority children and youth, full social integration within mainstream worlds and social settings, particularly the school, has been historically problematic. Fully comprehending the problematics of minority socialization is difficult, precisely because the task entails under-
standing processes of institutionalized exclusion within our school system and within other worlds and institutional settings throughout the mainstream (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). The emphasis on borders and barriers, as discussed by Phelan and her associates (1993), provides us with a tangible grasp of contextual realities that make everyday school life a marginalizing experience.

For minority children and youth, the ability to cross borders, overcome barriers, and resist the violent effects of exclusionary forces has much to do with developing resiliency through supportive ties with protective agents within the home and community (Stanton-Salazar, forthcoming). It must be emphasized here that this capacity to resist the alienating effects of mainstream institutional life is directly dependent upon simultaneous embeddedness in family and community networks of support (Gottlieb, 1991; Gottlieb & Sylvestre, 1994). Yet, consistent access to institutional resources and opportunities ultimately appears dependent upon effective participation in what Delpit (1988) calls the dominant “culture of power.” In essence, effective participation in this culture of power requires, on the one hand, developing resiliency through family- and community-embedded relations, and, on the other, learning to decode the system, as I earlier discussed.

Network Orientations and Their Roots in Class, Race, and Gender Relations

The various institutional constraints and barriers that problematize the formation of supportive relationships with institutional agents, however, are never totally deterministic. The role of individual and cultural agency must also be considered. Although these constraints and barriers function too often to alienate students from vital sources of institutional support, many minority children and youth do find ways to acquire social capital. Similarly, ideological forces of a counter-hegemonic nature and personal dispositions motivate many institutional agents to struggle against the alienating properties of their institutional roles, and to develop actively explicit agendas geared toward the transmission of institutional support to minority children and youth (Stanton-Salazar et al., 1996). Due to space considerations, I will focus on the struggles of children and youth, rather than on those of agents.

I wish to propose here that for working-class minority group members, both effective socialization and successful coping correspond to the development of what may be called a bicultural network orientation, a consciousness that facilitates the crossing of cultural borders and the overcoming of institutional barriers, and thereby facilitates entree into multiple community and institutional settings where diversified social capital can be generated and converted by way of instrumental actions (i.e., where instrumental social relationships can be formed, and social support and funds of knowledge can be obtained).
Within the framework proposed here, network orientation can be understood as the constellation of perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions that inform or motivate the choices an individual makes — whether consciously or unconsciously — in recruiting, manipulating, and maintaining various social relationships and in entering into various group affiliations in light of social structural circumstances that either expand or constrain his/her options (Boissevain, 1974; Katz, 1974; Lomnitz, 1977; Stanton-Salazar, forthcoming).

It is important to add here that a person's network orientation may very well motivate him or her to avoid, reject, or subvert various social relationships or social worlds, with such actions occurring most often as a result of latent antagonisms and institutionalized barriers rooted in the larger social structure.

With this said, successful socialization among minority children and youth translates into coping with and successfully negotiating one's growth and development as an "outsider" and "subordinate" within multiple mainstream worlds and social settings governed by distinct (and often alienating) discourses and cognitive styles, and by subtly coercive social relations and hidden exclusionary processes, and where symbolic violence is a constant threat. In many ways, whereas "the middle-class experience" can be characterized in terms of the facile accumulation, transfer, and conversion of mainstream forms of capital (cultural, social, economic, etc.), the working-class "minority experience" can be understood in terms of coping with mainstream worlds and settings organized to restrict minority members' access to mainstream forms of capital and to problematize their own use of indigenous forms of cultural, linguistic, and social resources (see Bartolomé, 1994; Delpit, 1988; Moll et al., 1992; Vásquez et al., 1994).

Thus, the construct of coping is given new meaning here. We begin with the traditional epidemiological definition of coping as "the instrumental behavior and problem-solving capacities of persons in meeting life demands and goals"(Mechanic, 1974, p. 302). I extend this definition by stating that for working-class minority group members, "coping" can be understood in terms of the problem-solving capacities, network orientations, and instrumental behaviors that are directed toward dealing with stressful borders and institutional barriers. Coping strategies are ultimately successful when barriers are overcome and the resources necessary to accomplish developmental and educational tasks and goals are acquired (Cochran et al., 1990). In more specific terms, my argument is that, for working-class minority group members, the resources and support necessary for acquiring empowering developmental and educational experiences are embedded either in mainstream worlds demarcated by cultural borders and governed by exclusionary processes, or in indigenous worlds and social settings organized on the basis of scarcity and conservation (Eames & Goode, 1973) and plagued by cultural and linguistic repression (Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988). Thus, effective coping behavior is understood here as the effective execution of strate-
gies for participating in multiple and disparate worlds, with such strategies being principally social relational in nature, and involving the rational application of skills, techniques, and cultural knowledge that a person has acquired through various forms of apprenticeship (Mechanic, 1974; Gee, 1989).

In light of the social structural forces that constrain network development and that threaten social development, effective coping among working-class minority youth usually entails a network orientation of almost hyper-rationality and of extraordinary psychic fortitude; it also entails a behavioral repertoire necessary to maximize the supportive potential of protective agents and to participate simultaneously in the dominant “culture of power.” For this group, a bicultural network orientation not only implies general facility with simultaneous participation in multiple social worlds that embody competing norms, expectations, and socialization agendas (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Coser, 1975; Merton, 1949; Simmel, 1955), it also implies a certain meta-awareness of relational strategies for negotiating one’s way within social and institutional settings tacitly organized on the basis of systems of exclusion and latent cultural conflict. It implies a constellation of super-psychic abilities, such as a tolerance for contradiction and ambiguity; an ability to juggle complex and disparate social identities, and to code-switch linguistically in different cultural settings; an ability to act instrumentally in one setting, expressively in another, and both instrumentally and expressively in still another; and in total, an ability to operate in a culturally pluralistic mode while maintaining high self-regard (see Anzaldua, 1987).20

What constitutes effective socialization, then, varies across class, ethnic, and gender borders and worlds; for working-class minority communities, the raising of children can be better appreciated by recognizing the strategies by which families and community agents struggle to equip, apprentice, and fortify their children and youth in ways that enable them to successfully negotiate different sociocultural worlds and the often conflictive relations between such worlds, and to acquire a heightened measure of resiliency (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Stanton-Salazar, forthcoming). In essence, effective socialization entails engendering in children an empowering network orientation. For middle-class Euro-Americans, a middle-class network orientation typically reflects regular engagement with institutional agents and gatekeepers as status-equals or even as status-superiors. In contrast, for working-class minorities, a bicultural network orientation not only assumes a tolerance for operating from a hierarchically subordinate position, but also a penchant for getting agents and gatekeepers to provide institutional resources and support; at the very least, it entails engaging agents in ways that keep them from acting in an exclusionary or discriminatory manner (Lyman & Douglass, 1973).

Although manifested in the form of individual actions, network orientations represent a critical dimension of a community’s social character. Using
terminology proposed by Fromm and Maccoby (1970), the constellation of perceptions, attitudes, and dispositions comprising an individual's network orientation is rooted within the "social character" shared by co-members of their status group. "The concept of 'social character,'" Fromm and Maccoby observe, "does not refer to the complete or highly individualized, in fact, unique character structure as it exists in an individual, but to the 'character matrix,' a syndrome of character traits which has developed as an adaptation to the economic, social, and cultural conditions common to that group" (Fromm & Maccoby, 1970, p. 36).

We can say, then, that a group's distinctive "social character" includes — at a deeper level — a framework upon which members depend for interpreting events, situations, and experiences revolving around the interactions with mainstream institutions and their agents (e.g., the school), and for guiding their behavior within these interactions (Ogbu, 1991). Urban social scientists have stressed that social characters — and the ideologies they embody — are never right or wrong (e.g., Fischer, 1982; Ogbu, 1991). They are neither totally rational nor totally emotional, but they are always meaningful; that is, they "make sense" to group members. Yet, a group's social character is more than a mere social construction based on a history of intra-group meaning-making; it is also a construction based on historical inter-group relations of power.

The prevailing social character of upper- and middle-class Euro-America has been profoundly shaped by the ideology of individualism, which can be understood as a psychodynamic worldview that interprets people's life condition, social status, and material wealth, not as a consequence of macro-social structural processes, but as a consequence of individual natural talents, choices, and actions. My objective in the next section of this article is to examine how institutionalized individualism, which pervades the world of the school, adversely affects the social development of minority children and youth by thwarting the development of a bicultural network orientation, by dampening their inclinations to seek help and guidance from both institutional and protective agents with the school, family, and community, and by obstructing their instrumental acquisition of the dominant "culture of power." In doing so, I hope to provide a glimpse of how ideology, in the words of Henry Giroux (1983), "works on and through individuals to secure their consent to the basic ethos and [exclusionary] practices of the dominant society" (p. 145).

Individualism as a General Network Orientation of Middle-Class Euro-Americans

The rise of individualism as an ideology appears to be historically rooted across different societies in their respective capitalist industrial development and modernization, leading, in turn, to mass literacy, the decline of tradi-
tional authority, and the rise of new forms of social organization (Eames & Goode, 1973). Industrial capitalism liberated some and dismembered others from communal social networks and traditional mores, imposing new and nontraditional values and practices while extending to some individuals the possibilities for considerable control over their life chances. The individual was now expected to chart his or her own path, to take risks, to be geographically mobile, to be motivated by self-interest and the potential for individual gain. Principal responsibility for both achievements and failures was now attributed to the individual, not to society (Turner, 1960).

Waterman (1984) states that the controversy over individualism originates in historical debates in the realm of moral philosophy and hinges on the lack of consensus over “what constitutes the highest forms of human functioning” (p. 4). In modern capitalist Western societies, this debate can also be understood as a struggle to assert and institutionalize values, beliefs, personality dispositions, and behavioral practices rooted in the Anglo Protestant heritage and in modern capitalism (Weber, 1958).

Individualism has never been a singular coherent ideological system, but rather has evolved into a number of distinctive branches, each with its own distinctive bent on the principality of the individual. The individualism of Karl Marx or John Dewey, for example, is quite divergent from the individualism most talked about today. The ideology pervasive throughout the twentieth century, of course, greatly diverges from the beliefs of Marx and Dewey. Known as “utilitarian” or “egoistic” individualism (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Waterman, 1984, respectively), this contemporary and mass ideology begins with the perception of people being by nature separate and atomistic, and pursuing their own private advantage in an idealized competitive setting.

The corresponding moral view is one that views competition and the pursuit of self-interest as a natural and superior means by which people are motivated to attain their highest level of human functioning. Egoistic motivation is viewed as not only natural, but also good, ultimately because it serves the good of everyone; in other words, the best society (or the best school system) is one where everyone profits from the combined effect of all individuals pursuing their private interests. When institutions are built upon the moral foundations of egoistic individualism, other motivational styles found in non-Western cultures either never gain due consideration or are viewed as exotic and inferior.

A principal tenet of the individualist tradition is the centrality of individual choice and personal responsibility, which casts success (and failure) in living as a function of the choices an individual makes (Watt, 1989). Since every person is seen as having the capacity for making the right choices, he or she also carries the burden of responsibility for making the wrong choices. The prevailing view of the individual is atomistic and self-contained. As Etzioni (1988) states, “The individual is viewed as standing detached from the com-
munity and from shared values, calculating whether or not to be a member, whether or not to heed the values' dictates" (p. 5). Collectivities are seen as "aggregates of individuals, without causal properties of their own, and as external to the person" (p. 5). The normative and socializing forces within the collective are only effective if the person chooses them to be so. According to this model, oppressive and inhibiting forces from above are trivialized, as are the mechanisms and forces that privilege the entire collective of which some individuals are a part.

Students of the individualist tradition see egoistic or utilitarian individualism as having a dominant influence on Western personality structures, producing, among other things, a sharp delineation between self and others, "an exclusion of others from one's own personal self-definition," and an exaggerated internal sense of personal control (self-congratulating as well as self-blaming) (Watson & Morris, 1994, p. 289). The emphases on self-trust, self-reliance, and autonomy are now institutionally articulated as the bases of esteem and self-reference (Vélez-Ibáñez, 1980). The consequences of this prevailing ethos, according to Bellah and associates (1984), have been severe in American society, undermining "deep commitments to family and friends, promoting excessive self-interest and a morally vacuous careerism, and making political and civic involvements increasingly suspect" (Watson & Morris, 1994, p. 290). To replace natural or communalistic support systems, formal institutional mechanisms (i.e., the state) and commercial enterprises are established to meet people's personal and social needs, with the former providing a safety net (or a prison cell) for those whose unmet expectations under individualism lead to various pathologies (i.e., anomie).

Yet, the potentially toxic character of mainstream or bourgeois individualism is most realized in working-class minority communities, where the atrophy of family and community support systems is not replaced by equal share-holdings in the mainstream marketplace, but by network orientations that pay homage to mainstream myths, while further undermining familial and communalistic relations capable of engendering resiliency. In another work (Stanton-Salazar, forthcoming) I have tried to provide a greater elaboration of this point:

The adaptive responses and defiant behavior of a growing segment of inner-city [minority] youth and young adults appear to stem from a social character which rejects the accommodation and conformity of immigrants, while adopting the most excessive aspects of individualism, sustained only by a highly adapted, defensive, and acutely concentrated peer-focused communalism (Vigil, 1988). The causes and meaning of their defiant behavior is typically portrayed by the mainstream using the logic of deviance, individual pathology, and learned helplessness, and thus chooses to ignore how the marginalization of many minority youth are rooted in the class and racial inequalities and antagonisms which characterize our society (Giroux, 1983, p. 107). In reality, what we find is a continuum whereby youth can be distinguished by the degree to which they embody what Sánchez-Jankowski
(1991, p. 23) terms a defiant individualist character. The greater the experience of marginality among youth, and the more it is shared by similar and significant others, the greater the probability that youth will assume and express such a character.

Contemporary institutionalized individualism exists as the ideological cloak for mainstream market relations and embodies within it a number of hidden reproductive functions, first and foremost, to obscure and legitimate the principal dimensions of institutionalized exclusion in society. This is to say that access to vital institutional resources is cast in terms of merit and fair competition, rather than in terms of the inherently unmerited advantages in constructing empowering networks and in accumulating social capital. When the role of social capital is made explicit, its inequitable distribution is again cast in terms of poor relational choices of others, rather than in terms of its contingency on native membership in the right social world — a world that is deeply exclusionary.

The ideological cloak of individualism serves to obscure how the formation of supportive ties to institutional agents (across sociocultural “borders”) rests on knowledge of, facility with, and deference to the cultural rules, communicative conventions, and network orientations that together are rooted in the social character and ethos of the dominant group. The ability to impose one’s social character and cultural conventions as requisites for the accumulation of social and other forms of capital remains one of the most fundamental and far-reaching forms of power and exclusion in society today.

Let me return here to a discussion of the toxic manifestations of institutionalized individualism in the socialization and schooling of working-class minority children and youth. First and foremost is the emphasis on competition, self-sufficiency, autonomy, and meritocracy within the school system, which has fundamentally differential effects on children from different class and ethnic backgrounds. For privileged children, it provides an institutionally endorsed explanation for their success, while obscuring the network mechanisms that systematically engineer their advantage. For nonprivileged children, it acts to undermine the support flowing from family and community sources (Martin & Martin, 1985) and muddles their awareness of how important help-seeking behavior, supportive ties to peers, and collaborative learning are to their long-term success. Among institutional agents, institutionalized individualism creates an unnecessary schism between their pedagogical actions and increasing empirical research documenting that collaborative learning structures and strategic mentorship enhance complex problem-solving, social cohesion, and personal well-being more than do individualistic and competitive structures (e.g., Nelson-Le Gall, 1985; Nelson-Le Gall & Jones, 1991).

As stated earlier, the most toxic manifestations of bourgeois individualism within minority communities appear in the adaptive responses and defiant
behavior of street youth. Here we find the adoption of the most excessive aspects of individualism, sustained only by a highly adapted, antagonistic, and peer-based pseudo-communalism (Martin & Martin, 1985; Sánchez-Jankowski, 1991; Vigil, 1988). In essence, what we find is heightened individualism, without the intensive capital to sustain its productive capabilities. Thus, the emergence of competitiveness and self-reliance corresponds not only to detachment from communal support systems and community protective agents, but also to mistrust, social isolation, and nihilistic struggles over scarce resources and newly valued commodities.

Conclusion

I have tried here to advance a network-analytic model of minority socialization and schooling that radically departs from the various psychocentric models existing in the literature. I have done so by building and incorporating the work of many scholars, including Bourdieu (1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), Boykin (1986), Fine (1991), and Phelan and associates (1993). Yet, this network-analytic model is clearly in its preliminary stages, and no doubt many will find areas that need refinement. Its strength, I believe, lies in its comparative analysis of race and class; while it focuses on the mechanisms responsible for such things as minority school failure, it does so by unveiling the mechanisms by which the dominant group socially organizes, in the most tacit of ways, to monopolize institutional resources. Another distinct advantage of the model presented here is that it goes far beyond the motivational dynamics of school success and addresses the social and relational mechanisms by which members of oppressed groups, particularly children and youth, become successful within mainstream institutions. Lastly, prescriptions for reproducing this success among all minority children and youth are strongly implied in the framework.

At this point, some readers may be asking, “How do we account for the apparent evidence that some immigrant youth experience school success and mobility with what appears to be minimal school- and community-based social capital?” (as defined here). I am well aware of the ample evidence that shows many immigrant youth exhibiting extraordinary and heroic amounts of ambition, motivation, and resilience, even in the face of poverty, prejudice, and problem-ridden public schools. In another work, I have tried to account for important cultural variations within minority communities using a network-analytic framework (Stanton-Salazar, forthcoming). For now, I can only briefly respond to the above question.

Contemporary work by cultural anthropologists has clearly shown how immigrant communities draw on cultural resources and ethnic identities not readily accessible to other sectors of the minority community, resources that function in a sense to immunize immigrants from the worst psychological effects of racism and classism (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991; Ogbu, 1991). Yet, the
available research provides no substantial evidence that academically successful immigrant youth “make it” without significant institutional support from school-based institutional agents. In fact, the bicultural network orientation of many English-proficient immigrant students makes them the most likely candidates for the accumulation of social capital within the school (see Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995). It is my sense that the development and maintenance of heightened levels of motivation, when not rooted in systematic and consistent access to institutional support, represents a form of heroism sustainable only by a most unrelenting misperception of structural reality. While such a mental condition may pay dividends to certain rare individuals within the minority student population, the lived experiences of most urban minority youth precludes the emergence of such an individualist and heroic mindset. Furthermore, the suggestion — often implicit in school ideology — that the adoption of this type of mindset is a precondition for individual school success tends to have psychologically violent consequences, whether it be a deepening of cynicism and quiet rage, or a nagging sense of personal moral failure (see Fine, 1991; MacLeod, 1987; Stanton-Salazar, 1995).

Unlike mainstream psychological models of child and youth development, the view of development I have tried to present aggressively confronts the social and cultural reproductive forces in society and their debilitating if not oppressive effects on children and youth. In sum, successful socialization among minority children entails learning to “decode the system” and to “participate in power,” understood as learning how to engage socially those agents and participants in mainstream worlds and social settings who control or manage critical resources. Learning to participate in power is also understood as learning for instrumental purposes, schemes of perceptions, dispositions, and latent relational and discourse strategies that drive the accumulation, conversion, and transference of mainstream forms of capital in society. The challenge of “participating in power” entails the motivation to learn the appropriate “codes” and the motivation to apply them in social interactions with institutional agents; such motivation is embodied in my definition of a bicultural network orientation. Yet, learning to thrive within the system must go far beyond such mere “decoding.” To thrive, minority children must also learn to engage in the academic process communally, rather than individualistically; they must also learn that to attain the highest levels of human functioning, they must remain embedded in familial and communal support systems while they participate in other worlds.

Put differently, the challenge of minority socialization entails learning to manage life in multiple worlds, to negotiate effectively what Boykin (1986) calls the “triple quandary.” Clearly, many youth have resolved this quandary by embracing an individualistic value system, detaching from community, and acting “native” within the mainstream social world. Yet, this solution — implicitly network-oriented — remains an individual solution, often with
long-term detrimental psychic consequences (Rodriguez, 1983). Most working-class minority youth will reject an assimilationist network-oriented model, no matter how much generous institutional support is offered. An authentically group solution rests with the development of a bicultural network orientation among all minority children — an orientation that is anti-assimilationist and culturally democratic at its core (Darder, 1991). The overwhelming evidence in the research literature is that learning the dominant "culture of power" is very difficult for many minority children and youth. The principal underlying reason for why this is so has to do with the fact that learning to negotiate the dominant culture of power within the typical school environment is usually a fiercely alienating and symbolically violent experience, particularly when one goes at it alone — as is so often the case. Ultimately, the systematic provision of institutional support must be accompanied by a radical critique of how mainstream institutions reproduce and legitimate inequalities (Fine, 1991; Giroux, 1988). Thus, minority students learn to "decode the system," not only for the purpose of attaining individual mobility and success, but also for the purpose of "democratizing the system." Systematic intervention efforts oriented toward enhancing the social networks of working-class minority youth, as well as efforts directed toward enabling them to effectively negotiate the "culture of power," can only be an immediate and short-term strategy. Simply stated, the radical transformation of the dominant "culture of power" — at least within the school — must be an integral feature of any network-oriented intervention, and minority youth and their agents must equally and jointly participate in this necessary transformation.22 Without such a pedagogical commitment on the part of researchers and educators, school interventions based upon network-analytic models will only function as "kinder and gentler" mechanisms of social reproduction, rather than as one authentic mechanism for the democratization of both our school system and society.

References


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Notes

1. Also neglected, of course, are the developmental stages by which White children are socialized into their racially privileged status and identity.
2. See Knottnerus (1987) for an extended critique of functionalist theories of inequality, particularly in the Wisconsin model of status attainment.
3. For example, how racism, classism, and patriarchy play themselves out in the school system, the labor market, state policies, and the workplace.
4. Originating in social anthropology as a powerful descriptive tool in the study of kinship relations (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952), the concept of social network became increasingly useful among researchers dissatisfied with long-established theoretical models of social behavior (Barnes, 1972). Though social networks have been studied as social and communication systems (e.g., Rogers & Kincaid, 1981), a great deal of research has focused on what can be termed egocentric networks, referring to “the chains of persons with whom a given person is in actual contact,” where a number of those who are linked to the focal person are, in turn, linked to each other, and where such linkages exhibit a particular structure (Boissevain, 1974, p. 25). It was precisely the observable structure of these linkages that researchers found valuable in interpreting the social behavior of groups and individuals.
5. Although the focus here is on working-class urban minority youth, I use the term low-status because I believe that much of my argument also applies to working-class youth in general, and to girls across class and racial categories.
6. In working-class families, older siblings who have been afforded opportunities to attend college often act as institutional agents to younger siblings.
7. See Stanton-Salazar, Vásquez, and Mehan (1996) for an extended discussion of these six forms of institutional support.
8. A similar argument is made by Lamont and Lareau (1988) in their treatment of Bourdieu’s work on cultural capital.
10. A very similar discussion is found in Lin’s (1995) recent treatment of “institutional capital” in China.
11. Williams and Kornblum (1985), in their chapter on Superkids, provide numerous examples of how informal mentors altered the life-course of adolescents from low-income families and communities.
12. In developing this section, I have drawn considerable insight from Eisenstadt and Roniger’s (1984) analysis of patron-client relations.
13. School personnel would be terribly mistaken to assume that minority children have absolutely no access to institutional support within the family and community. Such an attitude would foster thinking of minority children and youths in deficit terms. Luis Moll and colleagues (1992) have made great strides in demonstrating that bicultural children come to school with a good deal of funds of knowledge gained from family and community members. My argument is, however, class comparative. Compared to middle-class children, working-class children are much more dependent on nonfamilial institutional agents and on school-based interventions for these resources.
14. Fine’s (1991) discussion of “institutional fetishes” provides an excellent analysis of how a school’s organizational framework can operate, in tacit ways, to engineer school failure.
I use socialization and social development interchangeably in this article. Likewise, school reformers and social program designers will fail to institute the necessary mechanisms that could lead to successful social development and school success.

17. Montero-Sieburth and Villaruel (forthcoming), in their work on "at-risk" Latino adolescents, discuss six basic areas of human development: 1) physical health, physical growth; 2) accomplishments of normal developmental tasks; 3) the fulfillment of expected social roles; 4) the acquisitions of essential skills; 5) the achievement of a sense of adequacy and competence; and 6) the appropriate preparation for the next developmental period of the lifespan (i.e., young adulthood for adolescents).

18. The concept of apprenticeship is taken from Gee (1989, p. 7), and is used in his work to explain how people learn institutional Discourses in the context of supportive relationships with people who have already mastered the Discourse.

19. My use of the word "borders" differs to some degree from Phelan et al. (1993).

20. I credit Anzaldúa (1987) for helping me see how to articulate the complexity of multiple world participation.

21. The concept of social character, of course, overlaps considerably with Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) notion of "habitus," which they use to refer to a system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group of class.

22. Alschuler (1989), using principles based on the work of Paulo Freire, offers some guidelines that could serve as a worthy point of departure.

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