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dation for how lessons from neuroscience and psychology can be harnessed to improve education.

This book is applicable to *all* types of learners, irrespective of age, race, socioeconomic status, gender, or life history. Moreover, because *The Social Neuroscience of Education* is designed to be digestible for a range of readers, scientists who want to connect theories of the mind to education efforts will find the content just as meaningful as classroom teachers who want to better understand how the learning brain acquires new information.

T. E.

MARKETING SCHOOLS, MARKETING CITIES: WHO WINS AND WHO LOSES
WHEN SCHOOLS BECOME URBAN AMENITIES

by Maia Bloomfield Cucchiara

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Ever since the landmark 1966 Coleman Report, educational researchers have queried the impact of school and classroom composition on student achievement. The results, in general, have been consistent: students from low-income families demonstrate greater academic success, on average, in low-poverty schools. For policy makers, the logic of this repeatedly reported correlation is seductive. If they can create schools that are economically integrated, then academic outcomes should improve. This logic dovetails with other priorities facing many urban areas across the United States; economic integration—through the preservation and recruitment of middle-class families—is vital to reversing the decline in population, property values, and prosperity that has challenged cities for well over fifty years. As Maia Bloomfield Cucchiara notes in her fascinating and important ethnography, *Marketing Schools, Marketing Cities*, the emphasis on economic integration positions the middle class as the silver bullet for which urban educational reform—and, for that matter, urban reform more broadly—has been looking. The trick is to attract and keep middle-class families in public schools in cities. If only it were that simple.

Cucchiara explores how one section of Philadelphia, Center City, deployed this logic to advance and finance a policy designed to woo middle- and upper-middle-class families into its public schools. Through the story of the Center City Schools Initiative (CCSI), a public-private partnership between the local business-improvement organization and the public schools, she demonstrates how complex, challenging, and fraught this effort can be. She traces the life of the CCSI—from the capital needed to begin the initiative, to the way it functions in a hybrid public-private space, to the implications its focus on middle-class families had on, for example, race and class relations in the city. Drawing on data from interviews with parents and public officials, as well as observations of parent meetings at Grant Elementary in the Cobble Hill neighborhood of Center City, she argues that the underlying logic of the CCSI's tactics—such as encouraging school administrators to treat parents as customers

purchasing a particular product—epitomized market-based reform. She also demonstrates that these reforms successfully encouraged economic integration and led to improvements in schools' grounds and facilities, as well as to the quality of faculty and administration. But, she explains, these policies ultimately challenged "the core democratic ideals of seeing each citizen as equally valuable and worthy of full participation in public institutions" (p. 20).

In examining the ways in which the CCSI played out at Grant Elementary, Cucchiara tells a necessarily complex story. Yet the structure of the book and each chapter make the many aspects of this narrative accessible. Conceptually, the story moves from a broad history of "white flight" in Philadelphia, to the origins of the CCSI, to an account of the initiative in practice, and, finally, to its aftermath.

The first three chapters following the introduction are largely historical narrative that moves from the general to the specific. Cucchiara situates the narrative in a national context of urban decline and revitalization, looks closely at the role schools in Philadelphia have played in this process, and then narrows in on the CCSI, an initiative geared toward only a portion of the city. Within that broad story, she devotes one chapter to highlighting the national emergence of market-driven reform in urban revitalization and education and how it has played out specifically in Philadelphia—particularly through the story of the development and role of business-improvement districts like the one established in Center City.

While the historical narrative describes the outmigration from cities, it is much less attuned to historical work about the subsequent financial and social divisions erected between suburbs and urban centers. This aspect of the story may have benefited the overall argument. Center City seemed to separate itself from the rest of Philadelphia—which Cucchiara calls a "divided city"—through the creation of a business-improvement district and a new "region" within the Philadelphia school district, which drew boundaries between Center City and Philadelphia as a whole. She touches on these divisions toward the end of the book, but it feels almost like an afterthought rather than solidly positioned in the foundational context of the first chapters.

The next two chapters are the heart of the book and are by far the most powerful. Narrowing from the general to the specific again, Cucchiara focuses on the CCSI reforms at one school within the Center City District: Grant Elementary. Even as the story begins, Grant is one of the strongest schools in the Philadelphia school district. It attracted large numbers of transfer applicants from across the city. The goal of the CCSI, however, was to woo "neighborhood" parents—overwhelmingly white upper-middle-class parents—to attend the school, under the theory that these families would then stay in the city and continue to contribute to the Philadelphia's tax base rather than leave for the suburbs.

As neighborhood parents began to make inroads at Grant, Cucchiara describes the implications of their participation. While neighborhood parents

brought significant social and human capital to bear on improving Grant—evidenced through the development of a new “cybrary” and playground and an active parent-teacher organization—they also changed the dynamics of the school and its relation to the rest of Philadelphia. Cucchiara explains how they advanced agendas best suited to their own children through Grant’s parent-teacher organization, cast their work in racially and socioeconomically obscured language, and excluded or, worse, devalued the interests and contributions of “transfer” parents, largely families of color who applied to Grant to escape the struggling schools in their own neighborhoods.

The connection between the actions of middle- and upper-middle-class parents at Grant and those of market-driven CCSI are not, however, as clear as the author portrays them to be. For Cucchiara, the CCSI legitimized a discourse in which public schools were understood to be urban amenities. This sanctioned—indeed, even enhanced—middle-class families’ threat of exit whenever they dealt with school authorities over a contentious issue. However, Cucchiara cannot clearly disentangle the chicken-and-egg question: would the neighborhood parents at Grant have utilized the threat of exit regardless of how authorities framed their involvement? This is quite possible. As such, the mechanisms by which the policies instituted by local authorities—educational and otherwise—and middle-class values create and reinforce each other are not entirely clear. That said, they do not have to be for this narrative to have relevance; simply describing these concomitant processes highlights important considerations for policy makers and researchers, as Cucchiara makes clear in the final section of the book.

In the last two chapters detailing the end of the CCSI and the continued use of Grant by neighborhood parents, Cucchiara addresses the impact of the reforms on Center City and Philadelphia. As Grant became more and more a school for neighborhood parents, she concludes, it became less and less a school for Philadelphians in general. She finds herself unable to deny physical improvements to Grant, like the cybrary and new playground, or the activism of the parent-teacher organization that followed the inclusion of more middle- and upper-middle-class families in the school community. However, she also acknowledges that these improvements came at a great cost. Families that stood to benefit greatly from attending Grant found it harder to make it through the door; and when they did, they found themselves treated more as unwanted guests than as full and equal participants in a school community.

Cucchiara acknowledges that balancing these costs and benefits is tricky, but it is not a reason to throw out market-based reforms outright. Her message is, however, a necessary one: these reforms do come with costs, many of which are often lost in the excitement of their more immediate, tangible gains. To treat schools as “urban amenities” to win back middle-class families ignores the fact that schools are public institutions “equally responsible” to all citizens (p. 212). This is an important, provocative dilemma to consider and explore further.

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