

A proposed compromise regarding the southside debate: “College or die” vs. “Not everyone needs to go to college”

Much discussion has occurred during the meetings of the Southeast Education Task Force and the Southeast Working-Class Task Force (SEW-CTF) around the career needs of our southside students who are mainly from working-class families. The legacy that southside children will end up in common labor jobs as did their parents and extended family, is challenging to students and schools as each faces pressure from the current “...going to college culture” or the concern that a diploma alone no longer guarantees career success (Loschert, 2017).

Mainly, the opinion that manual labor was the destiny of Manual students and folks who lived on the “other side of the tracks” was reinforced by low graduation numbers and the consequent perpetual cycle of poverty. This provided proof to others that the stereotypes were true: the culture of low-income families was fundamentally flawed and made southsiders well-suited for the working-class lifestyle and conditions as they showed a capacity to accept their “station.”

This does not mean there are many outstanding individual Manual and Wood High graduates. Yet, these isolated cases sustain the stereotypes which suggest that only an exceptional few can find success in southside schools and that this success is partially defined by their ability to leave the southside community to live in a more “successful” one on the northside of “the tracks.” See how Indy’s railroad tracks actually divide the city by class (Baird & Lubin, 2013).

Southside public schools and concerned citizens must give young people a reason to invest in their learning. Students will commit to their education when its purpose is to help them do something to eliminate the characteristic of poverty and other social toxins (community health, crime, systemic oppression, unemployment, housing, etc.) they have to deal with and which act as barriers to their academic success.

Helping students to understand, question, and challenge the beliefs and practices associated with any oppressive condition they face will ensure this investment. Thus, schools must create a critical awareness in lower-class students so they not only see the connection between many of their individual/neighborhood problems/experiences and the systemic socio-economic conditions of that community, but act with their school to improve those conditions.

Investment will happen when low-income southside students are taught the skills needed to become more capable producers of counter-information which will discredit the stories by others who want to blame school failure on the character flaws of individual students and/or the cultural deficits ingrained in southside life. And, this awareness will connect students to the larger local social justice struggle fighting unjust conditions.

The compromise regarding the “College or die” vs. “Not everyone needs to go to college” debate is having our southside public schools foster a school/classroom climate that empowers *all* students regardless of what they plan to do after graduation. This climate normalizes self-respect, self-realization, critical self-consciousness, and intellectual capacity centered in community change and enabling working-class students to become: 1) more critical consumers of *all* information they encounter daily; and 2) more critically conscious citizens due to an empowering education using a curriculum valuing the intellectual potential in *all* students.

“What is unequivocally helpful from Prudence Carter’s inquiry in her book *Keepin’ it real*, is the assertion that these [southside Indianapolis] young people’s way of being and the concepts of achievement and mobility need not be mutually exclusive. That is, as a society [and a southside public school system], perhaps we need to meet these students where they are culturally [as members of the working class] so they can participate in the opportunity structure without having to compromise their sense of self, family, and neighborhood.” ~ paraphrased from *Harvard Education Review* (Summer, 2007)

Introduction

In the past, both southside Emmerich Manual Training High School (1895-present) and Harry E. Wood High School (1953-1978) had vocational themes. As in many large cities east of the Mississippi and north of the Mason-Dixon Line, the south side of urban centers was the “other side of the tracks.” This was where the poor and working class lived, worked, and went to school.

As a result of European immigration (1890s-1920), our southside was the home of working-class and some business-class Germans, Italians, Irish, and Jews. The First Great Migration (1910-1940) brought Appalachians and additional African Americans to the north who also settled on the south side. The Second Great Migration (1940-1970) brought even more Appalachians and African Americans here, sparking both the move of Manual and the opening of Wood in 1953.

I grew up in Fountain Square in the 1950s. My father’s family was Appalachian working class from North Carolina via West Virginia. On Saturdays, in the winter, we watched IU basketball followed by Midwestern Hayride with Porter Wagoner, who by the way debuted Dolly Parton on his show. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzvLSMgWfQM> I was richly impressed by Porter’s colorful embroidered outfits, and the show’s the clog dancers.

As I grew up, I became aware that the urban culture of the working class was suspicious of “educated people.” We were afraid they’d make us look “stupid.” The “educated” were our authority figures: our bosses who’d treat us unfairly, our teachers who’d correct our “bad” grammar; they were “the government” whose “nosey people” would intrude in our lives, or they were doctors and lawyers who’d take advantage of us.

“I never let school interfere with my education.” ~Mark Twain, 1907

We mocked those my mom called the “hoity toity.” She’d put her pinky finger out as she acted like she was sipping tea. In fact, this culture made fun of educated people. For example, the Grand Ole Opry had comedian Archie Campbell who called himself, “The “Professor.” He’d be on stage with a chalk board, a pointer, and he wore a black graduation gown and the flat hat/tassel. The Professor would make mistakes (like defining paradox as “two doctors”) and his class would boo and throw paper wads at him. Appreciate that Archie was not there to have the audience look up to educated people, but to poke fun at those the blue-collar folks saw as having lots of “book learning,” but no common sense due to being “educated beyond their intelligence.”

”There’s nothing more stupid than an educated man when you get off the subject he was educated in.”
~ Will Rogers, American humorist

This is not the “anti-intellectualism” the working class is sometimes accused of; it’s the concern that schooling was educating us “away from our culture” with the implication that the school’s culture was superior to the culture the working class students brought to school. That’s why country folks created “The Grand Ole Opry,” mis-spelling/mis-pronouncing “opera” on purpose. We did not place and play our “fiddle” under our chin. This was a direct and purposeful rejection of middle-class culture and sensibilities, and its individualism. The family and the extended family of relatives/clan (and now also the “block”/the neighborhood) were what gave us meaning.

Today, our southside schools and teachers must begin respect that their role is not necessarily to assimilate their students into the middle class, but to educate working class students in their own self-interest and the self-determination of their community (Finn, 1999).

A proposed compromise regarding the southside debate: “College or die” vs. “Not everyone needs to go to college”

Much discussion has occurred during the meetings of the Southeast Education Task Force and the Southeast Working-Class Task Force around the idea regarding what our southside students, who are mainly from working-class families, were capable of in school and after graduation. In the past, both southside Manual (as in manual labor) and Harry E. Wood had many vocational courses. For example, Manual had an actual auto mechanic/auto body shop with 3 bays where students worked on cars. Because the work was good and the prices reasonable, even community members brought in the cars.

Currently, a walk through most southside schools such as Manual shows hallways with a variety of pennants from a variety of colleges and universities. This “going to college” model of urban education reform seems contagious. It is the pattern in many schools in the city.

One aspect of the discussion involves the stereotype that Indy’s southsiders are the labor class with no interest or capacity to go to a university.

“When I was coming up on the south side in a working-class family and neighborhood, some of my peers at Wood High ‘...took pride in not giving in to school.’ They may have sensed schooling as wanting to educate them away from their culture. Education was rejected even though everyone knew the detrimental effects of this choice. This was the late 1950s. My classmates wanted the knowledge and skills offered, but not at the expense of their home culture, especially our language. For example, they had no intention of “talking proper” ever. Perhaps, too, they did not want to take on the sensibilities and mannerisms of the middle-class the schools offered and their teachers practiced; but, why?

We can’t forget that success, as defined by school, could have alienated us from our family, friends, workmates and remarkably, for instance, the world of the barbershop. Also, in this regard and in general, certain working-class female students could “marry up and out” of the neighborhood, but few males could date those co-eds from Howe or Shortridge. This was life as members of Indy’s southside rank and file, a life which could too often validate the negative views others had of us—views they used to justifying their discrimination based on social class and culture.”

~ John Harris Loflin

Why do most of the working class end up in labor intensive jobs?

The above recollection and commentary is supported by 2 books written to explain why most of the working class end-up in labor intensive jobs. The authors argue this prediction is true due to a history of certain expectations and/or working-class schools that perpetuate inequalities by confusing assimilation with education.

In *Learning to Labor: How working class kids end up in working class jobs* (1977), Paul Willis shows how education links culture/class in the reproduction of social hierarchy. Willis saw working-class students rebelling against the rules/values/authority of school, creating their own culture of opposition—all the while knowing that this non-conformity prepared them for labor jobs. Willis notes, it was their own choices, yet nothing was better for those who took pride in not “giving in” to school. This shows the power of class to influence working people in making their culture and how its resistance to the social order actually constitutes the culture.

When southside teachers do not respect/appreciate this opposition to education, their schools, rather than helping overcome hierarchies/inequalities, can perpetuate them.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning_to_Labour

A review Jay MacLeod's 1987 classic, *Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood*, shows how working-class youth personalize low self-esteem and low aspirations, and the school failure these internalizations produce. The youth he studied believed there was no possibility of being successful due to the ways schools were set up; everything, they said, was "stacked against us." The tragedy is, according to MacLeod, they were right. See Appendix E.

Our challenges in this debate are:

- do we create this debate by categorizing students as academic vs. non-academic?
- do we cause students and families, and schools, to limit thinking and dreams as we rationalize the failure of schools by the deficit thinking of "College is not for everyone" and the implication, "...she/he is just not college material"?
- does stressing college enable us to ignore the material conditions of urban neighborhoods, such as poverty, which are far removed from the rhetoric of college and much more pertinent to the lives of lower-class students?

Consider the paragraphs below to help all stakeholders deal with the dilemma as to how southside working-class students and their families, as well as their schools and society itself, view their potentials and aspirations.

Organic intellectualism:

Strength-based orientations that help urban working-class students stand out

A review of the concept of "labor" shows 2 types: manual and mental or intellectual labor.*

Italian philosopher, writer, politician, and political theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) notes, "*all [people] are intellectuals ... but not all [people] have in society the function of intellectuals.*"

According to Gramsci, each person has a level of intelligence resulting from the interaction with the world and that these interactions are most always constrained by such factors as race, age, gender, and class. The fact that each student experiences the world differently means each comes to school with different forms of intellectualism (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).

However, our urban public schools are often ill-equipped to identify and develop a student's "organic intellectualism." Instead, they end up sorting so-called intellectuals from so-called non-intellectuals via teaching methods that value the ability to acquire and reproduce information--using specific formats within rigid time frames that leave the organic intelligence of lower-class students unrecognized, unappreciated, and thus under-utilized in school/society.

Schools as places perpetuating false divisions: mental vs. manual labor

Gramsci went on to argue that schools are often the social institution used to validate this unnatural division in society, one where an individual is cast as either:

- *Homo sapiens* (one who thinks/works with his or her mind), or
- *Homo faber* (one who labors/works with his or her hands).

Gramsci's approach questions and breaks down the division between thinker and worker and replaces it with a paradigm that values the intellectual potential in *all* people.

*(What is important here is mental labor is built on the foundation of manual labor. Workers build Indianapolis. They harvest our food, make the surgeon's scalpel, and drive our buses. In fact, would intellectual labor be possible without the labor needed to meet our basic needs?

Humanizing our southside students, families, and neighborhoods: Enabling students to discredit stereotypical images that can restrict their life choices

The stereotypes about southsiders, and the fate of their working-class communities to a life of manual labor is perpetuated by the notion that there is a division between working with our hands and working with our minds. This split will be bridged when our southside working-class students become more critical consumers of *all* information they encounter in their daily lives and when they get the skills to become more capable producers of counter-information.

How does today's working class identify itself? "I belong to the drinking class"

A review of the lyrics to the song "Drinking Class" by Lee Brice will help "outsiders" appreciate how today's working class self-identifies and affirms its existence.

Although this song does not speak for all the working class, reporter Billy Dukes of *Taste of Country* gave the song a favorable review, calling it "Brice's finest moment" and "a song that can't be ignored." Dukes also wrote that "there's not a hardworking American who won't relate to this song on some level." Here's the chorus:

I'm a member of a blue collar crowd
They can never, nah they can't keep us down
If you gotta, gotta label me, label me proud

I belong to the drinking class
Monday through Friday, man we bust our backs
If you're one of us, raise your glass
I belong to the drinking class

Here's the link to the words: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/leebrice/drinkingclass.html>
Hear Lee sing the song at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZV1oQiRdoPc>

Southside students must be given chances to tell their own story

This humanization of their everyday lives demands an education preparing *all* our southside students to analyze their world critically. Such a curriculum puts tools of critical thinking, research, and most importantly, the intellectual production of knowledge in their hands.

Here, students themselves will provide a counter-narrative to the "unsophisticated southsider" portrayed by the general populace. Now students define who they are by revealing the realities they face. Ranging from the hope and strength they experience on their "block" to how they react and counter conditions of stereotypes and the resulting systemic oppression, students share their perspective to the world.

Self-affirmation is a powerful way for the southside working-class to control their story and their destiny, and so dispel the negative and even pathological images others have of them.

See Appendix C.

Going to college is put in perspective:

The limitations of the "college going" culture--a middle-class ideology that ignores actual neighborhood problems which are more pertinent to the lives of students and far removed from the rhetoric of college

Question: are southside students and their families owed a conversation around the positive and negative aspects of the current "college or die" school climate? For example, are we making the mistake of attempting to replicate the schooling ideology of the middle class--one emphasizing a "college-going culture" which all but:

- **ignores the material conditions of urban communities such as poverty?**

An education with relevance: Making college a realistic option

Let's be clear, our low-income southside students should go to college at rates equal to their more affluent counterparts. The point here is a schooling environment emphasizing the relationship between education and the most pressing conditions in the neighborhoods (an education with relevance) is most likely to produce notable increases in college eligibility.

This is why the unique lives and conditions of our southside urban youth deserve an education system which accomplishes the 2 goals in concert with one another:

1. preparation to confront the conditions of social/economic inequity in their daily lives
2. access to the academic literacies (reading, writing, math) making college attendance a realistic option.

This approach to reform is a *double investment* in southside neighborhoods because:

- it provides pedagogy/curricula lending immediate relevance to school for students;
- **it works to break the cycle of disinvestment of human capital in the southside by**
 - **creating graduates who recognize their potential agency to improve urban centers and their neighborhoods,**
 - **rather than seeing them as places to escape.**

These prospects offer our southside working-class students:

- a renewed sense of purpose with regard to school, and
- the realization that the necessary human and institutional capital they acquire in school can contribute to their neighborhood's cultural, economic, and political revitalization.

The question is: how can southside students get the critical pedagogy needed to make them critically conscious citizens no matter what happens after high school graduation? In other words, what is a high quality education for *any* southside student?

A response to the either/or predicament is the have our southside public schools foster a school/classroom climate that empowers *all* students regardless of what they plan to do after graduation. This culture normalizes:

- 1) self-respect—developing a sense of oneself and responsibility to others;
- 2) self-realization--developed by learning through their own experiences;
- 3) critical self-consciousness—developing a student's confidence in their agency to challenge inequalities in their neighborhoods; and,
- 4) intellectual capacity—revealing/developing the innate intelligence via social justice curriculum which aims to eradicate the very systemic barriers to academic success such as poverty and other social toxins.

An education with relevance: Increasing college eligibility

For the our southeast public schools to provide an education that is relevant so as to better prepare students for university, they must be a part of a larger southeast community effort to address the problems of poverty and other social toxins.

A comprehensive vision for southeast school transformation

The SEW-CTF paper, "A comprehensive vision for the transformation of southeast-Indianapolis public education" outlines the concept of "an education with relevance."

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SEW-CTF-A-comprehensive-vision-for-the-transformation-of-southeast-Indianapolis-public-education.pdf>

This vision recognizes the need to move beyond attempts to only change the system of education inside schools in order to also address more fundamental problems in our community environment--an environment which enables failing schools and can destroy the

hopes of southeast students and their families. SEW-CTF believes that in the absence of a long-range strategy to foster the self-determination and cultural empowerment that southeast resident-citizens need to challenge and eradicate the underlying causes of poverty and other social toxins, heroic attempts to reform schools or to introduce new teaching/learning techniques in the classroom will be difficult to sustain. Consequently, we must provide the conditions for a diminution of apathy and a resurgence of hope in our southeast neighborhoods by an aggressive assault on urban poverty and social isolation in order to begin to see healthy returns on our investments in education.

Urban schools as site to contest inequalities

This SEW-CTF proposal argues that because most public urban schools are in pockets of poverty, these institutions are uniquely situated as community centers for anti-poverty actions. It is quite justifiable that those who suffer from the immediacy of poverty and other social toxins be directly involved in the eradication of these conditions. Thus, urban students, and their communities, must reason with their neighborhood school and local district to provide them pedagogy and curricula addressing the conditions of urban life, and foster among them a sense of opportunity and power for altering those conditions.

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SEW-CTF-Urban-schools-as-site-to-contest-inequalities.pdf>

A problem: Two definitions of success--one for the poor, one for the wealthy

A good way to understand the debate around what Indy's southside schools need to do regarding helping their students decide what to do after graduation is found in the two definitions of success: one for the poor and one for the wealthy.

For the poor, it's how far you live from where you were raised. For the wealthy, it is how close you live from where you were raised. If you grew up in the Fountain Square and you now live in Carmel, you are more "successful" than someone still living there.

Considering the story below, these two definitions are both misleading and misguided because they drain needed talent from the already under-resourced urban neighborhoods needing them the most.

"I want to share with you what no one ever told me when I became an honors student. I want to share with you that you have the right, no, the responsibility, to redefine the term 'success.' Success is something that was always defined for me by others. I am the youngest of seven kids, so I had plenty of people ahead of me deciding what it meant for me to be successful...or, in the case of some of my older brothers and sisters, what it meant to NOT be successful. My family, [community], and, most powerfully, my schooling all had definitions of success that they were more than happy to tattoo onto my psyche. Almost without exception, these definitions were rooted in my ability to have more than others...and the baseline was my parents. If I could have more than them, if I could go to a brand name college, if I could have a better house, a better stereo, a better car...then I would be successful. Of course, all of that meant leaving behind my community, but that was alright because those who stayed behind were there because they couldn't leave, because they were failures. Anyone who was really successful, well, of course they moved out to a 'better' neighborhood. I never thought to question this. It seemed right to me."

~ paraphrased from Dr. Duncan-Andrade's essay "Success" published in Issue 1 of *Black and Brown on Brown*. <https://tcla.gseis.ucla.edu/equalterms/features/brown/issue1.html>

***Going to college and graduating are two different things:
Are southside high school graduates actually ready for the realities of college?***

In the face of today's "going to college" culture, there is the hidden issue exposed in the *USA Today* story, "College degrees elude charter school grads" (Tippo, 2017). According to Tippo, a 2013 report by the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Ed found that students from America's lowest income families were about 1/8th as likely as the wealthiest students to have a bachelor's degree by age 24. For the wealthiest, the rate was 77%. For the poorest, it was just 9%.

Nationally, 41% of African Americans who start college graduate in 6 years. In Indiana, the number is 36%. The number for white Hoosiers is 59%. Thus, few public urban schools are able to prepare *all* students to complete college. See <http://measuringup2008.highereducation.org/>

Hard questions need to be asked. We know: 1) the high stakes Indiana politics involved in traditional vs. charters; 2) that low A-F school rankings can close schools; and, 3) high test scores/graduation rates can determine profit margins for businesses like Charter Schools USA. Thus, how realistic is it that we southsiders "buy" the "Our graduates will go to college" sales pitch many schools use when at this point, for working-class students, *going to college and graduating* from college are 2 different things?

What this paper suggests is that our Manual High School (also even Howe High School)--meet the challenge to let southside families and residents know how many of their grads matriculate from college after 6 years. Also, families and employers must know the percentage of our high school grads who start at a 2-year college, eventually earn a 4-year degree.

To summarize

The stratified nature of our current American society creates a social pyramid that has no room at the top for the masses of citizens. Consequently, this structure requires people to be sorted, and schools are the mechanism used to resolve this messy social conundrum.

What is interesting and revealing is the overwhelming majority of those who benefit most from this sorting process are those who look, talk, think, and act most like those who already have power (Ducan-Andrade, 2008).

Because our southside public education system is based on the mainstream middle-class culture, and obviously not on the southside's working-class culture, working-class students attend schools which have historically made them have to choose between 2 distinct cultural worlds: that of their family, community, or neighborhood and that of the dominant culture which their public school/s represent.

Accordingly, our southside working-class students of all colors are asked to trade the culture of their home and community for the "higher culture" of the school in exchange for access to college. This reduces their life choices of students into a false binary, that of choosing between staying behind as a failure, and "getting out" as a success (Ducan-Andrade, 2008).

"Faced with the prospect of leaving their [southside] communities behind to be successful, many urban youth opt out of school. They choose to retain an urban and cultural identity they perceive to be in conflict with the expectations of schools, even if the cost of that choice is school failure. To be effective, [southside]...schools must begin to develop partnerships with communities that provide young people the opportunity to be successful while maintaining their identities as urban [and/or working-class] youth.

No educational system in a multi-cultural society democratic society should force large portions of its children to make such a choice. An equitable [southside Indy] education system would nurture students' own [working class and urban] cultural identit[ies] and promote the use of their school success in the service of their [southside neighborhoods].”

~ paraphrased from Duncan-Andrade in *The Art of Critical Pedagogy*, p. 174.

Recommendations for teachers and school staff:

- Focus on collective agency (the homeroom or the classroom, the family, “you and your homies” or the neighborhood) of students. Emphasize group learning/teamwork over the strictly individual assignments and assessments. Supporting a learning climate reflecting the middle-class culture of individualism practiced by their school and lived by their teachers, can actually interfere with/not advance the school success
- Provide students opportunities to be public intellectuals:
 - Develop a pedagogy of the city, community, and neighborhood.
 - Focus on student production of knowledge, rather than its consumption.
- Prioritize caring relationships where students feel authentically cared for and in turn open themselves up to caring about school (Duncan-Andrade, 2008).
- Resources must be used to address directly the context of urban life and poverty that shapes the lives of students and the surrounding community by:
 - focusing on pedagogies that challenge the social and economic inequities which confront urban youth;
 - helping schools, and teachers most directly, in the development and implementation of pedagogy and curricula that
 - address the conditions of urban life, and
 - develops a sense of power among students for altering those conditions.

In conclusion

- There is compromise with the debate: “College or die” vs. “Not everyone needs to go to college.” The middle-way is that our southside public schools will provide a school ethos and curriculum where working-class students become more critical consumers of all information they encounter in their daily lives regardless of their life plans.
- This is vital: the social/cultural respect, by the larger society for the working-class community, is sustained when our children and youth acquire the skills to become more capable producers of counter-information dispelling the negative stereotypes which enable a self-fulfilling prophecy of low expectations.
- *Southside public schools must give young people a reason to invest in their education. This must be an education that challenges and transforms the factors regarding the very social, economic, and political injustices they face every day. A critical praxis using critical pedagogies that are logically, culturally, politically, and locally relevant will empower our students to understand and question the place of education and schooling and the above critical factors in reproducing a social order where they are at the bottom.*

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Indianapolis is not only segregated by race, but by class. Washington St. (US 40) and the parallel railroad tracks divide the city north and south. Note the super majority of red dots (white people) south of Washington St. As is the case today, and in the past, these citizens are mainly working class. See map of Indianapolis here: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/walkingsf/5560477952/in/album-72157626354149574/>
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APPENDIX A

Social Class and School Knowledge: How working-class students get a working-class education

Jean Anyon (1980) studied 5th grade classrooms in northern New Jersey looking at differences in student work in schools she labeled by what the parents of the students did for a living. She concluded that public education has a "hidden curriculum" as schools provide different types of knowledge and different educational experiences to children based on the perceived competency of the students as well as their social class.

- Working-class school: students from families who were at or below the federal poverty line and where most of the parents had "blue-collar" jobs (semi-skilled/unskilled).
- Middle-class school: it contained students with parents who were blue-collar "rich" skilled and well paid laborers, parents with middle-class and "white collar" jobs (city employees, skilled tradesmen, office supervisors, accountants).
- Affluent professional school: parents were at the upper income level of the upper middle class, and predominantly employed as "professionals" (doctors, lawyers, engineers).
- Executive elite school: the majority of the families belonged to the capitalist class, with most fathers being top executives.

Working Class	Middle Class	Affluent Professional	Executive Elite
Schools focus on following steps of a procedure. • Explanations as to how work connected to other assignments or real life, or what the idea was that lay behind the procedure were rarely given.	Schools focus on getting the right answer. • Directions were to be followed in order to reach the right answer, but an element of choice and decision making was involved	Schools focus on: • Individual thought & expressiveness • Expansion & illustration of ideas • Choice of appropriate method & material.	Schools focus on developing one's analytical intellectual powers. • Children are continually asked to reason through a problem, • Produce work that was of top academic quality
Language Arts focus on punctuation, capitalization, & 4 kinds of sentences. • Grammatical rules were to be followed. No reasons as to how or why given. • Creative writing assignments required answering teacher created questions on a sheet	Language Arts focus on "simple grammar" needed to speak properly, write a business letter. • Assignments involved choosing the right answer & understanding why you chose that answer. • Very little chance given for creative writing	Language Arts focus on creative writing. • Each student was to write a story for a first grader, whom they had interviewed to see what type of story the child liked best • Very little focus was placed on grammar	Language Arts focus on practicing presentations & managing situations where child was expected to be in charge • Children present lesson on grammar to class • Evaluated on presentation, communication, level of interest, & class control
Students taught to follow a set procedure • Not encouraged to discover own methods of solving the problems presented. • Work is not graded on if the correct solution is found, but on if correct procedure followed.	Work graded on if solution is correct, not if specific technique used & fundamental understanding accomplished • More emphasis on choice/making decisions. • Creativity not expected, & does not have a place in the classroom	The fundamental goal: • Ensure students can not only perform a task, but also understand it. • Work is creative activity carried out independently. • Students learn a concept, not a method.	Students taught to think on their own: • Students learn not only the process of solving a problem, • Also, the fundamental concepts behind it & • The practical real-world applications

Working Class	Middle Class	Affluent Professional	Executive Elite
Teacher: "Simple punctuation is all they'll ever use."	Teacher: "I [the teacher] want to make sure you understand what you're doing so you get it right."	Teacher: "It doesn't matter whether it [what they find] is right or wrong. I bring them together and there's value in discussing their ideas."	Teacher: "Even if you don't know [the answers], if you think logically about it, you can figure it out."

Anyon's Conclusions regarding the "hidden curriculum"

Generally, as the social class of the community increases, the following increases:

- variety/abundance of materials in classrooms,
- time reported by teachers spent on preparation,
- higher social class/more prestigious universities attended by school staff,
- more stringent board of education requirements about teaching methods,
- increased teachers support services such as in-service workshops,
- increased parent expenditure for school equipment, and
- higher expectations/demands regarding student achievement.

More specifically:

- working class children are being prepared for mechanical & routine wage-labor,
- middle-class children are being prepared for white-collar jobs where success comes from not rocking the boat, but in being able to problem solve and find the right answer,
- professional-class children are being prepared to follow in the footsteps of their parents and become professionals--with highly developed linguistic, artistic & scientific expression skills, and
- executive-class children are developing skills necessary for the "ownership and control of the physical capital and the means of production in society."

The "hidden curriculum" of school work sets children up to remain within their social class, perpetuating the maintenance of the status quo and the on-going gap between rich and poor.

Social Class and School Knowledge

Anyon also talked with students at NJ elementary schools serving working class, middle class, or affluent communities. She asked 3 questions about knowledge to 5th graders at each school. Students from the working class school viewed knowledge as a set of procedures handed down to them by some authority. Students at the affluent professional school looked at knowledge as something that they could create through critical thinking.

Anyon points out that each school shaped students' beliefs about knowledge by providing certain types of learning materials and, more importantly, by teaching and introducing these materials in particular ways. Her study pushes us to ask:

- 1) How do we want young people to think about knowledge?
- 2) What knowledge is valuable?
- 3) How can we provide students access to valuable knowledge?
- 4) *Cui bono?*: who benefits when working-class students come to deny their own experiences and believe that they cannot create knowledge from these experiences--knowledge fostering their own liberation and the self-determination of their neighborhood?

Schools	Working-Class Schools	Middle-Class Schools	Affluent Professional
What Students Say About Knowledge?	To know stuff; Doing pages in our books; Worksheets; You answer questions; To remember things.	To remember; You learn facts & history; It's smartness; Knowledge is something you learn.	You think up ideas then find things wrong with them; It's when you know something really well; A way of learning, of finding out things; Figuring out stuff.
Where does knowledge come from?	Teachers; Books; The Board of Education; Scientists	Teachers; From old books; From scientists; Knowledge comes from everywhere; You hear other people talk with the big words.	People and computers; Your head; People-what they do; Some-thing you learn; From going places.
Could you make knowledge, and if so, how?	<i>No: 15, Yes: 1, Don't Know: 4</i> One girl said: No, because the Board of Education makes knowledge.	<i>No: 9 Yes: 11</i> I'd look it up; You can make knowledge by listening & doing what you're told; I'd go to the library; By doing extra credit.	<i>No: 4 Yes: 16</i> You can make knowledge if you invent something; I'd think of something to discover, then I'd make it; Explore for new things.

Anyon, J. (1980). Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work. *Journal of Education*. 162, 1.
<http://www.jeananyon.org/docs/anyon-1980.pdf>

* “Valuable Knowledge: Lessons from Jean Anyon” is from Teaching to Change LA.
<https://tcla.gseis.ucla.edu/reportcard/tools/pdf/anyon.pdf>

APPENDIX B

Literacy with an Attitude: Educating the working class in their own self-interest

Indianapolis has 2 types of education, one for the working class and one for the powerful.

1. *Domesticating Education*: Leads to functional literacy, the kind that makes a person productive and dependable, but not troublesome. One learns to be a “good worker”: wear the company uniform properly, be to work on time, get along to get ahead, follow directions, and work hard to maintain their employer’s profits.
2. *Empowering Education*: Leads to powerful literacy, the kind leading to power/authority. This enables one to know how to think for oneself. It helps to understand how the system works, how to critique and change it, and how to acquire power and authority in it.

According to Finn (1999), when the children of the wealthy get powerful literacy nothing changes; but, when the children of the poor get powerful literacy, you get literacy with an attitude—making students critical thinkers.

Powerful literacy when acquired by the blue-collar class uses reading and writing as a means to help them in their struggle to get a better deal. This implies that there may be those who would rather see the poor not have this powerful literacy because it would be troublesome. Below are examples (Finn, 1999):

<i>Domesticating Education: What We Have and Don't Want</i>	<i>Empowering Education: What We Need and Don't Have</i>
Knowledge is presented as facts isolated from wider bodies of knowledge.	Knowledge is rarely presented as facts isolated from wider bodies of knowledge.
Knowledge taught is not related to the lives and experiences of the students.	Knowledge taught is always related to the lives and experiences of the students.
Teachers do not make a practice of explaining how assignments are related to one another.	Teachers make a practice of explaining how assignments are related to one another.
Work is easy.	Work is challenging.
Textbook knowledge is valued more highly than knowledge gained from experience.	Textbook knowledge validated/challenged in terms of knowledge gained from experience.
Knowing the answers and knowing where to find the answers are valued over creativity, expression, and analysis.	Creativity, expression, and analysis are essential beyond knowing the answers or knowing where to find the answers.
Discussion of challenges to the status quo, past and present, rarely occurs.	Discussion of challenges to the status quo, past and present, frequently occurs.
History of labor unions, civil rights, women's suffrage, and other victories for justice and equity are taught as the accomplishments of "heroes" and "heroines" not as the result of grass roots struggles.	History of labor unions, civil rights, women's suffrage, and other victories for justice and equity are taught as collective action taken by common people.
Instruction is typically copying notes and writing answers to factual questions.	Instruction is rarely copying notes and writing answers to factual questions.
Work is evaluated in terms of following steps. A satisfactory answer does not suffice. "Do it my way or it's wrong."	"Work" is sometimes presented as following steps in procedures, but students are given choices and rewarded for original solutions.
"Writing" consists of filling in blanks or lines on teacher-made handouts/workbook pages.	"Writing" is taught in a workshop format.
Both teachers and students focus on good grades/diploma as the objective of schooling.	Neither teachers nor students focus on good grades/diploma as the objective of schooling.
Students' access to materials is tightly controlled.	Students have access to materials.
Movement of students is tightly controlled.	Students have ample freedom of movement.
Students rewarded for passivity/obedience, not for initiative and inquisitiveness.	Students are rewarded for initiative and inquisitiveness, not passivity and obedience.
Students are rarely given an opportunity to express their own ideas.	Students are frequently given an opportunity to express their own ideas.
Teachers are gatekeepers. They focus on correctness before expression.	Teachers focus on expression before correctness.
Teachers make derogatory remarks to and about students.	Teachers never make derogatory remarks to or about students.

For more see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laS1y4f_U2E

APPENDIX C

Teaching critical thinking by having southside working-class students compare/contrast life on either “side of the tracks” in order to understand their particular circumstances

The title of the lesson is Authoring Affluence: A Student-Created Map of Relevance. This multi-genre assignment invites students to observe, reflect on, and author their own experiences as they consider socially layered physical spaces.

Our southside students, who live in the circumstances of poverty, have to be able to analyze life on either “side of the tracks” in order to understand why their particular circumstances are the way they are.

Appropriate for students 9th grade and older, the Maps of Affluence assignment asks students to take a closer look at areas designated as “affluent” or “wealthy.”

For the first step of the assignment, students respond to the writing prompt:

- How did I learn about affluence and wealth?
- What are the rules of affluence and wealth?
- What are the actual markers that tell me I am inhabiting, visiting, or observing domains of affluence?

Students are asked to gain insights about their circumstances by comparing/contrasting their southside working-class neighborhoods with more affluent middle and upper-class neighborhoods. They will construct new thinking and knowledge about landscape choices, bridges, municipal and private use of lighting, train lines, storefront signage, water access, green space, street directions, proximity to reliable public transportation, advanced intercom systems, and so many other seemingly trivial constructs and behaviors whose prevalence may cue an individual's awareness to circumstances of poverty or wealth.

Finally as student work to illuminate the relationships among knowledge, authority, place, wealth, and power, they will acquire the language and understanding for:

- 1) relating “the self” to public life, and
- 2) social responsibility and the demands of citizenship.

http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol12/1214-gibson.aspx?utm_source=ascdexpress&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Express-12-14

APPENDIX D

Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood: Helping working-class students understand their circumstances

Author Jay MacLeod questions 2 current beliefs regarding social class, schooling, and poverty:

Belief 1 The “Achievement Ideal” of the American Dream is based on the following principles:

- economic inequality, which is due to levels of ambition and ability, is natural and good;
- success/rewards are based on merit: if you want it, go get it; thus,
- if you fail it's your own fault because you didn't try/work hard enough.

MacLeod notes using this belief system leads to the conclusion that the working classes can attribute their lower-class economic status to personal short-comings.

Belief 2 Because school systems can overcome the achievement gap between rich/poor:

- “We can no longer let poverty or zip codes determine the success of students.”

MacLeod asserts that using this belief places too much emphasis on schools alone to alter inequalities which are, according to *Belief 1*, a “natural and good” part of the class hierarchy structure of society.

Researcher MacLeod studied 2 groups of working-class older male teens (1 white/1 black) who lived in the same housing project and followed their lives into adulthood. Here’s his report:

- the mainly white group of older teens rejected the “Achievement Ideal.” They elected to enroll in lower academic tracks. They saw how their family members, neighbors, and friends, who worked hard to graduate, were jobless or had labor jobs, while graduates of middle-class schools did not. Many either were shifted by their school into a special program for students with behavior problems or they dropped out.
- the mainly black group of older teens embraced the “Achievement Ideal,” took the more rigorous tracks, got involved in sports, and most importantly, committed to following the rules and obtaining their degrees. They had high aspirations for their future: finding stable employment and sustaining a middle-class life style.

MacLeod’s research shows

- how rigid and durable the class structure is in American society,
- how these structural impediments to social mobility work, and
- how public schools reinforce those structures.

The following are MacLeod’s observations at the end of the study

Members of both white/black groups were not succeeding as adults: social welfare policies, incarceration and its aftermath, racism, drug and alcohol abuse, and insufficient educational credentials (a high school diploma was not enough) explained why all of the men struggled to find stable employment in the primary labor market for most of their adult lives.

For white working-class youth

- Opting out of the “American dream” was not a good choice; many ended up unemployed and in the underground economy and risking arrest.

For black working class youth

- Dutifully playing by the rules hardly guaranteed success.
- Aspiration, application, and intelligence often failed to cut through the firm figurations of structural inequality.
- Within the confines of the class structure then, school proved *not to be the catalyst for upward mobility* that the black student, as adherents to the Achievement Ideal, believed it to be.

For both white and black working class youth

- Schools, as part of the structure that reproduces class, are by nature poorly equipped to alter structural inequalities. There are cases of individual schools empowering certain students to have high aspirations; however, *Ain’t No Makin’ It* teaches us why that a belief in the American Dream does not guarantee future economic success.

The following are insights and recommendations

- Schools are a primary mechanism in legitimizing class structures and reproducing class positions. This seems the purpose of schools/education in lower-class neighborhoods: to prepare the lower classes for working-class jobs.
- We can't ignore how poverty and class are related to how schools function.
- As shown in Appendix A and B, working class students get a different kind of education/educational experience compared to middle- and upper-class students.
- Our public schools are class-based institutions made of mechanisms, structures, activities, policies, pedagogies, and curriculum which indeed contribute to the transmission/social reproduction of social inequality from one generation to the next.
- These characteristics of schooling set limits on social mobility because working-class students become destined to fulfill predetermined roles as lower-class workers.
- We see now that without sufficient guidance from school counselors, concerned teachers, or active and knowledgeable parents, the majority of the white teens in the study selected to enroll in the least academic track.
- US society is structured in such a way that despite personal ambitions and aspirations, on the whole, no matter how diligently they devote themselves to school, many lower-class students cannot escape the constraints of social class.
- Indeed, schools are a primary mechanism in legitimizing class structures and reproducing class positions, and so will invariably not provide a path to social mobility for the lower-classes.
- Schools and teachers who educated the lower-classes cannot forget the power of individual agency. However constrained by class an individual may be, they have a certain degree of choice in how their life may proceed. Thus, education must be aimed at increasing the power of personal agency and empowering lower-class students to exercise that agency.
- View "Ain't No Makin' It" by Stephanie Harris on Prezi
<https://prezi.com/h8sr30g1pmxo/aint-no-makin-it/>

Appendix E is a compilation of quotes and ideas from Daniela Torre's "A Tale for Our Times" a 2013 review of *Ain't No Making' It*
<https://my.vanderbilt.edu/danielatorre/2013/06/aint-no-makin-it-book-review/>

APPENDIX E

"Don't get above your raisin'"

Helping working-class students understand their circumstances

To know the southside's working class, appreciating Country-Western music is essential. The song, "Drinking Class" is reviewed on page 5. Here's "Don't get above your raisin'."

How does today's working class identify itself? Don't rise above your raising

In general, within the working class culture is a mistrust and ridicule of any one seen as trying to go "above their raising." "Above your raising" is a southern American colloquialism meaning "to believe that you are better than you are; to behave in a way that is incongruous with one's family of origin." It's exemplified here in this conversation:

Mother: I don't know who you think you is, goin' off to college like that.

Daughter: I'm trying to better myself.

Neighbor: You gettin' above your raising, that's what.

See more at: <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Above%20your%20raising>

"Gettin' above your raisin'" is a phrase I've heard all my life. The notion is you want to change social classes. You try to change social classes, there's this feeling that you're forsaking the family, you're forsaking place, you're forgetting where you came from...and here's this real fear that if you leave, that you'll become ashamed of where you came from."

~ Michael Birdwell, historian

These attitudes toward what are seen as the "corrupting" cultural influences of formal education (and mainly the middle-class "sensibilities" and values formal schooling represents) are so strong among the working class that globally recognized Bluegrass stars Flatt & Scruggs wrote a song: "Don't get above your raisin'!" Here are some of the verses:

Now I got a gal that's sweet to me,
But she just ain't what she used to be
Just a little high headed; That's plain to see
Don't get above your raisin' Stay down to
earth with me.

Now looky here gal you'd better be yourself
And leave that other stuff on the shelf
You're a country baby That's plain to see
Don't get above your raisin' Stay down to
earth with me.

Watch the Ricky Skaggs video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPYxj3QBkIs>. View all the lyrics at: www.classic-country-song-lyrics.com/dontgetaboveyourraisinglyricschords.html

Finally, this is so important to some, there's a book, *Don't Get above Your Raisin'* by Bill C. Malone. See : <http://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/catalog/23dgy9gh9780252026782.html>

Working-class identity and formal education

For those of us raised in the working-class and its everyday world on the southside of Indianapolis in the 1950s and 60s, the dream our parent/s had of their children being better off than they were was valued. As we mixed with the broader world and saw what life was like elsewhere, some of us came to value the middle-class family and their neighborhoods as well as admire "the lifestyles of the rich and famous."

In various instances, parents also were faced with this dilemma: if their child/children went off to college they would be "educated away from them and the family." These parents had seen other families and understood in many situations how college changed the son/daughter: "...they talk different and used big words." What this meant was they feared their daughter/son would act "uppity" and look down on them because now they were seen as "uncultured."

What also may have motivated this change in values/attitude was that son/daughter hid their background from their college peers fearing they would be associated with the negative stereotypes of the lower-classes.

"The working-class university students were better off to the extent they'd forget about where they came from."

~ Anonymous

What is important to understand is that within the "transformation" of the working-class person via the college experience is the implication that he/she might now view their parents and relatives as "not very smart" and their culture "backward."

Part of the expectations of the broader society was that college attendance for the working-class student would entail the "subtraction" of their home culture (Venezuela, 1999) in

exchange for entrance into the mainstream through the acquisition of a “superior” culture and language which was represented by the university.

Please understand assimilation/acculturation are valid concerns for working-class families. In the histories are stories of those who became successful and did not return to benefit them. Also, for some, there was the fear such “migration” would lead to the gradual disappearance of the language and culture, and its “way of life.”

This was analogous to the story of the “education” of American immigrants in their “citizenship” classes where they were also expected to “subtract” the culture/language of the home country and to acculturate/assimilate well into the mainstream--this being proof their “education” was successful.

This mis-association of education with assimilation is profoundly misguided and by nature compels many working-class students to have to choose between their home culture and the school's culture. Under these circumstances, some drop out, even to their own detriment.

Hillbilly Elegy: Trying to understand resistance to formal education

At present, the whole country is talking about the working class, chiefly the white working class, due the 2016 presidential election and the book *Hillbilly Elegy* by J. D. Vance. As of April 16, 2017, the book has been on the *New York Times* Bestseller List 36 weeks and is the No. 2 selling non-fiction hardcover book. It will be made into a movie directed and produced by Ron Howard of “Opie” fame.

The book has its many detractors. See one of many critiques in this essay, “Hillbilly sellout: The politics of J. D. Vance’s ‘Hillbilly Elegy’ are already being used to gut the working poor.”

<http://www.salon.com/2017/03/11/hillbilly-sellout-the-politics-of-j-d-vances-hillbilly-elegy-are-already-being-used-to-gut-the-working-poor/>

References

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APPENDIX F

A Critical Pedagogy:

How our southside students need can be engaged in the classroom regardless of what they plan to do after high school.

A critical pedagogy is a method of instruction all southside students need in order to be better prepared for career, college, and skilled citizenship.

The use of this way of curriculum building and instruction produces the independent thinkers, critical employees, and critically conscious community members our southside needs to look out for its own interests.

What is a critical pedagogy? (Giroux, 2017)

Critical pedagogy is a way of teaching that will enable southside working-class students to question and challenge the *status quo* and to undermine the beliefs and practices that are alleged to dominate the views that society has of them and their families, neighborhoods, schools, and especially their culture.

Critical pedagogy is conceived as a moral and political practice that is always implicated in power relations because it offers particular versions/visions of civic life, community, the future,

and how our southside students might construct authentic and asset-based representations of themselves, their family, and their neighborhood.

Simply put, a critical pedagogy involves learning how to become a skilled citizen. Under such circumstances, critical pedagogy becomes directive and intervenes on the side of producing a substantive democratic society.

This is what makes critical pedagogy different from training. And, it is precisely the failure to connect learning to its democratic functions and goals that provides rationales for pedagogical approaches that strip what it means to be educated from its critical and democratic potential.

Why a critical pedagogy? Putting the story of the working class in the hands of working-class students (Giroux, 2017)

In our case, it is the mainstream society which views the southside from a deficit perspective with negative stereotypes which can label us and influence our self-image, and so limit the dreams and aspirations of our children and youth.

Many from the dominant culture think working class people “...are poor because they’re dumb.” They have the belief that members of the lower-class are lazy, unproductive failures, who “Don’t see the importance of an education.”

Too often “working class” is a derogatory term. In a country where everyone is supposed to have an equal opportunity to get ahead, calling someone working class can feel like a put down.

Sherry Linkon (2008) sees it this way: “In American popular culture, working-class people are often portrayed as losers. As Pepi Leistyna shows in his terrific *Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class* documentary, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QSlyq7tSYs> working-class women in television sitcoms are often portrayed as physically out of control--fat, loud, overly sexual, and dressed in loud and inappropriate clothing. It’s even worse for the men. They might not look any more ‘refined’ than the women, but at least most female working-class characters are competent. Roseanne might not fit the Carol Brady image of suburban motherhood, but she could balance working and running a household and usually had good advice for her kids. Working-class men, as Richard Butsch has argued, (See www.cercles.com/n8/butsch.pdf and www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xhUkeKGM9I) are usually shown as buffoons. They’re lazy, foolish, selfish, and childish. Think Homer Simpson.”

Our students must be empowered academically and politically to discredit and abandon the dominant narratives, and present an appreciation of life “on the other side of the tracks” in all its historic and fascinating complexities.

What are the characteristics of a critical pedagogy? (Giroux, 2017)

- Rejects the notion of students as passive containers who simply imbibe “dead” knowledge. Instead, it embraces forms of teaching that offer students the challenge to transform knowledge rather than simply “processing received knowledges”--knowledges which in many cases reinforce society’s deficit view of the laboring classes.
- Helps working-class students address power as a relationship in which conditions are produced that allow them to engage in a Culture of Questioning:
 - Raises and addresses relevant and urgent questions about the society in which they live, and enables them to define, in part, the questions that can be asked.
- Represents a “Culture of Questioning” stressing the importance of understanding what actually happens in classrooms and other educational settings. This happened by raising questions such as:
 - What is the relationship between learning and social change?

- How do we create knowledge?
- What does it mean to know something?
- What knowledge is of most worthy/relevant to my community?
- What is the best way for me to show what I know and can do?
- Simultaneously concerns the knowledge and practices teachers and students might engage in together and the values, social relations and visions legitimated by such knowledge and practices.
- Listens to students, gives them a voice and role in their own learning, and recognizes that teachers not only educate students but also learn from them.
- Provides students with the knowledge, modes of literacy, skills, critique, social responsibility, and civic courage needed to enable them to be engaged critical citizens willing to fight for a sustainable and just neighborhood, city, and society.
- Emphasizes critical reflection, bridging the gap between learning and everyday life, understanding the connection between power and difficult knowledge, and extending democratic rights and identities by using the resources of history.
- Provides a discourse for agency, values, social relations, and a sense of the future.
- Legitimizes particular ways of knowing, being in the world, and relating to others that are the strengths and foundation of working-class culture.

What are the goals of a critical pedagogy? (Giroux, 2017)

We southsiders cannot forget this important issue: Our southside public schools have a civic duty to be institutions that serve democracy and foster a culture of questioning, dialogue, and dissent. Due to the critical citizenship that led to the Boston Tea Party, our Declaration of Independence, and the Revolutionary War with England, “questioning, dialogue, and dissent” are the cultural characters and spirit upon which America was founded.

The following are the goals of a critical pedagogy:

- Making critically engaged education as central to creating students who are socially responsible and civically engaged citizens.
- Engaging lower-class students in a more expansive struggle for individual rights and social justice.
- Preparing southside students who can contribute to the basic public sphere in their neighborhoods, community and city of Indianapolis:
 - This is central to both democracy and the culture and structures necessary for students to lead a life of dignity and political participation.
 - This connects pedagogy with the social and political task of resistance, empowerment, or democratization.
- Developing among students those critical, creative, and collaborative forms of thought and action necessary for participating in a substantive democracy.
- Reinforcing these notions: public schools are democratic public spheres, education is the foundation for any working democracy, and teachers are the most responsible agents for fostering that education.
- Providing students with the skills, ideas, values, and authority necessary for them to nourish a substantive democracy, recognize antidemocratic forms of power, and fight deeply rooted injustices in a society that still has systemic inequalities which perpetuate a deficit model of and negative stereotypes of the working class.

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APPENDIX G

Keeping Manual students in school and graduating: Adding a history of labor to the curriculum

This is a proposal to include the history of labor in the curricula of Manual High School. Adding this history will have a direct and positive effect on increasing graduation rates of Manual students who will acquire a greater sense of purpose to engage in schooling in order to gain the credentials and skills needed to improve working conditions, collectively bargain for a better deal, and improve their working-class neighborhoods for their families.

All Americans must realize when schools talk about the history of working people they are talking about the history of the United States. For southsiders, this will validate what many already know: the backs and hands of the working class have built Indiana and Indianapolis. A history of labor will inspire Manual's working-class students to take pride in their education due to the recognition of the efforts by their family, relatives, and neighbors in areas such as the struggle for workers rights, the collective bargaining process, fair wages, safe working conditions, child labor laws, and the 40 hour week. A history of labor will help students understand the real role of working men and women in making America a better place.

In studying labor, Manual students will learn important lessons—above all the contributions generations of labor activists, many of whom were killed, imprisoned, beaten, or threatened as they built our nation, democratizing and humanizing its often brutal workplaces.

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SEW-CTF-Keeping-urban-students-in-school-Adding-a-history-of-labor-course-to-the-curriculum.pdf>

Further reading suggestions

Working Class Without Work, Lois Weis, 1990

Class reunion: The remaking of the American white working class. Lois Weis, 2004

Class Construction: White Working-Class Student Identity in the New Millennium, Carrie Freie, 2008

“Poor whites just realized they need education equity as much as black folk” Andre Perry, 2017
<http://washingtonmonthly.com/2017/04/11/poor-whites-just-realized-they-need-education-equity-as-much-as-black-folk/>