constantly re/created through myriad interactions in society. These processes are *especially* potent in the realm of special education, where students of color often find themselves segregated and handed a third-class education on the basis of pseudo-medicalized labels, masquerading as scientific, well-intentioned, and sophisticated. Special education has had the effect of remaking centuries old categories that treat people of color as less able, less deserving, and ultimately, less human.

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CHAPTER 2

What a Good Boy

The Deployment and Distribution of "Goodness" as Ideological Property in Schools

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We respond here to Annamma, Connor, and Ferri's (2013) invitation to expand interdisciplinary thinking and dialogue around the intersections of race and dis/ability. Building upon our prior work on smartness as property (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011), we argue that like "smartness," "goodness" is so taken for granted as a central facet of the fabric of our cultural values that it is rarely remarked upon, let alone critically examined. Similarly, we argue that our identities as "smart" (or not) and "good" (or not) are actively constituted and contested from birth and that cultural institutions of schooling play central roles in shaping our identities within the boundaries of these ideological systems. The material-ideological system of "goodness" also plays a central role in the "interdependent ways that racism and ableism shape notions of normalcy" (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11). Indeed, one of the foundational tenets of DisCrit "recognizes Whiteness and Ability as 'property,' conferring economic benefits to those who can claim Whiteness and/or normalcy (Harris, 1993) and disadvantages for those who cannot lay claim to these identity statuses" (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 16). Building on our previous theorizing about smartness as property (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011), we posit that "goodness" too operates as a form of property in schools. Moreover, the mechanisms of dis/ablement are crucial operatives in the constitution of student identities in relation to the construct of "goodness," which operate in schools wherein deeply inequitable relations of race, class, and gender take an institutional form. Further, we concur with Annamma et al. (2013) that "racism and ableism are normalizing processes that are interconnected and collusive. In other words, racism and ableism often work in ways that are unspoken, yet racism validates

and reinforces ableism, and ableism validates and reinforces racism" (p. 6). Using DisCrit as a theoretical framework, we systematically explore these ideological systems that collectively work to constitute the normative center of schooling.

In the United States, education is racialized to reinforce the goodness of Whiteness. Thus, as Leonardo and Grubb (2014) contend, "from choosing school class presidents (therefore who is smart or popular), to homecoming queens (therefore who is beautiful), to targets of disciplinary policies (therefore who is the troublemaker), race is part of how schools perceive students" (p. 149). Gender, social class, and other domains of identity function in similar (albeit distinct) ways. Race, gender, and social class are part of not only how schools *perceive* students, but how they actively *construct* students' identities, self-perceptions, and subjectivities. In short, goodness is a central mechanism for creating normed subjects in schools. Through the powerful constitution of students' identities vis-à-vis "goodness" (as with "smartness"), material disparities manifest in students' experiences of schooling. Goodness is a central valuation of who deserves or does not deserve certain social and material goods that contribute to differential access to life chances. In other words, goodness is a mode through which dis/abling occurs, including the overvaluation of Whiteness and undervaluation of Blackness within educational practices.

THE DISCURSIVE WORK OF "GOODNESS": WHAT DOES IT ACCOMPLISH/DO?

As an ideological system, goodness is not expressed merely in a static set of beliefs. Rather, "goodness" (and smartness) are actively constituted through cultural discourse, or as Hatt (2011) says, "not just as an ideology or belief but as actual practice: more verb than noun . . . something *done* to others as social positioning" (p. 2, emphasis in original). In this sense, goodness is a set of material practices. It is recognized through gestures (raising your hand before you speak) and embodied performances (sitting quietly until told otherwise).

We want to distinguish what we are *not* talking about when we talk of "goodness." As with our analysis of smartness, we admit that some aspects of character and moral behavior are more culturally valued than others (for example, kindness, generosity, nonviolence, reciprocal assistance, and so forth). That is, share, take turns, don't hit, help one another, and so on are communitarian values that may be necessary in order to peacefully coexist in shared spaces like schools and homes. However, when we refer to the deployment of "goodness" as ideological property in schools, its referents are neither particular moral values nor specific behaviors (despite the fact that these dimensions may be recruited to do its ideological work). Indeed,

goodness as ideological property is often differentially distributed quite irrespective of the actions or behaviors associated with it. Thus, "goodness" in schools does not refer to an inherent feature of individuals' character or actions. It is neither the "stuff" nor the qualities that some people inherently possess, no more so than Whiteness is an inherent physical feature of White bodies (Leonardo, 2013).

The ideology of goodness is inextricably intertwined in the creation of good (and not-so-good) people, just as the ideology of Whiteness is inextricably intertwined in the creation of White people. Like Whiteness, the ideology of goodness recruits all students to abide by its regulations as a justification of its very functioning. We understand goodness, therefore, to be a performative, cultural, and ideological system that operates in the service of constructing the normative center of schools. It is an ideological system that is materialist as Althusser (1971b) might suggest, as an outcome of social differentiation. Our contention is that students' identity as constructed as either "good" or "bad" produces material consequences vis-à-vis their access and sense of entitlement (or not) to opportunities, privileges, and myriad forms of cultural capital. In short, goodness is a form of property.

We base our thinking not only on our previous work on smartness as property, but also on the work of other educational theorists and ethnographers who have documented the ways that being both "smart" and "good" in schools is discursively constituted by students and teachers alike as deeply intertwined forms of cultural practice (Annamma, 2014; Collins, 2013, 2013; Ferguson, 2001; Hatt, 2011; McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 2006). For example, Hatt (2011) found that "students were taught to understand [that] smartness resulted from listening to authority" and that "listening to authority connected appropriate behavior and one's ability to become and maintain a docile body" (p. 15). Thus, Hatt's research illustrated the complex ways that being "smart" was conflated with being "good" in kindergarten, and the ways that both were cast as being *compliant* with rules set forth by adults. To push this further, we suggest that goodness is a prerequisite of smartness such that a "smart" kid conceived as bad does not benefit maximally from this construction, whereas a "good" kid who does not perform smartly on assessments may be perceived as "smarter" than his or her academic performance warrants. The former's smartness is subject to scarcity whereas the second experiences a surplus, both instances irrespective of accepted standards of evaluation. In other words, the label of smartness is not a taken for granted good-in-itself, but is judged by the contextual regulation of student subjects, such as "too smart for their own good" (that is, precocious) or girls who are too smart (emasculating of boys). We do not suggest that teachers are able to change a student's actual performance on tests and the like, but that the perception of goodness affects whether a particular student is judged to be smart or not, which has material consequences, not the least of which include teachers' recommendations for tracking

purposes, academic awards, and leadership positions. Taking cues from their educational environment, these formal recognitions (or their absence) also affect students' self-concept. Our point is not that goodness trumps smartness, but that it validates and legitimizes it. Without the qualification of goodness (for example, willingness to listen, to demonstrate docility, compliance), smartness becomes something uncontrollable and potentially dangerous. In this instance, smartness is something external to the student, which is certainly manageable in one case (that is, to be regulated) or purged in another (too smart for one's good). By contrast, goodness is internal to the student, an intrinsic part of his or her makeup that is not teachable although certainly enforceable. It is in a student's assumed nature to be good or bad, which is something a trained educator knows when he or she sees it.

The belief that some students inherently *are* either "good" or "bad" by nature is problematic enough, but in the U.S. context such associations are also racialized. In Ferguson's (2001) appropriation of Foucault, she finds that Black boys are disciplined more harshly and assumed to be "bad boys" even when White boys participate in very similar behaviors. Thus, goodness is less about a set of behaviors and more a regulating system that justifies the differential treatment of students. It is a theoretical construct called upon to explain the intersection of social relations, such as race, class, and gender that are articulated into a formidable architecture of power. Even when "good" students benefit from this system, their horizon is also lowered because goodness requires their loyalty as docile bodies. They learn very early the rules of the game, and more important, the rewards that accrue once students are labeled as "good," and the punishments that ensue once students are labeled as "problems." Students understand what is at stake, but they may not know its logics, as it goes without explaining that goodness is the right path to choose; its criteria are observable but more often are simply assimilated. Yet, complications arise because social identities intersect, such as when middle-class boys' transgressions are forgiven and dismissed with a "boys will be boys" rationale (Sadker & Sadker, 1995). Goodness is then an assemblage of social forces that cohere under concrete and specific conditions, rather than an abstract system as such.

For the targets of goodness—those unruly bodies—the predicament is admittedly more difficult. They navigate a regulatory system that, once they have been labeled "bad" for reasons that are usually mysterious to them (because *they* are precisely the problem), is nearly impossible to undo. It follows them, like an albatross around their necks, throughout their educational careers because goodness comes with a bureaucracy that tracks students as they progress through the ideological state apparatus of education.

We explore briefly here two central facets of the discursive work of goodness. They are (1) the construction of student identities and subjectivities as "good" (or "bad"), and (2) the ways in which those identities are used and materially manifest as tools of both stratification and exclusion within

schools. This work is accomplished in deeply raced, classed, and gendered ways; all of it strategically deploys the "mechanisms of dis/ablement" (Davis, 2003, p. 29; slash inserted) as both a means of accomplishment as well as a source of legitimation. Our usage of the term *dis/ablement* is meant to draw explicit attention to the fact that students are not only actively *dis*abled through these mechanisms, but others are actively and simultaneously *en*abled, or granted cultural privilege. Students who are discursively constituted as "good" are provided greater freedoms, more latitude, and more "free passes" when it comes to enforcement of behavioral rules and consequences in schools, whereas students who are discursively constituted as "bad" have their freedoms restricted, are heavily surveilled, are more harshly punished for infractions of behavioral rules in schools, and are particularly blameworthy when they infringe on the entitlements of good children.

Collins (2013) uses the term *ability profiling* to refer to "the process of responding to a student as though he is 'disabled,' that is, regarding all of his actions and interactions through the lens of deficiency" (p. xiii). Though we find the notion of ability profiling a useful construct, we believe that only half of its utility has yet been fully explored. Thus, while racial profiling may have been central in subjecting Trayvon Martin to increased surveillance, ultimately and tragically leading to his death at the hands of George Zimmerman, racial profiling is *also* what *en*ables young White men every day to walk through gated housing communities *without* being subject to high levels of surveillance. We therefore want to emphasize the *relationality* of dis/enablement (DisCrit's Tenet One). Just as the process of interpreting a student's interactions through the lens of deficiency is indeed a form of ability profiling, or *dis*ablement, regarding and interpreting another student's actions and interactions through the lens of capacity, privilege, pardon, and entitlement is also part and parcel of *ability profiling*, or ablement.

The events unfolding in Ferguson, Missouri, offer a cogent illustration of the symbiotic nature of this racialized profiling vis-à-vis "goodness" and its materialist practices. On August 15, 2014, the chief of police of Ferguson released the name of the White police officer who shot and killed unarmed Black teenager Mike Brown on August 9, 2014. The officer, Darren Wilson, was described by the White police chief as "a gentle, quiet man" (Vega, Williams, & Eckholm, 2014, para. 22), who had no formal disciplinary actions on his permanent record. Simultaneous with the release of this (White, and ostensibly "good") officer's name, the chief released convenience store surveillance footage that allegedly showed Mike Brown stealing a box of cigars, thus positioning Brown (a Black teenager) as a robbery suspect and therefore a "bad" kid. According to *The New York Times*, "The videotapes seemed to contradict the image portrayed by Mr. Brown's family of a gentle teenager opposed to violence [good] and on his way to college [smart]" (para. 8, bracketed text inserted).

Mere hours after the simultaneous release of this information by the Ferguson police department, a White resident interviewed by a reporter in an adjacent suburb asserted, "The kid wasn't really innocent. . . . He was struggling with the cop, and he's got a rap sheet already, so he's not that innocent" (Ioffe, 2014, para. 10). The reporter clarified that "While the first point is in dispute, the second isn't: The police have said that Michael Brown had no criminal record," and she reported further, "If anything, the people here were disdainful and, mostly, scared—of the protesters, and, implicitly, of Black people" (para. 11). Annamma (2014) reminds us that "Du Bois (1897) recognized that innocence was an intangible benefit of Whiteness" as property (p. 6). And if "good" kids are commonly afforded greater disciplinary latitude in schools, and "bad" kids disciplined more harshly for more minor infractions, how does this dynamic continue to play out, in amplified ways, in the criminal justice system?

Goodness and Identity: On Becoming a "Good" (or "Bad") Subject

Hatt (2011) documented the ways that being both "smart" and "good" in the kindergarten classroom were intimately connected to exhibiting prior knowledge of the curriculum and to anticipating or fulfilling teacher behavioral expectations. Hatt reported that she initially "interpreted being 'good' and therefore 'smart' simply as obeying classroom rules" (p. 12), until she discovered that "White males from middle-class families repeatedly avoided [the teacher's] surveillance," while "African American students, especially Black males, were repeatedly the first to get in trouble and received the harshest reprimands" (p. 12). As can be seen in the following vignette, being positioned as "good" or as "bad" has less to do with one's actual actions than with one's relationships to authority, power, and cultural capital in the classroom:

> When my (Broderick) son Nicky was in 2nd grade, a close friend, Jamal, kept getting "lunch detention." Nicky wanted to sit with Jamal at lunchtime, so every time he got a detention, Nicky would try to get one by doing exactly what Jamal had done, but he would only get a reprimand. At first he was mystified by this phenomenon, so for 2 weeks he kept data on a scrap of paper in his desk: *Jamal throws a paper airplane, he gets a detention; I throw a paper airplane, I am told to pick it up and put it in the trash and go back to my seat. Jamal doesn't turn in his homework, he gets a detention; I don't turn in my homework, I am reminded to do it tonight and bring it in tomorrow.* After 2 weeks of this, Nicky told me he had finally figured out how you get a detention in school. Apparently, he said, "You have to do one of the things on this list, and have brown skin. Mama, my skin's the wrong color," he cried. "I'll never get a detention!"

Nicky was the only White child in the class, with a White teacher. And unfortunately, he was correct. Having been constituted as a "good boy," Nicky reaped the material advantages of race, class, and ableist privilege, manifest in "goodness" as ideological property, even if he did not understand them as advantages at the time. Through the asymmetric and inequitable distribution of rewards and punishments for behaviors in the classroom, both Nicky and Jamal were actively interpolated into racialized identities as "good" and "bad" boys. Nicky was actively groomed to accept his expected role of White complicity with the racist practices of schooling, just as Jamal was materially constituted, over and over, to accept his designated and denigrated subjectivity as a "bad boy" (Ferguson, 2001).

As an ideological system, goodness, like smartness, is deployed via a meritocratic rationale that locates within individual children an explanatory narrative for the differential distribution of social and cultural capital that always is mediated by deeply unequal relations of race, class, and gender. Hayman (1998) argues "we make some people smarter than others, by rewarding the smartness of some people and ignoring the smartness of others" (p. 26). Likewise, we *make* some people "good" and other people "bad" by positioning them that way. We are not arguing that educators make children "good" and "bad" merely by labeling them as such, but more profoundly through the myriad discursive practices that circulate in the routines and practices of schooling: the public displays and artifacts of behavior management systems (star charts, stoplights, names written on the board to mark either "good" or "bad" behavior, and so on), the selection of children at teachers' discretion for privileges both large and small (line leader, messenger, "star" student of the week, and so forth), and daily decisions about what is rewarded, and as important, what is ignored. The sheer repetition of these rituals ossifies what is otherwise a social process into a naturalized one.

In the vignette above, *both* Nicky and Jamal were subjected to racialized ability profiling, not just Jamal. By avoiding publicly reprimanding or issuing detention to Nicky, the classroom teacher publicly constructed for him (and for all his peers to see) an identity as a "good" boy. This identity provided a protective buffer, just as the teacher's public reprimands and repeated punishments of Jamal (for the exact same infractions) placed him at constant risk of exclusionary measures. Positioning theory, thus, requires us to examine not only how some students come to be identified as disabled, but also how others come to be identified as normative: We must simultaneously examine *both* why and how Jamal is positioned as a "bad boy" *and* why and how Nicky is positioned as a "good boy."

There are myriad practices that take place in schools through which students' identities become "thickened" over time into particular "types" of students through raced, gendered, and classed mechanisms of dis/ablement. Most teachers daily employ these kinds of practices, and most parents

actively encourage their children's participation in them without substantial critique: "Be a good boy today;" "Try to get a gold star":

> When Nicky was very young, he came home from school with a "star chart" at the end of the month with every single date on the calendar having a gold star affixed in its space (including a couple of dates I knew he had been absent from school).
>
> "What are these for?" I asked.
>
> "Those are because I'm a good listener," he said. "If you are a good listener, you get a star at goodbye circle."
>
> "Hmmmm . . ." I said. "You have a gold star every single day—does that mean that you listened really well, all day, every single day? Because I know that sometimes it's hard to listen well, especially all the time. Probably nobody can do that."
>
> "No, Mama," he replied, "you don't have to listen well; you have to be a good listener."

As an example, I reminded him of a minor altercation he'd had earlier in the week in which he'd refused to comply with a teacher's directive that he had judged to be unreasonable. "And look, you have a star on that day," I pointed out. "Do all the kids get a star, even if they might have had some trouble listening that day?"

> "If you're a good listener, you get a star, even if you had trouble, as long as you're trying to listen better," he said. "If you're a bad listener, I think you have to listen really well all day to get a star on your chart. Bad listeners don't get as many stars as good listeners. But that's because they're bad listeners."

Thus, we see that repeated instances of positioning result in a "thickening" process wherein students become recognized by peers and teachers as particular "types" of student: in this case, "good" and "bad" listeners. It is interesting to note that Nicky explicitly rejected the syntactic construction of the gold stars having anything to do with *listening well* (an actual, recognizable activity [verb] modified by an adverb denoting the quality of that activity), and reasserted that the stars had more to do with *being* (transitive verb) a *good listener* (a recognizable identity [noun—*listener*], modified by an adjective denoting the quality of that identity, and syntactically constructed through the verb "*to be*" as equivalent to the subject position). Thus, the whole point of the chart, from Nicky's perspective, had less to do with *what you did* than it had to do with *who you are*.

As a White parent, it was horrifying for me (Broderick) to hear my son offer up a learned rationalization for inequities that located both his own privilege (getting a gold star on a day he admittedly had not listened

well, and therefore had not "earned" it) and other students' marginalization within individual student subjectivities, and not within inequitable mechanisms of distribution. Thus, he had internalized the meritocratic rationale that simultaneously reified his privilege and other students' marginalization. If children on both sides of the aisle can accept that it is *because of who they are*—because I am a good listener or because I am a bad listener—it is easier for them to later accept why one of them is granted a scholarship over the other. Likewise, imagine how much more easily both students might accept the reason why one of them is expelled from school for similar behavioral infractions. Every child in that classroom was harmed by the deployment of this ostensibly meritocratic rationale, even as my son was among those positioned to be materially advantaged by it. However, that material advantage comes at a cost, which is complicity with the deeply inequitable structures that reify one's privilege, and one's very identity.

For Foucault (1972), subjectivation is the process whereby people are filled with meaning through social, specifically discursive, processes. It is in this moment that discourse, or language in practice, defines, limits, and regulates how students become known by making them intelligible as specific human beings (see Youdell, 2010). Through subjectivation, students are recruited into particular self-understandings that structure (without determining) their educational experience. It is not the same as labeling; it goes further than that. As subjects of regimes of knowledge, students enter a world of statements wherein they find their identity and place of "belonging" (a contradictory desire, as it is also a site of exclusion), other subjects who occupy their same predicament, and the meanings that govern their possibilities for moving among social spaces.

Critical scholarship on subjectivity represents a general reaction to the humanist or liberal notion of a stable, knowing subject. Insofar as students and educators are interpolated by discourses that hail and compete for their subjectivity, they are not passive receptacles of discourses (Weedon, 1997). People do not assimilate concepts and notions of the self without making active decisions in the matter. However, this choice is made possible by virtue of discourses to which they have access. Material institutions, like schools, gain their power through discursive authority. Likewise, discourse lacks power without the institutional backing that makes the exercise of power more efficient and potent. In other words, the subject is created out of the dialectical tension between institutions and the discourses that regulate them.

With respect to goodness, Ferguson (2001) documents the racialized subject positions that are available for students. For Black boys, in particular, badness is the dominant expectation that awaits them and the discourse through which their subjecthood is understood. Ferguson's study shows how the regulatory functions of discipline are not completed when Black boys break classroom rules, but rather in the racialized anticipation that

interprets their very being in the learning space. They are adultified with intentions beyond their level of sophistication as boys and surveilled more closely than their White counterparts, contributing to their criminalization and higher rates of incarceration. They are not afforded the mythical innocence of childhood and are forced to mature at a faster rate in order to navigate the social world's racial cues. Ferguson's data confirms the assumed guilt of the Black body, a subject created out of the depths of Whiteness and responsible for its existence. Many Black students succumb to its expectations; others perform acts of educational disobedience, pointing out the cruelties of such arrangements while finding ways to survive them.

For other minority children considered "good," there are ironies involved in accommodating White discipline. For "model minorities," such as Asian American students, goodness is not an unconditional valuation. A stereotype of another kind, this apparent compliment is also a disciplining mechanism that promotes docility even as it rewards Asian Americans for the very construction that is withheld from Black and Latino children. As a form of discipline in the Foucauldian (1977) sense, model minoritization exacts its price from Asian Americans through its expectations of normative obedience. It graduates from an externally imposed surveillance to an internally assimilated auto-surveillance. This norm is not without harms, not the least of which is its ability to recruit Asian American students to do the work of Whiteness as they accept their tenuous place in the racial hierarchy. Of course, the "goodness" of Asian American students is a rather recent phenomenon, owing itself to a specious timing when Black and Brown power movements proliferated during the civil rights era. The model minority myth also efficiently hides the real struggles that recent or poor Asian immigrants face. Previously considered heathens because they were not Christian, and unassimilable because of their culture and language, Asians in the United States experienced racial promotion during the height of racial unrest to exemplify the American opportunity structure that allows for a modicum of success even as it upholds the perpetual foreign status. Transgressing their assigned goodness brands them as ungrateful or, worse, un-American. Goodness, then, is not a sign of inclusion into Whiteness but an implicit agreement that those who are not White disappear into its expectations.

As arbiters of goodness in schools, White women comprise the vast majority of U.S. teachers, especially in the early grades. They enjoy a privileged subject position within the circuits of Whiteness (but not patriarchy), while simultaneously doing the "caring" work of racism (Coloma, 2011; Leonardo & Boas, 2013). In loco parentis, White women's "care" for students of color represents the mothering practices to which patriarchy has reduced them, thus bringing practices from the private sphere of the family into the public sphere of education. Within the limited sphere of the classroom, however, White women exercise considerable power to

define goodness as well as the right to discipline and punish children who do not meet the expectations of goodness. White women's presumed racial innocence as targets of patriarchy makes their role in propagating goodness contradictory because they harbor racial interests even if they do not benefit maximally from them.

Goodness and Power: The Discursive Work of Stratification and Exclusion

Although the import of individual children's identity development cannot be overstated, we must also interrogate other kinds of discursive work that the ideological system of "goodness" accomplishes in schools. Perhaps most obviously, there are related tools of social stratification and in/exclusion as mechanisms of asymmetric access to material advantages. The discursive institution of special education is a key mechanism for constituting the normative center—and conversely, its margins (Baglieri et al., 2011) by, for instance, the persistent and pernicious overrepresentation of Black boys in the "soft" disability categories, such as intellectual disability and emotional disturbance (Harry & Klingner, 2014; Losen & Orfield, 2002). When we look specifically at the category of "emotional disturbance," we can see how the notion of "goodness" operates as an ideological system that asymmetrically distributes ideological and material property in schools. In addition to being overrepresented, in every state in the United States, "students from minority racial groups are [also] more likely than whites to be placed in restrictive educational settings" (Fierros & Conroy, 2002, p. 40).

Ferguson (2001) details the insidious impact that "disability" labels such as "oppositional defiant disorder" have had upon the schooling experiences of Black youth. She writes, "My conviction that children's school behavior was becoming widely explained and understood as a matter of *individual* children's pathology extracted from any social context deepened when, in 1994, children's disobedience was officially classified as a mental illness by the American Psychiatric Association (APA)" (p. 195). Since then, individual children's behavior has not only been pathologized as mental illness but also increasingly criminalized through the presence of metal detectors, surveillance cameras, zero-tolerance policies, and armed police and security officers in schools. Ferguson argues that this individualized perspective on student behavior necessarily "involves the diagnosis and treatment of an individual and his problem," such that the student is "characterized as emotionally disturbed" (p. 199)—a mechanism of dis/ablement. Seen through the lens of individual pathology rather than a racialized lens wherein racism is normative in schools and society, students' behavior is judged as deviant and students are deemed "unsalvageable" (p. 96), or described by teachers as "that kid [who] has a jail cell with his name on it" (p. 221).

Reporting on the first-ever federal level accounting of preschool suspension rates, Samuels (2014) documents that more than 8,000 children,

"including a disproportionate number of boys and Black children—are suspended from school before reaching kindergarten." Additionally, "Black youngsters make up about a fifth of all preschool pupils but close to half the children suspended more than once. Boys of all races represent 54 percent of the preschoolers included in the report but more than 80 percent of those suspended more than once" (Samuels, para. 3). Tellingly, a state-level official quoted in the article stated, "I cannot think of any case—and I've seen some really extreme cases—where I thought [permanent removal] was warranted. In my mind, we might as well send them on over to the prison" (para. 11). Regardless of the precise mechanism for exclusion—be it formal disability identification and placement in a restrictive setting, or less formalized disciplinary suspension or expulsion (often an early stop on the school-to-prison pipeline)—it is clear that "disability has a distinct role in the pipeline" (Annamma, 2014, p. 2).

CONCLUSION: THE ABILITY LINE

During the early 1900s, Du Bois (1904/1989) ominously pronounced that the problem of the 20th century was the "color line." By this, he meant that the historical invention of race would not only become the structuring principle driving laws and policies, but for the social relations that guide everyday life. Du Bois was prophetic: Race has become the nation's common sense. To conclude, we appropriate Du Bois's insight by arguing that the problem of the 21st century is the *ability line*. By saying this, we do not argue for the displacement of race as a focus of social analysis but we highlight its articulation with the theoretical concept of ability. Rather, the ability line is a larger slice at the cross-cutting processes that always already include race, class, and gender. It represents the attempt to consolidate an analytics of power in education in order to illuminate the way schools segregate the "smart" and "good" from those cast as intellectually deficient and morally suspect in myriad ways that pass as common sense. The ability line connects with a DisCrit (Annamma et al., 2013) framework, as the ability line is a dehumanizing process. We extend this intervention to interrogate whether or not the educational goal is to advocate for the right to be on the privileged side of the relation.

We take our theoretical cue from Campbell (2009), whose articulated agenda is to "not only problematize but refuse the notion of able(ness)" (p. 3). We focus on what Campbell describes as "ableism's function in inaugurating the norm" (p. 5). Indeed, it is precisely "the notion of the normative (and normate individual) and the enforcement of a constitutional divide" (p. 6) between normative and nonnormative that may be regarded as the central problem of the 21st century. The "problem" is not the line itself, such as who is on which side of it, or what it "really" means to be on this

or that side. Rather, it is through common sense ideological systems such as smartness and goodness that ideas about what is or is not normative are deployed; race, class, and gender are always central to these cultural processes and mechanisms of dis/ablement. According to Campbell (2009):

> The reality is that studies in ableism offer more than a contribution to rethinking disability. These studies provide a platform for reconsidering the way we think about *all* bodies and mentalities within the parameters of nature/culture. In that sense, studies in ableism have the capacity to reconfigure both race and gender studies. (p. 198)

Using the concept of the ability line allows educators and educational scholars to recognize the multiple, intersecting systems of power as they are articulated within a specific moment of time and space. This approach is sensitive to the differing configurations that power recruits to do its ideological work as well as the counterhegemonic attempts to disrupt it. The common sense constructs of goodness and smartness are routinely deployed in the creation and enforcement of this "constitutional divide"—the *ability line*. Raced, classed, gendered mechanisms of dis/ablement are central to the constitution of the normative center of schooling and society.

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