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## Return of the Deficit

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#### Document Type

Article in Response to Controversy

#### Abstract

"What is it about school that manages to transform children who are good at learning . . . regardless of their economic and cultural differences, into children who are not good at learning, if they are poor or members of certain minority groups?" (Gee, 2004, p. 10)

Education as the great leveler of social class is one of the enduring myths of American culture. With hard work and a good education "any American can grow up to be president." It was in this context that the *Brown v. Bd. of Education* decision of the US Supreme Court held such hope for African Americans. After decades of "inherently unequal," separate schooling sanctioned by the Supreme Court's *Plessy* decision, integrated classrooms and schools required by the Brown decision promised an antidote to the poverty and discrimination that limited the life chances of African Americans.

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