Rethinking the political: reconstituting national imaginaries and producing difference

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What I want to emphasize in that large and liminal image of the nation which I began is a particular ambivalence that haunts the idea of the nation, the language of those who write of it and the lives of those who live it. It is an ambivalence that emerges from a growing awareness that, despite the certainty with which historians speak of the ‘origins’ of nation as a sign of ‘modernity’ of society, the cultural temporality of the nation inscribes a much more transitional social reality. (Bhabha 1990: 1)

I start with an unlikely space, The Nation, which many take as ‘dead’ in the processes of globalization and talk of international capital and a ‘global village’. Yet I want to argue that the nation and the citizen, themselves cultural inventions of the nineteenth century, are being revisioned through new salvation narratives that link the nation, the global and the individual. The new salvation stories of progress remake the nineteenth century identity of the cosmopolitan self, an individuality whose allegiances and ‘home’ formed the cultural and social patterns of modernity that make for\(^1\) individuality that is no longer bound to the nation.\(^2\) The cosmopolitan self is seemingly born of the Enlightenment but placed in high or post-modernity to embrace the citizen (and the child) whose norms of participation articulate universal rights and who participates actively and responsibly in a global society. Current sociological discussions of globalization, for example, pose the problem of identity in a ‘new’ cosmopolitan society and a citizen tied to an interconnected network that transcends the boundaries of the nation (Beck 2000, Castel 2000). But when this new cosmopolitan self is examined, it is not a global persona that is fabricated, but a different identity that is even more closely tied to the nation and the citizen than that of earlier cultural practices.

Thus, this discussion of the cosmopolitan society/self is a history of the present. It moves between the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries to consider fields of cultural practices by which the cosmopolitan self is continually shaped and fashioned as an effect of power, whether that of

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the early twentieth century citizen or one who is an *American and a Swede*. The multicultural community within this notion is formed through universal liberal discourses of ‘human rights’.

To pursue the differences, similarities and implications in the changes occurring in the construction of the citizen, I focus on the school as a field of cultural practices. The discourses of childhood, teaching and teacher education bring the individual into a practical relationship with the collective narratives of commitment and sacrifice embodied in the political rationalities of liberalism.

My focus on the ‘reason’ and ‘the reasonable person’ inscribed in schooling is to consider knowledge as the political. This is not a question of the bias of school knowledge or of the interests served, but one of the significant ‘facts’ of modernity; that is, power is exercised less through brute force and more through knowledge, or, the rules of reason, that orders the ‘objects’ through which action is produced in daily life. Thus, the politics of educational practices, in the sense that I am arguing here, are located in the field of cultural practice that produces an opening up of new intentions that order and ‘make’ new histories of the nation, the ‘self’ and ‘the other’. In particular, the pedagogical arguments for a new curriculum and pedagogical practices embody particular anxieties, displacements and principles for qualifying and disqualifying, for inclusion and exclusions of individuals for participation and action. The salvation narratives of *the cosmopolitan self* (yes, they are salvation narratives) are mutually constituted, as Toni Morrison (1992) argues in literary criticism, by its oppositions—the normalizing of ‘the otherness’ that is inscribed through the rules of reason and of being reasonable people.³

Two central themes organize this discussion. One is that modern schooling historically embodies the joining of the registers of social administration with those freedoms (e.g. Wagner 1994). The object of pedagogical reflection and action in modernity is an individuality that is systematically calculated and rationalized in the name of freedom. In this sense, reason is an effect of power.⁴ By register, my concern is with the different historical trajectories and discourses that come together to reason and make the child into a *reasonable person*.⁵ What has variously been thought of as post-modernity, the second crisis of modernity or advanced liberalism is, I will argue, the reformating and reconfiguring of the two registers of modernity.⁶ Second, I use the notion of ‘national imaginaries’ to focus on a particular form given to the registers of social administration and freedom in the modern school. The cultural representations and knowledge of the child, teacher and teacher education fabricate, in the double sense of a fiction and making, a ‘nation-ness’ that joins *the many as one*.

The argument given here can be summarized as: at the turn of the twentieth century, intersecting narratives of Americanization imagined a cosmopolitan *self* through a continual process by which national life is redeemed, signified and divided through the making of the citizen’s individuality (e.g. Homi Bhabha 1990, Anderson 1991, Shapiro 2001). The connections of child, parent and community were governed by the discourses that classified and order the rules by which individuals strived
for self-actualization and personal responsibility. I argue through examining different contemporary policy and research texts and an ethnography of a national teacher education reform that new salvation narratives are produced that revision national imaginaries. In the name of democracy is the cosmopolitan, problem-solving child; one who is continually and perpetually active in communities of learning and as a lifelong learner whose capacity and potentialities entail a perpetual intervention in one’s life. The images evoked, however, are not a freedom separated from the problems of social administration and governing. The freedom involves new forms of expertise of the teacher as a professional who investigates, maps, classifies, and works on the territories of individuality for ‘lifelong learning’. Further, the universal principles of the problem-solving child/parent/citizen at the turn of twenty-first century embody internments, enclosures, and inclusions/exclusions that reach into health, psychology and education.

This approach is different from that of the political philosophy and the political sociology of schooling. The literature has used as its framework an analytic divide between that of the republican, collective obligations of the individual and its opposite, individual freedom from the restraints of governing. This divide is found in contemporary neoliberal theories and its critiques of markets and privatization. The divide is reinstalled in state theories that normatively classify the welfare state that cares for its population and its opposite, the non-statist tradition that privileges the market and individualism (Espan-Anderson 1996), and its more recent turns that speak about neoliberalism and ‘The Third Way’. This divide of the republican-collective responsibility and the individual misrecognizes historically the problem of governing since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe, North America and their colonies. The modern state is a welfare state in that the concern of the state is the care of people. While political philosophy has placed the individual in a space outside of the governing patterns through the concept of ‘civil society’, the divide obscures how overlapping practices in multiple institutions (child care, schooling, social security agencies) converge in that they bring the economic, political and cultural practices into a single plane in the production of the self.

Focusing on knowledge and ‘reason’ as a phenomenon to investigate, the discussion is also an intervention in cultural and social theory since it questions the dichotomies of policy/practice, theory versus ‘reality’, discourse-text versus context/reality, state versus civil society, and the subjective versus the objective or social that have ordered modern social theory and education (for a discussion of this issue, see Popkewitz 1996, Wagner 1999). These divides have treated knowledge as an epiphenomenon to practice rather than as constitutive of ‘reality’. Such dichotomies are residues that serve as an epistemological obstacle to understanding the changes occurring, to use loosely Gaston Bachelard’s famous term. That obstacle makes ‘practice’ an unmediated reality. Yet, there can be no decoding and situating of oneself as a historical ‘being’ without a discursive structuring of language that defines historical experience or interest in the first place (e.g. Scott 1991).
Registers of social administration and freedom: construction of the citizen and struggling for the soul

This section considers the divide between the register of social administration and the registers of freedom formed during the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. The two registers join the knowledge of the modern citizen/the modern child, and family with liberal ideas about the freedom of the individual. The relation of political rationalities to individuality is a governing practice of modernity and inscribed in the modern school pedagogy. In the formation of the welfare state, the emergence of the social sciences, and a new form of expert knowledge, and the modern school is the cosmopolitan self that circulates in the name of liberty.

The state as the care of the self

By the mid-nineteenth century, the end of the care of the state was not only that of protecting its territorial boundaries and bureaucratic apparatuses brought into colonial contexts (Badie and Birnbaum 1983), but also the care for its populations (de Swaan 1988, Hunter 1994, Wagner 1994). Varela (2001) argues that the formation of individual personalities, individual subjects and the idea of society as composed of isolated individuals was produced at the precise historical moment when the legitimacy of power was being based on the idea of a general ‘will’.

While today’s cultural debates decry the lost of the actor and agency in political theories of knowledge, the presence of the actor and agency is a specific historical phenomenon. The Enlightenment notions of liberty of individuality gave attention to the actor and agency that would secure a more progressive world. The individual became an agent of change. This modern individual was a radical break from previous notions of a transcendent entity, of a world fixed by placement by birth, and of humans as subject to fate or the gods (Meyer et al. 1997).

In modernity, the Enlightenment notions of liberty were placed in the care of the state and inscribed in the fabrications of national imaginaries. The state was to care for the individual whose inner capabilities enabled a self-responsible and self-motivated citizen whose liberty was ordered through reason. The discipline of the individual was not through brute force but through the inscription of the universal rules of reason transported to the actor and agency. The projects of social reform, of which the modern curriculum is one, made the site of individuality as a site of change itself (Popkewitz (in press)). Philosophical thought, political treaties as well as the school curriculum inscribed theories of action which constructed the actor enacting cultural interests, producing collective authority, and thus the locus of observation, supervision and change.

The inscription of the actor and agency, then, involved a duality in its construction (Popkewitz 2001). The placement of the actor and agent enabled the individual to become the site of discipline through the inscription of rules of reason that order participation and action. The knowledge
that locates the freedom of the actor and agency was a knowledge that made these objects of action as objects of scrutiny, deliberation, calculation, and computation that were found in welfare institutions, the emergent social science and the cultural arena of the school, among others. So persuasive was the joining of the registers of social administration and registers of freedom that even the work-time studies by Frederick Taylor, who revolutionized the workplace worldwide through changing the labour process in the early decades of twentieth century, thought of the labour-saving devices as emancipating the worker!

The disciplining and governing were directed to the soul. No longer a religious soul to be saved in an afterlife, the object of social administration focused on governing the inner dispositions, sensitivities and awarenesses of the individual. Revelation was transferred to strategies that administered personal development, self-reflection, and the inner, self-guided moral growth of the individual personality and character. The narratives of individual salvation were expressed in the name of ‘freedom’ to link the person to a collective progress.

One site of deployment in the governing of the soul was the modern school. School pedagogies provided practical technologies in which to move the rationality of the cosmopolitan citizen to that of the child. Pedagogy replaced the cosmology of religious senses of the soul with one associated with modernity and the rational, active capabilities of being. The narratives of the school placed the child as a cosmopolitan actor whose agency formed the collective narrative of the democratic nation. But the capabilities and dispositions inscribed in the actor and agent were continually constructed in relations to the ‘other’ that stood silently in opposition to those capabilities. In American schooling that other is not one, but, among others, social grouping the people such as African Americans, the Native Americans and different Europeans in eighteenth and nineteenth century USA. Along the surface of texts of the nineteenth century school was an education that concerned not only ‘wealth, possessions, whatever makes up the external part—the body, if we may so speak—of human welfare’, but, as expressed in by one of the leaders of the movement to form the modern American school, as an education concerned with ‘a general amelioration of habits, and those purer pleasures which flow from a cultivation of the higher sentiments, which constitute the spirit of human welfare, and enhance a thousandfold the worth of all temporal possessions—these have been comparatively neglected’ (italics in original, Mann, 1867: 7).

There are two specific aspects of the registers of social administration and freedom that I address here. First are the new calculated systems of the modern school that located individuality in national imaginaries—the mutually constituted ‘homes’ of America and the American (and in other contexts, Sweden and the Swede, Finland and the Finn, Spain and the Spanish). Second, the registers of social administration embodied a cosmopolitan self that mutually constituted the individual in the global and the local. The finding a home in both the global and the local was through the universalizing of reason that constituted the principles of action and participation.
National imaginaries and salvation stories

A broad range of historical and anthropological scholarship has directed attention to how the discourses of public policy, theories of the social sciences, and literature generate conceptions of personhood and identity. Attention is directed to how there is no ‘natural’ national community, but only communities dependent upon the discourses that form individuals into the seam of a collective narrative (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991). A sense of ‘belonging’ is dependent on the multiple discourses that form individuals into a collective narrative rather than any ‘natural’ geographical cohesion. At the end of the nineteenth century, the French historian Renan stated:

A nation is a large scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future. It presupposes a past; it is summarized, however, in the present by a tangible fact, namely consent, the clearly expressed desire to continue a community life. The nation’s existence is a daily plebiscite, just as an individual’s existence is a perpetual affirmation of life. (Renan 1882/1990: 19)

Anderson (1991) has called this institution of an imaginary unity an ‘imagined community’, one in which cultural representations are historically fabricated to produce a ‘nation-ness’. The construction of memories of a European, an American or a German ‘identity’ is not the outgrowth of some natural ‘home’ where one belongs, but is produced through an amalgamation of technologies, ideas and social practices. But the writing the nation, as Homi Bhabha (1990) has argued, is not merely a unity but involves a ‘double time’, as people are both historical ‘objects’ that construct a memory of a constituted historical origin and the ‘subjects’ of a process of signification through which national redemption and reproduction occur. Further, the production of new memories of the ‘self’ embodied forgetting as new feelings of attachment and identity inscribe anxieties and displacements.

The school is a central site in which an individuality was fabricated to link national identity, citizenship and agency (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991). The discourses of the child, the parent and the community embodied salvation stories through which people are to know, understand, and experience themselves as members of a community and as citizens of a nation.

But the discourses of freedom were ordered through particular rules of childhood that interned and enclosed liberty itself. Theories of actors embodied the radical assumption of human progress through a rational means of control. This assumption of discipline and internal control was inscribed in the discourses of the child and the family as sites of a calculated progress. Childhood gave expression to producing the future through the present ordering of the child as a way to produce the adult who could participate in the construction of the world as an object of social administration (e.g. Baker 2001). New regimes of the body (scientific hygiene), of the intellect (literacy, mathematics) and the inculcation of virtuous habits of childhood were available to manage and discipline and articulate new imaginaries that linked the character of the child and the family to a nation-
ness. The sciences of the child and didactics calculated finer and finer distinctions about physical and psychological growth, skills, development, and cognitive achievement to order and assess not only the behavior, but also the inner characteristics and dispositions of the child.

In the USA,

The new idea of childhood helped to precipitate the new idea of the family. No longer seen simply as a little adult, the child came to be regarded as a person with distinctive attributes—impressionability, vulnerability, innocence—which required a warm, protected, and prolonged period of nurture. Whereas formerly children had mixed freely in adult society, parents now sought to segregate them from premature contact with servants and other corrupting influences. Educators and moralists began to stress the child’s need for play, for love and understanding, and for the gradual, gentle unfolding of his nature. Child rearing became more demanding as a result, and emotional ties between parents and children grew more intense at the same time that ties to relatives outside the immediate family weakened. (Lasch 1977: 5–6)

The calculated family embodied a paradigm of the self-abridgement of culture and thus a way of expressing fears and anxiety of the threat to a national identity in late nineteenth century. The threats in the USA were embodied in the images of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, migrations of African Americans from the south that overlapped with urbanization and an unbridled, organized capitalism that seemed to have no collective values (Wald 1995). These different populations were the ‘Other’ to be Americanized as they were to exchange one family structure (that of the Old World, for example) for another one and one narrative of identity for a radically different one. Educator, psychologist and philosopher John Dewey called attention in 1902 to the too rapid ‘de-nationalization’ of immigrant children to the USA and the need to find ways to stabilize the relation between the habits of ‘native traditions’ and the customs of the new country, for ‘unless we Americanize them they will foreignize us’ (cited in Wald 1995: 204).

The discipline of liberty was through an inscription of reason as a calculated project of the actor. Nineteenth century science, morality, and political notions of progress were linked to the individual through the principles of reason generated for action. Knowledge was productive rather than repressive. Social Darwinism, for example, was revised from an evolutionary natural theory into a social theory for thinking about how science and social policy could intervene in the producing of progress (Commager 1950). The new social sciences transported the cosmopolitan outlook into universalized discourses of reason that would make the actor and agency possible in the new political mentalities of freedom and liberty. One could think of the emergence of pragmatism in the nineteenth century in relation to the taming of uncertainty through the inscription of universal rules of problem solving. For freedom and liberty to occur, the rules of reason functioned as a disciplinary power for individual’s actions in future situations that could not be foretold.

The narratives of the universal cosmopolitan self brought social, cultural, economic and political discourses into a single plane to fabricate the citizen. The new characteristics of the individual circulated within theories of childhood, family and community that moved through multiple
institutions—the family, the workplace, health, school and the political arenas of participation. The school curriculum, for example, embodied narratives and images of the cosmopolitan self through the rules of child development, growth and cognitive formation. These rules seemed unen-cumbered with historical restrictions and human ‘biases’. The child as a learner and the family as the unit of child-rearing located individuality is a system of reason that seemed to transcend the local and the provincial through making humanity a problem of rationality.

*Cosmopolitan self*

The child and family of late nineteenth century were mutually constituted as a global and local individual, what I have called a cosmopolitan self. Individuality embodied a particular set of values, morality and identities that seemed to exist in a trans-historical way—an individual who had inalienable human rights that revisioned Enlightenment ideals into political projects of a nation-hood such as expressed through the American and French Revolutions. The cosmopolitan self was brought into the projects of modernity as one of a calculated individuality. The vast interior, seemingly private life of the individual was opened up for governing through theories of the child, the family and notions of personality and character. The Modern Individual was no longer seen as a single personality but a decentred individual who wore many hats (Wiebe 1995). The disappearance of a single fixed standard of conduct and moral code was written into the writing of Dewey as well as the US political commentator Walter Lippmann. While current social theory has focused on the decentred individual and pluralism as a sign of the times, the cosmopolitan self was a decentred and plural individual in modernity, although today the self is embedded in a different historical amalgamation of relations.  

The cosmopolitan self can be illustrated through the reconstitution of the family through the domestic sciences and the notion of career and character. New theories of hygiene, family and child-rearing rationalized and reconstructed the capabilities and dispositions sanctified as that of the working class, ethnic and urban populations. The domestic science movements refabricated the home as it was transformed through the rational planning of diet, budget planning of income, calculated patterns of child rearing, and parents who deliberated on what they and their actions meant to children. The new domestic sciences of the calculated home were not without conflict and anxieties in their urban setting as well as to the gendered bourgeois image of the social relations of the home.

The idea of an individual having a career signals a broader shift in locating the self in the world (Bledstein 1976). Whereas self-determination was a key word of democratic individualism of the nineteenth century, achievement in the twentieth century depended upon the individual searching for the real self, and also for real relationships with other people. The idea of career assumed a decentred individual whose character and career were pragmatically formed but as independent of social
mooring, cultural differentiations and the temporal dimensions of history. Career was a word that signified the track that horses ran around in the beginning of the nineteenth century, but began to signify middle class males whose identities travelled along one work life in an occupation. Career symbolized an identity in which life trajectories and social position are separated from the family and immediate community. In the nineteenth century, middle-class Americans visualized character as an architecture that was bounded to the whole even if it had strange closets and hidden fissures. In the twentieth century, these impulses were reconstructed ‘as boundless sources of energy though which individuals discovered who they were: personality flourished only through exploration and growth’ (Wiebe 1995: 186). The place of previous local loyalties and geographical contexts is reconfigured as a universal, trans-historical identity. Both the domestic sciences and changes in the male identity overlapped with other cultural practices and institutions to Americanize multiple populations as the cosmopolitan notion of citizen was reformulated.

In this matrix of ideas and institutions of the cosmopolitan self was the new American university. The first demand of the modern university was to ensure the pre-eminence of universalism over particularism that undergirds the cosmopolitan self. Reason and rationality secure the progress of the nation. Humboldt’s vision was the university as the epitome of the moral and emotional community of the nation, with the mission of its being its stimulus and its sum and substance. In fact, this ‘nationalist statist’ mission was to be incorporated into the Western university tradition by one nation after another (Pérez-Díaz 1999). The liberal university in England formed a relation of knowledge and character by acquiring habits, and the knowledge of ‘how’ rather than ‘what’—one went to school for the arts and habits; for the habit of attention, for the art of expression, for the art of assuming at a moment’s notice a new intellectual posture, for the art of entering quickly into another person’s thoughts, for the habit of submitting to censure and refutation (Pérez-Díaz 1999).

In the USA, one can understand the inscription of professional programs in the university as establishing the universal and cosmopolitan as it relates to a national imagery. Professionalization projects at the turn of the twentieth century embodied a new teacher whose allegiances were cosmopolitan in orientation and thus free from local, provincial and communal attachments. Professionalization became a tool for totally reshaping the lines of authority in school administration, for weeding out those of less desirable ethnic and social origins through requirements for higher education, and for instilling a sense of loyalty not to the community, but to the school principal, superintendent, and educational professorate (Murphy 1990: 23). At the same time higher education was a ‘civilizing’ practice of teachers that was to replace the family and the community as primary influences in socializing children through the universalizing discourses of teaching and childhood.16

The system of reason ascribed particular universal sets of norms that were not universal but historically particular. The different trajectories related to, for example, urbanization, the new organized capitalist
industrialization, a generalized protestant view of salvation, and liberal political rationalities that overlapped to form the *cosmopolitan self*.

There is ambiguity in the idea of the cosmopolitan self; as with liberalism it was to understand diversity but at the same time to universalize the world as the same-understanding different cultures from its own knowledge conditions through inserting the framework of its own contemporaneity from which ideas of universal rights and norms of liberalism were developed and brought to other contexts. The inscriptions of the *cosmopolitan self* also was constituted in relation to ‘the other’. Discourses of development that circulated in medicine, child study and curriculum in the USA embodied particular binaries that differentiated and divided children: whiteness/blackness; male/female; and civility/savagery (Baker 1998). These binaries classified the subjective dispositions of children through norms drawn from a particular Protestant view of individuality that was English-speaking, male and racially/heterosexually charged.

**Reason as a cultural practice: salvation stories and the cosmopolitan self in the Nutri-Grain bar**

The freedom and participation that circulated in the multiple institutions of modernity were not ‘the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations’ (Rose and Miller 1992: 174). This governing of freedom, what Michel Foucault (1979) calls governmentality, embodied the administration of freedom through the production of *reason* and *reasonable people*. The state was an art of governing to shape the individual who mastered change through the application of a universal rationality and reason. *Freedom* was an artefact of governing and only certain kinds of liberty are comparable with certain paths of calculation of expertise that enters into the individual to make the subject free.

One can explore production of liberty as a disciplining project through the production of the family and the child in the cultural field of health and a healthy diet. The packaging of an American food, Kellogg’s Nutri-Grain bar embodies a knowledge that links the health and food in everyday shopping to that of the nation and to the citizen through the distinctions about the child and the family. The pedagogical, the scientific, the political, and the commercial overlap as intricate to the exercise of power as individuals play a part in its operations.

*Constructing a cultural territory for the parent and child: the politics of the educated shopper*

The Kellogg’s Nutri-Grain bar is a historical artefact of the intersection of culture, science, politics and economy. It is a commercially prepared food to respond to and to create the desires of US families and individuals as their lives become faster and have less time in which to give to the preparation of food. The promise of the family of foods such as the Nutri-Grain
bar is to provide the necessary ingredients of a healthy diet through compacting the health of an individual and the family into a compact food. The territory of a normal diet tells of a salvation story that inscribes the problems of social life into a decentred life of the family and childhood that is constituted as it is, and changes so as to effect the conditions in which we live.

Figure 1. KELLOGG's and NUTRI-GRAIN are trademarks of Kellogg Co. used with permission. All rights reserved.
The narrative of health on food packaging links constructions of the child and parent with different discourses. In figure 1, there are rules of scientific (percentages of minerals, calories, etc. related to daily health requirements) with distinctions of the state (the legislation of certain food labelling). The organizing principles seem bound to the scientific ordering of the food that appears on the side of the food box, such as the labelling of fat content, calories, sodium, etc. The food labelling is an array of statistical numbers that collectively describe the health content of its ingredients, an ordering that is common in most countries today.

When the table of ingredients is read alongside the images and textual narratives inscribed on the box, a cultural territory of the citizen is constructed who is active, participatory and free through maintaining a healthy diet (figures 1 and 2). The grid of figures, images and narrative gives intelligibility to seemingly technical facts of health (the food ‘offers your family 20% of their daily requirements’ and ‘helps kids grow!’) with the number and ordering of ‘nutrient facts’ of the food’s content. The reason is not only of who is placed in the cultural vision but also embodies a set of omissions in which ‘healthy growth’ has no distinctions about the systems of genetic engineering, or of the pesticides and hormones in the new economies of food production, or other images of the other.

The grid of figures, images and narrative embodies a dialectic of cultural determinations and desire. A cultural territory is formed as the numbers relate to other narratives and images on the box. The healthy
individual is also of the citizen through multiple sets of overlapping calculations and rationalities in which the food table is not only a narrative of science. On the back panel of the box is an image of an African American female basketball star and representation of her children (figure 2). The athlete and her three daughters stand in descending heights with each wearing the team uniform to create an image of the family bond. An inserted photograph separated from the daughters has the mother holding a baby boy, identified as such in the accompanying text. The gaze of the family is out to the world of those who are holding the box as if to give a testimonial and an invitation to the cultural territory.

At first glance, the image of the family represents the progressive politics of representation. The inclusion is one that has been an important element of the American civil rights movement to include those populations who were previously excluded from the benefits of social, cultural and economic life. The politics of representation lies in identifying the populations of actors who have been socially and economically excluded and to provide systemic access and participation in the allocation of values in society, a view of politics and power consecrated in modern American political theory of pluralism.

While the politics of representation has been important, it is not the only politics in the narratives and images of the Nutri-Grain bar. There is a different politics that overlaps and circulates within the ‘reason’ of representation. What appears as simply a way to connect the body to a healthy regime is also a historical set of links, relays and pathways to connect political aspirations, calculations and decisions to subjectivities. At the centre of the modern citizen is the family, the site where the child and community are established as part of the rationality of governmentality. The intersection of networks and relations in the food table is a range of public, private and voluntary organizations in which there is no clear sovereign authority. The dispersed networks function to generate associations, passions, satisfactions, aspirations, and contemplations in the collective body.

Calculations, rationalities and divides

The grammar of the photos, texts and numbers is not only about access and participation, but also about the rules that qualify and disqualify individuals for action and participation. A different politics of knowledge is also at work. The reason in the food packaging deploys multiple calculations and rationalities in a single plane that normalizes and divides.

The grid that gives intelligibility to the family and childhood bestow comprehension to a national imaginary. The testimonial of the health of food is an amalgamation of political rationalities about a healthy society and citizenry, medical discourses about growth and disease, commercial interests in food production, scientific discourses about diets, and gendered discourses that embody images of sexuality (differentiated images of the ‘trim’ and ‘fit’ body). The public and private space merge as the family
became a location for establishing the public duty of health and cultural reproduction of the citizen through the shaping of domestic relations.

The new salvation story is where race and gender do not matter. The grammar of the photos transports the race, family and gender into a universalized narrative which there is discursively no black/white distinction. The images of the family are of a universalized American, transposed to a particular, naturalized, and classless space of an equalized playing field—all can be the same as racial stereotypes are broken down. The African American woman is anyone’s ‘average’ mother who cares for ‘natural’, healthy children. The image of the ‘new’ family is of a single mother in which images and narrative carry the presentation of a universalized habitus of an American. The nation-hood of the imagery is evident in such images and narrative when they become unrecognizable as a home when transported to other ‘places’ such as Scandinavia or Latin America.

The images and narratives join the registers of administration and freedom. There are new roles for experts who translate the daily worries and decisions over family truth claims that offer to teach the techniques by which individuals can be better managed, healthier and happy. The techniques of health are also of citizen formation that are no longer the inculcation of external validated morals and obligations but of the self-management necessary for the active construction of an ethical life (Rose 1999).

My focus on the embodied ‘reason’ is not to discount the struggles related to the politics of representation inscribed in the Nutri-Grain bar. Rather my purpose is to point to another politics embedded in the systems of reasoning. This is a productive power of the system of reason in a field of cultural practices and cultural reproduction. Knowledge is not an epiphenomenon to other structures, forces, or interests, or as a labelling of individuals in which categories are thought to create identities that travel to define actors—the disabled, socially disadvantaged, ‘at-risk’ child in education. Knowledge connects the scope and aspirations of public power with the personal and subjective capacities of individuals. Numbers are not ‘merely’ numbers but a system of reason to form a cultural territory of desire and desirability (Popkewitz and Lindblad 2000). The overlapping or scaffolding of different discourses is not something logically formulated through linear historical trajectories but a logic born through multiple and overlapping historical movements with no single origin.

**Remaking democracy: the cosmopolitan self in the remaking of the nation and the global**

If we use the previous overlapping discourses of science and health in fabricating a child and family in a national image, we can recognize the politics of the construction of the citizen is not only the politics of the ‘official’ narratives of the nation. It is a field of cultural practices that percolate through the everyday systems of reason. In this context, contemporary US reform in teaching and teacher education can be approached as one central site to explore the cultural field through which the registers of
social administration and the registers of freedom are reconstitution. While various rhetorical strategies are deployed about bringing the school into ‘the age of information’, the rhetorics are embodied in multiple practices that relate to a more ‘decentralized’, localized and community responsive organization; steering practices toward educational goals through performance outcomes and curriculum standards, strategies that are to produce the autonomous, ‘professional’ teachers, and to institute a new problem-solving, collaborative pedagogy. My concern, then, is with diverse practices that cross-university teacher education reform to nationally accredit teachers to curriculum changes in literacy sponsored by American teacher unions to consider the salvation themes constituted. I will argue that the salvation narratives are of the child who is continually active in reworking one’s self-capacity and potentialities through a perpetual intervention in one’s life. That individuality, as I will argue, is also the site in which patterns of inclusion and exclusion are formed.

At this point, one might ask, ‘What is the beef? The reforms do what are intended. They provide ways of moving towards diversity, participation, and community, things that are to be valued in education and the larger society to promote a just and equitable world and fulfil the calling of modern education. So, what is wrong?’ But the question is not what is ‘wrong’ but how do we understand the mutual sets of relations in which these practices are formed and how do we continually trouble what is taken as the normal, the reasonable and the common-sense. What are salvation themes in the current reforms are not merely paths to redemption but effects of power that cannot be taken-for-granted.

Reconstituting democracy: the American Jeremiad reinvented

A re-occurring signifier and central metaphor of the new imaginary is the administration of the child to ensure the future. The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (my italics, 1996), as does the American Council of Education, uses the rhetorical form of America’s future as linked to the constitution of the American child—a child who lives in a global world but framed through the imaginaries of the nation. This metaphor and illusion to the future, however, was also of the early nineteenth century. The first Massachusetts Superintendent of Schools, Horace Mann (1867) talked about ‘the promise of the future’ through invoking the pact of the republican government to promote the public good through children acquiring knowledge. Today, the fulfilling of dreams and aspirations is directed to the child as the ward of America: to touch the future is, ‘to ensure that America and its children will have the schools they require and deserve’ (American Council on Education 1999: ii).

Discourses of democracy and participation provide a redemptive theme that links teaching and teacher education to national survival. The American Council on Education’s (1999) To Touch the Future: Transforming the Way Teachers are Taught, for example, is a major professional document about the reform of teacher education. Produced by the presidents of the leading research universities in the USA, the report makes
the salvation of the nation as the expertise of the university in reforming of schools and saving the child for the future: ‘With each passing decade, education has become more critical to economic and social survival’. The report continues that America has entered into a new era: ‘This nation will begin a new century with an economy that depends far more than ever before on knowledge—its acquisition, analysis, synthesis, communication, and application and the school becomes important ‘for the creation of wealth and well being…. The quality of teaching in our schools must match our dreams and aspiration as a nation’ (American Council on Education 1999: 1)

Educational reforms perform a double sense: it is to create the agent who participates in the forming of the democracy and the actor who is disciplined in order to be capable of acting. First, is the agency of the parents and the child as actors who are the ‘We’ of the people who are to govern. This ‘We’ is fabricated through an imagery of ‘the will of the people’ that is expressed as public opinion and public attention given by the ‘wide-spread consensus [that] has held that the nation’s schools can and must serve better the citizens of our democracy and that the quality of teaching is not what it could or should be’ (American Council on Education 1999: 1).

The second sense of the ‘We, the People’ is the organizing of a particular expertise to order and calculate the consensus that governs the progress brought by ‘reason’ and ‘reasonable people’. That ideal of expertise weaves together both a centralized and decentralized systems of making choices through a universal reason that orders, and differentiates the problems to be solved. The reason of the new leadership is ‘energized’ to ‘work with others’ to ‘ensure that America and its children will have the schools they require and deserve’ (p. ii), and to provide ‘a down payment to renewal and reform’ that the ‘American public’ demand so (p. 1) that ‘the nation’s schools can and must serve better the citizens of our democracy…’ (American Council on Education 1999: 1).

The new system of governing embodies a redemptive focus that is called forth as a professional commitment to an expertise in service of the democratic ideal. The report, What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future joins an appeal to a political philosophy about natural rights with the construction of the teacher who is to administer the child. Pedagogy is the administration of the teacher in the name of the child.

We propose an audacious goal. … By the year 2006, America will provide every student with what should be his or her educational birthright: access to competent, caring and qualified teaching. (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future 1996 p. 10)

The clarion call is not only to meet the future economic progress but to fulfil a commitment to equity and justice: teaching is ‘an occupation critical to society’s future; about the nation’s need for powerful teaching that is available to all students, not just the affluent and the lucky …’ (American Council on Education 1999: 5; also Darling-Hammond 1998). The child and the family are the sites for the social administration of democracy and to provide an inclusionary society.
The redemptive focus is a particular reiteration of the ‘The American Jeremiad’, a joining of intellectual and political critiques of the European Jeremiad with assertions that social progress would produce spiritual redemption (Bercovitch 1978, Popkewitz 1998a). In contrast to the European Jeremiad that decried the sins of the people, The American Jeremiad invokes a particular expertise in formatting the ideas of the republic and the Enlightenment ideas to the social body. The prophetic injunctions of Jeremiah, a Hebrew prophet of the seventh-century BC who predicted the destruction of the Temple, were reconstituted in New England Puritan sermons to convey a duality. The sermons were practical and spiritual guides that wedded theology to politics, and then linked politics to the progress of the Kingdom of God.

The different practices can be thought of as ‘merely’ rhetorical points to create a rallying point, as did the US Department of Education’s 1981 report, A Nation-at-Risk. But discourses of redemption, salvation, and administration are not merely illusions to drum up support. The American Jeremiad is reconstituted through particular sets of distinctions and divisions about participation, democracy, the citizen and the expertise that orders the objects of the world to be understood and acted on. National survival, democracy and participation are notions formed in concrete rules of reason that are brought together into a single plane. Asserted is a need for a ‘(a) a common vision of good teaching . . . ; (b) well-defined standards of practice and performance that guide and measure courses and clinical work; (c) a rigorous core curriculum; (d) extensive use of problem-based methods, including case studies, research on teaching issues, performance assessments, and portfolio evaluation; and (e) strong relationships with reform-minded local schools . . . ’ (American Council on Education 1999: 5).

Participation and the new democracy: salvation themes of science in the production of collaboration

The imaginary of the collaborative citizen is of a particular individuality who uses universalized rules of reason in local, decentralized problem-solving in schools. That imaginary celebrates a historical tale of a federal system of schooling that is governed by local decision-making and through regional authorities with no centralized bureaucracy and a stateless state. The process of reform is the working with various state, local and professional organizations to produce change.

Yet this divides of centre/local—state/non-state—centralized and decentralized—dissolve when the rules of reason in the reforms of teaching, teacher education and pedagogy are examined (Popkewitz 1996). Participation and collaboration embody a disciplined individuality that operates through particular rules of expertise among local communities and local school districts, and teachers. The pact of reform is to promote collaboration for action and to revive the republic through the self-renewed, life-long learning of the individual. The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, argues that its role has been in ‘stimulating dozens of pieces of federal and state legislation’ and of ‘twelve states
... working collaboratively ... to develop strategies for implementing the commission’s recommendations (Darling-Hammond 1998: 5). Reform agendas are to ‘Reach across the barriers that normally separate the conversations of practitioners, policy makers, and the public to seek more comprehensive, transformative change ...’ (Darling-Hammond 1998: 5–6). Local involvement and participation are central to The American Council of Education (1999) as well: ‘No change without all, provosts, faculties, academic deans, ‘without whom no change will be possible’ (p. ii).

This working to stimulate local small schools to change its teacher practices embodies registers that link social administration to freedom. The Commission is to develop a comprehensive policy that ‘confronts the laissez-faire Darwinism that currently reserves most high quality teaching to affluent schools, substantially segregated ‘upper tracks’ and a few alternative schools that exist on the margins of the system’ (Darling-Hammond 1998: 6).

The common values and dispositions embody a continuum of values and distinctions to order and classify participation and democracy. It is a place of engagement with ‘communities’ where ‘students are well known both personally and academically and where common goals and values have been forged’ (p. 10). Participation is embodied through ‘rigorous graduation standards, performance-based assessment, accelerated and in-depth learning approaches, and stronger connections between the classroom and student’s home’; themes that intersect with other, teacher union reports about teaching literacy (Darling-Hammond 1998: 11; also American Federation of Teachers 1999).

A particular calculated democracy is produced. The reform reports locates the sciences of education as providing the calculated, systematic rationality in which to improve schools through providing the standards and practices for ‘making’ teacher’s development (e.g. Darling-Hammond 1998: 5). The American Council on Education asserts that ‘Persuasive new research, when combined with past findings’ (American Council on Education 1999: 1) will make the school successful. The teachers’ union, The American Federation of Teachers (1999), argues that ‘Scientific research has achieved the knowledge necessary to teach children to “read well” for all but a handful of severely disabled children’ (p. 5). ‘Teacher educators must be conversant with the new research findings and incorporate them into their course work in teacher education’ (p. 23). In another report on teacher standards, participation of parents and community is bounded through the categories and distinctions of the educational sciences through which there is engaged ‘sustained discussions about the schools that we want and the teaching we need ...’ (Darling-Hammond 1998: 5).

The expertise of the sciences provides a salvation narrative in the name of a democratic ideal. The participatory teacher is as an expert of the complexities of reading and who conducts oneself in ‘organized, systematic, efficient ways’ and according to ‘a well-designed instructional approach built on a range of research-based components and practices’ (American Federation of Teachers 1999: 7). Teacher education is to make the teacher through ‘meaningful professional standards, redesigning of teacher education, knowledge of the psychology of reading and reading development:
knowledge of sound–symbol mapping, sounding out words, language skills related to phonological or speech–sound processing systems, learning how to read and spell, language is foundation of reading instruction, but language as structure of linguistics’, such as that of learning about morphology, orthography, semantics, syntax and text structure.

Where nineteenth century imagined communities were formed by combining political rationalities with science, art, morality and religion, the contemporary registers are of a science that make the teacher and child meaningful through new distinctions and further differentiations that fabricate the teacher as objects of calculated planning. While the words of democracy, nation and participation are deployed, the words embody particular sets of relations and an amalgamation of discourses and technologies that fabricate the new visions of the democratic individuality.

Expertise of partnership

The new inscriptions of democracy embody new types of expertise to mobilize the individual. This new form of expertise of the teacher who is in a partnership that the professional investigates, maps, classifies and works on the territories of individuality for ‘lifelong learning’. The expert is one who engages individuals and communities so that they can be better managed and to be healthier and happier. But the expertise is not through overt rules but with the communication systems that govern by the individual self-activity, desire and personal responsibility for self-actualization. The second type of expertise is that of the ‘science’ that fabricates the divisions, distinctions and differentiations from which the teacher deploys the expertise. The previous discussions of the new sciences of teaching are illustrative.

The new expertism is embodied in today’s reforms about the empowerment of teachers and parents. Community participation is ordered and rules provided by reforms of site-based management, home–school collaboration, parent ‘choice’ vouchers, and the new charter schools. These reforms are seen as evidence of local involvement and control as teachers and parents for diverse reasons initiate them. The new practices of expertism are brought closer to the child through pedagogical theories about learning, administration of schools (classroom management) and assessment techniques (such as portfolios) that further differentiate and creates finer distinctions in the life of teachers, children and ‘community’.

But the rules of reason and the reasonable person inscribed in these reforms are those discussed previously in relation to constructivist psychologies and cooperative, collaborative participation. The professional teacher is to ‘enable’ and ‘empower’ the individual for self-management of choice and the autonomous conduct of life. It is to teach by providing information and the rules of reason through ‘lifelong learning’, and for the tutoring for the self-development and self-management of the ethical individual.

These shifts in the nature of expertise can be traced in changes in the curriculum over time. McEneaney (2001) argues that school science has moved dramatically to greater student participation over time, with a shift
to greater personal relevance and emotional accessibility. Also with an iconic image of the ‘expert’ changing, the child is imbued with an expert status, but not at the expense of the professionalized expert. The new curriculum inserts the expert knowledge of the disciplines as the arbiter of truth itself. The curriculum embodies narratives that assume greater participation of the expertise of science and widened claims of the natural world as ordered and manageable through science. Thus, the new expertise of the teacher is not to assess truth but to struggle for the soul through the coaching/facilitating of teaching.

The practices of the new expertism also fabricates the teacher who is self actualized and remaking her biography through continually calculating and rationally researching one’s self. New assessment methods are performed for teacher supervision and for the calculation of the child. One can think of the teacher education reform strategies as producing a ‘reflective teacher’, and while seeking to increase teachers involvement can also isolate and create illusions of democratization (Zeichner 1996). The teacher assesses the child through life histories or portfolios, and the child who makes and remakes his or her own biography (the constructivist child).

**Didactics as the struggle for the soul: reconfiguring the registers of social administration and freedom**

At this point we need to inquire further into the amalgamation of images and narratives of democracy and participation that order pedagogy and fabricate the child and the teacher. The overlay of discourses about teacher education and teaching standards intersect with other discourses about learning and child psychology to mutually constitute geopolitical imaginaries of community and nation, and thus re-territorialize the individuality of the child. The liberty and freedom of the cosmopolitan child and teacher are interned and enclosed by the disciplining of the particular pattern of reason that forms didactics, the teaching of school subjects. The reason seems to stand as a universalized ‘problem-solving’ by which the active, cooperative child is to engage the world, understand differences and master the particular distinctions and differentiations of school subjects.

The boundaries that form in the fabrication of the cosmopolitan self can be approached through examining the alchemy of didactics (Popkewitz 1998b). The alchemy is the travelling of disciplines of knowledge production—physics, history, literary criticism—into the space of schooling. As the sorcerer of the Middle Ages sought to turn lead into gold, modern curriculum theory produces a magical change as it is transported from the social spaces of historians or physicists, for example, into social spaces of the school. The alchemy transports disciplinary knowledge in physics or mathematics into a psychology of the child—learning physics is about ‘concept mastery’, the psychology of ‘cooperative small group learning’ and the ‘motivation’ and the ‘self-esteem’ of children. School subjects are performed in relation to the expectations related to the school timetable, conceptions of childhood, and conventions of teaching that transform knowledge and intellectual inquiry into a strategy for gov-
erning the soul. The only thing of disciplinary practices that is saved in the school is the namesake—physics or history.

The alchemy stabilizes school content knowledge in order to make the cosmopolitan child as the site of administration. Where the child of the late nineteenth century had to begin to prepare for a pluralism whose image was united in a universalized ‘American’, the American child of the twenty-first century must be prepared to be a global citizen/worker, flexible, adaptable, ready for uncertainties in work as well as in the family. He/she must also be a citizen prepared to recognize and work with diversity, whether in the USA or elsewhere. The teacher administrates the child who is flexible, ready to respond to new eventualities and empowered through the voices of local ‘communities’ to construct and reconstruct one’s own ‘practice’, participation and ways of reason.

In what might seem contradictory, the cosmopolitan self embodies images of the universal child that intersect scientifically derived age norms with the normalization of the dispositions and sensitivities of a ‘problem-solving’ child or person (Bloch and Popkewitz 2000). Developmental knowledge is (still) the mainstay or foundation for best practice in contemporary US educational reforms. The problem-solving pedagogies of mathematics education, for example, develop mathematical reasoning rather than to produce memory. But that mathematical reason is treated as a stable entity, ‘the development and justification of use of mathematical generalizations’ (Russell 1999). The learned child is one who explores and manipulates the patterns and regularities, and the properties through a reason that is presupposed as the logical and analytical foundations of mathematics.

The reason of mathematics education is a psychology directed to the soul that has little to do with mathematics as a social field of knowledge production. What is called the ‘innate reasoning’ of the child in the teaching of mathematics is a logic of the psychology of children’s development of justifications and conjectures. Teaching is the social administration of the child who practice an inductive and deductive reasoning (Malloy 1999). That universalized reason is one that merges the distinctions of analytical philosophy with psychology as a device to order the world of the child.

The soul targeted in the contemporary reforms is no longer the inculcation of an externally validated morality and obligations that embodied the curriculum of the turn of the twentieth century, but a self who is self managed for the active construction of an ethical life (Rose 1999). The problem-solving of school subjects is a salvation theme brought to the child through the constructive psychologies in didactics. While it is posed in the language of empowering and emancipating the child/family through their moral aspirations and desire, it embodies the registers of disciplining and liberty in the new cultural fields of production and reproduction. The cosmopolitan self is one that orders and calculates through a universal reason about responsible life conduct and participation of one’s self in lifelong learning.

Where diversity is discussed as a strategy for valuing cultural differences, the curriculum practice is to encourage students to transport
culturally based reasoning of family, friends, and ‘community’ to a learning of a universalized rule of reason for making ‘conjectures’. Collaborative and group learning are strategies to give order to the learning of the universal logic of mathematics envisioned as conjectures and justification.

The reason of mathematics reconfigures allegiances and reshapes the imaginaries of loyalty through the ordering patterns through which one thinks, talks, ‘sees’ and feels. The mathematics education is not about mathematics but of an ordering of the capabilities and dispositions of the child. The ‘reason’ of school subjects is the administration and the cultural production of individuals who work on themselves through self-improve- ment, autonomous and ‘responsible’ life conduct, and ‘lifelong’ learning.

**Exclusion/inclusion**

Approaching the alchemy of school subjects as a struggle for the soul of the child provides entrance to the problem of inclusion/exclusion. The stabilizing of school subjects in the alchemy makes possible a teacher whose problem is administration of the soul of the child. Further, what is to be embodied in the child’s learning is a universal reason that orders problem solving. But that reason of the problem solving is not universal but particular historically mobilized divisions and displacements that qualify and disqualify individuals for participation. To talk of a child’s development as having an innate intelligence or to make conjectures and justifications as an ahistorical ‘reason’ of mathematics education inscribes a normality and divisions that make for ‘the reasonable person’ and, at the same time, those capabilities and capacities that are outside of reason. That is, the distinctions of curriculum function as discursive maps that construct what is valued and calculable as children’s learning and, more importantly, children’s being. The mapping and divisions of characteristics and dispositions of the child embody qualities of being that establish dispositions and sensitivities through which the reasonable child is normalized.

It is in this universalized reason that we examined the distinctions and divisions that fabricate the cosmopolitan child. The problem-solving collaborative child is set into a space in which there are also those who do not have these characteristics of living. The inscription devise of the cosmopolitan child is also an inscription of an unspoken opposition—the child who is in need, who is to be rescued through education—the child who is categorized as the school leaver, disadvantaged, at-risk, or from non-functioning ‘homes’. These characteristics and distinctions are of the child who is to be saved or rescued for society and, if I bring back a metaphor, to be disciplined in the present so as to ensure a future that is to be civilized.

By examining the overlapping discourses that form the cosmopolitan and urban child, we can focus on the politics of schooling. The principles of reason that qualify and disqualify individuals through differential systems of recognition and distinctions are an important element to the politics of schooling. Urban education in the USA, while mobilized through a politics of representation to provide better education for those who have not tradi-
tionally succeeded in schooling, is also a practice that normalizes through selectively ordering particular distinctions and sensitivities as a universal knowledge— theories of how all children learn, achieve, and ‘reason’ about science or mathematics. The ordering and dividing are articulated in the alchemy of schooling. If we return to the cosmopolitan self embodied in constructivist pedagogy, the reason of problem-solving seemed as a naturalized quality of the mind that the urban child can never be ‘of the average’ (Popkewitz 1998b). The normalization and divisions in the systems of recognition of the child have particular cultural selectivity and location (e.g. Bourdieu 1984, Walkerdine 1988).

The discourses of urban education in the USA places the child in a continuum of value. The urban child is positioned as the ‘needy’ child who is the anthropological ‘other’ to the cosmopolitan self. The ‘urban’ child in urban education in the USA is a mobilizing of particular historical discourses of policy, research and educational practice to administer ‘needy’ children (Popkewitz 1998b). Where as in many other cultural settings, the wealthy live in the city, the American cities are a mixture of wealth and a cosmopolitan urbanism of poverty, and racial segregation. It is the later that is the field in which the urban child is located. When appealing for an education ‘available to all students, not just the affluent and the lucky . . .’ (American Council on Education 1999: 5), such narratives assume the urban school and child within its divisions.

The cultural territory of the urban child is silently inscribed in the discourses of teachers through a continuum of value of which the cosmopolitan self is the space that locates ‘the reasonable person’. The normality need not be spoken, as ‘everyone’ knows what is talked about when the discourses of urban education are evoked. If we examine, for example, categories that are deployed to redeem the child in an ethnography of urban teacher education (Popkewitz 1998b), it is the urban child who has a ‘street-wise intelligence’, who lacks ‘self-esteem’, or needs ‘hands-on’ learning (figure 3); the constructions of what is needed to help the child also inscribes a child who is set apart from what is normal. The child with ‘street-wise intelligence’ is different from something unspoken but understood as ‘intelligence’. The child who lacks self-esteem is different from what is the ‘normal’ self-esteem. The urban child is the learning disadvantaged, ‘the needy’, ‘at-risk’ and ‘inner-city’—distinctions of the inner characteristics of the children who are somehow different from the norm.

Different discourses identified in figure 3 form a single plane to order, classify and divide the practices of teaching. There is a scaffolding or overlay of political discourses about the state targeting poverty and marginalized groups (the ‘inner-city’ child and urban education). These discourses intersect with psychological discourses about the effects of marginalization and exclusion (poor self-esteem and self-motivation), discourses of ‘the biological nature’ in the child (‘potential’ and ‘intelligence’), as well as discourses of pastoral care and didactics (classroom management, hand-on activities, learning styles, and a caring pedagogy). The narrative that forms involves divisions and normalizations that intern and enclose the child so that the child can ‘never be of the average’.
Composite: Phrases taken from the study: **Struggling for the Soul**. (Popkewitz 1998b)

The children in my school are ‘needy,’ living in the **inner city** and **different** from my brother. They have a **street-wise intelligence**. By that I mean they have **potential** to succeed in school but lack the **self-esteem and self-motivation** to **achieve**.

It is important that the children feel successful. My teaching involves **strong classroom management techniques**. I give them a lot of **hand-on activities** and respond to their **learning styles** in my teaching.

I teach science using **strong management techniques** and a **genuine caring** about children. We talk and share about **their emotional and social issues**.

**Figure 3.**

**Conclusion: changing registers of governing the child, family and community and the politics of knowledge**

There is continual irony posed in the joining of the registers of social administration and freedom. Freedom, from at least the nineteenth century, is an individuality that acts in a world of uncertainty that was a premise of democracy itself. If the citizen is to be an actor and agent of change, change cannot be foretold as it rests on participation and negotiation in a world that has uncertainty rather than certainty. But the uncertainty of the future in which liberty resides is tamed through the practices of social administration. The taming of the present to guarantee the future is through knowledge, that is, through the application of a universal reason that generated principles for the actor and agency. The taming of the future, then, is not repressive of groups or action (although that is still present) but productive through the drawing of the boundaries and principles of reason itself. The alchemy of school subjects fixed the content of school subjects and thus enables the fabrication of the soul who operates through the fixed rules of reason. The struggle for the soul was a disciplining practice through an inscription of the rules of reason that was to master uncertainty in the name of democracy, liberty and the actor who has agency as the modern citizen. Reason disciplines the future through its rules that discipline the individuality of the present. But as Mehta (1997) argues, the universalizing of reason was often in the name of human rights that has been used both for liberating purposes and for violence in the name of those purposes. In the particular context argued earlier, the universalizing, cosmopolitan self has historically interned, enclosed, divided and normalized the capabilities of the individual, and thus mutually produced systems of inclusion and exclusion.
I have sought to problematize the reason of the teacher and the child through focusing on the changing registers that join social administration and freedom. Knowledge structures the field of possible action. It renders conduct calculable through inscribing the principles of performance and the modes of subjectification, that is, the rules through which individuals conduct themselves as responsible, self-motivated and competent (Dean 1995).

Thus, this essay is cautionary in the good works of education and its salvation themes of redemption. At both the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first century, the struggle of the school was to fabricate a cosmopolitan self whose images and narratives would join the nation and individuality. Where the early cosmopolitan self was formed in the image of the social through the universal norms of child development and the family, today’s cosmopolitan self is constructivist, active, and who works in communities for the self’s capacity and potentialities through a perpetual intervention in one’s life. The new flexible, independent, autonomous, responsible, and problem-solving child/parent/citizen at the turn of twenty-first century illustrate the ways in which the governing of the soul has shifted as not new freedoms but a reconstructing of interments, enclosures, and inclusions/exclusions. The images of democracy and participation that are evoked are not a freedom separated from the problems of social administration and governing. The freedom involves new forms of expertise as the partnership and pact in national imaginaries are revisioned through the professional who investigates, maps, classifies, and works on the territories of individuality for a lifelong learning.

Further, the focus on knowledge as a field of cultural practices places into question the ideologically commonplace to accept the reading of current reforms as reduced social and cultural issues to an economic language. My reading of US reforms as well as those of other countries suggest that the economic discourses intersect with other discourses to form a set of cultural practices that is not reducible to economics. The economic language of markets and privatization, to use two examples that appear frequently in educational literatures, overlap with discourses of cultural dislocation, social anxieties, and social movements. To signify the changes as the privileging of economic discourses in education and social policy is, I believe, to misrecognize, in Bourdieu’s sense of the word, the changes occurring in cultural practices.

While I have given attention to the USA, the studies of John Meyer and associates enables us to consider the relation of social administration and freedom in schooling is part of the globalization processes as its theories and narratives of teaching function to construct the images of cosmopolitan subjectivities that travel across multiple boundaries. The schooled child is to be the adult whose ways of thinking and acting enable an ease of movement and a ‘home’ in the trans-national worlds of business, politics, and culture. Further, the restructuring is a cultural practice of the present that forges narratives to instantiate a particular vision of the citizen and the nation.

Historicizing the present is not to argue against participation, community or salvation themes for seeking a more humane and just world.
Nor does it introduce a new determinism through its concern with reason and knowledge. It is just the opposite. To engage the present by making its own naturalness as strange and contingent and thus contestable is a strategy for making possibilities in the present. To show the contingency of the arrangement that we live by is to make possible the judgement of present inscriptions and arrangements, but, with both an irony and an optimism, to recognize the enclosures and internments as alternative possibilities are sought.

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Notes

1. My focus on modernity will be related to the nineteenth century in which science, the formation of the modern state in care of its population, organized capitalism, urbanization and the modern school intersect as historical trajectories. But this modernity is also related to the systems of reason that begin to take place in the seventeenth century (e.g. Baker 2001).

2. I will use both notions of identity and self here while recognizing that some have argued differences between the two concepts. My concern is with the ways in which the inner characteristics and dispositions are historically formed through registers of social administration and registers of freedom discussed below.

3. Morrison uses the imaginary of whiteness and blackness as doubly constituted in American literature.

4. There is a distinction between Enlightenment and Anti-Enlightenment traditions as they relate to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in schooling. My focus here is on those trajectories tied to the former traditions as they relate to the US. It is an open question in today’s forms of globalization of discourses of education how these two different traditions of the relation of social administration and individuality are being positioned.

5. The registers that I speak about are formed through a practical logic in which multiple different things are brought together that a syllogistic logic would find contradictory, such as that of social administration and freedom. One can also think of a register as analogous to a musical score in which multiple and different notations are brought together in a way that establishes something familiar and locates the practice as going in certain directions.

6. Modernity inscribes ‘the origins’ of the modern citizen in the family, the child and the ‘community’ where the self was administered as realms of government to produce the self-motivated and self-responsible person. That concern with populations can be understood through recognizing that since at least the eighteenth century, the nexus of governing shifted from an apex with a sovereign hierarchy (with its head as God, the king or queen) to an individualization that focused on the bottom of the apex through which governing principles were inscribed.
7. Just to be clear at this point about a certain tendency in current analyses of educational social policies. There is no pure market operating and the phrase ‘market oriented’ needs to be carefully scrutinized for what it obscures rather than what is directs attention to. While the idea of *laissez-faire* was prominent in the USA during the early nineteenth century, it was displaced with organized capitalism by the end of the century. The slogan of market is a way of re-ordering the relation of the care of the state and governing of the individual rather than any notion of private interests or a neo-liberalism that privileges the individual outside of the governing practices of social administration.

8. The rethinking of the divide between text and reality is one of the major contributions of postmodern social and political theory. It enables a methodological focus on knowledge and reason as ‘facts’ to investigate empirically. To focus on policy and academic discourses as a field of investigation, new avenues are opened for investigations that can historicize the relation of policy and science as fields of cultural practices and effects of power (Popkewitz et al. 2001).

9. I focus on the nineteenth century while recognizing that the different trajectories in which these practices occur.

10. While I focus on national projects as a convenient way to enter into this problem of social administration and freedom, it is important to recognize that it overlapped with multiple other trajectories that enabled the nation to ‘make sense’. I will be discussing some of these and their implications to issues of inclusion and exclusion below.

11. While our contemporary idea of progress as a linear pattern of development is an invention of the Renaissance, the notions of development and progress are found in classical thought. The Greeks, for example, had a conception of the world that did not place people at the centre. While there was a belief in development and growth, social improvement was not the basis of the organization of society — there was no notion of a philosophy of biological change or cultural improvement of humanity; each living thing had its own laws of cause, mechanism and purpose; and each living thing had its own fixed succession of stages and purpose. With Christianity, the elements of resignation and fatalism of the classical attitude were altered to ones of hope and progress. Time becomes linear and non-reversible; and a dialectical movement from birth to crisis, crucifixion and resurrection is introduced. There is also an idea of historical necessity: what happened in the past is believed not merely actual but necessary and additive.

12. At certain times in American history, the British are the ‘other’ in relation to the German and the French; and other times, the relations move to other axis, such as the post-Civil War, and the First and Second World Wars.

13. Horace Mann was one of the founders of the modern school in the USA and Superintendent of the Massachusetts schools in the nineteenth century. This problem of the social administration of the soul is posed by Durkheim (1997) when discussing the moral formations of society through the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, although the soul of modernity has different historical configurations and relations of knowledge and power that I want to explore.

14. I will historically focus on the USA and thus the ‘dating’ may be different and with different overlapping trajectories in other countries but if Meyer et al. (1997) discussion of world systems and education, and David Hamilton’s 1998 historical discussions of the school curriculum are appropriate, similar historical perspectives can be brought to bear to comparatively explore these themes across nations that include non-European and North American contexts.


16. I use ‘civilizing’ in the sense of Elias (1939/1982), a way of understanding how certain sets of distinctions and manners of the individual are related to cultural and social processes that link the individual to the nation and nation-hood.

17. The children were not the basketball player’s but inserted to provide an image of a family. It is the image and narratives through which reason is fabricated that I want to give attention to in this discussion.

References


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