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**Question 1:**

In Jay MacLeod's book Ain't No Makin It, he describes the lives and the fates of two different sets of young boys, the Hallway Hangers and Brothers. The two groups are brought up in the same neighborhood or project to be more descriptive. For the Hallway Hangers, there does not seem to be much hope. When the Hallway Hangers are asked what they have for themselves in the future, a common response would be, "hopefully have a job, if not, probably in jail or maybe dead" (MacLeod, p 64). They saw themselves and their families as failures. MacLeod described the fate of the Hallway Hangers very bleak and without much hope. He was pulling these ideas and thoughts directly from the hopeless Hallway Hangers.

Although living in the same project, the Brothers had a different outlook on their lives in 20 years. When the Brothers were asked what they would be doing in the future the common response was to have a home, a job and hopefully a family (p. 76-82). The Brothers were striving for a fate that was ideal in their lives. Even though the Brothers were optimistic about their futures, in reality, once 20 years came along they were not much better off than the Hallway Hangers.

When writing the book, MacLeod said he would have predicted a more positive outcome for the Brothers than what they had become. MacLeod believed because the Brothers had goals and positive aspirations, they would make a better life for themselves than the Hallway Hangers. The Brothers were working hard in high school at something they wanted to achieve in the future. On the other hand,

MacLeod did not see promising groundwork being laid by the Hallway Hangers for their futures. Therefore, he was not predicting much would come out of any of them. The depressing fate of the Hallway Hangers was apparent to MacLeod and the readers when the Hallway Hangers dreamed of being nothing more than a lower class worker.

After MacLeod returned to Clarendon Heights years later to learn the outcomes of the Hallway Hangers and Brothers he was not surprised with some of their fates but shocked by others. When MacLeod started studying the boys, they were all in same place, the bottom, the projects. Although some of them had not been there as long as other, MacLeod explains their similar fates with 'reproduction happens', history does repeat itself. A couple kids from each group were able to start their own lives, but the majority of the Hallway Hangers and the Brothers were doing jobs that were not far off from what their parents had done and the people around them. The fates of the two groups ended up similar, even though their aspirations were different from the start.

There are similarities to MacLeod in the studies by Bourdieu. Bourdieu believes that economic and educational classes reproduce. This is congruent to MacLeod's findings that reproduction happens. When analyzing both groups, MacLeod lets us know the race of each person, but he does not count race as a deciding factor of each individuals' fate. Unlike Bourdieu who accounts race as a big factor in who will be successful. Bourdieu believed that there would be more cultural differences to look at when different races were involved. MacLeod disagreed with this theory because both the Hallway Hangers and the Brothers were

starting at the same point in Clarendon Heights as well as the same school. MacLeod is also using this point to disagree with Bowles. Bowles preaches that the structure of schooling mirrors the structure in the classroom. If this were accurate, then the Brothers and Hallway Hangers would be carrying their lives on the same way. The opposite happened though; the Hallway hangers had little aspirations, while the Brothers aspired to be more than they already were. MacLeod and Bowles are similar when looking at the outcomes of both groups in that they account for race very little and are concentrating the culture that is going on around the young boys.

I think that MacLeod's explanation on the boys' fates is on point. I would have predicted a more positive outcome from the Brothers as well. I do agree with Bourdieu that "realistic aspirations based on the opportunities in front of you" (class notes, 10/20/09) is a better indicator of what the future will bring. That was more like the Hallway Hangers than the Brothers who had aspirations that were ideal, but there was little reality behind them. In support of Bourdieu, MacLeod was more consistent predicting the fates of the Hallway Hangers than he was of the Brothers. I think MacLeods explanation of Bowles theory in this book is accurate as well. To me, Bowles presents a very simplistic, black and white solution to generational reproduction. He does not consider all factors needed to explain socialization, he looks primarily at class.

Overall, MacLeod could have never predicted the fate of every one of the Hallway Hangers or the Brothers, but there were many good indicators of how each child's' fate would end.

## Question 2:

The book, The Chosen, by Jerome Karabel, displayed what three top United States universities, Harvard, Yale and Princeton, went through over a century of growth while all three were struggling to maintain their merit. The book was broken down into three parts, three distinct time periods of development for each school. Section one describes how the admissions process worked and the definition of merit. In this time period, 1900-1933, merit was the good ol boys. These three top elite schools were modeled after the British schools. Modeled so only the top men could get admitted to the universities. Merit at this time was men, the gentlemen of the country. The three schools, the “big three” had created a cultural supreme. The schools were very similar in makeup, dominantly protestant. The students were all the same with little diversity. Harvard was the first of the three schools to start broadening the admissions process. President Charles Elliot wanted a more diverse student body. He tried to accomplish this by opening the admissions process to public high school, cut back on the entrance exam and continued to stress the freedom of thought. Merit was not to be sacrificed at any level and the best gentlemen were still being educated at these top three institutions.

The second section was from 1933-1965. In this section, the definition of merit was questioned at the three schools. The push that all high school students should have an equal chance at higher education was prevalent. Higher education was becoming more abundant throughout the United States and Harvard, Yale and Princeton needed to search for the best students. Harvard took on a Jeffersonian

approach “that everyone should be educated”. While Princeton was struggling with letting anyone out of the mold into their University and Yale was in the midst of changing long-standing traditions. Meritocracy was setting in across the ‘big three’. The hard working intellect was being admitted to the top schools. The ‘pretty boys’ at Princeton were now competing with top scholars and true intellectuals. Merit had changed from just who you are, to what you know. The knowledge that you have and what you can bring to the school was important now. The new Harvard president stressed that he wanted each generation to work hard for themselves and not just have something handed to them because their father before them worked hard and was accomplished. While still over admitting alumni, athletes and the privileged, it was hard to believe any of the three schools would ever truly become meritocratic.

The third section of The Chosen takes place from 1965-2005. There were new people knocking on each of the schools’ doors. Women were becoming more powerful; blacks were more prevalent in the education system. The diversity of each school was being challenged; therefore merit was being altered again. Karabel writes, “success in America is a function of individual merit rather than family background” (Karabel, p. 545). The ‘big three’ were now concentrating on what each student can bring to their school and not what their parents have brought to the school. Unlike past years, Harvard, Yale and Princeton are admitting women, black people and people with different ethnic backgrounds. Although, all three schools strived for a more varied student body, all three still very much lacked “class

diversity” (Karabel, p. 537). Throughout these years, merit has transformed into a personal battle that each student must prosper on their own.

Karabel and Bourdieu are similar in the sense of cultural capital. Karabel writes how the privileged continue to be benefited while the underprivileged have to work over twice as hard to get to the same place. Karabel stresses that cultural capital is one of the main differences in each of the schools. This is parallel to the studies from Bourdieu. Without cultural capital, Karabel explains it in Bourdieu’s words, “there is limited amount of social mobility” (Karabel, p. 549). Social mobility is lacked in these three schools. The ‘big three’ have created a community within themselves of reproducing the same kind of person year after year. Karabel and Bourdieu are eye to eye when seeing the educational effects that cultural capital creates.

### **Question 3:**

In the section school organization and classrooms, we looked at the structure of schools and classes. Within the structure we learned a lot about teachers and the many roles they are to take on and to be successful. Some of the roles include teaching, disciplining, a parenting role, friend and a person to guide. In the Johnson article, she speaks of the roles outside the classroom that have to be fulfilled.

Whether they are coaches, study hall monitors or lunch duty, they are all additional roles teachers are sometimes burdened with when they do not want to do them.

Becker explains how disciplining children from different backgrounds can be difficult. Although in Bender's article, the teachers put the students in separated economic classes just by judgment, they still see a difference in the way students need and respond to discipline. Teachers also need to be conscious of gender differences. Sears and Feldman go into depth of how boys are given more attention than girls. When teachers were asked, their ultimate goal is to teach something to their students (Lortie). Lortie explains the intrinsic rewards teachers get from teaching are more powerful than other rewards. The single role of teaching is very rewarding to teachers.

I learned that teachers' relationships are not always strong. When schools are more bureaucratic, personal relationships are lost in the structure. Then school systems are run more like a business than learning centers. In Johnson's article she relays that private school teachers have a much better relationship with the administration than public school teachers. There is communication at all levels and more involvement as well. Teachers are able to make and carry out their own

lesson plans without someone looking over their shoulder. Unlike the private school system, Johnson explains how public school teachers usually have to follow instruction from someone above them. Whether that is the board of visitors or principle, public school teachers are on a tighter leash than private school teachers. In Johnson's article they complained of not being able to teach what they wanted and how they wanted.

In some school systems, relationships amongst colleagues were great (Johnson). Teachers spoke of how they enjoyed interacting with other teachers for ideas. Although teachers like to interact, the interaction was with people like them. For example, the math department or language department would all sit together. It was strange to me to learn that teachers who taught the same students wouldn't sit together more frequently. Some teachers expressed frustrations because of the lack of relationship between teachers. I learned that the happy teachers were allowed more freedom and had resources to help them teach.

I believe that conflicts arise in the teaching world because teachers are all individuals (Lortie). They all still teach a certain way and believe that their way works. Although they are individuals, school systems are trying to make them conform. I could see conflicts emerging between teachers and supervisors if the supervisors requested curriculum was not completed. Conflicts with the city and state that stress high test scores and teachers are not producing those desired numbers. I have not worked in a school, so I do not know many of the common conflicts, but I would not predict many conflicts among colleagues, especially at the lower levels of teaching. I could see more colleague conflicts in the junior high and



high school level because multiple teachers teach the same student and they could have varying opinions on what is best for that student.

I think that workers in other organizations would have similar conflicts with their bosses like teachers do with their superiors. Different conflicts could be the competitiveness to get a promotion. Whereas teachers who want to be in the classroom, there is not much competition once you are there.

Conflicts in school organizations are difficult. When there is a problem or conflict, students' educations are on the line. In the private school setting, I believe that conflict would be resolved quickly and on a small scale. Wherever the problem was stemming from those people would be brought in immediately and the problem would be actively solved. I think that it would be another story in a big public school, or a school system that has three or four schools in one county. At this level I think conflict would take the slow route of going through each administrator. Then if it were big enough, the person above the administrator would have to get involved. Conflicts in a bigger organization seem to get blown out of proportion and everyone wants to follow protocol. So steps are followed, but the real issue at hand gets lost in the paper work and sometimes can never be solved. My other thought on solving conflicts within big schools is the problem could sometimes never get addressed or solved. Because there are so many people at the school, problems that do not seem like a big deal could get lost in a stack of paper work. I know that these are opposite spectrums and neither is positive, but I hope this is not the way conflict is solved in public schools, I just have not heard of many positive experiences with conflict in big schools.