

# Reframing Internalized Oppression and Internalized Domination: From the Psychological to the Sociocultural

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*This article presents a reinterpretation of “internalized oppression” and “internalized domination,” not as internal, psychological qualities or characteristics, but rather as sociocultural phenomena—that is, as forms of “mediated action.” Mediated action entails two central elements: (1) an agent, the person who is doing the acting, and (2) cultural tools (or “mediational means”), the tools, means, or instruments appropriated from the culture and used by the agent to accomplish a given action. Such a reframing leads to a new conception of appropriated oppression and appropriated domination/privilege, both of which have significant implications for the practice of critical pedagogy in general, and what has come to be called antioppressive education in particular.*

Toward the end of the classic documentary, *A Class Divided* (see Peters, 1987), Jane Elliot, the third-grade teacher from Riceville, Iowa—who gave her students a lesson in prejudice, discrimination, and oppression by privileging the blue-eyed students in her class one day, and the brown-eyed students the next—conducts a phonics flash-card exercise with the brown-eyed students. This is the second day of the exercise, and the brown-eyed students, who had been in the subordinate position in the class the previous day (and wearing cloth collars to designate their status), were in the dominant position today. On the first day, they had done very poorly on the card pack. Today, however, it was a different story:

After the brown-eyed children had sped through the phonic card pack that second day, Jane congratulated them. “You went faster than I have ever seen anyone go through the card pack,” she said, smiling at their excitement and pleasure. “Why couldn’t you get them yesterday?”

“We had those collars on,” Donna Reddel said. The others agreed.

“Oh,” Jane said. “You think the collars kept you—”

“We couldn’t think with those collars on,” Roy Wilson said excitedly. “My eyes just kept going around and around.”  
 “Oh,” Jane said again, “and you couldn’t think as well with the collars on.” (Peters, 1987, p. 86)<sup>1</sup>

I will return to this video, and the example it offers, later in this article. For now, I simply want to note Jane Elliot’s own description of the phenomenon represented here: “In everything . . . they did on those two days, it was clear that the children that had been labeled inferior were, in fact, behaving as though they were inferior, while the ‘superior’ children performed in a consistently superior manner” (Peters, 1987, p. 86).

My goal in this article is to take a new look at the twin concepts that typically might be invoked to interpret such a phenomenon: *internalized oppression* and *internalized domination*. Internalized oppression is a concept currently widely used across a variety of disciplines and critical projects, including contemporary critical pedagogy (see, for example, Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1998; Tatum, 1997; Young, 1990), to describe and explain the experience of those who are members of subordinated, marginalized, or minority groups (like the “inferior” children in Jane Elliot’s class); those who are powerless and often victimized, both intentionally and unintentionally, by members of dominant groups; and those who have “adopted the [dominant] group’s ideology and accept their subordinate status as deserved, natural, and inevitable” (Griffin, 1997, p. 76).

Internalized domination, on the other hand, describes and explains the experience and attitudes of those who are members of dominant, privileged, or powerful identity groups (like the blue-eyed children in Jane Elliot’s classroom). It derives, at least in part, from the groundbreaking work of Baker-Miller (1976) on the dialectic between domination and subordination that characterizes all relations marked by differences in power and privilege, primarily in male-female relationships. The concept of internalized domination, as it is now more widely used (see Bell, 1997; Goodman, 2001; Griffin, 1997; Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Hitchcock, 2002; Pheterson, 1990), captures the phenomenon whereby “members of the [dominant] group accept their group’s socially superior status as normal and deserved” (Griffin, p. 76).

Traditionally, both internalized oppression and internalized domination have been viewed almost exclusively as internal, deep, unchanging, *psychological* qualities or characteristics of the oppressed, on the one hand, and the privileged on the other. I believe, however, that there are serious limitations to such an overemphasis on the personal, individual, psychological dimensions of both these phenomena. Bonilla-Silva (2003) argued that “whereas for most whites racism is prejudice, for most people of color, racism is systemic or institutionalized” (p. 8). The same holds true, I think, for

internalized oppression and internalized domination in general. It is easy, particularly from a dominant point of view, to see the oppressed as “victims” and to see their reaction to oppression as reflecting a set of “psychological problems,” thereby obscuring the role that systemic, structural, and institutionalized forces play in the production and reproduction of oppression. Similarly, it is very easy, from a dominant point of view, to see racism, sexism, homophobia, and so on, as personal psychological shortcomings that are too easily interpreted—and thus dismissed or minimized—as the result of prejudice, bias, or ignorance (“I’m not a racist!” or “I didn’t mean anything by that remark”). This view, moreover, leads to a solution to prejudice and bias that stresses the need for individual attitude change via education, training, and therapy—interventions at the individual level—and nothing more.<sup>2</sup>

But privilege and oppression are the result of forces and mechanisms that go far beyond the individual psychological level (see Hardiman & Jackson, 1997). Consequently, the social, cultural, institutional, and historical forces that lead racism, sexism, and homophobia to become systematically embedded in the structure of our social lives must be acknowledged in any attempt to challenge the status quo (Bishop, 2002). In the end, any solution to the problems of privilege and oppression must focus as much on structural/systemic change as it does on personal transformation. This is where the *sociocultural* concept of *mediated action* can be most useful.

Mediated action entails two central elements: (1) an agent, the person who is doing the acting, and (2) “cultural tools” or “mediational means”—the tools, means, or “instruments,” appropriated from the culture and used by the agent to accomplish a given action (Wertsch, 1998). In this article, I will argue that both internalized oppression and internalized domination are better understood as forms of mediated action; in other words, they are better understood as sociocultural phenomena rather than simply as psychological phenomena. Such a reinterpretation, among other things, helps to hold both the individual and the structural/systemic levels together at the same time.<sup>3</sup>

In constructing this argument, I will first sketch a general description of the classical conceptions of internalized oppression and internalized domination. I will then sketch a similarly general description of the concept of mediated action. Then I will bring these two descriptions together and, in so doing, I will present my reinterpretation of internalized oppression and internalized domination as mediated action. I will then return to *A Class Divided* to illustrate these concepts more fully, before turning to a necessarily incomplete consideration of the implications of this analysis for the practice of critical pedagogy in general, and what has come to be called *antioppressive education* (Kumashiro, 2000, 2002) in particular. Finally, I will conclude with

some brief thoughts and reflections, unanswered questions, and directions for future work on these and related ideas.

#### INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION AND INTERNALIZED DOMINATION

The phenomenon of internalized oppression has been extensively explored in the work of the Martiniquean psychiatrist Fanon (1963, 1967), the Tunisian Jewish writer Memmi (1967), and the Brazilian educator Freire (1970). However, as Foster (1993) suggested, the notion of a psychological *mark of oppression*—a term first coined by two American psychiatrists, Kardiner and Ovesey (1951)—which focuses on the consequences and implications of living under various forms of oppression (particularly colonization and racial oppression), is one of a whole host of labels, drawn primarily from the human and social sciences, that have been used to describe this phenomenon over the past 50 years or so. Whatever the label, all these notions carry a common referent: “the idea of internalized psychological consequences [e.g., a sense of inferiority, low self-esteem, and aggression] due to social systems of prejudice, discrimination and oppression” (Foster, p. 128).

Freire (1970) provided a well-known and useful summary of these consequences. He began by arguing that the goal of the oppressed is to liberate themselves *and* their oppressors. The difficulty of achieving this goal, said Freire, comes about because in the initial stage of their struggle against oppression, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend to become oppressors themselves (or “suboppressors”). This is because although their ideal is to be fully human, their model of “full humanity” has been the oppressor. This is what Freire called “identification with the oppressor”; at a certain moment of their existential experience, the oppressed have adopted an attitude of “adhesion” to the oppressor, they “find in the oppressor their model of ‘manhood’” (pp. 30–31), and they may even “feel an irresistible attraction towards the oppressor and his way of life” (p. 49). They have “internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines” (p. 31) for action and interaction in the world.

Freire offers two other insights about this “duality” under which the oppressed live. The first is to call attention to the phenomenon of *self-deprecation*, a sense of shame, humiliation, self-hatred, and low self-esteem that is characteristic of the oppressed (cf. the brown-eyed children’s performance on the phonics flash cards). This attitude derives, he said, from the oppressed’s adoption of the opinion that the oppressors hold of them. “So often do [the oppressed] hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing, and are incapable of learning anything—that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive—that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness” (p. 49).

Here Freire clearly echoed Memmi's (1967) analysis of the experience of colonization, in which the "mythical portrait" created by the colonizer profoundly shapes the view that the colonized hold of themselves:

Constantly confronted with this image of [themselves], set forth and imposed on all institutions and in every human contact, how could the colonized help reacting to [their] portrait? It cannot leave [them] indifferent and remain a veneer which, like an insult, blows with the wind. [They] end up recognizing it as one would a detested nickname which has become a familiar description. The accusation disturbs [them] and worries [them] even more because they admire and fear their powerful accuser. "Are not they partially right?," [they] mutter. "Are we not a little guilty after all? Lazy, because we have so many idlers? Timid, because we let ourselves be oppressed?" Willfully created and spread by the colonizer, this mythical and degrading portrait ends up being accepted and lived with to a certain extent by the colonized. (p. 87)

Freire (1970) also introduced the notion of *horizontal violence*, in which members of the oppressed group engage in violence against their own comrades. "Because the oppressor exists within their oppressed comrades," Freire said, when they attack, those comrades [the oppressed] are indirectly attacking the oppressor as well" (p. 48).

To support his analysis, Freire quoted Fanon's (1967) analysis of causes of the aggressiveness and violence that the oppressed/colonized "natives" direct toward each other, often for the pettiest of reasons:

The colonized man will first manifest this aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones against his own people. This is the period where the niggers beat each other up, and the police and the magistrates do not know which way to turn. . . . While the settler or the policeman has the right the livelong day to strike the native, to insult him and to make him crawl to them, you will see the native reaching for his knife at the slightest hostile or aggressive glance cast on him by another native; for the last resort of the native is to defend his personality vis-à-vis his brother. (p. 52)

Although there is much more that can and should be said about Freire's (1970) conception of the dynamics of oppression and domination, suffice it to say that the strictly individual, psychological understanding of internalized oppression to which Freire's description seems to point has been widely adopted in the contemporary literature on oppression (see Baker-Miller, 1976; Bartky, 1990; Bell, 1997; Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Harvey, 1999;

Lipsky, 1987; Pharr, 1988; Sennett & Cobb, 1972; Sherover-Marcuse, 1986; Young, 1990). Pheterson (1990) provided a classic summary of this perspective:

*Internalized oppression* is the incorporation and acceptance by individuals within an oppressed group of the prejudices against them within the dominant society. Internalized oppression is likely to consist of self-hatred, self-concealment, fear of violence and feelings of inferiority, resignation, isolation, powerlessness, and gratefulness for being allowed to survive. Internalized oppression is the mechanism within an oppressive system for perpetuating domination not only by external control but also by building subservience into the minds of the oppressed groups. (p. 35)

Note, in this description, the primary emphasis on feelings and emotional responses, and the use of internal, interior images (“into the minds”) to characterize this phenomenon.

Let me turn now to a brief consideration of what I call the “classical” conception of internalized domination. Although the concept of internalized domination has not been as widely used as the concept of internalized oppression, and its sources are less clear,<sup>4</sup> it has become, in recent years, a familiar concept to many (see Bell, 1997; Goodman, 2001; Griffin, 1997; Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Hitchcock, 2002; Pheterson, 1990). Pheterson, once again, provided a useful summary of how this phenomenon is typically conceptualized:

*Internalized domination* is the incorporation and acceptance by individuals within a dominant group of prejudices against others. Internalized domination is likely to consist of feelings of superiority, normalcy, and self righteousness, together with guilt, fear, projection, denial of reality, and alienation from one’s body and from nature. Internalized domination perpetuates oppression of others and alienation from oneself by either denying or degrading all but a narrow range of human possibilities. One’s own humanity is thus internally restricted and one’s qualities of empathy, trust, love, and openness to others and to life-enhancing work become rigid and repressed. (p. 35)

Hardiman and Jackson (1997) expanded on this definition, offering some specific examples:

Internalized domination refers to the behaviors, thoughts, and feelings of agents [dominant group members] who through their socialization as members of the dominant group, learn to think and act in

ways that express internalized notions of entitlement and privilege. Examples of internalized domination include men talking over and interrupting women in conversation, while simultaneously labeling women as chatty. There is an absence of feeling that one has to prove oneself, or that one's status, talent, and qualifications would be questioned in any situation. (p. 21)

Hitchcock (2002), in his book, *Lifting the White Veil*, discusses what he calls *internalized dominance*:

Internalized dominance is a belief system grounded in miseducation and in the politics of social inequality. This belief system is the result of an advantaged relationship to privilege, power, and cultural affirmation. The premise of white superiority undergirds the various attitudinal and behavioral expression of internalized dominance. (p. 143)

Hitchcock (2002) explored the way that internalized dominance influences Whites' relationship with themselves (leading, for example, to shame, guilt, and defensiveness); Whites' relationships to other White people (leading, for example, to the assumption that other Whites are racist, or to competition with other Whites to be the "best ally" to folks of color); Whites' relationships with people of color (leading, for example, to fear people of color, to feel superior to people of color, to take on the role of "savior" of people of color), and Whites' relationship to the racial structure of United States culture (leading, for example, to marginalizing talk and feelings about racial structure, or experiencing uncertainty or paralysis in mixed race settings). He also argued that "our internalized dominance affects us every bit as much as internalized oppression affects people of color" (p. 150).

Finally, Hitchcock (2002) presented his version of the argument that internalized dominance, like internalized oppression, becomes a part of the psyche, both consciously and unconsciously:

The ready-made imagery of our society is so prevalent and interwoven with everything else that it becomes a part of our inner psychological makeup. We incorporate this imagery even before we can think clearly. By the time we are adults it has become part of our psychological framework. While we might be aware of it, and thus work to reduce its effect upon us, we can never completely remove or expunge its effects from our conscious and, more importantly, subconscious minds. (p. 144)

In sum, although the classical conceptions of both internalized oppression and internalized domination are undeniably powerful and compelling, it is important to note the pervasiveness of internal and internalizing language and images in both conceptions. This language has clearly been influenced by the psychodynamic, psychiatric, psychological discourse that, since Freud, has become so much a part of the language that we use for self-understanding. But there are limitations, I would argue, in the use of this kind of language and these kinds of images. For one, as I have suggested above, it obscures the role that systemic, structural, institutionalized forces play in producing and reproducing both privilege and oppression. In addition, the internalized image suggests that oppression and domination become deep, internal psychological qualities, characteristics, or “marks” that are extremely difficult (if not impossible) to resist, interrupt, or abandon once they are in place. This, to me, perpetuates a static and ultimately pessimistic view of both oppression and privilege that is at odds with any kind of educational or developmental effort to challenge the status quo.

Thus, I would argue that we need a new way to think about these two phenomena. This is provided by recent scholarship in sociocultural theory, focusing in particular on the concept of mediated action.

### MEDIATED ACTION

The concept of mediated action has been explored and articulated most fully by Wertsch (1991, 1995, 1998). Wertsch (1998) argued that the goal of sociocultural inquiry, in contrast to strictly psychological inquiry, is to understand the relationship between the individual and the social, cultural, historical, and institutional contexts in which the individual lives. To accomplish this goal, he suggested, we must be careful not to limit our focus to individual mental functioning or to the social/cultural/historical setting. Rather, we must find a way to “live in the middle” (p. 17)—to focus on both the personal and the systemic—and thus avoid the tension between the individual and society, and the perils of both individualistic and social reductionism, that have plagued us for generations.

Wertsch proposed that the notion of mediated action provides the most useful way to “live in the middle.” Mediated action, as I have indicated above, entails two central elements: an agent and specific cultural tools, or mediational means (see Figure 1).<sup>5</sup> Understanding that virtually all human action is mediated action therefore involves focusing on both agent *and* agency, on both “what person or kind of person performed the act” in question and “what means or instruments she used” (Burke, 1969, p. xv).

The concept of mediated action is heavily influenced by the work of Vygotsky (1978, 1987, 1997) and his colleagues and contemporaries writing



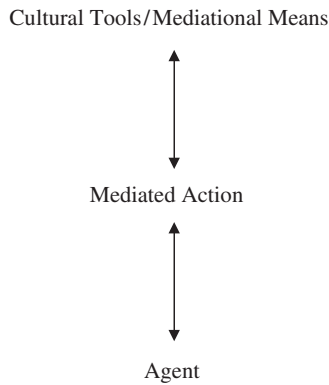


Figure 1. Mediated Action

in Russia in the early decades of the Soviet era (see Cole, 1996; Valsiner, 1998; Wertsch, 1985, 1991). Key to Vygotsky's theoretical perspective is his claim that in order to understand the mind and its development, we must understand the tools that mediate and shape its functioning (see Wertsch, 1985). Beginning with an idea borrowed from Marx and Engels—that all genuinely human activity is necessarily mediated by tools—Vygotsky considered the role of both physical (or technical) tools and psychological tools (or signs) in human life. The concept of mediation by psychological tools became so important to Vygotsky that by 1933, one year before his death, he wrote that “the central fact about our psychology is the fact of mediation” (1997, p. 166).

Wertsch (1998) provided a number of examples to illustrate mediated action and its properties. One is the track-and-field event of pole vaulting. The modern event of pole vaulting involves a vaulter running down a 125-foot runway with a fiberglass pole in her hands, planting the pole in a vaulting box at the end of the runway, and using the pole and her momentum to carry herself off the ground and over a bar that can be as high as 20 feet above the ground (Wertsch, 1995, 1998). Even though vaulting over a bar 20 feet in the air may appear to be an individual achievement, when it is considered as a form of mediated action, it illustrates the impossibility of separating the individual agent (the vaulter) and her cultural tool (the pole):

On the one hand, the pole by itself does not magically propel vaulters over a cross bar; it must be skillfully used by the vaulter. On the other hand, a vaulter without a pole or with an inappropriate pole is incapable of participating in the event, or at best can participate at less than an optimal level of performance. (Wertsch, 1995, p. 66)

But there is more to this example, as there is to all forms of mediated action. That is, the mediational means employed by a pole vaulter when she successfully vaults over a bar 20 feet in the air are not limited to the physical tool of the pole. Rather, there are a host of other cultural tools—primarily linguistic or semiotic tools—that a vaulter employs. These include information from books and videos about how to pole vault, guidance and direction from coaches about style and technique, and so on. This guidance and direction, moreover, may even be experienced as a specific voice or voices that the vaulter “hears” in her mind, perhaps without even being fully conscious of it, while she is vaulting (e.g., “hold your hands this way, take this many steps, don’t look at the bar”). In any case, the point here is that a vaulter employs a variety of mediational means, both physical and linguistic, when engaged in her sport. Thus, one should not assume that any given form of mediated action employs only one kind of cultural tool; in fact, mediated action typically entails multiple mediational means of various kinds (Wertsch, 1998).

This brings me to a central question, one that is essentially a developmental question: How are mediational means/cultural tools acquired? The term that most helpfully describes this process, I would argue, is *appropriation*. I use the term *appropriation*, rather than the more commonly used term, *internalization* (see Vygotsky, 1978), to ensure that the process by which individuals acquire cultural tools is not viewed as one in which something static is taken across a boundary from the external world to the internal psyche, but rather to foreground a process by which persons actively participate in the ongoing process of gaining proficiency and expertise in using specific mediational means, whether they are physical tools or linguistic tools (see Rogoff, 1995).

There are two dimensions, or characteristics, of the process of appropriation that I want briefly to highlight here. The first is mastery. This entails “knowing how” to use a given cultural tool with a relatively high degree of skill or facility (Wertsch, 1998). Acquiring mastery in the use of particular cultural tools typically takes some time, and in many cases, complete know-how is never fully achieved (Wertsch).

A second dimension, or characteristic, of the process of appropriation is ownership. This entails, following Bakhtin (1981), understanding how an agent takes a given cultural tool—something, quite commonly, “that belongs to others”—and “make[s] it one’s own” (p. 53; see also Tappan, 1991, 1999, 2000, 2005).<sup>6</sup> Moreover, as Bakhtin noted, mediational means often “resist” the process of appropriation, and agents do not always easily come to a sense of ownership of the cultural tools they use:

Not all words for just anyone submit equally easily to this appropriation, to this seizure and transformation into private property: many

words stubbornly resist, others remain alien, sound foreign in the mouth of the one who appropriated them and who now speaks them; they cannot be assimilated into his context and fall out of it; it is as if they put themselves into quotation marks against the will of the speaker. (p. 293)

So, a pole vaulter, as she learns how to pole vault, gradually appropriates the mediational means associated with her sport. She works to master the use of the relevant physical tools (e.g., the pole, the track, the equipment she uses and wears) and linguistic tools (e.g., the guidance about form, style, and technique that she receives from her coach). She also seeks to “own” those tools, to make them her own as much as possible, to use them in her own way, to make them part of herself in a fundamental sense—all of which are hallmarks of expertise in her sport.

But how, precisely, do individuals like this pole vaulter acquire such expertise in the use of new mediational means to perform new types of mediated action? This is a question that Rogoff (1995) attempted to answer in analyzing what she called “sociocultural activity” on three interrelated planes, or dimensions, focusing on three interrelated processes that contribute to the mastery and ownership—that is, the appropriation—of mediational means.

The first plane is the social, cultural, institutional plane. Here, the process of cultural participation (Rogoff, 1995, called this *apprenticeship*) provides the means for analyzing the development of mediated action as it emerges in a communal context.

[The concept of cultural participation] provides a model in the plane of community activity, involving active individuals participating with others (experts) in culturally organized activity that has as part of its purpose the development of mature participation in the activity by the less experienced people. This [concept] extends the idea of craft apprenticeship to include participation in any other culturally organized activity, such as other kinds of work, schooling, and family relations. This idea of apprenticeship necessarily focuses attention on the specific nature of the activity involved, as well as on its relation to practices and institutions of the community in which it occurs—economic, political, spiritual, and material. (p. 142)

Hence, the model of cultural participation/apprenticeship is one of active learners engaged in a community of people who support, challenge, and guide novices as they increasingly participate in skilled, valued, and valuable forms of mediated action.

The second plane is the interpersonal plane. Here, the concept of guided participation provides the means for analyzing the development of mediated action as it emerges in the context of interpersonal relationships.

The concept of *guided participation* refers to the processes and systems of involvement between people as they communicate and coordinate efforts while participating in culturally valued activity [forms of mediated action]. This includes not only face-to-face interaction . . . but also the side-by-side joint participation that is frequent in everyday life. . . . The “guidance” referred to in guided participation involves the directions offered by cultural and social values, as well as social partners; the “participation” in guided participation refers to observation, as well as hands-on involvement in an activity. (Rogoff, 1995, p. 142)

The third and final plane is the personal plane. Here the concept of participatory appropriation provides the means for analyzing the development of mediated action as it emerges as a result of a person’s active participation in sociocultural activities:

The concept of *participatory appropriation* refers to how individuals change (how mediated action develops) through their involvement in one or another activity, in the process of becoming prepared for subsequent involvement in related activities. With guided participation as the interpersonal process through which people are involved in sociocultural activity, participatory appropriation is the personal process by which, through engagement in an activity, individuals change and handle a later situation in ways prepared by their own participation in the previous situation. This is a process of becoming, rather than acquisition. (Rogoff, 1995, p. 142)

Returning once again to the pole vaulting example, we can see how developing expertise as a pole vaulter involves three interrelated processes: participatory appropriation, guided participation, and cultural participation. The vaulter ultimately both masters and owns the mediational means necessary to be an effective pole vaulter, and thus undergoes change, transformation, and development on the individual plane. But to acquire or appropriate these tools, she must participate in at least one, if not more, interpersonal relationships with others (i.e., coaches and teammates), through whom she gains facility in using these tools. And finally, she must participate in a sociocultural context that provides these tools in the first place. In short, all three planes are necessary if the process of appropriation is to occur, and each one contributes uniquely to the development of pole vaulting as a form of mediated action.

INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION AND INTERNALIZED DOMINATION AS MEDIATED ACTION

With this brief description of mediated action in hand, let me now turn to my claim that the phenomena that have been called internalized oppression and internalized domination should be understood, like all human action, as forms of mediated action. This conceptual reinterpretation allows us to salvage the central descriptive features of the classical view of both internalized oppression and internalized domination (and a corresponding understanding of the very real personal and experiential consequences of both), while at the same time moving away from the internal/interior/introjected remnants of the psychodynamic language first used to explain them—language that implies that these are exclusively psychological, rather than sociocultural, phenomena.

I would argue, therefore, that we should replace the term *internalized oppression* with the term *appropriated oppression*. As such, appropriated oppression results from the mastery and ownership of cultural tools that transmit oppressive ideologies, messages, and scripts (see Figure 2). Similarly, we should replace the term *internalized domination* with the term *appropriated domination/privilege*. As such, appropriated domination results from the mastery and ownership of cultural tools that transmit dominating/privileging ideologies, messages, and scripts (see Figure 3).<sup>7</sup> These tools, both oppressive and privileging, come from a variety of sources, including parents, teachers, friends, and the media. They take a variety of forms, from words, phrases, jokes, and books, to pictures, images, television shows, and films. And they are mastered and owned via cultural participation, guided

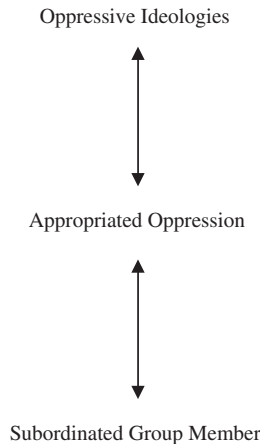


Figure 2. Internalized Oppression as Mediated Action

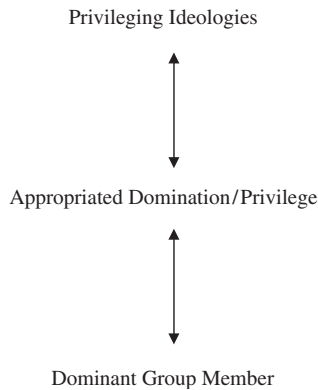


Figure 3. Internalized Domination as Mediated Action

participation, and participatory appropriation. No matter the source or the form, these tools are marked by a set of White-supremacist, male-supremacist, classist, heterosexist ideologies that are promulgated in and by the dominant culture and then appropriated by both the oppressed and the privileged (see Tappan, 2005; Thompson, 1990).

When we make this move from internalized oppression and domination to appropriated oppression and domination, a move that makes clear that both oppression and domination are fundamentally sociocultural phenomena, not simply psychological phenomena, we enrich and expand Freire's (1970) original conception of these dynamics. Freire certainly offered a neo-Marxist conception of the social, in which forms of subjectivity (like internalized oppression, false consciousness, and the forms of discourse that mediate them) arise from particular forms of social interaction and social structure (i.e., forms of material life). Yet I would argue that when oppression is seen as a form of mediated action, it also becomes possible to understand the effect that mediational means, cultural tools, and other artifacts of consciousness (e.g., forms of discourse) have on material life.<sup>8</sup> Once again, my intent here is to suggest a bidirectional view of causality, and thereby to complicate the strictly psychological conception of both oppression and domination that holds sway over our collective understanding of these experiences.

As an example of what such a reinterpretation offers, consider Lipsky's (1987) discussion of what she called *internalized stereotypes*:

Patterns of internalized racism have caused us [as Blacks] to accept many of the stereotypes of Blacks created by the oppressive majority society. We have been taught to be angry at, ashamed of, anything that

differs too much from a mythical idea of the middle-class of the majority culture—skin that is “too dark,” hair that is “too kinky,” dress, talk, and music that is “too loud.” (p. 5)

From a mediated action point of view, such appropriated racial stereotypes are not internal psychological categories, or structures. Rather, they are material, commodifiable, cultural products—cultural tools—that are used, transmitted, and thus reified in order to reinforce and perpetuate appropriated oppression among Black folks.

Another example of the way that such cultural tools operate to reproduce privilege comes from the work of Bonilla-Silva (2001, 2003). Bonilla-Silva described the phenomenon of what he called *color-blind racism*, whereby racism, racial oppression, and racial inequality are perpetuated in the United States, in the absence of explicitly racist practices, policies, or laws, by specific ideological constructions and discursive practices (i.e., forms of mediated action). He argued instead that “racism without racists” is produced and reproduced by a set of White-supremacist ideologies (i.e., particular discursive frames, rhetorical styles and strategies, and common storylines), all of which promote a racist worldview and which can be identified in the everyday talk of Whites. These discursive frames, strategies, and storylines, I would argue, are precisely the kinds of mediational means/cultural tools that continue to promote and encourage appropriated domination/privilege among white folks.

#### A CLASS DIVIDED

To illustrate these phenomena—mediated oppression and mediated domination—let me return the documentary *A Class Divided* (Peters, 1987).

As I have indicated above, this film reports on the work of Jane Elliot, a third-grade teacher in the nearly all-White, all-Christian farming community of Riceville, Iowa. In 1970, she devised an experience for her students to explore the nature of prejudice and discrimination. During “brotherhood week,” she divided her class into two groups: blue-eyed children and brown-eyed children.

“It might be interesting to judge people today by the color of their eyes,” [Jane Elliot] said speculatively.

Three children began bouncing up and down in their seats with excitement.

“Would you like to try this?”

“Yeah!” The answer was almost a shout as the entire class was caught up in enthusiasm for the idea.

It sounds like fun, doesn't it?" Jane asked.

"Yeah!" the whole class shouted again. (Peters, 1987, p. 59)

Jane began by explaining that blue-eyed children are more intelligent, better behaved, quicker to learn, and in every way superior to brown-eyed children:

"All right. Since I'm the teacher, and I have blue eyes, I think maybe the blue-eyed people should be on top the first day."

Roy Wilson, a serious-looking boy with brown eyes, close-cropped hair, and a long, oval face, frowned with puzzlement. "You mean . . ." He stopped, unsure what she could mean.

"I mean," Jane said with finality, "the blue-eyed people are the better people in this room."

"Uh-uh!" It was Brian Saltou, his blue eyes flashing.

"Oh, yes, they are," Jane said, turning to face him. "Blue-eyed people are smarter than brown-eyed people . . ."

"What color eyes did George Washington have?" Jane asked.

Sandra Dohman and Julie Smith, both brown-eyed, seated alongside each other, turned at this to stare at each other's eyes. "Blue?" Sandra asked, blinking, clearly hoping she was wrong.

Brian's head was up again. "Blue," he said disgustedly, "or else brown."

"Blue," Jane said. "Blue." She paused. "This is a fact. Blue-eyed people are better than brown-eyed people." (pp. 59-60)

To call attention to the "inferior" brown-eyed children, Jane asked the blue-eyed children to place a collar around the neck of each brown-eyed child.

As the day proceeded, the domination/privilege of the blue-eyed children and the subordination/oppression of the brown-eyed children played out in a myriad of both overt and covert ways:

After the blue-eyed children had been given seats in the front of the room and the job of row leader in each row had been reassigned to a blue-eyed student, Jane told them to get out their English workbooks.

"Turn to page 127," she said, writing the number on the blackboard.

"Is everyone ready?" she asked finally, glancing around the room.

"Everyone but Laurie," she said, watching brown-eyed little Laurie Mayer squirm as she paged rapidly through her workbook. "Ready, Laurie?" she asked when Laurie had found the page. Laurie nodded, looking up unhappily through her harlequin glasses.

"She's a brown-eye!" someone jeered.



“She’s a brown-eye,” Jane confirmed. “You’ll begin to notice today that we spend a great deal of time waiting for brown-eyed people.” Laurie pursed her lips unhappily, and Donna, sitting near her, flashed a brown-eyed, resentful look at Jane.

That was the way it went all morning. Whenever a brown-eyed child was slow, whenever one made a mistake, Jane made a point of picking it up. Blue-eyed children could seemingly do no wrong. As the brown-eyed children became tense and unhappy, the blue-eyed children relaxed and all but blossomed under the approving eye of their teacher. . . .

At morning recess, the blue-eyed children were excused five minutes early, and they left the room in a bustle of enthusiasm. . . . The brown-eyed children remained behind, working gloomily at their desks. When it was time for them to go out, they pinned their collars to their coats and trudged morosely out to the snowy playground, sullen, disgruntled, angry children. Three brown-eyed girls marched fiercely across the playground, avoiding the crowded swings, slides, and jungle gym, giving a wide berth to clusters of playing children. Their heads together, they talked furiously as they stomped briskly the length of the frozen yard.

Two brown-eyed boys slipped around a corner of the building and seated themselves, alone, on a step against the brick wall. By the time recess was over, all of the brown-eyed children had found each other and were huddled in little groups along that wall. Two girls consoled a third, who was close to tears. (Peters, 1987, pp. 65–67)

Much more happened the first day, including a fight between two boys, after the blue-eyed boy called the brown-eyed boy a “brown eye.” Then, the next day, Jane Elliot reversed things; the brown-eyed kids were on top, and the blue-eyed kids were on the bottom. The same dynamics emerged.

I would certainly encourage readers who have not viewed this documentary to do so. It is very powerful and very painful to watch. For my purposes, however, I want to turn to a brief analysis of this event, employing the concepts that I have introduced above.

First, let me highlight the ways in which both appropriated oppression and appropriated domination/privilege manifest themselves in this documentary (Peters, 1987):

### *Appropriated Oppression*

- Brown-eyed children became tense and unhappy; sullen, disgruntled, angry (p. 66).
- “You feel like you can’t do anything,” says Julie Smith (p. 74).
- “I feel mean,” says Donna Reddel (p. 74).
- “It’s like you don’t have any friends anymore,” says Vera Buls (p. 74).
- Brown-eyed children become violent (John punches Russell because he called him “brown-eye”; p. 70).
- Brown-eyed children do poorly on the phonics flash-cards timed test (p. 85).

### *Appropriated Domination/Privilege*

- Blue-eyed children become relaxed and all but blossom under the approving eye of their teacher (p. 66).
- Blue-eyed children look for ways to surveil and oppress the brown-eyed children (suggesting that Jane keep a yardstick handy in case the brown-eyed children “get out of hand” [p. 68], and reminding Jane to tell the lunch monitor not to allow the brown-eyed children to go back for seconds [p. 69]).
- Blue-eyed children tease and taunt the brown-eyed children (Russell calls John a “brown-eye,” p. 70).
- Blue-eyed children do very well on the phonics flash cards timed test (p. 85).

Next, let me highlight the cultural tools/mediational means that the children appropriate to mediate their oppression and domination/privilege, respectively.

Below are examples of the cultural tools/mediational means, appropriated by the brown-eyed group, that give rise to appropriated oppression:

- Jane Elliot’s words/messages about their subordinate status: “Do you think a blue-eyed father would kick his son?” (p. 60); “brown-eyed people don’t get to use the drinking fountain because we might catch something from you” (p. 61); “brown-eyed people are not to play with the blue-eyed people on the playground, because you are not as good as blue-eyed people” (p. 62); “you’ll begin to notice today that we spend a great deal of time waiting from brown-eyed people” (p. 65).

- Cultural scripts for oppression, prejudice, name-calling (Native Americans, Blacks) that they already have appropriated (see pp. 56–57).
- Collars worn by themselves to identify them as subordinate.

Below are examples of the cultural tools/mediational means, appropriated by the blue-eyed group, that give rise to appropriated domination/privilege:

- Jane’s words/messages about their dominant status (this is where she starts): “the blue-eyed people are the better people in this room” (p. 59); “blue-eyed people are smarter than brown-eyed people” (p. 59); “my dad’s blue-eyed and he’s never kicked me” (p. 60); what color eyes did George Washington have? Blue” (p. 80); “blue-eyed people get five extra minutes of recess” (p. 61); “blue-eyed people can go back for seconds at lunch” (p. 68); etc.
- Cultural scripts for oppression, prejudice, name-calling (Native Americans, Blacks, etc.) that they already have appropriated (see pp. 56–57).
- Collars worn by the “others” to identify them as subordinate.

Obviously, much more can and should be said about this example. For my purposes here, however, I simply want to highlight the ways in which it illustrates both appropriated oppression-as-mediated action and appropriated domination-as-mediated-action by focusing specifically on the cultural tools/mediational means that were provided in Jane Elliot’s classroom, appropriated by the children, and used to mediate their action as either subordinates or dominants.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, it is critical to note that the emergence of appropriated oppression occurs very quickly in the course of several hours on a Tuesday morning. This provides evidence for the reinterpretation of the classical conceptions of internalized oppression and internalized domination for which I have been arguing. Appropriated oppression does not require years and years of internalizing and intrapsychic processing. It can, and does, occur almost instantaneously; just as one picks up a tool and begins to use it, one’s physical and mental functioning—one’s thoughts, feelings, and actions—begins to change, as one appropriates, in the case of the brown-eyed children, oppressive cultural tools via the interrelated processes of cultural participation, guided participation, and participatory appropriation. The same goes for members of the dominant group. They very quickly assume the role of the privileged group (a role, of course, that they already inhabit as White members of our society).<sup>10</sup> Imagine, therefore, the power that these cultural tools amass over the course of many years and many generations, as people experience repeated opportunities to appropriate and

use either oppressive or dominating cultural tools/mediational means. Imagine also the challenge that this poses to critical educators seeking to change both oppression and domination.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND ANTIOPPRESSIVE EDUCATION

Let me offer a few brief ideas about the implications of this analysis for the practice of critical pedagogy, or what Kumashiro (2000, 2002) called *anti-oppressive education*.

First, let me consider what this perspective offers the classical Freirean (1970) conception of critical pedagogy, designed to promote *concientizacao*, or “critical consciousness raising.” If one’s response to oppression is not internalized but is mediated action that results from the appropriation of oppressive cultural tools and resources (like the response of the brown-eyed children in *A Class Divided*), then it can be changed through the same process that gives rise to mediated action in the first place. This is precisely what Freire (1970) and others (see Roberts, 1983, p. 25) suggested is necessary for attaining freedom/liberation: (1) unveiling the world of oppression; (2) expelling the myths and images created and promulgated by the old order, and rejecting the oppressive images of one’s own culture (i.e., rejecting oppressive cultural tools and resources, voices, and ideologies); and (3) replacing old myths and images with new images, stories, and ideologies that are more liberating (i.e., appropriating liberating cultural tools and resources, voices, and ideologies).

This is also what might be called the appropriation of “critical capital”—that is, cultural tools and resources that enable the oppressed to challenge the status quo, critique the dominant paradigm, and move toward true freedom/liberation (appropriated liberation). As such, this process resonates with a number of current accounts of how identity develops among those who have been oppressed or subordinated. I have in mind the development of Black racial identity, from the preencounter stage to the commitment stage (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1993b; Tatum, 1997); the development of ethnic identity, from the unexamined stage to the achieved stage (Phinney, 1990, 1993); and the development of gay and lesbian sexual identity, from first awareness to identity integration (Savin-Williams, 1990; Sophie, 1986)—all of which entail the gradual emergence of a liberated and committed sense of identity from an original position of subordination or oppression (see also Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Sleeter, 2003; Tappan, 2005).

I would argue that the same three-step process of *concientizacao* and reappropriation must also occur for members of dominant/privileged groups. Such a process might look something like this: (1) unveiling the world of

privilege; (2) expelling the myths and images created and promulgated by the old order, and rejecting the privileging images associated with one's dominant culture (i.e., rejecting privileging cultural tools and resources, voices, and ideologies); and (3) replacing old myths and images with new images, stories, ideologies that are more liberating for all people (i.e., appropriating liberating cultural tools and resources, voices, and ideologies). The critical capital involved in this process is intended to offset and counterbalance, at least somewhat, the privileging power of unexamined cultural capital to which members of dominant groups tend to have such easy access.

This is not something that has been talked about extensively in the literature on critical pedagogy, but, on principal, this is what lies behind efforts of McIntosh (1988), Fine (1997), Goodman (2001), Howard (2006), Jensen (2005), Johnson (2001), Kimmel and Ferber (2003), Rothenberg (2002), Stoltenberg (1989), Wise (2005), and others to foreground the issue of White privilege, male privilege, upper-class privilege, compulsory heterosexuality, and other ideologies associated with what I have called appropriated domination/privilege.<sup>11</sup> And it parallels the description, provided by Helms (1993a; see also Tatum, 1997), of the six-stage process of White racial identity development, which entails both the gradual abandonment of racism (contact, distentegration, reintegration) and the formation of a positive, nonracist White identity (pseudo-independence, immersion/emersion, autonomy; see also Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Sletter, 2003; Tappan, 2005).

Both of these descriptions also resonate with Kumashiro's (2000, 2002) recent discussion of antioppressive education. Kumashiro (2000) presented a typology of four different approaches to antioppressive education: (1) Education for the Other; (2) Education About the Other; (3) Education that is Critical of Privileging and Othering; and (4) Education that Changes Students and Society (p. 25). Let me say something briefly about the last two types.

The conception of appropriated oppression and appropriated domination/privilege that I have presented in this article helps to address one of the primary critiques that Kumashiro (2000) offered of Education that is Critical of Privileging and Othering. The strength of this approach is that it not only teaches about oppression but also seeks to change society by understanding the interrelationship between oppression and privileging. But it is limited, Kumashiro argued, because the notion that both oppression and privileging are fundamentally and exclusively structural implies that oppression has the same effect on all people:

[This] critique does not deny that members of any particular group share common experiences with oppression, or that certain groups have historically be subject to the same general form of oppression.

However, because all individuals have multiple identities, not all members of the same group necessarily have the same or even similar experiences with oppression. Structural explanations cannot account for this diversity and particularity. . . . For example, in her research on nursery classrooms, Walkerdine (1990) argues that females who at one moment were able to exert power over males, at another were rendered powerless by them, because in each situation *a different discourse was being recreated or "cited."* (p. 38)

Structural explanations of oppression and privileging may not be able to account for the diversity of experiences of subordination and domination, but a sociocultural explanation can. This is because a conception of appropriated/mediated oppression, as I have argued above, does not assume that the experience of oppression leaves a set of universal, internal, deep, psychological "marks" or characteristics. Rather, it assumes that oppression is mediated by a wide variety of possible cultural tools/mediational means and that those tools lead to various and varied forms of mediated action (agents-acting-with-mediational-means), depending, as in the case of the Walkerdine (1990) example, on the discourse being appropriated and used in a given situation. As such, a mediated action approach to understanding oppression and privileging serves to address, in helpful ways, the limitations of this otherwise very valuable approach to anti-oppressive education.

Let me turn now to Kumashiro's (2000) fourth and final type of anti-oppressive education, Education that Changes Students and Society. This approach employs poststructural insights to formulate a conception of oppression that focuses on discourse and the process of "citation." Referring once again to Walkerdine's (1990) work, Kumashiro argued that

Her analysis suggests that oppression and harm originate in (or are produced by) not merely the actions and intentions of individuals or in the imperatives of social structures or ideologies. Rather, oppression originates in discourse, and, in particular, in the citing of particular discourses, which frame how people think, feel, act, and interact. In other words, oppression is the citing of harmful discourses and the repetition of harmful histories. (p. 40)

Kumashiro (2000) illustrated this notion of citation by considering the "model minority" stereotype that is so often associated with Asian American students (i.e., that they are all smart, hardworking, successful students). Although the traditional view of the harm that such stereotypes inflict focuses either on the inherent power of the stereotype (used like a "weapon") or on the role that such stereotypes play in reinforcing existing social structures and ideologies, Kumashiro offered a different reading. He

suggested instead that every time a stereotype is used, it invokes past “iterations” of that stereotype:

In other words, the power of a stereotype to harm derives from a particular history of how that stereotype has been used and a particular community of people who have used that stereotype and who constitute that history. . . . If someone was to tell me that I should be a better student because I am Asian American, I would likely conclude that the speaker is making racist assumptions about me because I have heard other people talk about and generalize about Asian Americans in similar ways before. The speaker’s words would have racist meaning to me because I would read them as constituting part of the history of how the model-minority stereotype has been and is being used. Furthermore, if I believed that the speaker was judging me based on this stereotype and I valued the speaker’s judgment, the speaker’s words would likely produce in me feelings of failure or abnormality. (pp. 40–41)

Kumashiro (2000) has much more to say about the details and the implications of this poststructurally inspired approach to antioppressive education, details and implications to which I cannot possibly do justice in this article. As such, let me just briefly suggest that an approach to understanding oppression as mediated action is quite compatible with a perspective that employs notions of discourse and citation to conceptualize the same phenomena. The forms of discourse that frame how people think, feel, act, and interact, to which Kumashiro (2000) referred, are precisely those cultural tools/mediational means that are employed in any given example of mediated action, as the case of the brown-eyed children in Jane Elliot’s classroom makes crystal clear.

Moreover, this perspective clarifies precisely why the dynamics of domination and subordination were established in that classroom so quickly. The messages and the stereotypes about the superiority of the blue-eyed children and the inferiority of the brown-eyed children that Jane Elliot offered, and the children appropriated, were not powerful simply because they reinforced individual prejudice and discrimination, or a particular social structure. Rather, they gained their power because they reiterated messages and stereotypes with which they were quite familiar (different in form, perhaps, but not in kind)—messages and stereotypes about African Americans and Native Americans in particular. This is precisely the way that Jane Elliot introduced the eye-color exercise:

Jane glanced at the calendar on the front wall and said, “This is a special week. Does anybody know what it is?”

“National Brotherhood Week,” several children responded. . .

Jane took a few steps toward the door and then turned to ask, “Is there anyone in the United States that we do not treat as our brothers?”

“Yeah,” several children answered.

“Who?”

Raymond Hansen answered instantly. “Black people.” “The black people,” Jane said. “Who else?”

“Indians?” asked Sandra.

“Absolutely, the Indians,” Jane said. “And when many people see a black person or a yellow person or a red person, what do they think? What do they sometimes say?”

Sandra made a disgusted face. “Ew, look at the dumb people,” she said.

“Look at the dumb people,” Jane said flatly. “What else do they think sometimes? What kinds of things do they say about black people?”

Greg Johans . . . frowned and said, “They call them ‘Negroos,’ ‘niggers,’ things like that.” (Peters, 1987, pp. 55–56)

Simply put, the action and interaction that followed from this introduction by Jane Elliot, exemplifying both mediated oppression and mediated domination, clearly had its start in this initial exchange as the children built on their knowledge of harmful discourses and harmful histories (see Kumashiro, 2000), citing those discourses and repeating those histories (i.e., those cultural tools and resources) as they constructed their own system of domination and subordination right in the middle of their classroom.

## CONCLUSION

In this article, I have sought to sketch an alternative to what I have called the classical conception of both internalized oppression and internalized domination as internal, deep psychological qualities or characteristics. Employing the sociocultural notion of mediated action (an agent acting with mediational means/cultural tools), I have argued for a conception of appropriated oppression, and its mirror image, appropriated domination/privilege, as more helpful theoretical formulations of these phenomena. And I have briefly explored the implications of this reframing for the practice of critical pedagogy and antioppressive education.

Let me stress again that this move from what I have called a psychological interpretation of oppression and privilege to a sociocultural interpretation does not in any way deny the real and very powerful personal and



experiential consequences of oppression. Rather, it is intended to allow us to “live in the middle,” to recall Wertsch’s (1998) image, and thus to call our attention to the pervasive and insidious role that systemic forces, in the form of cultural tools and resources (ideologies, images, stereotypes, scripts, etc.), play in promoting and promulgating both oppression and privilege. Depending on when and how they are appropriated (both mastered and owned), these tools and resources have profound and long-lasting psychological ramifications. A move toward a mediated action perspective on both oppression and privilege, in other words, challenges both an exclusively individualistic view and an exclusively systemic/structural view. Both of these views meet in the concept of mediated action.

Furthermore, I would argue that a move away from the language of internalization moves us away from an image of the oppressed as victims and the privileged as villains, operating out of set and static mindsets that cannot be changed. A conception of appropriated oppression and appropriated privilege, in contrast, gives rise to a measure of hope and a sense that these dynamics, both at the individual level and at the systemic level, can be changed, made different. A move toward a conception of both oppression and privilege as mediated action also entails the understanding that both oppression and privilege typically emerge from the same social-cultural-historical-institutional-structural-systemic context (see Wertsch, 1998). As such, it enables us to see both the oppressed and the privileged as full and equal participants in a common history and an ongoing dialogue that, although it may not be easy (and may in fact at times seem impossible), is our only hope for both personal and social transformation (West, 1993).

Let me be the first to admit that this conception of both oppression and privilege as mediated action raises more questions than it answers. These include questions about the processes by which mediational means/cultural tools are appropriated (both mastered and owned) in different contexts and social locations and at different ages. Questions also remain about why some people move from positions of oppression, or positions of privilege, to positions of liberation, while others do not. And the pedagogical implications of all this remain to be spelled out in much more depth and detail than I have been able to do in this context.

Ultimately, however, I remain hopeful that such a sociocultural perspective on the dynamics of privilege and oppression will contribute in a useful way to the ongoing dialogue about these processes and how they can be resisted. As Freire (1970) said in this well-known passage,

Education as the practice of freedom—as opposed to education as the practice of domination—denies that [humans are] abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from [humans]. Authentic reflection

considers neither abstract [humans] nor the world without [humans], but [humans] in their relations with the world. In these relations consciousness and world are simultaneous; consciousness neither preceded the world nor follows it. (p. 69)

This is the sociocultural perspective on mediated action in a nutshell: “humans in their relations with the world” are “agents-acting-with-mediational-means” (Wertsch, 1998). And, as Freire suggested, in the end, this perspective is not simply a means to understand the world; it is also a means to change it, to make it a more just, more compassionate, and more liberating place for all people.

1 Similarly, the blue-eyed children did very well on the card pack the first day, when they were in the dominant position, and very poorly the second day, when they were in the subordinate position.

2 This view, of course, is right in line with our cultural overemphasis on the individual, individualism, and individual rights, which makes seeing any problem in more complex, systemic terms very difficult.

3 Let me be try to be clear about several key points from the outset: First, my argument is by no means intended to deny the real and very powerful psychological consequences of oppression. It is intended, however, to move us away from an exclusively individual, psychological understanding of this phenomenon. Second, as such, I am seeking a way to move beyond the traditional dichotomy between a micro-level analysis of domination and oppression as psychological phenomena and a macro-level analysis of domination and oppression as structural phenomena, and toward a middle-ground position that highlights the interrelationship between the micro level and the macro level. In so doing, moreover, I seek to explore the ways in which causality flows in both directions through the middle, from the individual to the structural and from the structural to the individual.

4 Pheterson (1990), one of several scholars who claimed to have coined the term *internalized domination* (or *internalized dominance*), suggested that “the basic concept can be found in Alice Miller’s (1983) book, *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence*” (p. 47).

5 Wertsch (1998) uses these two terms, “cultural tools” and “mediational means,” interchangeably.

6 Note that Wertsch, following Bakhtin (1981), used the term *appropriation* to refer specifically to this dimension of the relationship of agents toward mediational means/cultural tools. I prefer to use the term *appropriation*, following Rogoff, to refer more broadly to the general process by which agents acquire mediational means/cultural tools, of which then both mastery and ownership are seen as specific dimensions or characteristics.

7 These forms of privileging cultural tools have also been called forms of “cultural capital” (see Bourdieu, 1986; Hinchey, 1998; McLaren, 1998).

8 Discourses certainly have material consequences with respect to individual lives (including an effect on economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital—see Bourdieu, 1986), just as material life has a necessary and profound effect on mediational means/cultural tools (see Wertsch, 1998, pp. 30–32).

9 I certainly do not mean to equate the degree of oppression experienced by these third-graders, over the course of 2 days, with the degree of oppression experienced by other

members of subordinated groups, who have lived under these kinds of conditions for generations. As far as I am concerned, there are similarities in kind here, but not similarities in degree.

10 Because of the tendency of those benefiting from dominant group privilege to be blissfully unaware of their privilege (see Johnson, 2001; Kimmel & Ferber, 2003; Rothenberg, 2002), appropriated domination tends to be much more tacit than appropriated oppression.

11 See, in addition, Shor and Freire's (1987) discussion of "the dominant ideologies living within [both dominant and subordinate group members]" (p. 113). Although I worry about the "internalized" language here, Shor and Freire's discussion is very helpful in understanding how such ideologies, as mediational means/cultural tools, shape the action of both the privileged and the oppressed (see also Giroux, 1983; Howard, 2006; Tappan, 2005; Thompson, 1990).

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