Racism and imperialism in the child development discourse: deconstructing 'developmentally appropriate practice'

Sadaf Shallwani

Abstract

In this chapter, it is argued that, as part of the modern Enlightenment project, the dominant discourse on 'child development' reflects and reproduces racism and imperialism. In the first section, it is asserted that racism, as defined by Foucault (1975-76/2003), is found within the child development discourse, both in the regulation of children's bodies and the bodies and spaces with which children interact. Racism also serves to divide, classify, and 'normalize' notions of childhood. Through the above, the discourse aims to produce useful and docile children who will become useful and docile adults. In the second section, it is argued that the child development discourse privileges and produces characteristics associated with the modern Western imperial subject. This includes imagined notions of progress towards civility, and a fantasy of the White Subject who is scientist, conqueror and explorer, citizen of democracy, and a contributor and consumer in a capitalist market economy. Moreover, the discourse emphasizes a Western imperial sense of 'Self' versus 'Other', both in the goals of child development, and in the discipline's representation of itself. These arguments are demonstrated empirically through a textual analysis of the official position statement of the U.S.A. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1997), found in the guidebook entitled: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 3-30). This text is an example of the dominant child development discourse, and is highly influential in the design, development, and evaluation of programs, curricula, and pedagogical practices with young children, both in North America and around the world.

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> Knowledge, in particular knowledge of and about the social, is not produced in a vacuum. Knowledge producers are set in social milieus. The political economy and culture of their productive practices act upon the categories employed, and so they inform the knowledge being produced. By furnishing assumptions, values, and goals, this economy and culture frame the terms of the epistemological project. Once produced, the terms of articulation set their users' outlooks. The categories that now fashion content of the known constrain how people in the social order at hand think about things. Epistemological 'foundations', then, are at the heart of the constitution of social power. (Goldberg, 1993, p. 149)

Knowledge in the human sciences in general, and in the study of the child in particular, is socially constructed. In this paper, it is argued that, as part of the modern Enlightenment project, the dominant discourse on 'child development' reflects and reproduces racism and imperialism. The text used as an empirical example is the official position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1997) in the U.S.A., found in the guidebook entitled: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 3-30). This text is a typical example of the dominant child development discourse, and is highly influential in the design, development, and evaluation of programs, curricula, and pedagogical practices with young children, both in North America and around the world.

The Modern Enlightenment Project

The modern Enlightenment project has been characterized by belief in the power of science to discover objective universal truth, belief that the pursuit and attainment of this knowledge can lead to a better life, and belief in a liberal democratic state founded on rationality and knowledge. As Harvey describes:

> The project of Modernity came into focus during the eighteenth century. That project amounted to an extraordinary intellectual effort on the part of Enlightenment thinkers to develop objective science, universal morality and law and autonomous art… The idea was to use the accumulation of knowledge generated by many individuals working freely and creatively for the pursuit of human emancipation and the enrichment of human life. The scientific domination of nature promised freedom from scarcity… The development of rational forms of social organisation and rational modes of thought promised liberation from the irrationalities of myth, religion, superstition, release from the arbitrary use of power as well as from the dark side of human natures. Only through such a project could the universal, eternal and immutable qualities of all humanity be revealed… The Enlightenment project took it as axiomatic that there was only one answer to any one question. (Harvey, 1989, 12, 27; as cited in Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999)

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In this regard, the modern Enlightenment project has been built on mechanisms of social regulation and engineering – observing, classifying, regulating, and intervening on human bodies in order to attain human emancipation.

The modern Enlightenment project and the child development discourse

Modernity's tasks of surveillance, measurement, classification and intervention have been carried about by different discourses of 'knowledge', including discourses on children and childhood. Foucault (1977/1984) has described the problem of management of 'childhood', with new and particular rules to regulate relations between adults and children. Nikolas Rose has more recently asserted,

> Childhood is the most intensively governed sector of personal existence. In different ways, at different times, and by many different routes varying from one section of society to another, the health, welfare, and rearing of children have been linked in thought and practice to the destiny of the nation and the responsibilities of the state. The modern child has become the focus of innumerable projects that purport to safeguard it from physical, sexual and moral danger, to ensure its 'normal' development, to actively promote certain capacities of attributes such as intelligence, educability and emotional stability. (Rose, 1989, p. 121, as cited in James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998, p. 7)

Developmental psychology, as part of the child development discipline, has been particularly occupied with the tasks of monitoring, regulating, and moulding human beings in the earliest years of their lives (Burman, 2008).

Racism: disciplinary and regulatory power in the child development discourse

'Racism' is a way of dividing, normalizing, and hierarchizing groups within a population (Foucault, 1975-76/2003). It falls within the modern Enlightenment project's goals of social regulation. In this section, it is argued that this racism is found within the child development discourse, both in the regulation of children's bodies and the bodies and spaces with which children interact. It also serves to divide, classify, and 'normalize' notions of childhood. Through all of the above, the discourse aims to produce useful and docile children who will become useful and docile adults.

Power, race, and knowledge

Michel Foucault has described modernity's goals of social engineering as resting on two major forms of state power (Foucault, 1975-76/2003): disciplinary power and regulatory power. Disciplinary power functions to render individual bodies useful and docile, and regulatory power—or biopower—functions to monitor and regulate populations. Both of these powers are served by strategies such as dividing, hierarchizing, and normalizing. The element of the 'norm' in particular, can both discipline individual bodies and regulate populations:

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> In more general terms still, we can say that there is one element that will circulate between the disciplinary and the regulatory, which will also be applied to body and population alike, which will make it possible to control both the disciplinary order of the body and the aleatory events that occur in the biological multiplicity. The element that circulates between the two is the norm. The norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize. (Foucault, 1975-76/2003, p. 252-253).

Foucault further discusses the 'art of punishing' (1977/1984, p. 195) and the norm in the regime of disciplinary power:

> It brings five quite distinct operations into play: it refers individual actions to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation, and the principle of a rule to be followed. It differentiates individuals from one another, in terms of the following overall rule: that the rule be made to function as a minimal threshold, as an average to be respected, or as an optimum toward which one must move. It measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the 'nature' of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved. Lastly, it traces the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal (the 'shameful' class of the Ecole Militaire). The perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes. (Foucault, 1977/1984, p. 195)

These techniques of dividing, hierarchizing, and normalizing populations and individuals work through 'racism'. Foucault has named racism in particular as a means of "… introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die. (…) It is a way of separating out the groups that exist within a population." (Foucault, 1975-76/2003, p. 254-255). The 'normal' depends on the existence of the 'abnormal', the racialized Other, who is different, inferior, and excluded. As such, scientific knowledge is necessarily racialized, as it serves to justify the division and regulation of populations. As Goldberg explains,

> What I am calling 'racial knowledge' is defined by a dual movement. It is dependent upon—it appropriates as its own mode of expression, its premises, and the limits of its determinations—those of established scientific fields of the day, especially anthropology, natural history, and biology. This scientific cloak of racial knowledge, its formal character and seeming universality, imparts authority and legitimation to it. Its authority is identical with, it parasitically maps onto the formal authority of the scientific discipline it mirrors. At the same time, racial knowledge—racial science, to risk excess—is able to do this because it has been historically integral to the emergence of these authoritative scientific fields. Race has been seen as a basic categorical object, in some cases a founding focus of scientific analysis in these various domains. This phenomenon has no doubt been facilitated by the definitive importance of difference in modernity's development of knowledge. (Goldberg, 1993, p. 149)

In this sense, knowledge is racial in the way it normalizes, categorizes, and hierarchizes groups of humans.

The child development discipline carries out the state goals of discipline and regulation by monitoring and regulating children's bodies, as well as the bodies and spaces with which children interact (i.e., caregivers and settings). This disciplining and regulating is justified by

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appeals to modernity's belief in an empirical universal knowledge base and goals of emancipation, and involves constant monitoring and regulating of bodies and systems.

Monitoring and regulating children's bodies

The child development discourse justifies and promotes the monitoring and regulation of children's bodies, through the intertwined techniques of dividing practices (Foucault, 1977/1984, p. 195) and closely observing and training bodies to be useful and docile (Foucault, 1975-76/2003, p. 249).

> The classical age discovered the body as an object and target of power. It is easy enough to find signs of the attention then paid to the body – to the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skillful and increases its forces. (Foucault, 1977, p. 136, as cited in James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998, p. 10)

The early childhood professional is required to closely observe and intervene to make the child's body docile and useful:

> Teachers continually observe children's spontaneous play and interaction with the physical environment and with other children to learn about their interests, abilities, and developmental progress. On the basis of this information, teachers plan experiences that enhance children's learning and development. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 17)

It is important to note that the early childhood professional is generally portrayed as an objective and separate observer. The importance of the early childhood professional's objective observation of the child in this technology has been underscored by Foucault:

> Disciplinary power, on the other hand, is exercised through its invisibility; at the same time it imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold o the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of constantly being seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection. (Foucault, 1877/1984, p. 199)

Monitoring and regulating the people and settings with which children interact

The child development discourse advocates monitoring and regulating the bodies and spaces encountered by children in public and private spheres. Racialized knowledge produces particular notions of 'normal' and 'optimal' which are then imposed at population levels. For example, the NAEYC position statement asserts:

> Children's development in all areas is influenced by their ability to establish and maintain a limited number of positive, consistent primary relationships with adults and other children. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 15)

In this way, particular imagined (White, Western, middle class) models of caregiving and childrearing are normalized and prescribed as optimal for children's development, thus pathologizing and inferiorizing other models and arrangements.

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In the public sphere of the early childhood institution (e.g., child care centre, preschool), the body of the early childhood professional is regulated in particular ways. Her body is required to engage in 'appropriate' practices and avoid 'inappropriate' practices; she is required to interact (and not interact) with children and families in particular ways deemed 'normal' and prescribed as optimal. The body of the early childhood professional is under constant scrutiny in the hierarchy of observation, under the guise of professionalism and quality, which inscribe particular rules of social administration. The professional can only exist in contrast to the unprofessional (Bloch & Popkewitz, 2000, p. 23); high-quality can only exist in contrast to low-quality. This system requires ongoing monitoring and regulation to ensure standards are met; to identify, regulate, and exclude the unprofessional and the low-quality. In the implementation of early childhood programs, the NAEYC recommends that comprehensive systems are in place to prepare, regulate, and evaluate the quality of staff and programmes (NAEYC, p. 24-25). The NAEYC offers accreditation criteria and procedures for organizations wishing to train early childhood professionals. Appeals to 'knowledge' and appeals to danger are made in justifying these particular rules of social administration:

> Of even greater concern was the large percentage of classrooms and family child care homes that were rated "barely adequate" or "inadequate" for quality. From 12 to 20% of the children were in settings that were considered dangerous to their health and safety and harmful to their social and cognitive development. An alarming number of infants and toddlers (35 to 40%) were found to be in unsafe settings. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 7)

The early childhood professional is both the effect and effector of disciplinary power and regulatory power. As she is expected to monitor and regulate the bodies of children, she is monitored and regulated by the early childhood discipline.

Dividing, classifying, and 'normalizing' childhood

The racialized knowledge base of the child development discipline engages in dividing practices (Foucault, 1977/1984, p. 195), through classification, individualization, normalization, and thus hierarchization and exclusion. First, the category of 'the child' is differentiated from the category of 'the adult', with the child conceptualized as vulnerable and primitive, and the adult conceptualized as saviour and civilized. Justifications for intervention in children's lives often appeal to such notions of children's vulnerability:

> Because children's health and safety too often are threatened today, programs for young children must not only provide adequate health, safety, and nutrition but may also need to ensure more comprehensive services, such as physical, dental, and mental health and social services. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 15)

Second, the processes of children's development and learning are divided in a number of ways, such as (a) domains of development (e.g., cognitive, social, emotional, physical); (b) ages and stages of development; and (c) modes of learning/types of knowledge (e.g., emotional, spatial, rational). For example, the Developmentally Appropriate Practice guidebook charts developmental tasks in each domain that children are expected to accomplish at particular ages (e.g., Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 70-71: Developmental Milestones of Children from Birth to Age 3).

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Finally, and most importantly, the process of 'development' is normalized and racialized. Development is portrayed as a universal phenomenon which is orderly, linear, progressive, and cumulative. 'Normal' development thus creates 'abnormal' development, whereby difference (deficiency, deviance) is located in and serves to exclude the individual (child). For example, the NAEYC asserts that, "Development occurs in a relatively orderly sequence, with later abilities, skills, and knowledge building on those already acquired" (NAEYC, 1997, p. 10). They further claim that there is a clear knowledge base about child development and learning – "knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions with an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable, and also challenging to children" (NAEYC, 1997, p. 9). However, as articulated by Bloch and Popkewitz,

> That the norms, the natural, and the biological were those of middle-class, white, young boys and girls, as observed by "scientific" methods used by white, middle-class, "scientifically trained" men and women, was, in the 1920s-1940s, rarely discussed, and with some likelihood, rarely recognized. Nonetheless, these norms created a universalized girl or boy, what was normal and what was deviant, who was advanced, which children were retarded, in short, what normal childhood versus adolescence and adulthood were, what normal stages of progress were, what backwardness looked like, and what evolutionary ideals or "norms" for childhood should be. (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995, p. 20)

In this way, particular imagined (White, Western, middle-class) characteristics and models are deemed to be the 'norm' and prescribed as optimal for all children, thereby constructing the 'abnormal', the 'deficient', the 'other'. Moreover, early childhood professionals are required to "adapt for and be responsive to inevitable individual variation" (NAEYC, 1997, p. 9), and individual variation is described in part as "the inevitable variability around the average or normative course of development" (NAEYC, 1997, p. 10). The repeated use of the word 'inevitable' implies that deviance from the norm is something one would want to but cannot avoid. In this way, the norm is the imagined, the unreal, and yet the ideal, that cannot be attained. Ghassan Hage has described this imagined White as "the ideal of being the bearer of 'Western' civilisation. As such, no one can be fully White, but people yearn to be so. It is in this sense that Whiteness is itself a fantasy position and a field of accumulating Whiteness." (Hage, 2000, p. 58).

Useful and docile children, useful and docile adults

The child development discipline also occupies itself with training bodies to be docile, to be self-regulating and other-regulating, to give rise to docile adult bodies (Foucault, 1977, p. 136, as cited in James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998, p. 10). In this discourse, development is presented as natural and yet needing careful monitoring, regulation, and intervention to produce docile and useful bodies. As described in the NAEYC position statement:

> Development and learning are dynamic processes requiring that adults understand the continuum, observe children closely to match curriculum and teaching to children's emerging competencies, needs, and interests, and then help children more forward by targeting educational experiences to the edge of children's changing capacities so as to challenge but not frustrate them. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 15)

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The child development discourse places particular emphasis on the 'early years' for the believed malleability of children's brains during these years and the long-term outcomes expected from these early interventions:

> Current research demonstrates the early and lasting experiences of children's environments and experiences on brain development and cognition." (NAEYC, 1997, p. 6)

In this regard, a major focus of the child development profession has become the order and regulation of children's time, space, and bodies. Children's bodies are trained to behave in particular (White, Western, middle-class) ways: to function according to timetables and routines (e.g., eating or napping at the same time everyday), and to behave differently in different spaces (e.g., thematic play areas, outdoors physical activity versus indoor pretend play, storytime seated on the floor versus eating at a table):

> Children experience an organized environment and an orderly routine that provides an overall structure in which learning takes place. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 17)

There is an emphasis on children learning self- and other-regulation, responsibility, and autonomy, as demonstrated in NAEYC's description of appropriate practice:

> Teachers set clear, consistent, and fair limits for children's behavior and hold children accountable to standards of acceptable behavior. To the extent that children are able, teachers engage them in developing rules and procedures for behavior of class members. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 19)

Similarly, the justifications for monitoring and intervention, as well as the outcome measures by which children are evaluated, reflect how docile and useful the child's body is; children are evaluated on how they function within school settings and how they integrate with 'mainstream' society. For example, the NAEYC appeals to the perceived failure of racialized others to meet imagined White standards:

> Currently, too many children—especially children from low-income families and some minority groups—experience school failure, are retained in grade, get assigned to special education, and eventually drop out of school. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 7)

In this way, social control is performed through processes of 'normalization' and exclusion (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, p. 65) of racialized other children. Despite its coding in the languages of class and minority status, race is the dividing factor; whereby Whiteness is normal, and racial others are abnormal and in need of intervention.

Imperialism: child development as the production of the Western imperial subject

Imperialism is "characterized by an exercise of power, either through direct conquest or (latterly) through political and economic influence that effectively amounts to a similar form of domination" (Young, 2001, p. 27, as cited in Cannella & Viruru, 2004, p.15). Imperialism has

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been intertwined with modern Enlightenment and Western imperial notions of 'humanity' (Young, 1990/2004) and 'civility' (Coleman, 2006).

Foucault (1977/1984) asserted that power is constitutive and productive, as opposed to merely repressive. In this section, it is argued that the child development discourse privileges and produces characteristics associated with the modern Western imperial subject. This includes imagined notions of progress towards 'White civility' (Coleman, 2006, p. 10), and a fantasy of the White Subject who is scientist, conqueror and explorer, citizen of democracy, and a contributor and consumer in a capitalist market economy. Moreover, the discourse emphasizes a sense of 'Self' versus 'Other', both in the goals of child development, and the discipline's representation of itself.

Yearning for 'White civility'

First, the notion of 'development' as 'progress' implies a linear and progressive path from 'the primitive' to 'the civilized' (Coleman, 2006, p. 10-11), and is thus tied up with moral and cultural ideas of White civilized superiority (Goldberg, 1993, p. 166). Whether the discourse is about countries or humans, it is implied that there is one path to 'development', and all entities can be ranked on this continuum (e.g., under-developed, developing, developed). Goldberg asserts,

> This assumption has had to do, in part, with the self-identity of the West, of its self-confident superiority, its imperial successes, its dominant colonialism, and its postcolonial dominance. It has also had to do, at least in part, with the projection of European Enlightenment values as universal, as the standard against which all judgements should be measured. (Goldberg, 1993, p. 166-167)

Goldberg (1993) describes the notion of "the Primitive" as one hegemonic conceptual schema in the production of contemporary racialized knowledge:

> Formally, primitive societies were theorized in binary differentiation from a civilized order. (…) In popular terms, nonwhite primitives have come to be conceived as childlike, intuitive, and spontaneous; they require the iron fist of 'European' governance and paternalistic guidance to control inherent physical violence and sexual drives. (Goldberg, 1993, p. 156)

Progress and improvement is thus conceived as the pathway from racialized and gendered Other—signified by 'the under-developed/developing', 'the primitive', 'the child'—to the White man—signified by 'the developed', 'the civilized', 'the adult'. Coleman cites Richard Dyer:

According to Dyer, enterprise is often presented as the sign of the White spirit – that is, to a valuation of energy, will, discovery, science, progress, the building of nations, the organization of labour, and especially leadership. 'The idea of leadership,' [Dyer] writes, 'suggests both a narrative of human progress and the peculiar quality required to effect it. Thus white people [are understood naturally to] lead humanity forward because of their temperamental qualities of leadership: will power, far-sightedness, energy'. (Coleman, 2006, p. 12)

Becoming a 'White subject'

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The discourse both normalizes and prescribes 'child development' as the development of the rational scientist, the conquering explorer, the citizen of democracy, and the member of a capitalist market economy – roles associated with the (White) Western imperial subject.

Rational scientist. First, the racialized discourse on child development, in line with the values of modernity and the yearnings for White civility, represents child development as a progressive evolution from dependence-attachment and irrationality-emotion (considered feminine and primitive qualities), to independence-detachment and rationality-objectivity (considered masculine and civilized qualities). Burman describes Piaget's depiction of the developing child as "… a budding scientist systematically encountering problems in the material world, developing hypotheses, and learning by discovery and activity" (Burman, 1994, p. 157). Along the same lines, in the NAEYC position statement, it is stated:

> Children need to form their own hypotheses and keep trying them out through social interaction, physical manipulation, and their own thought processes—observing what happens, reflecting on their findings, asking questions, and formulating answers (…). (NAEYC, 1997, p. 13).

> The individual is conceived as separate, developing intellectually towards logic and rationality, epitomized within 'the scientific method' of modern knowledge production. As noted by Burman, the reverence for activity and discovery carries with it colonial (and gendered) implications (Burman, 1994).

Explorer and conqueror. Second, the child development discourse perpetuates the imperial subject as explorer and conqueror by representing child learning and growth as exploration and achievement. Importance is given to motivation, curiosity, initiative, confidence, autonomy, and achievement – reflecting imperial and gendered nuances. Two assertions from the NAEYC position statement serve as examples:

> To strengthen children's sense of competence and confidence as learners, motivation to persist, and willingness to take risks, teachers provide experiences for children to be genuinely successful and to be challenged. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 19)

> Children continually gravitate to situations and stimuli that give them the chance to work at their "growing edge". Moreover, in a task just beyond the child's independent reach, the adult and more-competent peers contribute significantly to development by providing the supportive "scaffolding" that allows the child to take the next step. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 14)

There is a continuous reference to edges, frontiers, the 'just beyond' which the child is constantly encouraged to attain. This language bears a striking resemblance to the language of imperialism and colonialism. Slotkin has described the usage of this metaphor as the "Frontier Myth", according to which,

> (…) the conquest of the wilderness and the subjugation or displacement of the Native Americans who originally inhabited it have been the means to our achievement of a national identity, a democratic polity, an ever-expanding economy, and a phenomenally dynamic and "progressive" civilization. The original ideological task of the Myth was to explain and justify the establishment of the American colonies; but as the colonies expanded and developed, the Myth was called on to account for our rapid economic growth, our emergency as a powerful nation-state, and our

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> distinctively American approach to the socially and culturally disruptive processes of modernization. (Slotkin, 1992, p. 10).

Conquest and expansion are thus intertwined with progress, development, and the attainment of White civility.

Citizen of democracy. Third, the child development discourse reflects and promotes particular imagined roles the child will be expected to play as an adult in society. For example, citizens of a liberal democratic society are required to be self-governing and autonomous (Burman, 1994, p. 168). In this vein, children are expected to develop into docile, self- and other-regulating bodies. This is highlighted by a quote shared earlier from the NAEYC position statement:

> Teachers set clear, consistent, and fair limits for children's behavior and hold children accountable to standards of acceptable behavior. To the extent that children are able, teachers engage them in developing rules and procedures for behavior of class members. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 19)

Contributor and consumer in capitalist market economy. Finally, a capitalist market economy requires entrepreneurs and consumers, which the child development discipline aims to produce. As suggested in the NAEYC statement, consumer preferences and demands are cultivated:

> Teachers provide children with a rich variety of experiences, projects, materials, problems, and ideas to explore and investigate, ensuring that these are worthy of children's attention. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 18)

> Teachers provide children with opportunities to make meaningful choices and time to explore through active involvement. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 18)

In this way, consumer preferences and demands are cultivated and valued:

> From infancy onwards, the child is encouraged to characterize himself in terms of his favourite toys and foods and those he dislikes; his tastes, aversions and consumer preferences are viewed not only as legitimate but essential aspects of his growing individuality – and a prized quality of an independent person. (Levine, 2003, p. 95)

Moreover, particular qualities associated with 'entrepreneurship' are privileged:

> [Children] need to understand that effort is necessary for achievement, for example, and they need to have curiosity and confidence in themselves as learners. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 8)

> Teachers foster children's collaboration with peers on interesting, important enterprises. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 19)

However, these White 'enterprising' qualities (Dyer, as cited in Coleman, 2006, p. 12) are not universal, and differ substantially from those qualities desired for those (and accessible to those) who work at the mass production levels (Bloch & Popkewitz, 2000, p. 29). As discussed earlier, non-white, non-middle-class children are thus excluded from White middle-class citizenship and economic participation (Fanon, p. 131, as cited in Young, 1990/2004, p. 163)

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'Self' versus 'Other'

The child development discourse also emphasizes the Western imperial (and racist) sense of 'Self' versus 'Other', both in the goals of child development, and the discipline's representation of itself.

First, successful child development has been conceptualized as children's learning to clearly develop a sense of 'Self' (who is the universal Subject or agent) in opposition to 'the Other' (who is different and objectified). The NAEYC position statement articulates:

> Moreover, to live in a highly pluralistic society and world, young people need to develop a positive self-identity and a tolerance for others whose perspective and experience may be different from their own. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 8)

In this sense, the child grows to be the Self, an identity which depends on the designation of the Other, in whom difference is located (Ahmed, 2000, p. 7). This Self is considered to be the universal subject, the universal human; yet the values and ideals promoted are actually associated with a particular fantasy of Whiteness which, as discussed earlier, is both yearned for and unattainable (Hage, 2000, p. 58).

> Western bourgeois racial prejudice as regards the nigger and the Arab is a racism of contempt; it is a racism which minimizes what it hates. Bourgeois ideology, however, which is the proclamation of an essential equality between men, manages to appear logical in its own eyes by inviting the sub-men to become human, and to take as their prototype Western humanity as incarnated in the Western bourgeoisie. (Fanon, p. 131, as cited in Young, 1990/2004, p. 163)

'We' and 'the Other' in the child development discourse

Second, the discipline of child development portrays particular imagined notions of 'We', as a subject/agent who encompasses leadership, legitimized authority, benevolence, and the power to include and exclude the Other.

In line with the rhetoric of the New World Order, in which the American government is responsible to lead due to its superior values of order, democracy, and freedom (Said, 1994, p. xvii), the Western child development discourse considers itself the leader in child development worldwide. This leadership is qualified by authority, legitimacy, and totality. For example, the NAEYC states,

> Based on an enduring commitment to act on behalf of children, NAEYC's mission is to promote high-quality, developmentally appropriate programs for all children and their families. Because we define developmentally appropriate programs as programs that contribute to children's development, we must articulate our goals for children's development… what we want for them, both in their present lives and as they develop to adulthood, and what personal characteristics should be fostered because they contribute to a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic society. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 8)

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The White Western subject presumptuously claims to know and represent all children, all families, and all professionals, and brazenly confers itself the power to define that which is morally and socially desirable for all.

Moreover, this leadership comes from imagined moral superiority and corresponding responsibility (perhaps as Rudyard Kipling's white man's burden, as cited in Razack, 2004, p. 4). There is an appeal to a sense of danger and urgency, a need to save the children, and a capacity to save but only in the one way determined by the legitimized authority:

> Of even greater concern was the large percentage of classrooms and family child care homes that were rated "barely adequate" or "inadequate" for quality. From 12 to 20% of the children were in settings that were considered dangerous to their health and safety and harmful to their social and cognitive development. An alarming number of infants and toddlers (35 to 40%) were found to be in unsafe settings. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 7)

> (…) (W)hile early childhood programs have the potential or producing positive and lasting effects on children, this potential will not be achieved unless more attention is paid to ensuring that all programs meet the highest standards of quality. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 7)

The highest standards are, of course, determined by the White Western subject group. The implication is that there is potential, the children can be saved, but only if everyone's on board, only if everyone agrees to the standards and norms established by the White Western subject, only then can we save all the children.

Most fundamentally, the fantasy of the imagined 'We' (the White Western Imperial Self) is defined by and depends upon 'the Other', and upon the power of 'We' to include or exclude the racialized Other. Difference and deviation are located in the Other, as opposed to the universal Self/We who responds to and has the power to (selectively) include the Other. In this vein, the child development discourse depicts families as deficient in caring for their children and the discipline/profession as the legitimate knowledge base regarding children and childhood:

> The program links families with a range of services, based on identified resources, priorities, and concerns. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 22)

> Increasingly, programs serve children and families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, requiring that all programs demonstrate understanding of and responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 4).

> [Appropriate] curriculum provides opportunities to support children's home culture and language while also developing all children's abilities to participate in the shared culture of the program and the community. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 20)

Difference and need (culture, language, and disability) are clearly located in the racialized Other (individual, child, family, home, background), while the imagined 'We' (all, shared, community) holds the responsibility and benevolence to respond, to include or exclude:

> Many different settings in this country provide services to young children, and it is legitimate—even beneficial—for these settings to vary in certain ways. However, since it is vital to meet children's learning and developmental needs wherever they are served, high standards of quality should apply to all settings. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 4)

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> Teachers acknowledge parents' choices and goals for children and respond with sensitivity and respect to parents' preferences and concerns without abdicating professional responsibility to children. (NAEYC, 1997, p. 22)

Again, difference and deviation are located in the individual/child/family, and the imagined 'We' of the child development discipline holds moral responsibility (the white man's burden) to intervene in the raising of children. Superficial input from parents is 'allowed', but the profession remains the expert on the 'real' issues. The state goals of social regulation rely fundamentally on this knowledge/power imbalance in the relationship between the discipline and the individual.

Sara Ahmed discusses the stranger fetishism involved in the rhetoric of inclusion, arguing that othering happens through acts of inclusion, and that this discourse is built around a fantasy of a national subject who has the power to define who should and should not be included (Ahmed, 2000, p. 112). Similarly, Hage describes the imaginary of the 'nationalist manager' and the other as object: the nationalist's capacity to classify others as desirable and undesirable, and manage both the national space and the national object (Hage, 2000, p. 58).

Significantly, despite the repeated implicit references to the racialized Other, race itself is never explicitly acknowledged in this and most texts in the child development discourse. Toni Morrison has argued that coded language and significant omissions are required to maintain the frail constructions of the imagined nation (Morrison, 1992, p. 6). In the NAEYC statement, the closest one gets to race is 'culture' or 'class' (or in one situation, 'minority status') – described by Goldberg as contemporary masks of race (Goldberg, 1993, p. 69-74). These codes for race are associated with codes for difference, deviance, and need; in short, the nonwhite is othered and excluded.

As it has been argued, the dominant discourse on 'child development' reflects and reproduces racism and imperialism. The discourse regulates children's lives, 'normalizes' and hierachizes different groups, divides and classifies childhood, and privileges particular White and imperial characteristics.

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