

DEVELOPING DIALOGUE AND DEMOCRACY:

Connecting with student knowledge to
overcome race and social class hegemony

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THE PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED

- Paulo Freire (1970): The interests of the oppressors lie in ‘changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppresses them’ (de Beauvoir, 1963, p. 34 cited in Freire, p. 74);
- “The more the oppressed can be led to adapt to that situation, the more easily they can be dominated” (p. 74).

HEGEMONY: WHAT DOES IT MEAN; HOW CAN IT HELP!

- Hegemony means that people in power have persuaded a large % of the population that certain ways of thinking, feeling, believing and acting are normal, natural and common sense
- And since these mainstream people tend to think in bi-polar ways (good vs. evil; black vs white), what is not presented as normal, natural and common sense is seen as the opposite!



HEGEMONY OF KNOWLEDGE

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

1492-PRESENT

HOWARD ZINN

- WHOSE VERSION OF HISTORY IS BEING TOLD?

HEGEMONY OF AESTHETICS



**WHO TELLS
YOU WHAT YOU
SHOULD LOOK
LIKE & WHY?**

HEGEMONY OF PERSPECTIVE



- **WHOSE ANCESTORS ARE CONSIDERED THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE NATION, AND WHAT IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES DO THEY UPHOLD?**

HEGEMONY OF PLACE & ORGANIZATION



- **CLASSROOM STRUCTURE DICTATES THE KIND OF PEDAGOGY WE PRACTICE AND THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS WE NURTURE**

MORE BARRIERS IN THE MAINSTREAM

dominant socio-economic and cultural hierarchy
©Lea & Sims 2005



MODERN DISCIPLINARY TECHNOLOGIES OF POWER (cf. Foucault)	EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Normalizing and Dividing Discourses: <i>Coopting/colonizing and legitimizing the hegemonic agenda</i> 	<p>Language: Includes appropriating signifiers; Constructing and reproducing deficit discourses in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, ableism, age that advantage elites and disadvantage others</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Classification: <i>Sorting function</i> 	<p>Includes, sorting in terms of: “Race,” class, gender, via tracking, ability grouping and curricula content; Course placements in terms of. AP, Honors, Special Needs; ESL/Bilingual education, as subject areas; Pedagogical strategies; High stakes testing; Grades</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Surveillance: <i>Monitoring, constructing and regulating subjectivities</i> 	<p>Includes denying Students privacy, even in the bathrooms; Designing school buildings that facilitate surveillance; Determining dress codes, and strictly enforcing codes of conduct</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Standardization: <i>Occurs through presenting a homogenous, scripted, Anglocentric curriculum</i> 	<p>Establishes power relations; Establishes what is normal and acceptable in the school curriculum, pedagogy and practice; Includes high stakes tests</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Exclusion: <i>Often occurs with normalization</i> 	<p>Occurs through: Tracking; Reading groups; “Sheltered” & English-only classrooms for “English Language Learners (ELLs)” & Special Education students. The following may also be excluded: Some identities, practices and ways of constructing knowledge</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Distribution: <i>Controlling the agenda</i> 	<p>Includes establishing: Reading groups; Grade level groups, Segregated schools and classrooms</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Individualization: <i>A form of exclusion</i> 	<p>Developed through: Forms of competition; Seeing the world through bi-polar opposites—’ me’ versus ‘we’, independent free will versus viewing the historical, systemic nature of inequalities and inequities</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Totalization: <i>Consumes student agenda & governs and regulates groups</i> 	<p>Occurs through students commit to various competitive, ego-invested groups like year groups, teachers, fraternities, teams, debating groups, ethnic groups</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Regulation: <i>Erects the limits of acceptable behavior to control and maintain the existing system</i> 	<p>Refers to group rules, regulations and certain forms of knowledge; Established through sanctions, rewards and punishment (NCLB)</p>

THE POWER OF POWER!

- While human beings have the power to make their own meanings...
- Those in power can shape and control the narratives people use to make sense of the world
- Those in power can decide what laws are passed
- Those in power can decide what narratives the media, schools, and the workplace disseminate to “manufacture consent” for their interests
- Those in power can disseminate stereotypes and misinformation in political and “educational”

YOUR PERSPECTIVE

- In what ways have you observed or felt hegemony playing out on your campus (i.e. in class, out of class, student organizations, faculty meetings, etc.)?
- In small groups, pairs, write down one or two examples and/or a question you might have about the ideas presented so far. We will come back to them at the end of the presentation.

OUR RESEARCH

(VIRGINIA LEA, DANG YANG, ALI AHMED, CHAVONN TAYLOR, LAREYNA HESS)

- Aims to identify how hegemony works in higher education to keep inequities in place;
- Looks for ways of conversing and connecting with students from underserved communities so as to honor and identify their own knowledge about their own cultural and academic needs;
- Asks how race, social class, and other mechanisms of power function as barriers to equitable educational opportunity;
- Builds a virtual community to connect and serve the needs of students, researchers, educators, and community activists who want to develop more equitable and inclusive higher education institutions—In this democratic communal space, participants will be able to share their research and ideas for educational transformation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Small groups of students who self-identify with African American, Asian, Latino, Native, and White ethnic groups contacted and asked to volunteer for the project
- Students given a list of key words and concepts related to hegemony, such as “power,” “surveillance,” and “standardization,” and asked to respond to/illustrate the prompts in the form of a collage
- Students asked to reflect orally on the the meaning of their representations on the collage
- Researchers ask students follow-up questions to tease out, as individuals and their groups, the hegemonic significance of their collages
- Subject the data, at every stage of the project, to a form of critical discourse analysis that reflects the project’s critical multicultural theoretical framework

EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS FROM DANG'S STORY

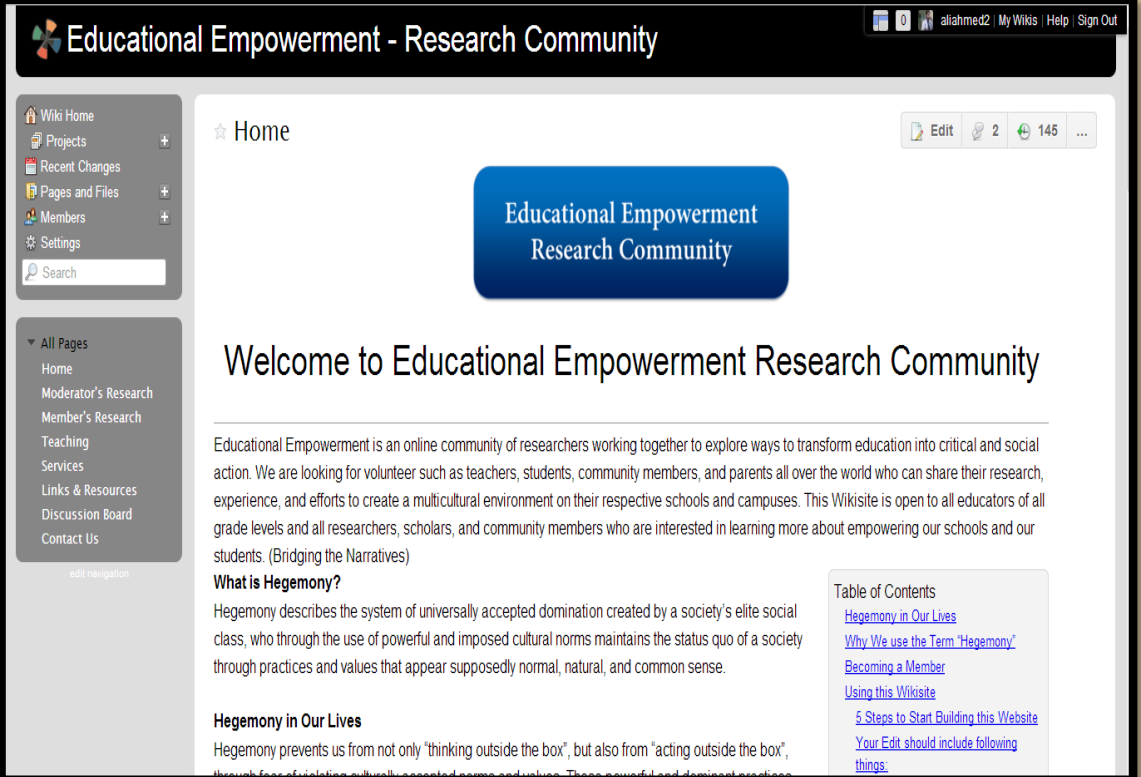
- Stereotypes held by people in the dominant culture, disseminated in the media & at school by students and teachers
- Native born American whose maternal language was Hmong—resulted in conceptual barriers at the level of language markers (Conceptual Language Markers)
- Mainstream cultural narratives that said who I was supposed to be and who I thought I was culturally
- Surveillance/control by social/cultural gatekeepers (Guardians of what's considered normal in the mainstream)
- Passivity born of internalized racism and apparently insurmountable power of dominant culture
- Critical literacy concerning how the social system works gained through “education”

ASIAN-HMONG COHORT

- Metaphors: Penguins & Cross-Hairs
- An American Identity
- Dualistic Identities - Orientalism/Occidentalism
- Impact of being targeted by racial-ethnic stereotypes: Segregation vs. inclusion/partial inclusion; Allocated a racial-ethnic place; “Domesticated exoticism”; Orientalism/occidentalism; “Whitewashed” and “Exoticized”
- White Privilege
- Individualism vs. Communalism
- Destructive role of everyday micro-aggressions: Everyday encounters with multiple levels of hierarchy

CONVERSATIONS, CONNECTIONS, COMMUNITIES: THE WEBSITE

- Educational Empowerment is an online community of researchers working together to explore ways to transform education into critical and social action.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Educational Empowerment - Research Community' website. The page features a blue header with the site title and a navigation menu on the left. The main content area includes a blue button with the text 'Educational Empowerment Research Community', a welcome message, and a paragraph of introductory text. A 'Table of Contents' sidebar is visible on the right.

Educational Empowerment - Research Community

Wiki Home
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Educational Empowerment Research Community

Welcome to Educational Empowerment Research Community

Educational Empowerment is an online community of researchers working together to explore ways to transform education into critical and social action. We are looking for volunteer such as teachers, students, community members, and parents all over the world who can share their research, experience, and efforts to create a multicultural environment on their respective schools and campuses. This Wikisite is open to all educators of all grade levels and all researchers, scholars, and community members who are interested in learning more about empowering our schools and our students. (Bridging the Narratives)

What is Hegemony?
Hegemony describes the system of universally accepted domination created by a society's elite social class, who through the use of powerful and imposed cultural norms maintains the status quo of a society through practices and values that appear supposedly normal, natural, and common sense.

Hegemony in Our Lives
Hegemony prevents us from not only "thinking outside the box", but also from "acting outside the box", through the use of relating, culturally accepted norms and values. These norms of social dominant practices

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[Why We use the Term "Hegemony"](#)
[Becoming a Member](#)
[Using this Wikisite](#)
[5 Steps to Start Building this Website](#)
[Your Edit should include following things.](#)

- Please follow us on twitter @hegemonyproject
- Link: <https://educationalempowerment.wikispaces.com/Home>

OUR RESEARCH—EMPOWERING STUDENTS TOWARDS CRITICAL MULTICULTURAL LITERACY

- What are some of the ways in which the university can use students' knowledge of how hegemony works to support and empower these students?
- Mapping this knowledge on to practices that have been identified as having a positive impact on student success:

What research tells us

- Discrete practices make a difference in students' educational success: For example:
- Service learning
- Undergraduate research; mentoring
- Collaborative assignments and projects
- Writing intensive courses; learning communities
- Internships
- Capstone courses & projects
- Common intellectual experiences
- First year seminars
- Diversity/global learning

What our students tell us

- These practices must be critical, coherent, connected;
- They are not enough;
- Empowering educational practices are only as good as the staff and teachers who recognize and address hegemonic barriers, including standardization; categorization; regulation; individualization; and whiteness

MULTICULTURALISM: DIALOGUE & FIELD EXPERIENCE

- Research based
- Builds a learning community
- Is writing intensive: reading responses,
- High expectations, engaging students in strong and common intellectual experiences
- Is culturally response, cultural relevant, critical and multicultural
- Asks students to develop collaborative projects
- ADDRESSES ISSUES OF RACE, SOCIAL CLASS, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, LANGUAGE ABILITY AND OTHER NARRATIVES OF POWER AND OPPRESSION HEAD-ON IN SENSITIVE WAYS
- ASK STUDENTS TO DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDINGS BY LOOKING AT THE DATA THEY COLLECT THROUGH ENLIGHTENING & EMPOWERING THEORETICAL LENSES
- USES CRITICAL QUESTIONING TO MAKE THE FAMILIAR UNFAMILIAR & THE UNFAMILIAR FAMILIAR
- All of these practices are INTERCONNECTED

STUDENT SOLUTIONS: DO THEY SOLVE THE PROBLEM?

- **Flicking the switch: Need to close the emotional door/compartmentalize feeling to survive**
- **Using the language/narratives of the dominant culture**
- **Embracing neoliberal goals for education**
- **Active in constructing own future role**
- **Developing voice/dialogue**
- **Developing own educational structures**
- **Mentors: Making sure that vulnerable students know what is available to support them at every stage in their career**
- **Addressing the racism and whiteness that silently color the educational process**

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE COMPLEXITY, CONTEXT & COHERENCE

- *Validate students as whole people, who are part of social, cultural and historical contexts*
- *Avoid compartmentalization*
- *Avoid reproducing the inequitable, neoliberal status quo*

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE COMPLEXITY, CONTEXT & COHERENCE

- *Recognize the ways in which the standards of whiteness silences, and excludes underserved students*
- *Be aware that the dominant educational structure, knowledge perspectives, and cultural communication style(s) are not neutral*
- *Be aware that when underserved students appear to be doing well in school there may be a problematic undercurrent.*

QUESTIONS

- How do you think our findings and ideas for empowering underserved students play out on your campus/in your school?
- What other ideas do you have for helping underserved students to surmount the educational barriers they may meet in higher education?