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"TUCK IN THAT SHIRT!" RACE, CLASS, GENDER, AND DISCIPLINE IN AN URBAN SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT: *This article explores how schools reproduce race, class, and gender inequality through the regulation of students' bodies. Using ethnographic data from an urban school, I examine how assumptions guiding bodily discipline differed for different groups of students. First, adults at the school tended to view the behaviors of African American girls as not "lady-like" and attempted to discipline them into dress and manners considered more gender appropriate. Second, school officials tended to view the behaviors of Latino boys as especially threatening, and members of this group often received strict, punitive discipline. Third, school officials tended to view the behaviors of white and Asian American students as nonthreatening and gender appropriate and disciplined these students less strictly. To conclude, I discuss the importance of viewing race, class, and gender in schools simultaneously and the problems associated with disciplinary reform in education.*

Virtually every day that I conducted research at Matthews Middle School,¹ a predominately minority, urban school, I heard an adult admonishing a student, "Tuck in that shirt!" The prevalence of this phrase represents the connections among dress, behavior, and discipline that composed a primary but unofficial emphasis at the school. In this article I incorporate the theoretical concepts of cultural capital and bodily discipline to analyze this concern with student dress and comportment. I show how educators identified students deemed deficient in cultural capital, especially regarding manners and dress, and attempted to reform these perceived deficiencies through regulating their bodies. This process differed by race, class, and gender as interconnected, rather than distinct, concepts. Perceptions of race, class, and gender guided educators' assumptions of which students lacked cultural capital and which students required disciplinary reform. Although many school officials viewed this discipline as a way of teaching valuable social skills, it appeared instead to reinforce race, class, and gender stereotypes and had the potential to alienate many students from schooling.

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BACKGROUND

One of the most enduring perspectives on social inequality in education has been reproduction theory. This theory, broadly defined, argues that schools tend to reproduce and even exaggerate inequalities of race, class, and gender (e.g., Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Willis 1977). Recent research on reproduction stresses the relationship of bodily display and behavior to inequalities in schooling. One line of this research shows that forms of cultural capital, including styles of dress and behavior, influence student success. Another line of research examines how schools discipline, control, and shape students' bodily activity.

Pierre Bourdieu developed one of the most popular versions of reproduction theory. According to Bourdieu (1977, 1984), social status in various fields, or social settings, is strongly tied to certain cultural tastes, skills, preferences, and knowledge, which he terms "cultural capital." People who possess cultural capital understand and appreciate the cultural norms held by those with societal power and have a greater ability to obtain this power themselves. According to Bourdieu, people tend to have differing abilities to understand such norms, or differing amounts of cultural capital, depending on their class position growing up. Research in education has confirmed Bourdieu's version of reproduction theory, especially in demonstrating how various forms of cultural capital result in school success (e.g., Farkas 1996; Lareau 1987; Lareau and Horvat 1999; Lewis 2003; Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell 1999; for a review, see Lamont and Lareau 1988).

Research has examined the possession of cultural capital in the forms of exposure to literature and museums, "high culture" artistic consumption, language use, and parental influence, among other factors. Less attention has been given to bodily displays of cultural capital, particularly in the form of dress and comportment. Here I propose that clothing styles and manners can function as very important and visible aspects of cultural capital. It is often repeated, for instance, that to succeed in the white-collar business world one must learn to "dress for success"—wear appropriate attire to convey the impression of neatness, order, and ambition. In this case, occupational success relates strongly to a particular set of cultural norms regarding clothing style. A similar dynamic certainly occurs within schools: those students whose dress reflects the cultural styles preferred by those in power should be viewed as successful students.

However, many students, especially those who are poor or racial-ethnic minority group members, are often perceived to lack the cultural background and skills (including methods of dress and comportment) that schools reward. Research finds that the cultural styles of poor and racial-ethnic minority students can irritate many educators, which often leads to the alienation and marginalization of these students (Bernstein 1986; Delpit 1995; Farkas 1996; Gilmore 1985; Heath 1983; Ogbu 1978). According to this argument, poor and minority students have obtained certain knowledge, as well as ways of speaking, behaving, and dressing, from their community contexts. These communities require such skills for survival and cultural participation. However, schools require a different set of skills and knowledge, which poor and minority students are often seen to lack. Further, the

forms of cultural capital useful in poor and minority communities often become impediments in the school context, hampering these students' access to education. For example, Valenzuela (1999) describes a mismatch between styles of dress in a poor, Latino neighborhood and that neighborhood's high school. A Latina student, Carla, had been scolded by school officials for her "ganglike attire," which they interpreted as conveying opposition to the school. Valenzuela (1999:83) explains that Carla merely tried to dress like everyone else in her community: "Far from trying to make a statement, she is doing her best *not* to stand out in her neighborhood." Carla's dress, while normative in her neighborhood, acquired the connotation of opposition within the school's walls, causing educators there to assume she did not care about school.

Adult-student conflict over school standards of dress and behavior is exceedingly complex and may reflect a mixture of misunderstandings, as well as a dynamic of control and resistance. If students interpret the school as strict and uncaring, they could use clothing and behavior in ways that purposely oppose its authority. Youth, especially working-class youth, might use certain styles of speech, behavior, and dress to signal their resistance to middle-class norms, which they experience as oppressive (Foley 1990; Hebdige 1979; Willis 1977). Hebdige's (1979) study of British subcultures, for instance, describes clothing as a particularly important form of class-based youth identity. Many working-class youth wear certain clothing, according to Hebdige, to challenge the "symbolic order" of bourgeois institutions. A similar form of style-based challenge exists in the contemporary United States with hip-hop fashions such as oversized baggy pants, conspicuous chains and jewelry, and hooded sweatshirts, to name a few. Although sometimes embraced by white and middle-class young people, these styles acquire a threatening tenor of opposition for many when worn by minority youth, especially boys (Anderson 1990; Patillo-McCoy 1999). However, these styles may just reflect a youth identity that includes relatively innocuous resistance to adult, mainstream norms.

The question of control and resistance to clothing styles and manners leads to a second area of research on social reproduction that focuses on discipline. This research examines how schools attempt to mold students, especially those perceived as lacking or resistant in some way, into embodying what school officials consider proper comportment. Schools exercise this goal, according to this perspective, through persistent bodily discipline, or regulation of bodily movements and displays. Foucault ([1977] 1995) argued that modern control is enacted through techniques of surveillance and physical regulation, or "discipline," aimed at the body. Although Foucault focused his analysis on prisons, he claimed that an array of modern institutions, including schools, use similar disciplinary techniques. Subsequent research in education has pursued this claim and documented that schools attempt to discipline students into embodiments of compliance (Ferguson 2000; Martin 1998; McLaren 1986; Noguera 1995). Schools use this discipline to rework the behavior and appearance of students so their bodies display acceptable, normative comportment.

Schools include some aspects of this bodily regulation, such as dress codes, in their overt curricula. However, they teach most lessons about appropriate behavior,

such as which students should be quieter and more docile for instance, in a “hidden curriculum” (Giroux and Purpel 1983; Snyder 1971). The hidden curriculum tacitly teaches students unspoken lessons about their race, class, and gender (Anyon 1980; Orenstein 1994) and often manifests in how schools regulate their students’ bodies. According to Martin (1998:495–96), “This curriculum demands the practice of bodily control in congruence with the goals of the school as an institution. . . . [I]n such a curriculum, teachers constantly monitor kids’ bodily movements, comportment, and practices.” In this way schools produce students who not only learn specific subject matter but also learn how to embody raced, classed, and gendered realities.

Several important studies have examined how schools participate in (re)producing gender (e.g., Thorne 1993), race (e.g., Lewis 2003; Olsen 1997), and class (e.g., MacLeod [1987] 1995). Increasingly, studies have also explored the interaction of gender with race and ethnicity in this process (Ferguson 2000; Williams, Alvarez, and Hauck 2002). This literature suggests that race, class, and gender are not inherent characteristics people possess but identities people work to inhabit and re-create (West and Fenstermaker 1995). Coupling the notions of the hidden curriculum and disciplinary control, some research on schools has focused on bodily regulation in the social reproduction process. Martin (1998), for instance, shows how preschools shape the bodily practices of children, producing girls and boys with gender-specific mannerisms. The schools she studied restricted girls’ behaviors more than boys’ behaviors. Ferguson (2000) considers race and gender simultaneously in her study of disciplinary procedures aimed at black boys. The school she studied viewed the dress and behavior of black boys as recalcitrant and oppositional and attempted to exert strict control over them. Ferguson (2000:72) argues that culturally based assumptions about black males made these boys appear as “challenging, oppositional bod[ies],” requiring constant surveillance and regulation in dress, behavior, and speech. In this way, schools react to students based on perceptions of race and gender and use these concepts (in interrelated form) as a basis for specific patterns of regulation.

Literature on disciplinary regulation in schools as well as literature using the notion of cultural capital suggest that schools can engender alienation and resistance from students who do not fit school norms. Students whose cultural knowledge and styles do not fit the school model can feel outcast and confused (e.g., Valenzuela’s [1999] example of Carla). Similarly, strict social control from school officials can provoke resistance from students, which causes the school to perceive them as deserving even more discipline (McNeil 1986). This cycle often produces disengagement from school. When cultural capital and bodily discipline relate to race, class, and gender (as they invariably do) this can reproduce these inequalities by generating students who feel out of place in schools, or oppose them.

Although streams of educational research employing the concepts of cultural capital and bodily discipline have remained largely separate, some studies have merged aspects of these perspectives productively (e.g., Connolly 1998; Ferguson 2000). Ferguson’s study, for example, shows that educators often interpret the cultural styles of black boys negatively and target them for restrictive bodily discipline. Her work provides an excellent platform for analyzing the importance of

bodily display and bodily discipline in educational interactions. However, she limits this study to black boys. To understand more about how processes of bodily display and discipline can hinder attachment to school, we need to expand this view to other groups of students. Studying the way in which disciplinary procedures relate to other race, class, and gender groups can link these processes to a broader array of educational inequalities (and advantages). Latino boys, for example, currently have the highest high school dropout rate of any major racial or ethnic and gender group in the United States (U.S. Department of Education 2001). How educators interpret these boys' presumed cultural capabilities or deficiencies, and attempt to reform them through bodily discipline, could constitute a key factor in their alienation from school.

I explore the relationship among race, class, gender, bodily display, and discipline in more detail. Using observational and interview data from an urban middle school in Texas, I expand our view of this problem to include the educational experiences of African American girls, Latino boys, and white and Asian American girls and boys. I examine how educators' assumptions about these students drove the different ways they disciplined their bodies, especially in dress and manners. School officials tended to interpret African American girls as not "ladylike" and Latino boys as oppositional and potentially dangerous, and disciplined these students regularly. White and Asian American students, by contrast, were seen as less problematic, even though they lived in the same low-income area, and these students often avoided discipline. I suggest that educators' responses to students based on intersections of race, class, and gender resulted in disciplinary practices that could inadvertently maintain these areas of educational inequality.

METHODS

The data come from ethnographic research conducted at Matthews Middle School, located in a large Texas city. According to school records while I was there, the student body of Matthews was 47 percent African American, 40 percent Latino, 9 percent Asian American, and 4 percent white. The school was located in a predominantly poor and working-class area, and 60 percent of its students received free or reduced lunch, indicating economic disadvantage. The faculty consisted of approximately sixty teachers, administrators, and aides. According to records, the faculty was roughly two-thirds black and one-third white. The principal was an African American woman. The middle school encompassed the seventh and eighth grades and had a student population of more than one thousand.

I conducted research over the course of two school years. From August to December in the first school year (2000), I visited the campus only a few times. Beginning in January 2001, with the principal's approval, I began more regular visits. During this time, I observed at the school from two to four days per week, every week that school was in session. I continued this schedule until June 2002. I observed before school and after school, as well as during classes. My observations did not follow a set pattern. Instead, I tried to randomize them as much as possible so that I was able to observe an array of classes of different levels, different subjects, and different students and teachers. I also volunteered as a tutor in classes and after

school. The classes and students I tutored varied but focused primarily on helping with writing, at the behest of the school. Tutoring allowed me to converse with several students (I tutored roughly 15 students one-on-one and more than 40 in group settings and in classrooms), without interviewing them formally. I observed or spoke with nearly every teacher at Matthews during my time there, and many students and teachers became familiar with me. I typically recorded classroom and lunchroom interactions and assemblies directly in a small notebook as they occurred. However, occasionally I sensed that my note taking might be experienced as obtrusive in a certain situation, in which case I wrote notes soon afterward (see Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995:23). I wrote down conversations with teachers and students as soon as possible after they occurred, usually in the school library, the lunchroom, or my car. I conducted a student survey in order to learn how students identified themselves racially.² I also conducted fourteen semistructured interviews with teachers and administrators. I tape-recorded two of these interviews, but because of the uneasiness this caused the interviewees, I wrote down the other interviews as they occurred. When I could only remember the gist of what was said, I did not record this as a quote. Thus the quotes given below are not verbatim but are reasonably accurate.

The bulk of the data for this article is drawn from field notes. I have supplemented these with teacher interviews, although I analyze the teachers' perspectives in greater depth in other, currently unpublished work. I interviewed and spoke with teachers from a range of subject areas, in both required and elective classes. Teachers at Matthews ranged from teaching veterans (some had close to thirty years of experience) to first-year teachers. I did not collect information on years of teaching for every teacher mentioned here, although I indicate this when I have the information. Interestingly, concern with discipline did not vary systematically by teacher experience. Rather, this composed a philosophy held by most (but not all) teachers at the school, which I discuss. In my presentation of findings, I have intentionally deleted or altered certain details to protect participant confidentiality. I will not, for example, state the subject area of a class unless absolutely necessary, because with a relatively small number of teachers in each area (and some areas with only one teacher), identifying the subject area would often all but identify the teacher.

The data that I analyze here emerge from a larger project in which I focus on the numerical minority of white students and whiteness in this predominantly minority school. However, as part of this larger project, I closely observed the experiences of African American, Latino, and Asian American students. Indeed, because there were only about forty white students in the school, it was virtually impossible to not observe the experiences of nonwhite students. Hence, I closely documented the circumstances of these students as well. My social location as a white middle-class man undoubtedly influenced what participants told me and what I observed. I often found myself the sole white person in the classrooms and meetings I observed. This probably magnified my outsider status in many situations and influenced the interactions I observed, making them less than typical. In addition, my cultural and racial background might have caused me to misunderstand (or simply miss) many meaningful interactions. I found that my social distance as an

outsider decreased over time, as I became more familiar with adults and students at the school, and they with me. However, the biases of my background undoubtedly shaped the data I collected. In my view this does not render these data invalid but just different from what a nonwhite woman, for instance, might have collected.

In my research at Matthews, I viewed the concepts of race, class, and gender as socially constructed and context-specific (Omi and Winant [1986] 1994; West and Fenstermaker 1995). My goal in this process, for example, was not to assess a student's "real" race but to understand students' and teachers' standpoints on this concept. I then considered these along with my own perceptions as an "outsider/within" (Collins 1986), which I consider an equally valid standpoint. Also, as the analysis below shows, students actively "performed," or symbolically displayed, race, class, and gender through ongoing interactions (Bettie 2000; Foley 1990; West and Fenstermaker 1995). By recording these interactions, I attempt to document the use and meaning of these concepts at the school. I use the terms "African American" and "black" interchangeably because that is how people at the school used them. I also use "Latino" and "Hispanic" interchangeably for the same reason and treat this as more of a racial category than an ethnic category because that is how it was used in school interactions and records.

FINDINGS

The Importance of Dress at Matthews

Matthews was a public school but required students to wear uniforms based on the school colors—navy blue, red, or white shirts, and navy blue or khaki shorts or pants. Girls could wear navy blue or khaki skirts or skorts (half skirt, half shorts) that fell below the knee. Most sneakers and dress shoes were allowed, except sandals and boots. The school expected students to have their shirts tucked in at all times. According to teachers, the movement for uniforms at Matthews began about eight years before I started my fieldwork. Teachers told me that this was a collaborative effort between parents and the school, and the few parents I spoke with supported the uniforms. Similar to many urban schools, the uniform dress code at Matthews was intended to decrease gang activity (to rid the school of the "flying colors," according to one teacher) and make student poverty less visible. The regulation of the dress code, however, was a constant source of conflict between teachers and students.

Teachers' profound interest in instilling discipline through dress was reflected in their nearly ubiquitous calls to "tuck in that shirt!" This phrase is peppered throughout my field notes, and although adherence to the dress code was not an initial concern of my study, I soon found it emblematic of the school's exhaustive focus on bodily discipline. According to the principal, a survey of teachers conducted by the school just before I arrived found that dress code violations and discipline problems were among the top issues teachers wanted improved. Indeed, like other urban schools that require uniforms, teachers and administrators at Matthews linked the dress code to student discipline and order in general (Stanley 1996). The school sent an information sheet titled "Standard Mode of Dress" to

each student's home. This document states that the purpose of the dress code is to "ensure a safe learning environment" and "promote a climate of effective discipline that does not distract from the educational process." It describes the dress code and emphasizes in bold print that "baggy and over-sized clothing *will not* be allowed" (original emphasis). Students who deviated from this code, typically those who did not tuck in their shirts, were often spotted by adults and disciplined into compliance.

For many of the educators at the school, policing the dress code extended to an emphasis on teaching students how to dress "well." Many even coupled this interest with genuine, caring concern for student upward mobility in this working-class context. For example, the school held what it called a "dress for success" day, when students were invited to dress as one might for the "business world." Also, many teachers encouraged their students to dress up when giving a presentation in class, and teachers at the school were expected to dress up (often suits and ties for men and dresses and nylons for women), lending a tone of formality to the school. Matthews devoted entire assemblies to instructing students on how to dress properly. The example that follows is from my field notes.

5/11/01, 8:30. The school has an assembly for advisory period. The point of the assembly appears to be to remind the students of how they should dress for upcoming events. Ms. Gilroy, a black assistant principal, first lectures the students on how they have strayed from the dress code recently and need to get back in line. "We need shirts tucked in and I don't want to see boys with earrings." Several kids laugh at this, but she isn't joking at all—this is all presented as if it were deadly serious. Next, she describes how the kids should dress on the upcoming "dress for success" day. "You need to dress like you would for a business. You may have something cute, but it may not be appropriate for what you would wear in a business setting." Next up to speak is Ms. Thomas, a white teacher who is in charge of the graduation ceremony. She tells the kids where and when the ceremony is, and that they must be present in school that day to graduate. Then she continues with a lengthy description of what the kids should wear. She says there will be no cap and gown and emphasizes repeatedly that the kids should be in "Sunday dress" and "what you wear to church." Finally, another teacher gets up and continues the dressing theme to talk about the upcoming dance, again emphasizing "appropriate" clothing.

Thus, beyond the uniforms, the school sought to discipline the kids³ into wearing clothing considered appropriate on nonuniform school days and events. This discipline served as part of a hidden curriculum, emphasizing strict regulation of dress for working-class students whom adults thought did not possess knowledge of "appropriate" manners and clothing. In addition, as Ms. Gilroy's comment about boys wearing earrings indicates, instructions in how to dress well typically fell along gendered lines. A black administrator named Ms. Adams, for example, instructed a group of girls, most of whom were black, in how to dress for one formal event by warning, "Don't come in here with no hoochie-mama dress all tight up on your butt!" (fieldnotes, 4/12/01). I also observed other school officials, all of them African American women, critiquing girls (who were almost always African American as well), for wearing "hoochie-mama" clothing. These

adults appeared to identify the styles of black girls in particular as overly sexual and sought to reform them (see also Collins 1990, 1998).

However, concerns over clothing and appearance were not just directed toward girls. Adults also feared that boys, especially black and Hispanic boys, might wear something considered inappropriate to formal events, such as oversized pants that sagged below the waist. Several African American men and women at the school encouraged boys to dress like “gentlemen,” even giving some practical advice such as not wearing white socks with a suit. In this sense, these boys appeared to educators to display “marginalized masculinities,” interpreted as overly coarse and aggressive (Connell 1995). Educators aimed to reform these styles and behaviors into what were perceived to be mainstream masculine forms. School officials viewed the gendered prescription of dress for both girls and boys as a central part of teaching the students appropriate manners. In this process, they distinguished “street” styles, which they deemed brash, from “appropriate,” conservative styles of dress and behavior.

Many adults at Matthews saw making students adhere to the dress code and use proper manners as a way to provide them with social skills, including those needed for future employment. This concern is interesting, because research on cultural capital has rarely examined public institutions that attempt to transmit such cultural skills. A second-year African American teacher named Mr. Kyle, for instance, said this:

They have to learn to follow the rules—like coming to class late, I won’t tolerate that. Or tucking in the shirts. . . . [I]t’s a rule and you have to learn to follow it. I teach them to say “Yes Sir” and “Ma’am.” It’s a way to model good behavior, so that way they’re not just booksmart—if they go for an interview for a job, they’ve got to learn how to talk to someone. . . . [I]f you know how to be respectful, you can get a job. (Interview, 3/22/02)

Many adults thought that teaching students “the rules” of dress and manners, including adherence to the dress code, was an important way to prepare students for future success. School officials viewed their discipline of student’s bodies, especially in appropriately masculine and feminine ways, as transmitting cultural capital—modeling the type of dress and conduct that could be linked to upward mobility.⁴

However, school officials did not appear concerned with the dress and manners of all students in the same way. Disciplinary action differed according to how perceptions of race and class interacted with perceptions of masculinity and femininity. In my observations, disciplinary focus at Matthews took three general forms, which I discuss in detail below. First, educators were concerned with “ladylike” behavior and dress, especially for African American girls. Second, educators were concerned with threatening and oppositional behavior and dress, especially for African American and Latino boys (because Ferguson [2000] has already provided an in-depth account of the disciplinary experiences of African American boys, I focus on the discipline directed at Latino boys below). Third, many school officials assumed that some students, especially white and Asian American students, required little guidance or discipline in their behavior and dress. Fourth, I

consider how these disciplinary patterns may have provoked alienation and resistance from many of the students targeted for reform.

Acting Like a Young Lady: Race and Perceptions of Femininity

Aside from "Tuck in that shirt!" the most often used phrase that I recorded in my fieldnotes was some variation on "Act like a young lady!" Adults invariably directed this reprimand at African American girls; I never recorded it directed at Latina girls, Asian American girls, or white girls (although members of these groups did receive other reprimands). Adults occasionally instructed boys (primarily black boys) in how to act like "gentlemen," but this was far less common and was never used as a reprimand. Teachers and administrators used the phrase "Act like a young lady" to instruct black girls in how to sit and get up properly, dress appropriately, and speak quietly, as the following excerpt illustrates.

As the students are working on Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (the state achievement test) worksheets, Brittany, a black girl wearing dark blue shorts and a white shirt, gets up from her desk to get a tissue. The action seems perfectly innocuous to me, but Ms. Taylor, a black teacher, sees something unacceptable in it. Before Brittany can get to the tissue box, Ms. Taylor makes her go back to her seat, sit down, and then get up "like a young lady." Brittany seems rather confused by this and seems about to protest but eventually obeys with some huffing. She gets up much slower this time and with her legs closer together, looking at Ms. Taylor the whole time for assurance that everything is correct. Ms. Taylor says, "Thank you, Brittany." And Brittany proceeds to get her tissue while still looking rather perplexed. (Fieldnotes, 3/21/01, 1:00)

In a subsequent interview I conducted with Ms. Taylor, a veteran teacher, she explained why she considered it necessary to teach some girls "ladylike" behavior, as she did with Brittany:

I talk to them about how a lady talks and walks—I used to put books on their heads, so they would learn to stand straight and sit straight, with no slouching. I've had to say things like "Close your legs—ladies don't sit like that." But there is a lack of parental involvement, and they are not taught these things. Some come in here as young ladies already, but some have to learn. (3/27/02)

According to my observations, the girls adults thought needed to learn this ladylike behavior tended to be African American. One first-year teacher, a black man named Mr. Neal, told me in a conversation that black girls in particular required instruction in acceptable manners:

Mr. Neal talks to me about how important he thinks it is for black, urban youth to learn how to express themselves in acceptable ways, like through video and film. He tells me: "Like the black girls here—they lack social skills. The way they talk, it's loud and combative. They grow up in these rough neighborhoods, and that's how they act to survive. We need to teach them more social skills because that's one of the big problems now." (Fieldnotes, 3/6/02)

Mr. Neal's statement echoes Grant's (1984) finding that teachers tend to focus on improving the social skills of black girls. As he mentions, many teachers, both

black and white, interpreted black girls as overly “loud” and aggressive. This was one of the main ways adults thought these girls deviated from their model of ideal feminine behavior, and it often stimulated reprimands:

I am walking outside among the portable buildings that are used as classrooms while the school building is under construction. It is between classes, and the kids are running around to find their friends, and laughing boisterously, as usual. A group of three black girls runs by Mr. Henry, a black male teacher, laughing loudly. This upsets him and he scolds them as they leave: “hey! You need to act like young ladies!” (Fieldnotes, 5/11/01, 10:30)

In this passage, Mr. Henry is offended not only by the volume of the girls’ laughter but also by the speed of their movements. He implies through his gendered scolding of this behavior that the girls would conduct themselves in a more acceptable and gender-appropriate manner if they slowed and controlled their bodily movements and spoke quietly. Adults did not often demand that boys (of any racial-ethnic background) exert similar control over themselves. I witnessed no admonitions to “act like young gentlemen!” for example. Thus, similar to Martin (1998), I find that school officials restricted the movements of girls more than boys and encouraged girls to exert greater control over their bodies. While most of the children in Martin’s (1998) study were white, however, my findings from Matthews indicate that adults directed these bodily restrictions at black girls far more than at white, Asian American, or Latina girls (discussed below). Race appeared to shape the perception of femininity. Educators tended to read the behaviors of black girls as more stereotypically masculine than feminine and attempted to discipline them into exhibiting behavior closer to stereotypical femininity.

Interestingly, however, this concern with the gendered comportment of black girls did not seem to affect teachers’ perceptions of them academically. Although black girls were frequently disciplined, they were not viewed as particularly “bad.” They were overrepresented in pre-Advanced Placement classes, and teachers frequently described them in “regular” classes as among their best students. In fact, stereotypically masculine behavior, such as the boldness many adults interpreted as “loud,” often seemed to benefit black girls in the classroom. As Mr. Wilson, a veteran white teacher, said in describing some of the best students in his class, “The black girls up there I don’t worry about, they can fend for themselves—they’re loud, but they’re a sharp bunch and do their work” (fieldnotes, 10/3/01). Although many adults viewed training girls to “act like young ladies” as putting them on the path to upward mobility, their discipline of black girls seemed to curtail some of the very behaviors that led to success in the classroom. Despite adults’ good intentions, this disciplinary pattern could actually serve to solidify racial and gender inequality by restricting the classroom input and involvement of black girls.

Symbolizing Opposition: Race, Masculinity, and Style

In contrast to girls, adults saw many boys at Matthews as “bad” and occasionally threatening. This was particularly true for Latino and African American boys.

In my observations, members of these groups were the most likely to “get in trouble.” Unlike that for most girls, this discipline often entailed stern reprimands and referrals to the office for punishment. My findings of the negative disciplinary experiences of African American boys match those of Ferguson (2000). However, I found that school officials at Matthews also considered many *Latino* boys equally if not more dangerous and subjected them to constant surveillance and bodily discipline. The discipline directed at Latino boys was strongly mediated by their presentation of self, however, especially through their choice of clothing, hairstyle, and response to authority (Bettie 2000; Goffman 1973; West and Fenstermaker 1995). Teachers interpreted Hispanic students who projected a “street” persona through their dress and behavior as indifferent to school. Markers of this persona included gang-related dress such as colored shoelaces, colored or marked belts, or a white T-shirt or towel slung over a particular shoulder. However, other markers of this street style were less directly related to gang involvement, such as baggy Dickies brand pants, shaved or slicked-back hair, or refusal to keep the shirt tucked in. Many of these markers appeared instead to reflect a working-class identity.

Latino boys provoked fear in many teachers, especially when the boys were suspected of gang involvement. One white teacher, for example, referred to a group of Hispanic boys she called “gangsters” as “the type that would get back at you” (fieldnotes, 5/13/02). Although many adults and students told me that most kids affiliated with gangs at the school were wannabes rather than full-fledged members, and I never witnessed any gang violence on or near school grounds, teachers viewed any “gang-related” students as potentially dangerous and disciplined them accordingly. Students suspected of being in gangs were almost always Latinos and were monitored closely by adults, especially in terms of their dress:

Mr. Pham, an Asian American teacher, is overseeing a class made up of students from different classes who have finished TAAS [Texas Assessment of Academic Skills] testing early. The kids are very unruly, and few heed Mr. Pham’s directions for silent reading. During the course of this “class,” Mr. Pham reprimands several Latino and African American boys but no girls. Carlos, a Latino boy that another teacher told me is affiliated with the Crips, a large and popular gang, has been sent to the office. Toward the end of class he returns, and in a show of defiance, immediately untucks his shirt. Mr. Pham eventually notices and tells him to tuck it back in. Carlos complies somewhat, tucking half of it in. As the class draws to a close, Carlos walks by Mr. Pham and fakes like he will hit him. Mr. Pham seems to not notice amid all the other activity.

After class I talk to Mr. Pham about Carlos causing so much trouble. Mr. Pham says, “Yeah, well he’s in a gang. I won’t back down to him, though.” (Fieldnotes, 4/26/01, 9:45)

Although many of the students at Matthews resisted the dress code prescription to tuck in their shirts, it was the resistance of Latinos that was viewed as especially threatening and oppositional. As Mr. Wilson told me, “The gang influence is bad among these Hispanics” (fieldnotes, 10/3/01). Many teachers expressed a similar othering of Latinos, constructing the group as exotic and untrustworthy and connecting them to negative gang activity.

For example, many school officials interpreted types of clothing as gang related when worn by Latino boys. Ms. McCain, a white fourth-year teacher, expressed this view when asked in an interview how she identified gang members: "Like if one on my Hispanic boys is wearing all blue—blue shirt and blue pants. The Crips, they wear blue rag." Many students, irrespective of race or gender, wore blue clothing at Matthews, occasionally all blue. Yet Ms. McCain implied that she interprets such clothing to indicate gang membership only when worn by Latino boys. The combination of race and gender with dress in this case could signal the difference between a potentially dangerous student and a harmless one.

Some Hispanic boys at the school were indeed involved with gangs, including the Crips, and announced this verbally as well as through their bodily displays. But outright gang members constituted only a small percentage of Latino boys at the school. I also knew of Asian boys and Hispanic girls who were involved in gangs, for instance, but teachers did not generalize that these groups of students, defined by race and gender, were dangerous. In addition, many adults viewed Latino boys in general as having the potential for gang involvement or violence, even if they did not openly display gang markers. For example, in another class I observed with Mr. Pham, he reprimanded a Latino boy who was wrestling with another boy. The Latino boy protested, saying he did not think he was hurting the other boy. Mr. Pham told him to stop anyway and added, "One day you're gonna hurt someone and not know it and go to jail." This particular Latino boy did not wear any salient markers of gang affiliation typically used at the school. However, Mr. Pham still interpreted his actions as overly aggressive and warned that they could one day land him in jail.

Discipline and surveillance were especially directed at Hispanic boys who projected various elements of a "street" persona. This persona did not necessarily include direct gang markers but almost always included wearing baggy Dickies brand pants. Many Latino and African American boys preferred this brand of pants and shorts and usually wore them oversized and low on their hips. The choice of Dickies by these students suggests a working-class-based, "tough" identity because the brand is primarily marketed as men's blue-collar work clothing (see Hebdige 1979 for a discussion of other styles of clothing and class identity). Many adults at Matthews, such as Ms. Boyd, an African American fifth-year teacher, interpreted Dickies negatively: "You know how they wear these baggy Dickies pants and stuff—you know where that comes from? It's like how they dress in prison. A lot of them see their older brothers or whatever in prison and that's what they pattern themselves after" (fieldnotes, 4/20/01). For Ms. Boyd, Dickies represented oppositional values. Interestingly, I rarely saw white students wearing Dickies, and only a few Asian students wore them. The brand was overwhelmingly preferred by black and Latino students, usually boys. This parallels Ferguson's (2000) finding that school officials viewed many black boys as "bound for jail." My findings from Matthews expand this view to include Hispanic boys and highlight how something as simple as a style of pants can indicate potential criminality when worn by black or Latino boys.

However, bodily display, especially clothing choice, had a major influence on how educators viewed and treated Latino boys. The few Latino boys who wore

Dockers brand pants and dark sneakers or dress shoes and kept their shirts tucked in signaled to teachers that they were good students. One Hispanic student of this type was named Thomas. Thomas projected a middle-class, "school-boy" persona through his Dockers pants, tucked-in shirt, and parted hair (see also Ferguson 2000). Although I heard him called a "little nerd" by some of his classmates, he received positive reactions from teachers in class. Thomas was rambunctious and did have a few referrals to the assistant principal's office. However, these referrals were not for severe and persistent behavior, and teachers did not interpret Thomas's actions as threatening.

Thomas serves as an example of how Latino boys, largely through their dress and manners, could signal to school officials that they were conscientious students and came from middle-class backgrounds. These students paralleled the African American boys that Ferguson (2000) terms "Schoolboys" because of their strict adherence to school rules (in contradistinction to boys considered "Troublemakers"). At Matthews I noticed a similar split between those considered "school-boys" and "bad boys" among Latino students.⁵ I suggest that this dichotomous view stemmed largely from educators' perceptions of social class. Teachers seemed to hold more polarized views of the potential class backgrounds of Latino students than they did for other students. Many told me that the Hispanic students' backgrounds could be relatively wealthy and upwardly mobile or very disadvantaged. A veteran white teacher named Ms. Phillips, for instance, explained in our interview that she thought many of the school's Hispanic students were middle class or at least stable working class and in a better economic situation than most of the white students: "I'm pretty sure most of the white kids who go here live in apartments, and are poor like a lot of the other kids. Now, if you drive through the neighborhood just down from here—the one with all the houses—it's all Hispanic. A lot of the Hispanic families here are home owners."

I found that many Latino students at Matthews actively "performed" (Bettie 2000) class identity and membership, especially through their dress. A middle-class performance displayed the students' possession of cultural capital in the form of dress and grooming, indicating a middle-class or upwardly mobile background and mitigating the discipline they received. Although Latino boys in general were viewed as potentially problematic, social class-oriented signals, in the form clothing and manners, could ameliorate the negative perceptions associated with being male and Hispanic.

At the same time, any display of a working-class street style by Latinos could lead educators to perceive them as oppositional. This was true for boys as well as girls but appeared less acute for girls. Latinas who displayed a street style could be disciplined and seen as "bad" but not as dangerous as Latinos who displayed this style. Teachers suggested that although they believed many of the Latinas were connected to gangs, they did not see them as "ringleaders" or instigators of trouble in classrooms, or as overly aggressive. Some teachers even tried to protect Hispanic girls from boys they suspected of gang activity. Mr. Wilson told me, for example, that he tried to separate the Hispanic boys and girls in one of his classes because he thought that the girls "wanted to do their work": "I try to give them as much positive reinforcement as possible, so they don't get under the influence of

those boys" (fieldnotes, 10/3/01). Teachers could view Latinas exhibiting a street style as oppositional, but they did not see this as the tendency for Latinas in general. By contrast, they did view many Latino boys as inclined to opposition and having the potential to influence others in that same way. Thus, race- and class-oriented style did not really compromise femininity for Latinas or lead adults to view them as resistant, but these factors had important implications for perceptions of masculinity for Latino boys.

Self-Discipline and Benign Resistance: Race, Class, and Gender in the Perception of Acceptable Behavior

Most research employing concepts of cultural capital and bodily discipline has given little attention to how these processes might work for white and Asian students, especially those in predominantly black and Latino urban areas. Matthews had a small minority of white students and a larger minority of Asian American students. I almost never saw these students disciplined in terms of dress or manners, even when I observed clear violations.⁶ School officials appeared to view Asian students at the school through the lens of the "model-minority" stereotype of high academic achievement and discipline (see Lee 1994, 1996). I never saw Asian American girls disciplined for behavior or dress; in many ways these girls exemplified the educators' ideal self-disciplined student. I rarely observed school officials discipline Asian American boys. Behaviors for which adults frequently rebuked African American and Latino boys (e.g., getting out of their seats without permission, being loud) often went unnoticed when engaged in by Asian American boys. Further, some Asian American boys exhibited behavior and dress almost identical to that considered dangerous and gang affiliated when engaged in by Latinos boys, but the Asian Americans were still considered good students.

A Pakistani student named Roshan, for example, dressed in a street-based style that included baggy Dickies pants. Roshan could be quite disruptive in classes and received some discipline, but educators did not describe him as "bad," and I never saw him referred to the assistant principal's office (for serious infractions). Roshan often dressed in all blue, and I observed him hanging out with kids that teachers considered gang affiliated. In fact, one day when I was helping Roshan write a paper, he calmly informed me that he was indeed involved with a gang (fieldnotes, 4/15/02). Thus, even when Asian American boys such as Roshan exhibited specific markers associated with gang affiliation, and in his case actually did have some involvement in gangs, educators still did not view them as threatening or dangerous, especially compared to Latino boys.

Adults rarely disciplined white girls or boys, although, as was the case for Latinos, this was strongly mediated by race- and class-based performance. Some white students, through their interactive style, choice of clothing, and friendship groups, signaled a type of street persona similar to many other students. This persona incorporated styles of dressing and speaking commonly associated with urban black youth. Although I never saw these white students wear Dickies pants, some wore gold chains outside their shirts, like many of the black and Latino students, and used expressions and spoke in a cadence similar to many black

students at the school, what many might call “Black English” or “ebonics” (Labov 1972). Students affecting this persona tended to receive more disciplinary action than other whites.

One example is Lisa, whom I originally considered white, then multiracial, and then white again based on her survey response of just “White.” I had difficulty classifying Lisa racially because she often wore her dark hair in styles similar to many black girls at the school, such as cornrows, she tended to hang out with black girls, and she spoke in a rhythm similar to her black friends. Teachers occasionally monitored and regulated Lisa’s comportment, such as when she gave a class presentation.

Lisa, who has her hair styled like many of the black girls in a sort of bun on top of her head, and is dressed up, goes next. The teacher, a black woman named Ms. Lewis, again tells the class how important it is to “look nice” when doing a presentation for a job. She gives Lisa quite a bit of coaching, including making her take off her jacket: “You do not wear a jacket giving a presentation for a job unless it is part of your outfit.” Lisa reluctantly takes the jacket off. Then Ms. Lewis tells her, “Take your hand off your hip, and stand up at the front—don’t slouch.” Ms. Lewis also asks why Lisa’s parent didn’t come (students were given extra credit if they brought their parent[s] to see their presentation). Lisa says she doesn’t know. She then starts her presentation, which she goes through quickly. She speaks in a slight southern/black cadence—different from other white students I’ve seen at the school but also different from the black students—sort of in between. (Fieldnotes, 11/14/01, 9:10)

Lisa certainly received bodily discipline in this instance, which differed from what I observed with other white girls. The “coaching” of Lisa’s behavior parallels what I witnessed with many black girls and appears to be an attempt to instill in Lisa knowledge of how to conduct herself in a business setting. However, this discipline differed from that directed at the black girls in that the adult did not label Lisa’s actions specifically “unladylike.” Ms. Lewis, like most of Lisa’s teachers, did not seem to assume she really lacked knowledge of how to “act like a young lady.” Although Lisa dressed and acted in ways virtually indistinguishable from many black girls at the school, adults did not interpret her behaviors as overly bold or aggressive. Lisa’s whiteness, however nonstereotypical, seemed to indicate adequate femininity in itself.

The same class contained another white student who spoke in a style similar to many black students at the school. This student, a large boy with light brown hair named Jackson, marked “White” on his survey and in the “Other” space wrote in “white chocolate.” Jackson very much portrayed this “white chocolate” racial identity. He hung out with black students, used Black English in his speech, and wore long gold chains outside his shirt. Although Jackson often wore his pants or shorts well below his waist and rarely tucked in his shirt, I never saw him scolded for it. He did “get in trouble” frequently for other reasons, however, such as in this interaction with Ms. Lewis from the same class period discussed above.

After a few presentations at the beginning that Ms. Lewis seemed satisfied with, the rest have not pleased her—many students had multiple misspellings and failed to follow directions. Ms. Lewis is particularly angry with Jackson

for his. She has already scolded him and moved him away from the class for causing a disruption. I notice as he moves, Jackson is wearing a large gold chain on the outside of his shirt and that his shirt is not tucked into his long baggy shorts. No one has told him to tuck it in. As Jackson starts his presentation, his clothes contrasting with many of the other students who have dressed up for their presentations, he tells Ms. Lewis, "I ain't finish." Ms. Lewis tells him to do it anyway. He attempts to but has not done most of the things she asked for. Ms. Lewis scolds Jackson for this, and he talks back, saying, "I told you I ain't finish yet." Ms. Lewis responds, "But why did you tell me it was done last week when you weren't doing anything?" Jackson tries to mount a weak defense: "It was—I just had it somewhere else." Ms. Lewis tells Jackson to see her after class but later forgets about it, and he goes free.

Teachers often reprimanded Jackson like this for not doing his work or being insolent. However, as in the example above, they tended to not monitor or correct his clothing or mannerisms. Similarly, school officials did not appear to perceive Jackson as particularly "bad" or threatening. In fact, although some teachers watched Jackson closely during assemblies, he was allowed to walk around rather freely and stand near the teachers at the same time that they often admonished other students, to "Get in your seat!" or "Tuck in that shirt!" Jackson's whiteness seemed to make his technically deviant (according to school rules) dress and behavior appear harmless and benign to many school officials.

In her study of the disciplinary experiences of black children, Ferguson (2000:72) states, "The closer to whiteness, to the norm of bodies, language, emotion, the more these children *are* self-disciplined and acceptable members of the institution." In my observations, students such as Jackson and Lisa performed identities that deviated from stereotypical whiteness despite their white skin and despite their categorization of themselves as white on a survey form. Perhaps because these students lived in this working-class, predominantly minority urban neighborhood, they reflected and aligned themselves with their experience in this context, which produced an alternative projection of whiteness. However, although this performance tended to slightly differentiate these students from other white students in terms of discipline, their whiteness still afforded them less concern and monitoring from teachers than that directed at most African American and Latino students, especially in terms of manners and dress. This provided white students with latent racial benefits, something scholars have referred to as "white privilege" (Fine et al. 1997; McIntosh [1988] 1996). Whiteness, even when expressed through a streetwise demeanor in the working-class context of Matthews, was still considered quietly central and normative.

Impacts of Disciplinary Control

Several scholars suggest that discipline, especially when harsh and controlling, often engenders resistance and alienation (Ferguson 2000; Foucault [1977] 1995; McNeil 1986). When directed at historically marginalized student groups, such discipline may only perpetuate their marginalization and inequality in the educational system. At Matthews, the different ways in which students and teachers

interpreted discipline in dress and manners provides insight into how this discipline might actually reproduce educational inequalities.

Although most teachers at Matthews favored strict discipline in dress and manners, a few did not. A white teacher named Ms. Scott, for example, said this when I asked why she thought so many adults insisted on making the students tuck in their shirts: "Because it's an easy battle. You might not be able to get them to sit in their seat and do their work, but you can make them tuck their shirt in. It's an easy way for teachers to assert their authority over the kids and make it look like they have control" (fieldnotes, 2/1/02). Ms. Scott implied that teachers who did not have enough control over their students to make them do schoolwork could project a facade of control through the regulation of student clothing. Similarly, some teachers I observed also made their students tuck in their shirts before going to lunch while ignoring untucked shirts in their own classrooms. These findings emphasize how important teachers considered the visibility of student compliance with clothing rules and echo Foucault's ([1977] 1995:187) assertions that "in discipline it is the subjects that have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of power that is exercised over them." Students displaying tucked in shirts symbolized and embodied the control and order sought by the school.

In contrast to adults, virtually all the students I talked to at Matthews expressed displeasure with the dress code, especially the policy of keeping shirts tucked in. Most complained that the dress code made them physically uncomfortable and stifled their ability to express creativity. The students most persistently targeted for dress code infractions—black and Latino boys—appeared most resistant to this policy. For example, I tutored Daniel, a Latino boy, on a persuasive paper he was writing against the school's tucked-in shirt policy. I asked him why he thought adults cared so much about this. He replied, "Because they think it makes us look like we're educated." When I asked him why he opposed that, he thought for a while and finally stated, "Because it doesn't matter what you look like to be educated, it's all up here [points to his head]." In contrast to most adults at Matthews, Daniel viewed regulation in dress and manners as unnecessary and asserted that mental development itself should be the primary form of cultural capital that teachers transmit to students.

Student displeasure with the dress code often translated into resistance. This resistance, especially in the form of untucked shirts and baggy pants worn low on the hips, symbolized defiance of the school for many teachers. According to Mr. Simms, a veteran white teacher, "We've tried to get them to wear pants that fit around their waist, but that hasn't really worked. That baggy style with the pants hanging low came from the black community and the prisons—they use it as a way to defy authority" (interview, 5/8/02). Mr. Simms, like Ms. Boyd, claimed that the baggy style derived from prison dress. But unlike Ms. Boyd, he also located its origins in "the black community," specifically connecting it to race. Although Mr. Simms thought this style originated with black prisoners, in other conversations I had with him he pointed out Latino kids who he said used baggy pants as a mode of defiance. Although white and Asian American students also resisted the dress code, adults interpreted their resistance as benign and harmless. Mr.

Simms, along with other school officials, interpreted the race- and class-based "street" styles of black and Latino children in particular as purposely oppositional. Many educators seemed to think that purging these styles from the school would also purge the opposition. However, as Valenzuela (1999) reported also, most youth I talked to at Matthews wanted to wear baggy pants and untucked shirts not specifically to oppose the school but because this was normative dress among youth in their neighborhood. The restriction of these styles perplexed many students and led them to see the school as an alien, unfairly punitive institution. Because of its restrictions, the school inadvertently transformed the expression of youth identity, encompassing relatively innocuous stylistic rebelliousness, into a mode of subversive opposition. This, it appeared, only promoted more resistance from many students and did little to bond them to the school.

For example, I tutored an African American boy named Derek, who wore baggy Dickies pants and his hair in cornrows, on a position paper he was writing on school uniforms. Derek, a shy and thoughtful kid, explained to me why he was against the uniform policy during a tutoring session:

I sit with Derek in the library, and he tells me his reasons why he is against uniforms. As I talk to him, I learn that he feels strongly about this and is not just making up reasons for the exercise. One of his reasons is that the kids already have clothes and buying extra uniform clothes makes it more expensive. Another is that the uniforms create a prisonlike atmosphere in the school. He writes that you could compare the students to prisoners because of the control the school uses with uniforms and timetables: "they [prisoners] wear uniforms, we wear uniforms, they have a certain time to eat, we have a certain time to eat."

I ask Derek to explain his point that the uniforms make kids feel like prisoners. He explains, "It's 'cause like everyone is wearing the same thing like in prison." I ask what specifically is bad about that. He responds, "Because it's like we did something wrong, but we didn't do anything. Prisoners are there because they did something wrong. We're just here to learn, we didn't do anything wrong, but it's like we're being punished." (12/10/01, 9:30)

Whereas adults such as Mr. Simms saw the restriction of certain styles of clothing and behavior as eliminating prisoner-like defiance, Derek interpreted this discipline as creating a prisonlike atmosphere in the school. Ironically, Mr. Simms and Derek seem to agree in their view that Derek is like a prisoner. However, in Mr. Simms's case, this view stems from a stereotypical assumption that guides disciplinary practice, and in Derek's case, it stems from being a target of this practice. Foucault ([1977] 1995) argues that disciplinary institutions such as schools and prisons intend to produce individuals who internalize discipline and regulate themselves. Similarly, the disciplinary practices aimed at students at Matthews, often based on stereotypical assumptions about their lack of conformity, seemed to produce students who internalized these very assumptions. Because some adults interpreted certain dress and behaviors as oppositional or inadequate and sought to discipline them away, this meant that students subject to this discipline could come to see themselves as oppositional or inadequate.

CONCLUSION

Schools teach children many lessons. These lessons often transgress the formal elements of overt curricula and instruct children how to speak, what to wear, how to move their bodies, and, ultimately, how to inhabit different race, class, and gender positions. At Matthews, school officials helped implement and regulate dress and manners out of an expressed, genuine desire to help students.⁷ Left hidden, however, were the assumptions of which students needed this discipline, and in what form.

I want to highlight two ways in which this study advances our understanding of inequality in education. First, it demonstrates how the production of difference and inequality in schooling takes place not just through gender, or just through race, or just through class, but through all of these at once. Similar to Collins's (1990) concept of a "matrix of domination," race, class, and gender interrelate to profoundly alter one another in guiding expectations and sanctions of young people. We know that identity formation works through intersections of race, class, and gender (Bettie 2002), but previous research has not fully developed how organizations respond to these overlapping concepts. We have also seen that schools shape how students will embody race, class, and gender positions (e.g. Lewis 2003; Martin 1998; Thorne 1993; Willis 1977), but previous research has not explored how this process works for various combinations of identities. I have examined how teachers and schools interpret and respond to students based on previously underexplored intersections of race, class, and gender. My study suggests that race, class, and gender profoundly alter each other in framing perceptions of different students, which translates into different methods of regulating and shaping their behaviors. Examining organizational discipline at these intersections is crucial to developing a more nuanced understanding of the role of schools in producing and reproducing social inequalities.

For instance, in my observations the "blackness" of students seemed to indicate aggression and forcefulness. When combined with gender, this influenced perceptions of masculinity and femininity. As a result, adults not only viewed black boys as dangerously masculine, as Ferguson (2000) finds, but also viewed black girls as inadequately feminine. This perception of black girls influenced educators to restrict behaviors perceived as loud and aggressive, even though these very behaviors aided black girls in the classroom. Although not always producing the intended results, the discipline adults directed at black girls aimed to mold these energetic girls into models of quiet compliance and deference. In this way, perceptions of race can work through perceptions of masculinity and femininity to guide how adults approach different youths, resulting in different ways that race and gender inequality can manifest in school settings.

For Latinos in this urban, southwestern setting, "brownness" worked somewhat differently when combined with gender and social class perceptions. School officials did not view Latinas as inadequately feminine but did view many Latino boys as potentially aggressively masculine, similar to popular culture characterizations of dangerous Latino masculinity (see Fregoso 1993:29). Latino boys in this setting endured adult assumptions that because of their race and gender, they had the potential for danger and should be monitored and disciplined accordingly.

Overcoming this assumption required displays of cultural capital from Latino boys in the form of dress and manners not required of other students (especially white and Asian American students, whose race often seemed to represent cultural capital in itself (see also Lareau and Horvat 1999). Through these displays, Latino boys could signal a middle-class background, which reduced the surveillance and discipline directed at them. By contrast, adults viewed Latinos and Latinas who displayed a non-middle-class "street-based" persona as oppositional. The negative perceptions of this class-based display were especially acute for Latino boys, however. Thus, for Latino boys in particular, adults' perceptions of their class could alter perceptions of their race and masculinity.

When adopted by white and Asian American students, a street-based style elicited some discipline but seemed to be less menacing to educators. In this way, race modified perceptions of class- and gender-based behavior. Even when these students affected a street style almost identical to that of black and Latino youth, educators typically interpreted white and Asian American boys as harmless and white girls as well mannered. "Whiteness" and "Asianness," although partially qualified by class-based performative display, appeared to indicate docility and normative masculinity and femininity. Educators assumed at the outset that white and Asian American students did not need disciplinary reform, which only solidified their connection to educationally valuable forms of cultural capital in dress and manners. These examples point to the complex ways in which race, class, and gender combined to shape perceptions and regulations of students at Matthews. Future research should clarify further how such processes work to re-create disadvantages in schooling for some and advantages for others.

Further, I wish to emphasize how such race, class, and gender assumptions actually worked to subvert the goal of many educators at the school to provide students with the skills to gain upward mobility. Research using Bourdieu's reproduction theory has not often examined organizations that actually attempt to teach students the skills and styles of the dominant culture. Using evidence from a school that emphasized informal training in dress and manners, my research exposes the difficulty of transmitting cultural capital in a public organizational setting, even if this is ostensibly a "caring" pursuit (see Valenzuela 1999). Educators' identification of which students lacked cultural capital was greatly influenced by their perceptions of students' race, class, and gender. Students identified as lacking or resistant would never measure up to those whose race and class position suggested the possession of social skills in and of itself. In addition, the methods for transmitting and instilling this form of cultural capital involved persistent bodily discipline, which many students experienced as confusing and alienating. My observations suggest that students targeted for disciplinary reform can internalize the discipline aimed at them, and while for some this may lead to self-regulation and complicity, for others it could produce resistance and disengagement from school.

Rather than create opportunities for advancement, the emphasis on regulating students into embodying dominant modes of dress and comportment only seems to bolster perceptions of poor and minority youth as flawed in some way. Schools employing disciplinary regimes steeped in race, class, and gender assumptions

(however well intentioned) risk pushing many students away and, ironically, reproducing the very inequalities they are attempting to change. This study suggests that to truly advance toward equality of opportunity, schools and society should seek to value, rather than reform, marginalized forms of style and appearance.

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NOTES

1. A pseudonym, as are all names in this analysis.
2. The survey asked students to circle all that apply from the following choices: African American/Black; Latino/Hispanic; Asian; White/Anglo; Native American; or "Other," which provided space for them to write in their own choice.
3. I occasionally refer to adolescents as "kids" because that is how teachers often referred to them and how they often referred to themselves (see also Thorne 1993).
4. This interest in gender-specific manners—particularly when invoked by black teachers—perhaps stemmed from the influence of African American fraternities, sororities, and other social clubs that have historically emphasized social etiquette.
5. To be sure, there were black boys who were considered "school-oriented" and "street-oriented" at Matthews as well. However, educators seemed to especially identify this distinction among Latinos, many of whom could be considered extremely polite and from upwardly mobile backgrounds and others of whom could be considered among the most dangerous students in the school. This polarity did not appear to exist for black students; compared to Latinos, few were described as middle class, and fewer were also described as threatening gang members.
6. One could argue that this stems from the fewer numbers of white and Asian American students at the school and that I was simply less likely to encounter discipline aimed at these students. However, as this article is part of a broader research plan focusing on white students in this predominantly racial-ethnic minority school, I purposely observed more classes and interactions involving white students than other students. It is possible that I missed some instances of discipline aimed at Asian American students, but this is highly unlikely in the case of white students.
7. While certainly strict, Matthews's climate was not one of harsh and severe discipline, such as that described by Anyon (1997) in her study of an urban school. Indeed, many adults at Matthews, including the principal, expressed a desire to create a caring, family atmosphere at the school.

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