

Missing the target



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This article is written to the general public. It is begging the question, how do we close the gap? The school district or town of Ossining is struggling to get to the root of the great racial divide. However, the bigger question, is it race, is the real issue. Is it socioeconomic or an even greater issue at hand? The values stressed in this article are of education, equality and integration.

The author whole-heartedly believes that the great racial divide is what hinders many African-American and Latino students. The author also points out that the students have benefited from the integration and provides examples in the article of said benefits. Let us examine the points a little further.

The article asks the question, 'can the town continue to use racial targeting to close the achievement gap?' Is that what is going on? According to the article, "'they're doing a lot of things, but it's not clear that they're working.'" He (Noguera) says the results of his research are forthcoming. Pedro Noguera is a New York University sociologist and nationally known expert in the achievement gap (Goldstein). He does not see how this is helping but gives the school an A for effort. However, effort alone does not achieve results, especially in this instance. I do not see the efforts of Ossining as an academic achievement, but as a social one.

It is irrelevant as to whether I agree with the values of the article, although I do. However, the values of integration do not solve the problems of the educational divide, which is the point or thesis of the article. What is stressed here is how African-Americans do better in the workforce when they are put in integrated environments and pregnancy rates are lowered for

Latina and African-American teenagers, but what does that have to do with education?

The sociological gap presented here is really what is being questioned. However, that is not achieving equality in higher education. Programs such as the Boy Scouts of America or summer enrichment programs can achieve integration or exposure to a less segregated social experience. The question in the article is about closing the achievement gap and that is not being addressed or answered in this article.

The author values integration, equal opportunity, enrichment exposure and self-esteem. However, if the parents of the affluent are the only ones involved, then there will only be a social integration. Achievement comes from involvement and reinforcement at home. There are few children that can achieve anything with parents who cannot understand and assist in homework or academic endeavors. That is discouraging. My take on it is to target parents and to teach them about what good study habits are. It does not matter if the children are being targeted if it is not reinforced at home.

There are only a minute amount of children that can make achievements in dire circumstances. If the parents are telling the children to work hard or that they need them to get a job to help out with bills and other extenuating circumstances, such things can and will deter academic achievement. There are statistics that show parents that read have children that read. The emphasis on education starts at home and if there is a sociological disadvantage, then that is what needs to be addressed and resolved since,

obviously, such efforts as in the Ossining school are missing the target; educational equality.