No Alternative?

THE SEOUL-CALIFORNIA SERIES IN KOREAN STUDIES

EDITORS: *Noh Tae-Don, Seoul National University; John Lie, University of California, Berkeley*

ADVISORY BOARD: *John Duncan, UCLA; Henry Em, New York University; Roger Janelli, Indiana University; Michael Shin, University of Cambridge; Sem Vermeersch, Seoul National University; Chang Dukjin, Seoul National University*

The Seoul-California Series in Korean Studies is a collaboration between the University of California, Berkeley, and the Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies, Seoul National University. The series promotes the global dissemination of scholarship on Korea by publishing distinguished research on Korean history, society, art, and culture by scholars from across the world.

No Alternative?

Experiments in South Korean Education

Edited by

NANCY ABELMANN
JUNG-AH CHOI
SO JIN PARK

Global, Area, and International Archive
University of California Press
BERKELEY LOS ANGELES LONDON

The Global, Area, and International Archive (GAIA) is an initiative ofthe Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, in partnership with the University of California Press, the California Digital Library, and international research programs across the University of California system.

University of California Press, one of the most distinguished university presses in the United States, enriches lives around the world by advancing scholarship in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Its activities are supported by the UC Press Foundation and by philanthropic contributions from individuals and institutions. For more information, visit www.ucpress.edu.

University of California Press
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California

University of California Press, Ltd.
London, England

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Manufactured in the United States of America

21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of ANSI/NISO Z39.48–1992 (R 1997) (*Permanence of Paper*).

Contents

Acknowledgments

This book emerged from a workshop held at the University of Illinois in 2003 entitled "South Korea's Neoliberal Educational Transformation: The Ethnography of Classed Experience." It was generously supported by many campus units, including the College of Education and the Departments of Anthropology and East Asian Languages and Cultures. We are grateful to those presenters whose insights informed this volume but whose work is not featured here: Michael Hurt, Jin-heon Jung, and Jesook Song. It is thanks to the excellent research assistance of Yoonjung Kang that the manuscript was able to take final shape. We are also indebted to John Cho for his editorial assistance in the final phase of the manuscript preparation; and to Dohye Kim for her tireless and nearly endless help with the copy-edited manuscript. And we extend our sincere thanks to Nathan MacBrien, the publication director at UC Berkeley's Institute of International Studies, for shepherding this manuscript throughout and for his editorial hand. The book also has been greatly strengthened thanks to the careful reading of two anonymous reviewers. Finally, we are grateful for the patience and goodwill of all of the contributors, who have had to wait some years for this book to appear. Nancy Abelmann is indebted to Jung-ah for her enthusiastic role as co-organizer of the workshop and for her unflagging commitment to seeing this work published. She also thanks So Jin for agreeing to join as a co-editor and lending her expertise and vision. Jung-ah wants to thank Nancy for her initiative, leadership, and friendship. And So Jin extends her gratitude to Nancy and Jung-ah for organizing the original conference and for inviting her to join as a co-editor.

Introduction

Nancy Abelmann, Jung-ah Choi, So Jin Park

This volume takes up burgeoning education venues in South Korea—what we call here "nonmainstream" or "other" education—namely, education beyond daytime K-16 schooling (both public and private, a distinction in South Korea that until recently has not been so significant). These include alternative or second-chance schooling, homeschooling, private afterschooling, and adult distance education. These "other" venues have garnered increasing social significance in large part precisely because mainstream schooling has widely been perceived as a problem. These "other" venues then are championed either as correctives to the problems of mainstream schooling or dismissed as nothing other than functional extensions of mainstream schooling, motivated by the same aims and values. The chapters in this volume engage this debate and demonstrate that in fact individuals often simultaneously reject or exit mainstream schooling *and* embrace or seek to attain the symbolic value of mainstream education.

In long proclaiming a "crisis" in education, South Korea joins many other advanced industrial nations, including the United States, Japan, and Great Britain. Although these education crises echo one another, including, for example, anxiety over the behavior of "youth today," the quality of teachers, and the ability of schools to prepare the next generation for a changing world, not surprisingly their character and idioms are country-specific. As a country that has experienced both rapid democratization and dramatic increases in standards of living in recent decades, South Koreans have felt that mainstream education has not kept pace with the times. For example, while social life is characterized by ever greater freedoms—of mobility, consumption, speech, and so on—schools, much of the citizenry bemoans, have remained conservative bastions of centralization, hierarchy, and control. Or again, while young South Koreans have arguably emerged

as global trend-setters in technology, media, and consumption (from music to fashion to online gaming), mainstream schooling has been burdened by its fixed and homogeneous curriculum, allowing for only limited creative expression. Similarly, while South Korea's economy and rhetoric of globalization demand an ever-more creative elite class, its schooling is decried for producing narrow achievers well suited to older economies based on staid, hierarchical conglomerates rather than creative start-up companies and cutting-edge ventures. The alternative education venues introduced in this volume must all be appreciated in this context. Although not the focus of this volume, we can also point to the large number of K-16 students who exit mainstream schooling for so-called early study abroad (*chogi yuhak*) (i.e., pre-college) as comprising yet another South Korean education experiment.[1] Jiyeon Kang and Nancy Abelmann argue that while in the past *chogi yuhak* was celebrated as a real alternative, over time the discourse on *chogi yuhak* reveals that many South Koreans have come to see the phenomenon as merely an extension of, rather than any real challenge to, the South Korean educational market.[2]

While recognizing the broad-based charge that South Korean mainstream schooling has not changed, we note that in fact all of South Korea's democratic presidencies have instituted considerable education reforms. Indeed, integral to South Korea's burgeoning nonmainstream education sector have been education reforms beginning in the mid-1990s, in accordance with democratization, escalating consumerism, and economic restructuring after the so-called IMF crisis, and globalization. The Kim Young Sam government (1993–97) planned and initiated a series of education reforms to build a new education system, while the Kim Dae Jung government (1998–2003) accelerated these reforms in the aftermath of the IMF crisis. In order to cope with the crisis, education reforms were designed to transform the citizenry to become "creative citizens" who could compete in the twenty-first-century global economy as self-sufficient and independent actors (Mok, Yoon, and Welch 2003; J. Song 2003). These recent neoliberal education reforms are perhaps the most radical and comprehensive in the history of South Korean education (Mok, Yoon, and Welch 2003, 58; Seth 2002, 169). They initiated dramatic changes in education rhetoric from "uniformity and equality" to "creativity, excellence, and diversification." In contrast to the emphasis on "uniformity," "standardization," and "equality" of education during South Korea's successive authoritarian regimes (1961–92), neoliberal educational reforms pursued a "decentralized and diversified" curriculum designed to promote students' "excellence" and "creativity." While applying market principles (e.g., "free

competition" and "deregulation") to education, these reforms emphasized education consumers' rights to education choice (C. Kim 1997; Y. Lee 2001; Ro 1998, 1999).

However, many argue that in fact, schools, teachers, and parents are resistant to real reform. Further, we suggest that both state-promulgated and more informal changes to mainstream education have again and again been dwarfed by the education experiments that we take up in this volume. A recent conversation with one of this volume's contributors, Misook Kim (who has written extensively on South Korean mainstream schooling), sheds light on why mainstream schooling has largely maintained the status quo. Among others, Kim offered the following examples, a number of them ironic. To take one, answering to public demand for diversified criteria for college admission (i.e., criteria beyond the exclusive and long-standardized college entrance examinations), high school grades (among other things) have become more important. While this might seem to offer schools and teachers a greater measure of autonomy (as they are freed from teaching exclusively to the test), grade pressure exerts its own conservative effect. In another example, mainstream schools have been encouraged to institute tracking to remedy what many citizen consumers have perceived as an egalitarian straitjacket, the homogeneous curriculum. Here, too, however, the reform has not produced the desired results: again, the increased value placed on school grades for university entrance has been such that even with tracking, most schools have settled on uniform tests for all children. Thus, teachers and mainstream education consumers alike have become resistant to experimentation because of grade consciousness. Similarly, because entrance exams do remain important, teachers note that parents complain when the curriculum veers too far afield of what is necessary for college entrance exam preparation. This works against the efforts of those schools who are making good on their autonomy, and those teachers who are exercising their freedom to foster student-centered or self-directed learning (*chagijudojŏk haksŭp*).

While static schools are supposedly to blame for South Korea's educational shortcomings, we appreciate with Misook Kim in this volume that real transformation is limited by persistent social structures, such as network-based employment and a class system that precludes real second chances. As mentioned above, these education developments are not unique. However, the East Asian countries, Japan and Taiwan foremost, continue to have highly stratified higher education systems, enormous wage rewards linked to educational achievement, and entrance examination–centered college application systems. And while South Korea's after-school educa-

tion market is an exaggerated form of what can be found in many other countries (demanding relatively greater inputs of family income, child time, and effort than perhaps any country, as Michael Seth discusses in chapter 1 in this volume), throughout the world people are increasingly bearing the financial and emotional burden of their own human capital development.

Despite these considerable education reforms, it is hard to conclude that new market-driven educational values in South Korea have simply superseded old ones. Rather, it is best to think of these divergent values as coexisting while competing and conflicting with one another, as Jae Hoon Lim argues in chapter 2. In order to understand the complex relationship between nonmainstream and mainstream education, we must consider the tensions and conflicts among diverse educational values. Under recent neoliberal transformation, on the one hand mainstream schooling itself is ideologically fraught; on the other, burgeoning nonmainstream education venues are by no means insulated from mainstream schooling. The ethnographic studies in this volume thus ask how these nonmainstream education venues variously challenge, co-opt, or negotiate the discourses and practices of mainstream schooling.

No Alternative? draws on the voices of its ethnographic interlocutors to consider what it is to manage and experience education amid arguably one of the world's most interesting cluster of educational experiments: namely, the extremes of South Korea's private market, education migration abroad, and familial investment in education. We hope, then, that this book offers a national case study of the global educational predicament in which nations inevitably undertake neoliberal reforms while also managing long-standing national education values, such as, in South Korea's case, a persistent commitment to educational egalitarianism, a largely unchanged entrance exam system, and unrelenting credentialism and a network-based mobility system. By investigating South Korea's nonmainstream education venues, we are interested in how families and young people are managing new opportunities alongside long-standing constraints. The people introduced in this volume reveal the on-the-ground reality of a country caught amid proclamations of crisis in mainstream education, valiant efforts at education reform, hope pinned on new education venues, and profound disappointments when the "new" ends up proving not so new after all.

We warn that some of our contributors answer the volume title's question pessimistically, asserting that yes, there is no alternative: the demands of South Korean social life and anxieties about indeterminate futures are such that systems and individuals have little room with which to really

experiment in earnest. But most contributors, at least fleetingly, identify some real experiments.

EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

In chapter 1, Michael Seth pinpoints the long-standing tension between egalitarian educational philosophies and the reality of a very stratified and rank-conscious society as one example of what he dubs South Korean educational exceptionalism. The history of early education reforms and the state's regulation of the private after-school market during the postwar military regimes call attention to the ways in which policy makers juggled South Korea's egalitarian legacy and the strong desires of its citizenry for social mobility.

In the past, South Korea's military regimes, committed at least ideologically to educational equality and the pursuit of educational uniformity, exerted tight control over all levels of education. In order to be faithful to the egalitarian mission—namely, equal opportunity for all citizens, regardless of social class—the government made strenuous efforts to minimize the effects of familial disparities on student achievement. A primary example was President Park Chung Hee's high-school equalization policy (see chapter 1 in this volume, by Michael Seth). The policy was originally established for the purpose of reducing excessive competition for high-school entrance (H. Cho 1995; J. S. Kim 2001; Seth 2002, 155–58). The subsequent Chun Doo Hwan regime furthered this drive for equality of educational opportunity by banning all forms of private after-school education and all extra classes in high schools. However, in the aftermath of the Chun regime in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, the state gradually loosened regulation and enforcement of the private after-school education market (J. S. Kim 2001; Ju-ho Lee 2004; Seth 2002; Sorensen 1994).

Into the era of neoliberal education reforms, in April 2000 the Constitutional Court decided to rescind state regulations that had prohibited private (after-school) education institutions, thus guaranteeing parents' rights to make decisions about their children's education. While the private after-school market had rapidly expanded throughout the 1990s, this court decision amplified this expansion. Already by the late 1990s, family expenditures for private after-school education almost equaled the country's entire education budget (Ju-ho Lee 2004, 223). Among nonmainstream education venues, it is this after-school sector that has grown most precipitously: indeed, by 2002, 83 percent of elementary students partici-

pated in after-schooling.[3] This liberalized private after-school education sector has emerged as a frontier for unabashed privatization.[4] In this volume, chapters 6 and 7, by Misook Kim and So Jin Park respectively, take up both the history of the private after-school sector and its contemporary character.

The complexity of education in the era of neoliberal reform is further evidenced by the South Korean media's hue and cry about "school collapse." As the educational climate changed, the media responded with portrayals of immoral and ineffective teachers—taking bribes from parents, not being able to teach as effectively as private institute instructors, and not being respected by their students. A media image emerged of students and parents as neoliberal consuming subjects, entitled to "purchase" education and thus eroding long-standing norms of deference to and respect for teachers and schools. As Jae Hoon Lim discusses in chapter 2, the heated public debate on "school collapse" (*hakkyo punggoe* or *kyosil punggoe*) between 1999 and 2001 encapsulates the tensions and conflicts between different educational values. Lim demonstrates how diverse ideological camps ironically echoed each other on some points. Despite their radically different political positions, for instance, what she dubs "traditionalists" and "democratic reformists" share a communitarian view of education, while "neoliberalists" and "de-schooling advocates" are united by a strong commitment to individualism.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Three chapters take up the fraught character of nonmainstream educational venues including second-chance schooling, homeschooling, and adult distance education. Together they examine the extent to which these alternative venues challenge both the values and realities of mainstream schooling. While not uniformly pessimistic, their ethnographic findings do give pause about the real potential for disrupting mainstream ideologies and structures. The underlying question is, how can people sustain support for new ways of preparing children for the future if they remain unconvinced that long-standing social sorting measures—college entrance exams, elite college attendance, and a network society in which elite connections are preeminent—will abate? Despite this sense of doubt, people do think that the future might hold new social arrangements. It is this indeterminate future that makes education such a fraught social field. Because people are ambivalent, they are often torn when it comes to making educational decisions, not quite knowing how to proceed.

In chapter 3, Jung-ah Choi introduces the ideological complexity of South Korea's nonmainstream education field via a so-called second-chance school. Despite the school's self-identification as a "progressive" and "liberal" savior for dropouts, the demographics of its student body (homogeneously low income and from nontraditional families) reveal that this school works in reality as a sort of dumping ground. Despite the school's pioneering character and its egalitarian slogans, student voices narrate that they have internalized mainstream educational values and are keenly aware that their mere attendance at the school confirms their status as second-rate citizens. Her ethnographic data introduce students who are wise enough to know their school's place in the social hierarchy, and that their teachers' leniency and permissiveness promise a second-class future.

Deok-Hee Seo considers the opposite end of South Korea's class spectrum in chapter 4, on homeschooling. Consumers who have grown dissatisfied with South Korea's homogenous mainstream schooling now have many venues through which to exercise their educational visions and values. Advocates have begun to mobilize and form alliances to promote "de-schooling," one form of which is homeschooling. Seo examines homeschooling's relationship with mainstream schooling by taking up the case of homeschoolers who return to mainstream schooling. Seo points to the irony that for some people "successful" homeschooling is measured by the extent to which it allows homeschoolers to return to the mainstream sector better able to succeed. Seo demonstrates that many of her subjects chose to have their children exit mainstream schooling to become individually motivated, creative, contemplative learners, only to end up propelling them back into mainstream schooling for human capital accumulation and success. She offers a sympathetic analysis of how and why it is that they "fail" at homeschooling, even as they "succeed" in returning their children to mainstream schooling. Specifically, she argues that these parents' individualistic, meritocratic approach to homeschooling precludes the successful formation of an alternative space or autonomous learning network. Her findings invite readers to ask whether homeschooling can really serve as an alternative to mainstream schooling, and if not, why not?

Choi and Seo thus demonstrate that although homeschooling and second-chance schooling owe their formation to a critique of mainstream education, their students have not been able to successfully resist mainstream ideals of schooling and prevailing images of "studenthood," or to exit from South Korea's existing stratification system. In both cases, students (and their families) wrestled with conflicting messages about the educational space of home- and second-chance schooling. In contrast,

Kiyeon Yi's discussion of adult distance education in chapter 5 is considerably more optimistic about the potential for a real alternative.

Yi argues that although distance adult education is not necessarily alternative in itself, her interlocutors appear to be fashioning something alternative out of it. Indeed, the adult female long-distance learners at Korea National Open University (KNOU) are disappointed by their chosen venue: KNOU, not unlike the second-chance school in Choi's chapter, emerges as a pseudo-institution, in this case a pseudo-university. It delivers, her informants painfully come to realize, little of what they imagined they missed by not having been able to attend college in their youth. Specifically, it falls short both on the nature of the experience—the promise of high-level college learning—and on the results—the real career opportunities and social mobility afforded by a college credential. Yi's optimism thus emerges not from the sector itself but from how her group of primary interlocutors enlivens this space. The group helps them manage their pseudo-university career and, much more important, provides a community through which to reject the credentialism and educational prejudice that have dogged them all their adult lives. And it offers them a new template for how to participate meaningfully in the social world: in activities designed to transform the world in progressive directions. And yet Yi's informants are adult middle-class women who can, in a sense, afford to not worry about their own class reproduction. We might wonder instead how they have managed or are managing their children's education.

SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION

This struggle between upholding and resisting the mainstream education sector is also captured in the voices of many students who participate in the escalating private after-school sector. While most South Koreans avail their children of some after-school education (with the caveat that a minority are shut out of the market because of cost), there is nonetheless considerable confusion as to the ultimate value and impact of this sector. On the one hand, the after-school market is the ultimate champion of new neoliberal values: it is private and consumer- and choice-driven, and it makes no pretense to egalitarianism (e.g., it uses tracking). On the other hand, it does not embrace a host of other neoliberal principles, including autonomy, creativity, and independent thought and study. In this latter vein, private after-schooling ironically looks much like "traditional" mainstream schooling with its stress on rote-memorization, repetition, and teaching to the test.

This contradictory character is more apparent in the secondary market than in the elementary sector. In secondary after-school institutes, as Misook Kim shows in chapter 6, teachers succeed or fail depending on students' exam scores and to a lesser extent on the basis of improved mainstream school grades. In this way institutes undermine mainstream school curricula and learning. Herein lies the irony: in many cases it is the same public that calls for school reform, consumes in the private market, and insists on tailoring that market in ways that are counterproductive to meaningful school reform. Kim describes "institute addicts" who can't even begin to imagine mainstream schooling without institutes. In the words of one such student, "But to study on my own, I would have to search for books! And what if there are problems that are not in the textbooks?" Here we can productively recall Seo's findings: the "successful" students of her study were precisely those who became self-directed learners through homeschooling and then could return to mainstream schooling destined for conventional success. Thus, students' embrace of after-schooling is on the one hand quintessentially neoliberal—they are opting for choice and ability-driven consumerism—and on the other hand entirely at odds with neoliberal values in that they risk not becoming self-directed learners or autonomous agents but rather spoon-fed, "traditional" learners destined perhaps to succeed only marginally in a constantly transforming world—and in constantly transforming mainstream schools, as well.

The debates on private after-school institutes take a somewhat different shape in chapter 7, by So Jin Park, on the elementary market. The private after-school market for elementary students has been growing rapidly in the aftermath of two reforms—the adoption of English as a formal subject in elementary schools in 1997, and the 2000 Constitutional Court decision against state regulation of the after-school market. Even as this sector mushrooms, there has been widespread criticism of the heavy burdens it places on young children, while mothers have a heightened sense of responsibility for and anxiety over their children's education. Park's ethnographic interlocutors, primary school mothers, reveal the ambivalence of the education consumer today as they combine enormous hope and anxiety. If it is their hope that draws them to private after-schooling and fuels their desire to nurture creative new citizens with a broad array of skills, their anxiety wonders if it is not old skills and conventional credentials that still rule the day. Here we can recall Seo's homeschooling parents who are well aware that this is not an either/or venture, and that perhaps it is precisely the creative and autonomous learners who will succeed in mainstream schooling. It is an understanding of the tapestry of

the simultaneous embrace and rejection of mainstream schooling that is critical for understanding the predicament of the ethnographic subjects featured in this book.

These findings remind us that one feature of neoliberalism is the reconfiguration of the pubic definition of success. Recent neoliberal education reforms rhetorically and practically unsettle the assumed close link between education and success. They promote values of new human capital, such as creativity and excellence, as well as open up the possibility of new types of social success—perhaps even beyond status achieved through higher education. Indeed, a critical context here is the change in the value of (higher) education amid recent transformations. As the national preoccupation with the college entrance examination illustrates, during the period of rapid industrialization and educational expansion, the notion of social success through education was pervasive (O 2000; Seth 2002; Sorensen 1994). However, as several scholars note, since the number of college graduates continued to increase during the 1990s, credentials gradually conferred less and less in terms of employment and income—a phenomenon dubbed "credential inflation" (*hangnyŏk inp'ŭlleisyŏn*) (Abelmann 1997; Wangbae Kim 2001; O 2000; Sol 1994). In particular, the value of higher education credentials came into question in the aftermath of the IMF crisis and the extensive economic restructuring that followed, including the waning of the production sector and the rapid rise of the service sector, growing instability in employment (i.e., increasing unemployment and the waning of "lifetime employment," especially for white-collar workers), and the emergence of venture capital firms. Accordingly, the rhetoric of education reform also promoted the possibility of new social success achieved through means other than the traditional path.

CLASS MATTERS

At the heart of *No Alternative?* are narratives of educational producers and consumers. Central to our analysis is how social class operates in a transforming, increasingly neoliberal South Korea. As with all industrializing countries, education in South Korea long served as a beacon of hope for the achievement of social mobility. In the South Korean case, this was particularly so given the fluidity of class in the postcolonial, postwar era. All of the chapters in this volume, however, consider class reconfiguration and stagnation in the present era. With the premise that alternative education, too, is a profoundly classed space, we ask who are the winners and losers of these education experiments.

The chapters herein feature people's fraught calculations about *who* can achieve educational success today; *which* factors make for success; *what* educational success promises people; and *whether* education is still the critical tool for social mobility. Despite the neoliberal rhetoric that a college education is not the only form of capital that can secure upward mobility, our contributors demonstrate that higher-education credentials are still relevant to social mobility in South Korea. Indeed, college graduates—particularly those from elite universities in the highly stratified higher-education system—are still highly valued and privileged, symbolically and economically, despite the decreasing economic return on higher education in general (see also Abelmann 2003, 126–31; O 2000, 387; S. Park 2006). As Misook Kim demonstrates in chapter 6, ensuring admission to a prestigious college is the very reason why high-school students purchase after-school education. Importantly, in the context of South Korea's restructuring after the IMF crisis, the economic hardship and fragility of middle-class families made higher education, especially elite higher education, all the more important for middle-class aspiration and reproduction (S. Kim and Finch 2002; Shin and Chang 2000; J. Song 2003).

At this juncture, it is critically important to analyze diverse subjects' voices in light of their socioeconomic class. Specifically, in the chapters by Kim (6), Park (7), and Seo (4), working- and middle-class students and parents anxiously invest their cultural and material resources in the nonmainstream education market. Neoliberal education reforms and the privatization of education open up seemingly diverse options that invite anxious middle-class students and parents to nonmainstream schooling. However, in accordance with free-market principles, as middle-class interests in and commitment to nonmainstream schooling increase, material and cultural resources have increasingly become a key determinant for education success. As the chapters by Kim and Park illustrate, the private after-school market clearly gives children with more resources more diverse options, although the effects of private after-schooling on children might not be uniformly benevolent. Moreover, as the chapters by Park and Seo illustrate, some middle-class families with economic and cultural resources can make the decision to homeschool their kids or go abroad to opt for a better education, while lower-class families have no other options but to rely on domestic mainstream schools or bottom-tier private after-schools. The disproportionate number of economically underprivileged youth in Choi's second-chance school and their life stories testify to this thesis.

In this context, the reports and public concern about the growing income and consumption gulf between the haves and have-nots, including in

education consumption, dispel the long-standing egalitarian myth of social success through education (Ju-ho Lee 2004; T. Song 2002). For instance, according to a *Hankyoreh* daily newspaper article on November 15, 2003, the changing demographics of the freshmen at Seoul National University (at the top of the South Korean higher-education pyramid), which have been publicized since 2000, demonstrate that students' family background is becoming more and more important for educational success.[5]

We consider the ironic nature of the ways in which some relatively less-privileged people have optimistically embraced the new reform rhetoric—even as we understand that this embrace is not without ambivalence. Choi has argued elsewhere (2005) that students in second-chance schools aspire to be service-sector workers who dress in white-collar outfits to distinguish themselves from the typical working class, and in turn often belittle the value of school education. They are almost ready to identify with neoliberal intellectuals by believing that they can become materially successful without recourse to school education. Their definition of success is thus neatly aligned with neoliberal discourses of success. Similarly, working-class mothers in Park's chapter embrace new education rhetoric that calls for "finding and developing children's talents," while emphasizing that nowadays a college diploma does not guarantee either privilege or wealth. Appreciating the subtle way in which existing social stratification is sustained, this embrace can perhaps be considered a ruse by which less-privileged people console themselves. However, this is only partially true because the narratives of second-chance school students and working-class mothers also express their ambivalence and resentment about their own marginalization. Although most of the ethnographic analyses in this volume do not necessarily speak in traditional "class" terms, we argue that people's practices and travels in nonmainstream schooling venues are thoroughly mediated by their class backgrounds in the context of the escalating privatization of education.

This analysis of neoliberalism and its impact on class configurations in South Korea reminds us of recent policy debates over equity issues. For example, the hottest debates over school diversification and privatization echo the long-standing school equalization policy mentioned above (Ju-ho Lee 2004). When neoliberal reformists pursue diversification and privatization, especially of secondary schools, the persistent tension between equality and social stratification resurfaces (Ju-ho Lee 2004). Our volume leaves readers to question to what extent the diversification of schools (i.e., the co-existence of mainstream and nonmainstream schools) promotes meaningful social debate about stratification and educational opportunity.

The studies presented here also invite readers to ponder whether and in what way the existence and flourishing of nonmainstream education venues challenge the hegemony of mainstream schooling.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY . . .

Five of the chapters in this volume are ethnographic, namely, grounded in field research or participant observation. Commonsensical in anthropology (and other disciplines that employ ethnography) is the intersubjective nature of field research, such that the identity or subjectivity of the researcher matters, both to the field research itself and to its eventual write-up. With this in mind, we introduce in brief the social location and subjectivity of the field researchers whose chapters compose this volume. Jung-ah Choi's research emerged from her own experience as a teacher at a second-chance high school in 1999 and 2000, when she listened to students talk about why they left mainstream schools and how they made the decision to return to school. In her analysis, she calls our attention to the school itself as the (active) site in and from which those student narratives are produced. Indeed, in Choi's chapter the school comes to life as a set of institutional and ideological practices that act upon both students and teachers. Deok-Hee Seo's chapter on homeschooling is organized around her own journey: from deep-seated admiration of homeschoolers as a progressive vanguard resisting South Korean schoolism to profound disappointment upon realizing their totalizing complicity in what she calls the "habitus" of the South Korean middle class. Seo, a scholar working in South Korea, makes her educational longings clear, that is, her interest in alternatives that challenge mainstream schooling and ideologies. Kiyeon Yi's research on adult women learners in a largely digital university emerged from her own experience as a returnee student from 1998 to 2001. Her research documents the transformative impact of a women's study group on herself and her returnee-student colleagues. Although Yi began her returnee studies having completed a BA (the other members had not previously graduated from college) and went on to earn a PhD at another university and today resides and works in the United States, she nonetheless considers herself an "insider" to this research. In her chapter, Misook Kim, an active writer on educational issues in South Korea today, makes very clear her critical position about private institutes. She minces no words in denouncing this market-driven sector, which she argues preys on parental worry and makes educational dependents of youth. As an ethnographer working in South Korea, So Jin Park, in her chapter on mothers' management of

their children's private after-school education, reveals her sympathy for the mothers' predicament, one that she well understands as an insider. In this vein, we may take note of Jae Hoon Lim's critical stance in her analysis of the discourse of "school collapse." Although a scholar working in the United States, Lim's credentials include having been a schoolteacher in South Korea and publishing widely in Korean. Lim is explicit in her charge that neoliberal educational reforms in South Korea and elsewhere run afield of, in her words, "the ultimate goal of education . . . the ethical or moral aspirations that are essential to human growth." Finally, as a historian of South Korean education, Michael Seth makes clear his comparative perspective from which South Korea emerges as quite remarkable in a world-historical context, both for the rapidity of the growth of the education sector and for the "extent to which the state was able to transfer the financial burden of schooling to the students and their families."

PART I

Educational Transformation

1. South Korea's Educational Exceptionalism

Michael Seth

Perhaps no feature of South Korea's development stands out more than its transition in fifty years from a nation where a majority of the adult population was illiterate to one of the world's most schooled societies. In fact, South Korea's development has been characterized by educational exceptionalism. This includes the remarkable rapidity of its expansion of schooling at all levels, the highest educational costs borne by any populace in the world, a globally incomparable level of social demand for education, the high rate of economic and social return on educational achievement, and the remarkable tension between radically egalitarian educational philosophies and the reality of a very stratified and rank-conscious society. Here I discuss South Korea's exceptionalism in its historical context.

THE RAPID EXPANSION OF SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

South Korea's educational expansion after 1945 was nothing short of a revolution. In 1945, when thirty-five years of Japanese colonial rule ended, the majority of adult Koreans were illiterate. Mass primary education had only recently begun, and less than five percent of the adult population had more than an elementary-school education. Five decades later, virtually all South Koreans were literate, all young people attended primary and middle schools, and 90 percent graduated from high school. Further, there were over 180 colleges and universities, and the proportion of college-age men and women who enrolled in higher education was greater than in most European nations. And in most comparative international tests, the math and sciences skills of South Korean primary and secondary students ranked among the highest in the world.[1]

The rapid expansion of state-directed formal education in the second half of the twentieth century is not unique to South Korea but part of the so-called "educational revolution," the global expansion of national education systems that occurred after the Second World War and was especially dramatic in the developing world (Meyer and Hannan 1979, 37–55). Nonetheless, since the 1950s South Korea has been on the extreme end of the correlation between general levels of educational attainment and economic development, with a higher level of educational attainment than other nations of comparable per-capita income.[2]

South Korea's developmental policies after 1945 focused on establishing universal and standardized basic education. Only a few other countries, most notably Japan and the other "tigers" of East Asia—Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong—so consistently pursued these aims. While the U.S. military government during its occupation (1945–48) promoted education at all levels, the administration of President Syngman Rhee (1948–60) gave priority to establishing universal primary education. Indeed, Article 16 of the Korean Constitution declared elementary education universal and compulsory. To alleviate the lack of trained teachers, the Ministry of Education (MOE) organized massive teacher-training programs, which worked alongside the efforts of Seoul National University Teachers Training Center (supervised by American advisers). With shortages of both classrooms and teachers, classes were often huge and teaching was done in shifts. The Minister of Education drew up a Six-Year Compulsory Education Plan in 1949; however, due to the Korean War it was vigorously implemented only in early 1954. Teachers were asked to go around the neighborhoods to make sure that parents registered their children. Stands were set up in market places to publicize the registration procedures, and, in some cases, volunteers were asked to survey neighborhoods and report the names of children missing from the registration lists.[3] Elementary enrollment increased at an annual rate of about 6 percent from 1954 to 1959, increasing from 2,678,374 in 1954 to 3,549,510 in 1959. The Six-Year Compulsory Education Plan was largely successful in meeting its goal of enrolling 96 percent of primary school-age children by 1959. By 1960, over 90 percent of students enrolled in primary school would progress through the six grades.[4] By 1970, enrollment in all six years was virtually universal.

Underlining this achievement was the nearly universal social demand for schooling that made enforcement of compulsory education rather easy. The public's aspiration for education at all levels was great, but the state under Rhee chose to emphasize primary education in part because it was

less expensive to implement. Officials both within and outside of the MOE repeatedly made the case that in a nation as poor as South Korea, with among the lowest per-capita incomes of any independent state, and with a population that was still mostly rural and agricultural, the state could not afford to do otherwise.

Secondary education also expanded at a rapid rate. Half of all new secondary schools that opened from 1945 to 1961 were private. The task of the South Korean government in the 1950s was, in fact, as much to control the growth of secondary and higher education. Only after 1961, when the process of universal primary education was nearly completed, did government efforts to promote education gradually shift to the secondary level. The number of middle-school students swelled fourfold between 1961 and 1980. In percentages, the number of students in middle school grew from 33 percent in 1960 to 95 percent in 1980, with the sharpest increase in the 1970s. By 1995, although middle school was not compulsory there was a 99 percent enrollment rate. Secondary enrollment increased five-and-a-half times between 1960 and 1980. While in 1961 only one in five adolescents of high-school age was attending school, by 1980 nearly two-thirds were, again with the steepest increase in enrollment in the 1970s. High-school enrollments grew steadily if less dramatically thereafter, reaching 90 percent by the mid-1990s.[5]

Colleges and universities also mushroomed in South Korea in the two decades after liberation. As with secondary schools, this was principally due to public demand rather than government policy. By 1958, thirty-eight private colleges and universities had been established.[6] In 1960, there were 50,000 men and 14,000 women attending private institutions of higher learning while 30,000 men and 2,000 women were attending public institutions of higher education (*taehan kyoyuk yŏn'gam*). First in the late 1950s and again in the early 1960s, the state regulated the number of students allowed to enter college. Although these quotas were gradually expanded, they fell far short of the demand for higher education, making entrance into university highly competitive. Only after 1980 were the quotas sharply increased, but even then South Korean policy makers continued to control enrollments. Nonetheless, by 2007 three out of five South Korean youths were entering college from high school, one of the highest percentages of any nation.[7]

South Koreans' educational demands are remarkable in a world-historical context. As late as 1960, South Korea had a Gross National Product (GNP) per capita lower than Ghana or Haiti and yet it had already achieved nearly universal primary education. By 1980, although it had made impressive

progress its GNP was still lower than Mexico, and yet it was achieving higher levels of secondary and tertiary education than virtually any other developing nation. By 1990, its enrollment at all levels was comparable to Western European countries. The state's emphasis on developing basic levels of education eliminated the sharp disparities between regions and social classes that often characterize developing nations, and made for a literate workforce with the skills needed for a newly industrializing economy. But the state orchestration of education made for fierce competition for entry into higher education, and for strains between the demand for higher levels of education and its efforts to prevent an oversupply of advanced degree holders.

EXORBITANT EDUCATIONAL COSTS

Few features of South Korean education are more striking than the enormous financial burden it places on students and their families and the willingness of those families to bear that burden. Measured as a proportion of personal income, South Koreans bear perhaps the highest educational costs of any citizenry in the world.[8]

From the Japanese colonial period, South Korea inherited an unsystematic and improvised system of school funding through tuition, special school taxes, and school support associations. Under President Syngman Rhee, an even more bewilderingly complex and unsystematic hodgepodge of private donations, voluntary and mandatory fees, "gifts," and local and national taxes supported education. National revenues went primarily to support the national universities, teachers' colleges, and salaries of elementary teachers and staff. The costs of maintaining school facilities were the responsibility of local government. Some estimates suggest that national funds under Rhee contributed only 10 percent of the cost of education (Adams 1990, 375). Local taxes accounted for a similar share of educational support. The effective tax rate of 9.9 percent of the nation's GNP was low, even compared to other poor states (Woo 1991, 81).

Most obvious among the education burdens borne by the citizenry was tuition (*hakkbi*), which provided a major share of financial support to all levels of schooling. There also were miscellaneous fees of all kinds such as class fees, entrance fees, and special fees for school activities or repairs. Teachers were inadequately paid and relied on private tutoring and income from the sale of special textbooks and study materials, especially those related to exam preparation (Han'guk Hyŏngmyŏng Chaep'an-sa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe 1962, 1078). Schools also sold special answer sheets

for quizzes and tests. The extent to which a variety of means were used to finance education can be seen in primary education, which was by law free. A survey of Seoul's ninety-two primary schools in late 1959 found that all charged extra fees and that most sold extra materials, collected money for unscheduled events, and collected fees connected with classroom tests.[9] Another means of support came from the parent-teacher association (PTA), which served primarily as a fundraising organization for schools. In 1957, the MOE calculated that national and local government revenues supported 55 percent of the cost for elementary education, 22 percent of secondary schooling, and 24 percent of higher education; the remainder came from tuition, fees, and PTA contributions.[10] Voluntary in theory, PTA fees were universally regarded by school officials as mandatory; students were frequently refused admission or threatened with expulsion if their parents did not pay the fees.[11]

Although the Park Chung Hee regime in the 1960s and 1970s tinkered with the system's finances, the basic pattern persisted of state underfunding and a resultant reliance on South Korean families to assume most of the cost of education. Although incomes rose under Park's developmental regime, the costs of education kept pace. In point of fact, public expenditure on education as a proportion of the national budget remained quite modest by the standards of developing nations, averaging about 17 percent of the national budget in 1965–66, and only slightly above 15.1 percent for the last two full years of civilian rule, 1959–60 (Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education 1975). The share of the national budget devoted to education remained in the 15–17 percent range throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Confident in citizens' willingness to support their children's education, economic planners simply did not make education, which was already expanding rapidly, a high priority for major public investment. The public demand made for enormous competition to get into tertiary education and particularly elite schools. This demand led to the extracurricular expenses of out-of-class lessons, private tutoring, and a variety of often financially onerous strategies such as renting out rooms in desirable districts. Nor were these measures confined to the elite: by the 1980s, if not earlier, private lessons for elementary and secondary students had become nearly universal (see chapters 6 and 7 in this volume, by Kim and Park respectively, for analyses of the contemporary private after-school market).

The cost of education escalated in the 1980s and 1990s. The greatest single factor in the escalating price of schooling was private tutoring and out-of-school lessons known as *kwaoe*. *Kwaoe* not only placed an enormous burden on families but also accentuated the income differences

among sectors of society. It also represented a drain of resources that economic planners would rather have seen devoted to savings and used for capital investment. In 1995, the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI) estimated that families paid 17 trillion won (US$ 21 billion) on direct educational expenditure such as tuition, mandatory fees, support for extracurricular activities sponsored by schools, transportation, and textbooks. By contrast, total government public expenditure on education in 1994 amounted to 16.7 trillion won. The public thus paid 51 percent of the total direct cost of education. In addition, an estimated six trillion won was spent on private tutoring. According to the KEDI study, when tutoring was included, parents and students absorbed 69 percent of the costs of education.[12] State expenditures on education accounted for about 4 percent of GNP, somewhat less than in most developed countries, but if the total costs were to be calculated, South Koreans spent as much as 12 percent of their GNP on education, considerably higher than most other industrialized nations. In reality, the costs of education are really much greater than even these figures suggest when we include the vast private tutoring industry and what is today called "early study abroad" (*chogi yuhak*, i.e., before college; see this volume's introduction). All indicators suggest that over the last decades, educational expenses have risen faster than the cost of living. A 1999 study found that costs of education rose 2.5 times from 1988 and 1998, outstripping increases in the cost of food, housing, healthcare, transportation, utilities, or indeed any other major category of expenses.[13] According to a report of the National Statistical Office in 1997, urban workers spent 9.8 percent of their income on education, up from 6.7 percent in 1987, while rural families devoted a smaller proportion. The magnitude of this expenditure can perhaps be understood by comparing it with Japan, also known for its obsession with educational achievement and robust private tutoring and institute sector. In Japan, urban workers spent 5.4 percent of their income on education, up from 4.7 percent in 1987.[14]

ENORMOUS SOCIAL DEMAND FOR EDUCATION

The single greatest factor accounting for the impressive achievements in educational expansion and the high cost of schooling was the social demand for education, sometimes referred to literally as "education fever." While some of the credit for the rapid expansion of education should be given to the state's continuous efforts in building a comprehensive and efficient network of schools, the expansion of the South Korean educational system was less the product of a systematic and coherent drive by the central

government than the result of a mass social movement for educational opportunity. Foreign observers have long observed South Koreans' desire for personal advancement through education. Elaine Barnes, an American educational adviser in Taegu in the early 1950s, reported that, as regards to the "mass of people," the "determination of this class to get an education is almost frightening" (Barnes 1960, 97). Elizabeth Wilson, another American educational adviser working in South Korea at this time, described "the impatient popular movement" for education (Wilson 1959). A British observer noted that "their love of education" is such that "even the poorest will struggle to send their children to school."[15] The anthropologist Cornelius Osgood, working in the village of Sŏndup'o in Kanghwa Island, Kyŏnggi Province, in 1947, reported "the farmers themselves speak of nothing so consistently as the desirability of improving educational facilities" (Osgood 1951, 100).

In 1952, UNESCO sent a commission to South Korea to survey the needs and problems of education in preparation for massive reconstruction efforts. The UNESCO commission found much to fault. In fact, overall it was highly critical, perhaps unfairly considering the turmoil of the nation. It reported an "extremely low level of professional preparation" on the part of teachers and educational administrators,[16] that salaries for teachers were insufficient to cover basic living costs,[17] an "utter inadequacy of school facilities,[18] and an extensive reliance on "inadequate" and "ineffective" textbooks and teaching materials.[19] Further, the report declared that civic and higher civic schools aimed at adult literacy "functioned sporadically" and technical education was "inadequate."[20] The report disparaged the "often poor" educational administration and the "little trace of supervision of instruction."[21] The commission also charged the South Korean government with political interference in education. Yet despite these criticisms, the report expressed admiration for the zeal of South Koreans for education and concluded that "Korean education is in a dynamic condition."[22]

What is perhaps most fascinating about the South Korean experience has been the extent to which social demand for schooling has pervaded every sector of society. Indeed, surveys in the 1990s revealed that virtually every parent wanted higher education for their children. In one study, 98 percent responded that university education for their children was a primary goal, a considerably higher figure than in the U.S. or Western Europe.[23] A 1998 study of South Korean education by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) sounded in some respects remarkably like the UNESCO report issued in 1952. Both found overcrowding in Korean classrooms, too much reliance on rote memoriza-

tion, a rigid or inflexible manner of instruction, deficiencies in technical education, overcentralization of educational administration, and a pedagogy that hindered creativity and independent thought. But the OECD strikingly echoed the UNESCO report issued a half-century earlier when it stated, "The strong zeal for education among Koreans cannot be matched anywhere else in the world." The report attributes this zeal to the importance of credentials in South Korean society with the most important being diplomas, "which are frequently the most important criterion for evaluation in employment, marriage and informal interpersonal relations" (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 1998, 27).

EGALITARIAN EDUCATIONAL IDEALS VERSUS A HIGHLY STRATIFIED SOCIETY

South Korea has juggled strong egalitarian ideals and rank and status consciousness. The social demand for education was driven to a large extent by the desire of families for the high status that degrees conferred. Entry into Seoul National University, for example, was the dream of millions of South Korean youths and their families. Seoul National University was the pinnacle of a highly stratified higher-education system in which universities outside of Seoul were lower in prestige than those in the capital.

This highly stratified system, however, ran counter to a strong egalitarian strain in Korean cultural history. In public policy this was expressed with the term "uniformity of education," which referred to two ideas. The first was that educational opportunity should be open to all, a commitment to egalitarian and democratic ideals and a rejection of the rigid and largely hereditary class structure of Chosŏn Korea. In Chosŏn Korea (1392–1910) the civil examinations provided a means for enhancing and improving social status. In practice, however, it was limited to the hereditary *yangban* aristocracy. In the twentieth century the tradition of improving social status through educational achievement continued, with degrees replacing the civil exams and with the removal of hereditary class barriers. With the breakdown of traditional barriers to education and social advancement, along with the influence of egalitarian and democratic ideals, millions of Koreans clung to this idea with great conviction and were intolerant of any structures that appeared to militate against equal access to schooling.[24]

The second notion of uniformity, namely, equality of education conditions, was also promoted by the South Korean government and embraced by many South Koreans. The state carried out, with uneven success, policies that sought to provide uniformity in content and standards in the schools.

This effort, however, conflicted with the realities of a rank-conscious society in which many people were quick to assign every school and school district a place in a status hierarchy. We might argue that while the modern ideals of democracy and equality had won broad acceptance, the citizenry still viewed the world in hierarchical conceptual categories. Uniformity of education in South Korea meant that at the very least, the entrance-examination system ought to be fair. In official policy, this was often termed the "equalization of education." For example, during the 1949–51 debates over the Education Law, early tracking was rejected so as to assure that all students could access the upper tiers of schooling (Seth 2002, 866–77).

The Korean public remained ever vigilant against any attempts to create an "elitist" school system, and a rigidly uniform curriculum was introduced in the mid-1950s. The Central Educational Research Institute (Chung'ang Kyoyuk Yŏn'guso) was established to work out a national curriculum, which was implemented from 1955 to 1957 (Im 1980).[25] Although disparities between urban and rural and Seoul and provincial schools were not as great as in most nations, even these differences were regarded by most educators, politicians, and officials as intolerable and deserving of reform efforts. In 1967, for example, the Central Educational Research Institute found that while the national attrition rate in primary school was 2.3 percent, it was 0.8 percent in Seoul and 2.7 percent in the provinces (Central Educational Research Institute 1967, 37). The same study found that 41.2 percent of those who dropped out in the first grade and 66.8 percent of those who dropped out in the sixth grade did so out of poverty.[26] Although these discrepancies were still low by most national standards, South Koreans were especially sensitive to regional and class inequalities.

In order to prevent low-income students from being ghettoized in poor schools, the MOE created a lottery system in 1968 by which students were randomly assigned schools in large districts that were designed to include both wealthier downtown areas and the poor outskirts of cities. Motivating the system was intense parental pressure to get into primary schools with the best reputations in Seoul, Pusan, Taegu, Inch'ŏn, and Taejōn. The lottery system, however, was not popular with many parent and teachers groups who complained of its creating a "gambling mentality."[27] Nonetheless it was enforced in the name of equalization. In 1973, a commission of officials and private educators drew up the High School Equalization Plan, which eliminated the high-school entry exam, used a lottery to admit students into high schools, and sought to make sure that facilities and instruction were uniform in all schools. Worried about the swelling city population, the government hoped that this policy would

slow the tide of families moving to the city for better educational opportunities (B. Park 1988, 2–5). In the 1990s, in an effort to upgrade all provincial universities, the MOE offered special aid and scholarships. However, these measures did little to change the public perception that all provincial colleges were second rate.

Educational officials often insisted that the standards in elementary and secondary schools be consistent enough to ensure fairness in educational opportunity (Im 1960, 383). But primary and secondary schools were not completely equal, since those in the better districts outperformed other schools. Much of this was due simply to the fact that parents with greater financial resources and who were themselves better educated tended to move to these districts. Uniformity and equality were also challenged in the 1990s by educational reforms that aimed to give individual high schools and colleges greater autonomy in the admission process and curriculum experimentation. These values were also threatened by the rise of free-market advocates within bureaucracy, academia, and media who questioned state attempts to micromanage education and called for the liberation of education from government restrictions. Some provincial boards of education then experimented with permitting private high schools to recruit freshmen within a certain geographical range. In 1995, the Seoul Board of Education followed these initiatives and beginning in 1998 allowed private high schools to select freshmen from within ten educational districts. Also, it was decided that admission was to be based on middle-school records, not on entry examinations, a necessary measure, board members argued, because the uniform system of admission "brought down the overall quality of education."[28]

The popular zeal for educational advancement was due to the breakdown of barriers that had once separated the elite from the nonelite. The desire by millions of Korean families for social mobility propelled educational expansion and provided the foundation for democracy and prosperity. The 1990s protests of teachers, journalists, civil groups, and angry letters against any modification of the uniform standards suggest that the South Korean public remained animated by persistent concerns for personal advancement, social justice, and equality, and the right of families to enhance their material existence and their social position through hard work and education.

Few societies in modern history have undergone South Korea's speed of transformation in the second half of the twentieth century. Perhaps no feature of that transformation is more remarkable than its educational devel-

opment. It has been remarkable not only for the rapidity of its growth but also for (1) the extent to which the state was able to transfer the financial burden of schooling to students and their families, (2) the heavy reliance on costly private tutoring and after school lessons, (3) the nearly universal nature of the demand for schooling at all levels, (4) the intensity with which prestigious degrees were pursued, and (5) the concern for uniformity of standards and opportunity while being preoccupied with academic ranking. A closer look at education in South Korea provides a deeper understanding of the complex ways in which education unfolds at the intersection of social, economic, and political forces.

2. South Korea's "School Collapse" Debates

Jae Hoon Lim

The education system in South Korea has been commended for its contribution to the rapid economic growth of the country over the last four decades. The nation's economic success is attributable to an education system that has successfully provided the kind of quality workforce required for economic expansion. Like many other developing countries in Asia, the South Korean government established a strong public school system and used it as the primary tool for the country's nation-building project (see chapter 1 in this volume, by Michael Seth, for a historical overview). Schools in South Korea introduced a new set of values, ideologies, and skills that supported the political-economic structure of the nation-state. Therefore, there has been little doubt that the South Korean public school system, despite its relatively short history, has played a significant role in the country's nation-building process.

However, from its inception the South Korean education system (as represented in K-12 schooling) has exhibited an interesting mixture of different, even conflicting, ideologies. On the one hand, the Confucian philosophy that reigned as the official governing philosophy of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392–1910), and which remains a critical axis of South Korean cultural life, heavily influenced how schools were structured and how people related to one another within that system. On the other hand, democratic and individualist ideologies have been continually introduced into the national curriculum. Until the 1990s, however, the fundamental difference between and potential conflict among the different discourses that coexisted in the South Korean education enterprise were not readily apparent. This opacity was due to the strong involvement of the government, with its incontestable power to make decisions in every sector of the national education system. The authoritarian governments that lasted

until the late 1980s presented themselves as the only agents that could legitimately make important decisions about education in both the public and the national interest. It is, therefore, not an exaggeration to say that the central government virtually controlled the education system and its practices and even discourses—channeling the "public" discourse through its official voice until a nonmilitary government was elected in 1992. Therefore, only recently have conflicts over education become visible through heated public debates about "school collapse."

Rapid and significant changes followed by some stabilization in South Korea's class structure during the last five decades have added another layer of complexity to educational discourse. Because the nation's strong egalitarian education policy minimized the impact of family background on student achievement (see Park, chapter 7 in this volume, for further discussion), South Korea was often listed as one of the countries with minimal impact of social class on education success compared to other countries (Jeong and Armer 1994; OECD 2001). However, neoliberal education reforms undertaken in the early 1990s under a civilian government opened up a new space for diverse voices in education, including discourses with a clear group or class affiliation (Seo 2003).

In this chapter, I analyze four different discourses of education that were part of the public debate over "school collapse" in South Korea between 1999 and 2001.[1] This analysis illuminates the sociopolitical nature of the debate, centering on the fundamental purpose of education as espoused and promoted by diverse groups based on class and ideological affiliations.

The discourse of "school collapse" can be traced back to a winter seminar held by the Korea Educational Research Institute in January 1999 (Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap 1999) and a series of discussions and technical reports by the Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodongjohap (Korean Teachers' Union, or KTU) in May 1999 (M. Kim 2000). The Ch'amgyoyuk Silch'ŏn Wiwŏnhoe (Committee for Praxis for True Education), one of the KTU's subcommittees, reported the phenomenon of "school collapse" in several city schools, and the union's national executive committee discussed its nationwide scope in May 1999 (M. Kim 2000). However, it was the mass media that turned the issue of school collapse into a heated public discourse. The country's three major newspapers, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, and *Joongang Ilbo*, played a significant role, but the greatest contribution was made by two major broadcasting companies, the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), through a series of television documentaries showing students blatantly rejecting their teachers' authority and instruction, as well as teachers and

schools voluntarily or involuntarily abdicating their professional responsibilities. Academic societies and research institutions subsequently held a series of discussions on the crisis, defining it as a sign of irreversible erosion in the public education system. The term "collapse" reflects the extent of the cultural shock experienced by Koreans who had put their trust in the strength of the public school system and the virtue of establishing a hierarchical yet committed relationship between teachers and students.

"School collapse" itself is a social reality observed, enacted, and defined through discursive practices. It was, therefore, subject to critical review. Some scholars initially expressed skepticism about its existence (D. Kim 2002; Won-jung Kim 2000), but survey data collected by ideologically diverse organizations confirmed significant changes in schools, and hence the term became accepted as a reasonable descriptor (C. Chŏn 1999b; Yun, Yi, and Pak 1999). Both scholars and the general public evaluated the crisis differently from any previous educational challenge; they found that the time-honored, core educational values and fundamental human relationships (especially between teachers and students) essential to the everyday functioning of school had crumbled, and that teachers and school administrators were unable to handle the challenges constantly erupting in their schools. Furthermore, it was not irregular and sporadic (and therefore negligible) but a consistent phenomenon spread nationwide. However, the various groups participating in this debate disagreed about the nature or degree of collapse and possible remedies for it. In this debate, four significant voices or discourses, stemming from different social, cultural, and political ideologies as well as class bases, were represented. I will refer to them as traditionalists, democratic reformists, neoliberals, and de-schooling advocates. The remainder of this chapter explores these four discourses, which competed to establish the meaning of "school collapse" in South Korea between 1999 and 2002.

TRADITIONALISTS: CONFUCIAN ETHICS OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Several senior scholars and educators interpreted "school collapse" as a natural consequence of the moral anomie prevalent in contemporary South Korean society, explaining that it was caused primarily by two factors: the lack of proper discipline for children at home and a series of "failed" education policies that eroded teachers' authority in schools and diminished their status in society. In a survey conducted by Yun and associates in 1999 (Yun, Yi and Pak 1999), roughly 56 percent of teachers believed the absence

of discipline at home and moral anomie in the larger society to be causes of "school collapse," while about 58 percent attributed it to flawed education policies. This interpretation was embraced by many teachers who were dissatisfied with the new education policies enacted in 1998 under the Kim Dae Jung administration, particularly the banning of corporal punishment in schools (Y. Park and Kim 2002).

One of the primary articulators of this discourse was the Korean Federation of Teachers' Associations (KFTA), which stated in its official documents that the primary reason for "school collapse" rested in the flawed education policies of administrators that undermined teachers' authority: "The policy of [enforced] early retirement of teachers is responsible for everything. The administration used education reform to reduce the government workforce. The early retirement policy consequently drove many teachers out of schools. Dismissing so many experienced teachers ultimately resulted in a shortage of teachers, an increase in class sizes, loss of instructional *savoir-faire*, and diminished teachers' morality as a whole. These are the reasons for 'school collapse'" (Won-jung Kim 2000, 102).

In the traditionalist discourse, another major factor in "school collapse" was the absence of familial education, particularly discipline at home. Kuk-t'aek Yim argued that parents nowadays did not properly discipline their children at home, making it difficult for the children to develop a sense of restraint in settings such as the school or classroom (K. Yim 1999; see also Y. Park and Kim 2002). These scholars and teachers decried children who had so little self-discipline that they were not able to exhibit even a minimal level of consideration for others' needs, and contested that "consideration" is essential to maintaining order in any school or classroom.

Based on this diagnosis, several scholars and policy makers voiced the need for school to play a stronger role in children's moral education. For example, the president of the Hakkyogyoyuk Paroseugi Yŏndae (Alliance for Straightening Out Our Schools) argued that school curricula should emphasize basic etiquette so that students will abide by school rules. He stressed that the inclusion of a strong disciplinary component in school curricula would be the first and most important step necessary for recovering the health of the school community and confronting the challenges of school collapse (S. Y. Kim and Ko 2000, 161). Despite being criticized for their poor implementation of the new education policy, some Ministry of Education officials made a series of suggestions that directly reflected the discourse of the traditionalists. One of the examiners for the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Policy argued that schools should provide basic disciplinary training for students: "Schools should stand firmly behind

their role as the major educator by emphasizing cultivation of personality and recovering educational competency as soon as possible" (*Chosun Ilbo* 1999b).

Several scholars also drew on the traditionalist discourse in their discussion of school collapse. In his extensive analysis of the phenomenon, Won-jung Kim (2000) points to several factors contributing to this collapse in 1999; however, he clearly identifies the Ministry of Education's ban on all forms of corporal punishment at school as the major one, stating that the ministry obviously failed to consider the role and meaning of corporal punishment in the unique context of Korean society.

Two essential features ran through the traditionalist discourse. First, it emphasized the maintenance of core values of education in terms of its "relational ethics," despite the major social changes since 1960. This discourse reflected a long-held image of the teaching profession in Korean society based on Confucian philosophy, which advocates a set of fundamental principles in human relationships. Compared with the relationship between parent and child, or ruler and subjects, the teacher-student relationship is seen as a model for other social relationships. As a result, respecting a teacher's authority is seen as an essential virtue for all students. Questioning or challenging that authority is seen as being no less than immoral or unethical. In this regard, despite the government's meager monetary compensation, the traditionalist discourse tried to maintain the teaching profession's prestige in South Korea.

Many sectors of South Korean society still retain a strong Confucian influence. It is thus not surprising that this discourse, with its embedded Confucian ideology of education and human relationships, resonated among other groups, including those who adopted a less traditional, even radical, approach to school education (as is evidenced in documents from the Hakkyogyoyuk Paroseugi Yŏndae [Alliance for Straightening Out Our Schools] and the Korean Teachers' Union, a rival to the Korean Federation of Teachers' Associations mentioned above). Parents also endorsed this discourse, with several parents' associations delivering "canes of love" to their children's schools to announce their opposition to the Ministry of Education's ban on corporal punishment (T. Yim 1999). This Confucian-influenced education model cannot therefore be understood simply as the view of "old fashioned" teachers who used to enjoy great privilege in school and society under this model, since it was supported by the wider population (E. Kim 2003; Won-jung Kim 2000; Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation 2000; K. Yang 2000).

Another interesting aspect of this discourse was its fervent opposi-

tion to privatization and market-based education reforms. Even though the traditionalists seemed to have very little in common with democratic reformists who came from the KTU, they actually shared some fundamental beliefs focused on the public and collective nature of school education and emphasizing the moral and social aspects of education. Although their value schemes—Confucian philosophy and democratic ideology—had different roots, both groups viewed education, including the role of schools, in terms of social integrity and as a value-laden, collective enterprise.

DEMOCRATIC REFORMISTS: DEMOCRATIC SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY

The focal point of democratic reformism was the democratization of the school environment. Major agents of this discourse were the KTU (S. Y. Kim and Ko 2000) and young education scholars who supported the union's perspective (Hwang 2001). In fact, the KTU and its affiliates played a major role in identifying and diagnosing the changes in schools nationwide even before the public became aware of "school collapse" (M. Kim 2000). For example, M. Kim (2000) states that the Ch'amgyoyuk Silch'ŏn Wiwŏnhoe (Committee for Praxis for True Education), a KTU subcommittee, was instrumental in identifying "school collapse," while the union's national executive committee went on to discuss its nationwide scope. However, the KTU later disapproved of the public discourse around the issue, stating that the mass media presented "exaggerated reports of the new educational challenges." According to the union, the media's exaggerated reports bred distrust among the three major groups of teachers, parents, and students, and led to the further "collapse" of many schools across the country (*Chŏn'gyojo Sinmun* [Korean Teachers Union Newspaper] 1999).

The KTU's Policy Research Institute produced a series of publications after public awareness of school collapse emerged (Chŏn'gyojo Chŏngch'aek Yŏn'guso 1999a, 1999b). These democratic reformists shared some of the traditionalists' language and beliefs, but their discourse ultimately presented a different philosophy of education—their primary goal being to firmly establish modern rationality and institute a democratic culture in every sector of society, including schools. Democratic reformists believed that the current school system reflected an authoritarian and bureaucratic model and that this system was the major stumbling block to education reform. This inefficient and obsolete model prevented teachers and students from playing an active role in the school reform process, thereby prohibiting the actualization of participatory democracy throughout the

society (S. Y. Kim and Ko 2000). The following three quotations identify the issues defined by KTU as the primary causes of school collapse:

> Our schools have maintained the same curricular infrastructure since the liberation from Japanese Occupation. The central government has been controlling the quality, content, organizational methods, and evaluation methods, providing no role for the people who actually produce and consume knowledge in the educational fields. This resulted in the alienation of students in the very field of education and has prompted the phenomenon of "school collapse." (C. Chŏn 1999a, 121)

> The remnants of authoritarianism and oppression in Korean education along with dreadfully obsolete educational environments were factors that amplified the phenomenon of "classroom crisis." . . . [V]arious irrational and antidemocratic characteristics, such as an excessive number of unrealistic rules, oversized schools that pose a great challenge to communication with students, overcrowded classrooms, a mismatch between curriculum and assessment, limited rights and participation of an autonomous student body, etc., have, in fact, contributed to the phenomenon of "classroom crisis." (Chŏn'gyojo Kyoyuk Charyosil 2000; as cited in S. Y. Kim and Ko 2000, 165–66)

> The primary reason for teachers' failure to educate students with knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes is antidemocratic school management and the closed system of communication. No rights [given to teachers], then no responsibilities. (Chŏn'gyojo Chŏngch'aek Yŏn'guso 1999a, 140)

The discourse of democratic reformists was also reflected in several works by a group of scholars (Hwang 2001; Sim 1999), including Sŏng-bo Sim (1999), who emphasized that democratic school management and participatory democracy in schools were essential to overcoming school collapse. Sim suggested three major changes for individual schools, including the establishment of a system of student self-governance, the restructuring of school rules and regulations to promote student autonomy, and open communication and participatory-democratic school management.

Democratic reformists, however, refused the idea of extreme individualism. Rather, they pursued a balance between the collective goals of education in the South Korean context and the individual needs of students wanting to experience personal growth through education (S. Y. Kim and Ko 2000). Even though the democratic reformists respected the individual rights of students (by opposing corporal punishment, for instance, unlike the traditionalists), they also appreciated the communitarian nature of education and the role it might play in political causes, such as the reunification of the Korea peninsula (Chŏn'gyojo Chŏngch'aek Yŏn'guso 1999b).

The democratic reformists also critiqued the discourse of neoliber-

als who were at the time advocating the complete marketization of the education system. Even though democratic reformists emphasized their difference from both traditionalists and neoliberals, their harshest criticisms were reserved for the latter, as the following passage from the KTU demonstrates:

> Reckless implementation of individualized instruction represented as "open education" and consumer-based education that puts individuals and market principles at the center [of education discourse] has undermined the communitarian function of schools and increased individualism and self-centeredness. Teachers have also been targets of ideological propaganda, damaging their authority and depriving them of the means to guide the misguided education reforms. These are the reasons for the rapid spread of the "school collapse" phenomenon, and the teachers' almost utter inability to find a solution to it. (Chŏn'gyojo Kyoyuk Charyosil 2000)

Sŏng-bo Sim (1999) argued that competition-oriented education reform during the last two administrations actually expedited the process of school collapse, placing responsibility on the following policies: "educational reform for bolstering the nation's competitiveness," "excellence-based education," and "open education" under President Kim Young Sam's administration, and "neoliberal policy" under President Kim Dae Jung's administration. Sim admitted that the policy of "open education" was successful in helping to challenge authoritarian school culture; nonetheless, education policies stressing individualism and competition, he argued, weakened schools' communitarian nature and reduced the possibility of social and political alliances. Such education policies, he stated, severely damaged the structure of participatory democracy and prompted the collapse of the school community.

NEOLIBERALS: "CHOICE," "COMPETITION," AND "EXCELLENCE"

The neoliberal discourse led the "school collapse" debate between 1999 and 2001. Sharing little in common with the previous two voices, which were affiliated with teachers' organizations, the neoliberal discourse presented a relatively clear set of interests based on the social class of the participants. The primary agents producing this discourse were a group of parents, particularly from middle- and upper-middle class backgrounds, and the conservative mass media, which had helped to fuel the school collapse debate in the first place (Seo 2003; see also chapter 4, by Seo, in this volume).

The neoliberal discourse interpreted school collapse as a natural consequence of a school system unable to adapt to a new social and economic environment. Neoliberals contended that the entire structure of society had shifted from a premodern agricultural society and a modern industrial society to a postmodern technological one, yet schools had not adapted to this change. Providing none of the quality education that respected students' individual merits and desires, schools were unprepared to educate the next generation of students to succeed within the emergent economy. Neoliberals argued that obsolete educational ideas and systems would endanger the younger generation as they moved towards a global society of unlimited competition (D. Kim 2002).

South Korea's three major newspapers, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, and *Joongang Ilbo*, produced a large portion of this discourse through editorials. Editorial columns enumerated many factors that contributed to school collapse, in general viewing the government's strong control over the schooling system as undesirable or even detrimental (Seo 2002). Pieces with titles such as "Unshackle the Admission Process from the Ministry of Education's Control" (*Chosun Ilbo* 2001) strongly advocated against the government's involvement in education, particularly in the high-school and college admission processes. Neoliberals believed that the public-school system placed excessive emphasis on equality at the expense of excellence (*Chosun Ilbo* 1999d; K. M. Yang 2001), asserting that "the governing principle in our classrooms is nothing but an arithmetical view of equality. . . . A mechanistic view of equality prevails over all other values" (K. M. Yang 2001).

Neoliberal discourse attributed schools' failure to school educate to three particular factors: the use of randomization in high-school admission, inconsistent college admission policies, and the lack of competition in the entire schooling system, including competition among teachers and individual schools. One of this discourse's major critiques was leveled at the lottery system for high-school admission, which was used in most of the large metropolitan school districts, including Seoul: "School collapse was, in part, caused by the system itself. The lottery system for high-school admission made 90 percent of the high school 'neglected children.' There is no effective method for a teacher to teach a heterogeneous class of 50 students. Teachers tend to focus on the top 20 percent of the students; the rest become alienated and fall behind" (*Chosun Ilbo* 1999c). Neoliberals argued that the government should permit more independent private and special-purpose high schools that would serve gifted students. In a similar vein, this discourse criticized the government's control over

early study abroad as an infringement of the individual right to procure a quality education.

Neoliberals proposed a laissez-faire policy in the college admission process as well, arguing that each individual college and university should control its own admission process so that each institution could select the most appropriate students for its educational purposes (*Chosun Ilbo* 2001).

> With the involvement of the government [Ministry of Education] in the admission process of universities, we have experienced all sorts of problems, regardless of the method taken. The conclusion is then clear and simple: leave the autonomous decision making up to each university. The Scholastic Aptitude Test will still be used in the universities' decision-making process; but how they will use this information will be their decision. . . . There is no solution unless the government [Ministry of Education] unshackles the university admission process from its control. (*Chosun Ilbo* 2001)

Advocating competition as a positive educational value was another distinguishing characteristic of this discourse. Neoliberals, in general, urged competition among teachers and schools in order to improve performance and effectiveness (D. Kim 2002):

> We believe that it is time to improve the competitiveness of the teaching profession as a whole. A long time ago, it was proposed that a more competitive system be implemented in the teaching profession. . . . The competitiveness of a nation is closely related to the competitiveness of its education system. . . . If teachers neglect their research and instructional responsibilities, they should leave the profession. Implementing competition in the teaching profession is an inevitable trend in the contemporary era. . . . Teachers' organizations should collaborate with the government in leading the discussion to find ways to implement a competitive education system. (*Joongang Ilbo* 2001)

The three major foci of neoliberal discourse were "choice," "competition," and "excellence" (see also chapter 6, by Misook Kim, and the introduction in this volume). For neoliberals, the ultimate goal of schooling was to cultivate an individual who could be highly competitive in the ever-changing global economy. Neoliberals, therefore, eagerly accepted the "marketization" of education as a way to provide higher-quality and more individualized educational goods for students.

What remains unclear is what made the neoliberal discourse such a powerful voice in the discussion of school collapse. Several critical sociologists (D. Seo 2003) have explored the nature of neoliberal discourse and why it is so powerful at this time. They note many interesting social,

cultural, and political phenomena that have arisen with the transformation and stabilization of South Korea's class structure during the last two decades (C. Yang 2000). In particular, with the consolidation of the middle and upper-middle classes, these groups have begun to express their class interests through various influential means, including mass media and political elections (P. Chŏn and Kim 1998; Park in chapter 7 of this volume corroborates this point through her ethnographic research).

Due to strong government control over the entire school system, however, these affluent families could play only a limited role in their children's education. The quality of school facilities and teaching forces remained relatively homogeneous nationwide and largely immune to the wealth of any particular school district or individual family. The government did not permit education practices that were seen to contribute to class reproduction (e.g., early tracking, differentiated curricula, independent private schools, flexible admission policies in universities). As a result, the school system's contribution to class reproduction remained minimal (OECD 2001). With little control over their children's education processes, middle- and upper-middle class families had to struggle to transfer their class status to their children.

DE-SCHOOLING ADVOCATES: HUMAN RIGHTS AND A RADICAL VISION OF EDUCATION

The last and most radical point of view presented in the school collapse debate was that of "de-schooling" advocates. They viewed school collapse as a natural consequence of fundamental changes in South Korean society during the previous two decades (Cheong 2000). According to these advocates, the South Korean education system, like the modern schooling systems of other countries, was originally based on the needs of a developing modern society. Reflecting an old social model, the rigid structure of schools and the entire education system could not but fail to meet the challenges of an emerging postmodern, postindustrial, technology-based society that required a different economic, social, and cultural infrastructure. Based on this analysis of social change, de-schooling advocates identified the rigid structure of schools and the entire education system as the fundamental cause of school collapse.

A diverse group of people, including scholars who advocated postmodern theory and parents who supported alternative schools and homeschooling, participated in this discourse. Even though the boundaries of this group were less clear than the others, the class background of major participants

tended to be middle or upper-middle class (a point substantiated by Seo's research on homeschooling in chapter 4). The majority were at least college educated and able to afford higher-quality instructional and educational experiences for their children, the cost of which exceeded that of public school education (*Chosun Ilbo* 1999a). This group also held a more liberal view of education than any other group described in this chapter.

Many scholars and educators in the previous three discourse groups also acknowledged the occurrence of significant changes in South Korean society during the 1990s. However, the de-schooling advocates believed the changes to be much more fundamental, and they criticized the schools for failing to meet the challenges of contemporary society: "The most fundamental reason (for school collapse) is because the current model of schools based on industrial society is no longer effective in our postindustrial 'information society'" (C. Chŏn 1999a, 120). Ŏm (1999) presented a similar diagnosis. While the modern schooling system was effective in modern society, based on the Fordist model of mass production and mass consumption, it was too enormous and rigid for a postindustrial society, based on flexible systems of capital accumulation.

To drive home their point, de-schooling advocates produced extensive critiques of the modern schooling system that were often accompanied by an extensive critique of modern society as a whole:

> Schools developed a variety of methods to control the bodies of children to fulfill their primary goal of control. Most of those methods came from military training. . . . Didn't politicians who hoped to have obedient citizens want children to grow up like automatic robots, always compliant to authority? . . . Didn't society want people who would just obey orders? Children trained in schools that forced them to fit into a prefabricated model, reciting "in line, in line" under the name of "order" . . . functioned well within an industrial society, rarely rebelling against their given role/position in society. (Hyun 1999b)

According to de-schooling advocates, three characteristics embedded in the modern schooling system make it impossible for it to meet the challenges of postmodern, postindustrial society: the system's oppressiveness, its controlling nature, and the pursuit of uniformity. They thus defined "the institutionalized system of education called 'school' as nothing more than a structure of oppression limiting the freedom, creativity, and individuality of children" (K. M. Yang 1999).

De-schooling advocates articulated the ultimate goal of education to be the individual's right to pursue happiness (H. Cho Han 1999). They expressed an optimistic view of human nature and believed that cre-

ative and free-minded individuals could shape society in a positive way. Therefore, it was not surprising that their discourse was often based on the concept of children's rights—a call for awarding some fundamental human rights to children (Pae 2000; J. S. Kim 2001), as well as the rights of parents to pursue their own happiness.

A unique feature of this discourse is its strong sense of agency. Even though de-schooling advocates identified several causes of school collapse, they still viewed it as an unavoidable consequence of social change. They constantly emphasized the importance of individual agency, encouraging people to think and act independently about their children's education, communicate their opinions and desires, and not blindly trust the larger system. Based on this process-based pragmatic approach, de-schooling advocates suggested educational content and methods that reflected progressive educational philosophy, which relied on children's experiences for curriculum development and their social and intellectual needs for organizing instructional and learning activities (S. Y. Kim and Ko 2000).

The de-schooling position, however, posed a significant dilemma. Its advocates' deep mistrust of the existing K-12 schooling system and their excessive emphasis on agency led them to overlook the structural aspects of education and their relation to society at large. Lacking structural alternatives at the college level, the de-schooling advocates had no option but to return to the institutionalized education system despite being vigorously critical of it (see chapter 4, by Seo, in this volume). Furthermore, many found that the voices of de-schooling advocates reflected the experiences and interests of their own (upper and middle) class, since such diverse educational choices were available only to those with significant social and cultural capital and financial means. Unable to afford such alternative education processes, the majority of South Korean families and their children were excluded from the educational possibilities suggested by the de-schooling advocates.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis of the discourses of school collapse offered in this chapter illuminates several interesting and critical aspects of South Korean education as a whole. The four major discourses—traditionalist, democratic reformist, neoliberal, and de-schooling—represent a spectrum of voices in South Korean education. Of course, these discourses existed prior to the school collapse phenomenon; however, through public debates the fundamental differences among these four groups became much more visible.

Significantly more noticeable, for one, was the class or group affiliation of each discourse. While the discourses of the traditionalists and democratic reformists were largely enacted and articulated by the two major teachers' organizations, KFT and KTU, the neoliberal and de-schooling discourses largely reflected middle- and upper-middle-class families' growing dissatisfaction with and interest in restructuring the existing public schooling system. Considering the higher proportion of college-educated and middle and upper-middle classes subscribing to the three major newspapers (e.g., *Chosun Ilbo* 2002), the mass media's active engagement of the "school collapse" discourse makes sense (Seo 2003).

These affiliations may have been shocking to many South Koreans who, in the past, had not observed such clear class affiliations in education discourse. However, these class-based alliances were a fairly predictable result of the rise of stable middle and upper-middle classes (C. Yang 2000). This relationship between discourse and its class base is important to understand and yet should not be exaggerated, since variation did exist among the class associations found in each of the four discourses. For example, while neoliberal discourse showed a somewhat clear class affiliation, people from diverse class backgrounds supported the other three discourses. In a related vein, a similar class background did not always render the same discourse. An interesting example is the de-schooling advocates and the neoliberals. Even though the majority of the two groups consisted of people from upper-middle-class or at least middle-class backgrounds, their solutions to the school-collapse crisis differed significantly. The critiques of institutional education by de-schooling advocates were much more radical than their neoliberal counterparts, with the former wanting to fundamentally alter education practices in a way that would create an embryonic space for alternative education in the future. Another critical factor in these debates was the ideological understanding of the purpose of education as perceived and promoted by these discourses. In other words, how people defined and promoted the fundamental goal of education actually mediated the relationship between their class background and their participation in a particular discourse.

The contrasting nature of these four forces, or discourses, in South Korean education can be interpreted in multiple ways, and it is possible to offer some conjectures regarding possible alliances and conflicts among the four in the near future. However, two relatively clear themes emerge from close analysis. First, one of the most compelling changes in the South Korean education system since the early 1990s has been a strong surge of individualism. The strong presence of the discourse of individualism

in the public debate on school collapse corroborates this thesis. Neoliberals and de-schooling advocates did share a common ground to the extent that both groups focused on individual intellectual capacity and need for growth. Even though the two discourses proposed completely different views of an ideal society and the goals of education, they both relied on the discourse of individualism to meet current challenges in schools. This advocacy of the rights and desires of individual students stood in sharp contrast with the valuing of the communitarian goal of education by traditionalists and democratic reformists. The tension between these two camps will continue, even though some participants in the debates believe that individualism and communitarianism are complementary rather than contradictory values.

A second interesting aspect of the discourse of school collapse was its connectedness and resemblance to the larger education discourse internationally (e.g., in the United States). In particular, neoliberals who were advocating market-based education constantly referred to the "American model of education" as an example of a successful system that achieves excellence through choice and competition. The discourse of school collapse was already part of a complex web of ideological discourses originating in and outside of the country. Therefore, even though each linguistic event remained unique and contextual, the embedded power struggles and ideological competition and alliances reached far beyond South Korea's national borders.

Numerous scholars have documented the surge of "neoliberal" or "neoconservative" discourses in many countries in recent decades (P. Ch'ŏn and Kim 1998; Peters 1999). One of the most disturbing aspects of neoliberal education discourse, both in the South Korean context and abroad, is its lack of interest in or understanding of the ultimate goal of education. Even though ideological terms such as "choice," "competition," and "excellence" represent legitimate ways to achieve greater productivity and competitiveness in the global society, none of these terms can be appreciated as education's definitive goal. One of the most serious defects of this discourse is its lack of attention to values and ethical or moral aspirations essential to human growth.

Unfortunately this kind of instrumentalization of education and learning based on the needs of postindustrial society is not unique to South Korean education discourse. In fact, it is widespread throughout the world. Maxine Green, a renowned education researcher in the United States, acknowledges this as a problem but she still articulates the possibility of a more holistically oriented and community-based education system: "Yes,

one tendency in education today is to shape malleable young people to serve the needs of technology and the postindustrial society. However, there is another tendency that has to do with the growth of persons, with the education of persons to become different, to find their voices, and to play participatory and articulate parts in a community in the making" (Green 1995, 132).

To some extent, the discourse of school collapse in South Korea epitomizes the inevitable conflict between the surge of instrumental views of education based on the demands of the postindustrial economy and other alternative, more culturally or politically aware and value-oriented views. This conflict is global, yet each local example possesses a unique dynamic based on the cultural, social, and political heritage of the particular society. Therefore, it is worth investigating how the South Korean education system, with its strong communitarian tradition and equity awareness, will respond and react to the influx of neoliberal education discourse. In the next few decades, the four different ideological discourses presented in this study will either form new ideological alliances or draw new battle lines as the South Korean education system continues to evolve.

PART II

Alternative Education

3. A Second-Chance High School

Students' Second-Class Internalization and Stratification

Jung-ah Choi

In the summer of 1999 and fall of 2000, I taught classes in a second-chance high school, Sae Gil High (SGH), in Seoul, South Korea. SGH accommodated students who had been expelled from mainstream schools, primarily for behavioral reasons such as truancy, bullying, and violence. They enrolled in SGH to continue their education, since SGH confers middle-school and high-school diplomas. Students attending SGH shared similar characteristics such as low academic achievement and family poverty. This second-chance school was starkly different from regular schools in South Korea in terms of school policies and regulations, organization, resource distribution, peer relations, and teaching practices; it thereby generated an alternative culture, climate, and norms. In South Korea, second-chance high schools have existed for a long time in the form of "civic education institutes" or "adult education." Recently they have been renamed and repositioned in alignment with the "school collapse" phenomenon (see chapter 2 in this volume, by Jae Hoon Lim). Second-chance schools began to boast of their liberal culture and radical policies in order to differentiate themselves from mainstream schooling and to position themselves as "pioneer" schools. As returnees, their students had the experience of being both in and against school, in the mainstream and second-chance school systems.

When I taught in the second-chance school, I had the opportunity to hear the schooling stories of returnees: how and why they had left their mainstream school and returned to a second-chance school, and what they experienced between those two schools. It was these stories that motivated this research and allowed for my examination of the role of alternative schooling in identity formation.

Second-chance schools provided a specific institutional discourse—both

official and unofficial—that shaped the ways in which their students spoke about the education system and their own place in it. That is, second-chance schools played a crucial role in developing students' aspirations by tutoring them to internalize a sense of being second-class citizens who were attending a second-class institution. Conversely, they helped students to claim or reclaim their sense of selves as their life stories were recontextualized through the second-chance school experiences. This chapter addresses the way in which second-chance school discourses and norms helped both to stimulate and to regulate students' reflections on their past experiences (in both mainstream schools and on the streets), and the way in which the second-chance school's particular discourses reshaped their identities. In particular, this chapter discusses how second-chance schools, despite their official mission of giving a second chance to dropouts, reinforce a school-failure identity.

Theoretically, this study integrates a critical educational approach with an ethnographic research method (Anderson 1989). Critical education studies have argued that schools regulate and reify social divisions, maintaining cultural hegemony and perpetuating inequality. Critical theories and ethnographies, which have flourished in the United States (e.g., Anyon 1981; Apple 1982; Fine 1991; Foley 1990; MacLeod 1987; McLaren 1986; Valenzuela 1999) and other Western countries (e.g., Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Reay 1998; Whitty 1985; Willis 1977; Young 1971), provide a framework within which students' narratives are conceptualized and analyzed. In particular, I employ a narrative approach to criticize the static representation of disenfranchised youth as being subordinated. To this end, I draw on the poststructural stance that regards the self as multiple, inconsistent, and fragmented. Furthermore, a poststructural frame illuminates the multiple and often contradictory positions within student narratives, as they encounter the shifting and multidirectional effects of social and institutional power (Clough 1992; Flax 1990; N. Fraser and Nicholson, 1990; Lather 1991; Weedon 1987). Thus, I am particularly interested in capturing the complexities of identity by exploring the context in which narratives are told.

In viewing schooling as a part of the process of self-formation (Giroux 1983; Weis 1990) rather than merely a mechanism of social reproduction, this research shows how second-chance school students continuously negotiated their identities in the process of schooling. I pay particular attention to how second-chance school students—as former dropouts—developed social identities in a highly stratified South Korean society and how these

identities were then reshaped in response to institutional, cultural, and ideological forces. I bring the students' stories in relation to the body of literature on identity construction, raising the question of whether second-chance schools serve to reproduce social stratification and, if so, how. Existing studies of schooling have tended to explore the role of *mainstream* schools in class formation; this study asks, "What about second-chance (i.e., non-mainstream) schools?" The official brochure of SGH claims that the school offers opportunities to those who have been denied them, thus contributing to class-based equality. My research findings question this claim and unpack the ways in which second-chance schools also perpetuate the existing class stratification system.

"Is this a 'school'?": Sae Gil High's policies and facilities

The data used in this study are derived from ethnographic field research that I conducted at SGH in 2001. SGH serves those who are expelled from mainstream schools and who are unable or unwilling to return to the mainstream schooling system. SGH is nonselective in terms of students' geographic location, academic history, age, gender, and social class. The official policy states that anyone who wishes to receive an education at the school may enroll. As far as the school's culture goes, SGH breaks with mainstream institutional practices. The school's loose organization and lax regulations, the absence of rigorous programs, the leniency of its teachers and administrators, and its low academic expectations all promote student freedom and autonomy. The permissiveness of SGH's administration is remarkable. Chronic truancy is generally disregarded. Students expelled from mainstream schools for more than thirty days of absence (truancy) can stay at SGH, where a maximum of seventy days of absence is allowed each semester. Smoking, tattoos, and jewelry—all generally punishable in mainstream schools—are permitted at SGH. This nontraditional culture reflects the principal's educational philosophy about the school's relationship to mainstream schools. SGH purports to challenge the problems inherent in mainstream schools by differentiating its policy, mission, and culture (Choi 2004).

Due to limited funding, the facilities at SGH are in dismal condition. The school itself looks like an abandoned building in a poor neighborhood and occupies approximately one-tenth of the standard amount of space for mainstream schools. The one restroom, shared by both teachers and

students, always smelled foul. With no fence or gate enclosing the school grounds, the building is bordered by sidewalks, and there is no playground or playing field to speak of. In order to hold physical education classes or graduation ceremonies, SGH rents the sports field of a nearby school or the community stadium. Indeed, the school's shabby appearance suggests less a school and more a private institute experiencing hard times (see chapter 6 in this volume on the competitiveness of private institutes). School visitors often wonder, "Is this a school, or a private institute?" Were it not for the plaque on the front of the building, few people would know that it was a school.

There are thirty-eight second-chance schools nationwide and eight of them are in Seoul. As nontraditional schools, they are not supervised by the Korean Ministry of Education and don't need to meet its regulations governing enrollment size, curriculum, architecture and facilities, or teacher recruitment. Nor are second-chance schools provided with the same level of government financial support as mainstream schools. Most of SGH's funding is obtained privately (e.g., from social workers or through fund-raising campaigns and special events—the principal himself works tirelessly to raise enough money to keep the school running). As a second-chance school, SGH thus occupies the bottom tier of the South Korean system. Despite its poor facilities and nontraditional policies, however, SGH fulfills an important function that attracts students: it confers accredited high-school diplomas. This ability, which distinguishes them from private educational institutes, enables SGH graduates to go to college, just like graduates of mainstream high schools.

At SGH, I worked with approximately one hundred students, both male and female. Besides teaching them, I conversed with them in the school cafeteria on a more personal and informal level. After interviewing dozens of students at SGH, I later selected six key participants (three males and three females) for in-depth interviews. Selected to represent the diversity of the student body, they had the following in common: (1) expulsion from mainstream schools for violating school rules and policies; (2) involvement in street life, such as gang involvement or drug abuse, after leaving school or sometimes running away from home; and (3) an inability or unwillingness to return to mainstream schooling. Though these students had struggled in mainstream schools, they thrived within the second-chance school environment. In addition to these interviews, I also interviewed a dozen students and teachers at mainstream high schools and examined their policy documents to get a better understanding of SGH in the context of the South Korean educational system.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF SAE GIL HIGH

> I quit [mainstream] school a year ago because teachers often beat me [for not obeying school regulations]. I had no intention to return. One day, my aunt [with whom he had lived since his parents got divorced] told me about a school very different from typical schools. I resisted for a while but my aunt begged me to visit the school and then decide. So I came here with my aunt to look around and I saw students with make-up, red hair, hip-hop jeans, and tattoos. I was like "Wow! This kind of school exists?" I quickly decided to come to this school [SGH].

Hyŏnsik, the narrator of this story, was a mischievous eighth-grade boy who enjoyed the loose regulations at SGH. Expelled from mainstream school because of his involvement in youth street culture (i.e., school gangs), he spent the following year on the street. When informed about SGH and its liberal policies, he decided to try it. Hyŏnsik was not the only student attracted by by SGH's lenient regulations. For Mingyu, who could not adapt to the strict rules and regulations at a mainstream school, SGH was also perfect. Mingyu took full advantage of its lax rules to engage in mischievous or unruly behavior that would not be allowed in a mainstream school. Mingyu jokingly said, "This school is just at my level." Throughout the students' narratives, they expressed joy at discovering SGH's liberal policies and environment. Indeed, the (innovative and nontraditional) atmosphere created by SGH's policies set it apart from mainstream schools and helped to account for the fact that many students who had fallen by the wayside in the mainstream school system managed to survive at SGH. Most students whom I interviewed described how comfortable and reassuring it was to be in an environment where their youth culture, disdained by mainstream teachers, was accepted. In effect, SGH not only accepts but even legitimates the youths' social world.

The students' gratitude towards SGH was a prominent component of our interviews. Understandably, they expressed deep respect for the SGH principal since SGH was responsible for rescuing them from the mainstream school system, their struggles to obtain a GED, and the streets. Their gratitude was tied to their past experiences of rejection and condemnation by mainstream schools, which for many were places of physical and mental oppression and exclusion. As Jim Fraser and his colleagues' (1997) research shows, institutionally marginalized students (alternative schoolers) quickly distance themselves from their previous schools and embrace certain features of second-chance schooling. A significant number of SGH

students commented on how they were impressed with the kind teachers at SGH, comparing them to their mainstream counterparts:

> This school's teachers are angels. You know how mean the mainstream school teachers are? They disparaged people like me, saying outright, "You guys are garbage. No good. Our school doesn't need you." Plus they would beat us when they were in the mood. But here [at SGH] teachers are fair. When they hit you, I never think that they hit out of anger. At regular schools, some teachers beat us just when one student talked loudly in class—all in the name of group discipline. Some teachers also slapped us for no reason. They were despicable.

The students explained that until they came to SGH, they did not know that teachers could be good people. Their narratives revealed feelings of alienation due to mainstream teachers' cruelty and thus they were especially impressed with SGH teachers' warmth and compassion. Interestingly, as they came to know the SGH teachers, their hatred of the mainstream teachers often came into sharper focus, contributing to more deep-seated critiques.

By and large, SGH students evaluated the school's policies and teachers in a positive light. However, when it came time to comparing themselves to mainstream students, they expressed shame and self-mortification. Their shame was associated with cultural stereotypes that stigmatized SGH as a low-ranking or bottom-tier school with a student body composed of social pariahs. Woogi, an eighth-grader, commented, "When I say that I go to SGH, they [mainstream school students] ridicule me." The social status of SGH played a significant role in constructing the students' identities: aware of their school's low rank, they associated themselves with its lower status.

The students' feelings of shame and stigma were embodied in the physical trappings of the school. All of the students that I interviewed commented on the school's shabby appearance and its poor facilities. Bora, an eleventh grader, seemed to speak for many students when she said that she was embarrassed by the run-down building and limited facilities: "I hesitated to enroll in this school because I was so disappointed with the school's shabby appearance. I was expecting the school to look like a school rather than a small private institute. Upon seeing the school, my mom discouraged me from enrolling. She said, 'Is this really a school without an athletic field?'" Indeed, the school's lack of facilities diminished the students' image of themselves as students.

The SGH students' perceptions of their school also framed their perceptions of their own social and education positions. Ashamed of SGH,

they did not fail to connect this shame with their own quality as students. According to the students, the school's poor reputation and facilities confirmed their own status as second-rate students. They often said that they felt like nobodies when they hung out with their "regular school" friends. One student said: "I will definitely go on to college. I have to go in order to hide the shame of my high-school name [SGH] underneath my college name on my résumé." Some students even failed to tell their parents that they attended SGH, pretending to be attending a mainstream school instead. Sharpening their sense of shame and frustration was the older age of many of the students at their grade level. As one student commented: "I don't contact my friends who knew me at my previous school. They are now high-school seniors whereas I am still a sophomore."

These students' sense of themselves was unstable, incoherent, and even contradictory. While they appreciated SGH's lenient policies and kind teachers, they also felt disillusioned and ashamed. Yunju, a young woman in twelfth grade, expressed her gratitude toward SGH for rescuing her from her lonely struggle to earn a GED, but she also quickly voiced her doubts about the school: "I am happy with this school and deeply thankful although this school is not really a school." In a similar vein, Woogi was grateful to his friend for introducing SGH to him. He added, however, "I want to get out of this pseudo-school and attend a mainstream high school after graduating from the SGH middle-school program." Hyŏnsik also commented, "Although I am in an institution that is half-school and half-not, I still proudly remind my dad that I am going to school." Such characterizations of SGH as "a pseudo-school," "not a real school," or "half-school and half-not" thus index the students' keen awareness of belonging to a low-status institution.

SGH students' comments about their teachers also vacillated between pride and shame. On the one hand, students were very appreciative of the fact that their SGH teachers did not harass, disrespect, ignore, or otherwise mistreat them. On the other hand, students recognized that their teachers' tolerance and indulgence were not always signs of love and dedication but rather evidence of having given up on educating them. Several students reasoned: "I think that teachers here sympathize with us. They know that we will not go anywhere if we are kicked out of here. They try to be nice enough to accept all kinds of behavior."

These complex, ambivalent, and contradictory perceptions of SGH intersected with the students' understanding of their past educational experiences to form their ambiguous educational identities. Arguably, SGH was an ideological and political space in which they reconstituted memories of

their pre-SGH life. At SGH, their value systems were continuously contested and renegotiated according to the ways in which they participated in discourses in and about the school. I introduce the internal mechanisms of SGH's culture in order to examine how SGH facilitated the ways in which students recalled their pasts and reconstructed their pre-SGH memories in relation to the school's practices.

SAE GIL HIGH AS A CULTURAL INSTITUTION

The most prominent feature of SGH was the latitude it granted to student behavior and culture. On any given day, students talked among themselves, listened to music with headphones, played electronic games, fixed their hair, applied make-up, and used cell phones in the classroom. Further, students were cavalier about skipping school. Indeed, skipping one or two days a week was so normal that they did not even need to explain it to the teachers. On the contrary, because absenteeism was so common at SGH, students who attended regularly were praised. This leniency contrasted sharply with the policies of mainstream schools, where absence is punished and regular attendance is expected.

SGH students also dressed in a flamboyant manner. Both male and female students were conscious of their appearance, adorning themselves with jewelry, make-up, and the latest fashion. They followed fads and competed with each other over who could better imitate their favorite stars and who owned more expensive commodities. Many students bought brand-name motorcycles, cell phones, and other expensive items in their efforts to emulate South Korean pop stars. As scholars have observed, television dramas, movies, and youth magazines constantly push young people to consume images of masculinity or femininity and to develop a sexual identity at a young age (Fine 1991; Foley 1990; Hemmings 2002).

The behavior of SGH students, such as their frequent absences and their teachers' tolerance for such truancy, left the impression that neither the students nor teachers cared much about school. Nonetheless, students' efforts to graduate were impressive. "Graduation" (earning a diploma) was their primary goal. They were keenly aware of the factors that affected graduation: minimum attendance and showing up for exams. Their obsession with receiving the diploma was most evident on exam days. The school administered two exams each year: a midterm and a final exam. On exam days, classrooms suddenly filled up with more than three times as many students as on regular class days. Students scrambled to find desks and chairs and to borrow pencils before the exam (most of them did not carry

school bags). Although they did not care about grades, they were aware of the importance of taking the exams, since attendance at the exams was required in order to advance to the next grade level.

While the students made great efforts to graduate, equally impressive were teachers' efforts at preventing students from dropping out of SGH. Teachers went to great lengths to counsel unmotivated students and convince them of the importance of graduation. Although lax about some absenteeism, teachers kept a careful count of the number of absences in accordance with graduation requirements. One teacher, for example, made an average of twenty calls each day to persuade absent students to attend school the next day. I witnessed one female teacher tearfully pleading with her students to come to school. Another teacher, however, had a different take on this sort of cajoling: "I think that calling them is not an effective way to force them to return to school. I'd rather just wait for them to return of their own volition. I only call just before a student is on the verge of being expelled because of his or her absences." Indeed, the week before exam week, teachers were busy calling students, informing them of the exam and emphasizing its importance. At such times, it seemed that a teacher's first job was to track attendance, while teaching was only a secondary concern.

In a trend that runs parallel to Lois Weis's (1990) ethnographic data on lower-class high-school students, there is a contradiction between SGH students' nontraditional school behavior and their desire to earn a diploma (see also McNeil 1986). The social and cultural pressure to obtain educational credentials undergirds SGH's preoccupation with making sure that its students obtained these significant credentials. In fact, both SGH students and teachers were keenly conscious of the importance of the credential. Teachers often admonished: "You have to be equipped with at least high-school credentials. Otherwise, it will be difficult for you to get a job even at McDonald's." In South Korea, where over 99 percent of students obtain a high-school diploma, a diploma is a symbol of a normative life course and is a minimum requirement for social adulthood. Although anti-school behavior was rampant, and teachers at SGH were more permissive and tolerant than mainstream teachers in terms of disciplinary practice, SGH students were still socialized to be good citizens. Teachers emphasized the importance of school credentials, praised hardworking and respectful students, and discouraged and belittled disrespectful students for being immature. Teachers designated those who complied with the institutional and social norms as "mature" students, while they branded recalcitrant students "immature."

SGH teachers' pedagogical position was apparent in their conversations with new students. They often reminded new students that SGH would grant them legitimate diplomas if they made it through graduation. Teachers seldom pried into students' past misconduct because they believed that what students might do in the future was more important than what they had done in the past. In class or during the counseling sessions with students, teachers often gave advice such as, "It's not too late. Better late than never." Teachers valued palpable changes in students' attitudes:

> Our students have gone through ups and downs. They know what is right and wrong by now. You [referring to the author] may think that our students are still problem students—unruly, rebellious—but the very act of their returning [to school] proves their new determination. They were as corrupt as they could be but now they have come to their senses and returned to school. If they had not developed new minds, they would not have returned to school.

Teachers tried their best to give hope to students and praised the very act of returning to school. The teachers' gospel is summarized in these words: "If you become a good student by reforming your past attitude, you will get a high-school diploma and even go to college. It is all up to you." These are encouraging words indeed. However, as I will argue in the following section, this flawless education advice draws on a particular strategy, namely the prevailing ideology of second-chance schooling. The next section will scrutinize this subtle and hidden ideology of second-chance schooling through students' retrospective accounts.

RECALLING THE PAST

> "I don't understand myself—why did I do such stupid things! I really really regret dropping out—what an absurd decision!"
>
> "If I had been more thoughtful about my future, I would not have left school."

Previous literature on dropouts illustrates that dropouts usually defy (Fine 1991) or refuse to acknowledge the social value of school (Ogbu 1994). In their ethnography, Stevenson and Ellsworth (1991, 1993) found two patterns of dropouts: one group blames the system and the other group places the blame on themselves. The former group usually relies on peer group support and maintains healthy self-esteem, while the latter group suffers from self-pity and lack of self esteem. My data suggests that the majority of these second-chance school students blamed themselves for having neglected their schoolwork. Statements such as "I was immature," "I lost

my mind," or "I dropped out thoughtlessly," revealed that the students did not value—or even despised—their past decisions and experiences. This particular way of recalling the past was very much bound up with their current status as returnees. Furthermore, as discussed above, their regrets derived from SGH's run-down facilities and lax policies and their knowledge of its larger social reputation.

At SGH, expressions of regret were interpreted positively as a sign that a student was determined to improve his or her school behavior and study habits. Yongwoo, who was known as SGH's smartest and most motivated student, painfully regretted his past; on one occasion, when I pried, he replied angrily, "I don't want to talk about [what I did in the past]. Don't judge me by what I did before." Bora, another motivated student, repeatedly said, "I was stupid. I was so stupid that I brazenly left school." Bora and Yongwoo emphasized their new selves, stressing that they now understood that they need to attend, wear the uniform, avoid getting into fights, and comply with teachers' instructions. At least to some degree, most students at SGH had gone through a value transformation in the period between leaving mainstream school and deciding to return to school, and it was this reformation and new value system that garnered praise at SGH.

It is an interesting paradox that the more regret a student felt, the better a student he or she became. The converse was also true—that the more compliant a student was to social norms, the more regret he or she felt for having dropped out. Along the same lines, the more each student was inclined to think of the future, the more he or she regretted the past. This correlation is clear upon comparing the two groups: "mature" and "immature" students. The quotes that open this section belong to the good students, the teachers' pets at SGH, all of whom bitterly regretted having left school. By contrast, Mingyu and Hyŏnsik, who enjoyed SGH's liberal policies, showed little regret for having dropped out.

Interestingly, although the more motivated students felt grateful for SGH, they were also less satisfied. Bora, for example, longed for a more rigorous education:

> When I enrolled in this school, I strengthened my determination, thinking, "I will study hard and I will go to college." For the first couple of weeks I started studying, and I tried not to be distracted by clothes and that kind of stuff. But the environment did not allow me to do so. If I was not wearing stuff like other people I would be rejected. You [referring to the author] know this school's students, right? This school atmosphere got me automatically into fashion. Because of the peer pressure about fashion, I could not avoid it.

Bora's determination dissipated, and as time went by she became more like her schoolmates. Her complaints about SGH were superseded by self-blame: "It's all my fault. If I had kept up good attendance in my previous school, I wouldn't have to be here. I guess I should be grateful to SGH." Yongwoo, on the other hand, expressed confidence that he would be able to adjust himself to a regimented mainstream school. He was not attracted to SGH's lenient policy and teachers: "I like teachers who are stern and strict. I don't like teachers who are like, 'I don't care if you guys are absent or not.' I think those teachers are irresponsible or cowardly." Yongwoo faulted the teachers' loose classroom management and weak focus on academics. However, he quickly added, "It's all because of me. I am not blaming them. I am *not* saying that teachers here are doing something wrong. This school is established for dropouts, so teachers here are doing the right thing." In just this way, when SGH students felt the urge to complain about SGH, they most often quickly attributed their dissatisfaction to their own mistakes, reasoning, "I deserve this school because I was expelled from a mainstream school." Thus even those who believed that SGH was not a worthy institution maintained a positive evaluation of the school and expressed their gratitude.

While the more motivated students shared their disappointment with the school's lax standards, SGH proved to be a highly satisfactory educational environment for those with little determination for rehabilitation, such as Mingyu and Hyŏnsik. These "immature" students tended to be content with SGH. Being grouped with others who had dropped out or been expelled from school resituated them in such a way as to obliterate their low self-esteem. Mingyu remarked that before he came to SGH, "I thought I was extremely bad, but I realized that I am only moderately bad in terms of behavior. Here in this school, there are a dozen guys who went to juvenile detention more times than I did." Although students like Mingyu were aware that their behavior and values were not socially acceptable for students, they were able to rationalize and justify themselves within the broader cultural territory of SGH. For these students, regret for having been expelled hardly registered.

If there are two distinctive groups of students in terms of the way that they recalled the past, what role did SGH play for each group? For the students who were now determined to be good students, self-blame and regret prevailed. The causal relationship between their regret and their return to school requires careful analysis. They may have enrolled at SGH because they regretted dropping out and had gained new determination.

The converse is also possible: they regretted dropping out only after coming to SGH. One student's comments provide a clue:

> When I heard of SGH, I was very excited, thinking that I could be a student again. I thought that I could attend a real school. However, all my anticipation vanished when I saw the school building. I was stunned to see no playground for this school. I was thinking to myself: "I have to attend this kind of school *because* I am a *reject*. And I know that I am not in the position to complain about this environment because it's all my fault."

The mainstream schooling opportunity was lost to them forever, and no amount of regret could allow them to regain that opportunity, yet the bitterness of their regret was intensified after enrolling at a second-chance school, where they were reminded daily of their marginal status.

Although the teachers encouraged students to make efforts to prepare for their *future,* such advice ironically made students reflect on their *past* and the fact that they had left mainstream school. Though the school's rhetoric promised students that they could have a fresh start by distancing themselves from their identity as dropouts, their present placement at SGH was itself a marker of previous failure, and thus their present position bound them to their identity as dropouts. In addition, SGH did not allow students to skip grade levels, a provision that made it impossible for students to rectify their past mistakes. Students who had fallen a step behind would always be "late learners," no matter how hard they worked. Therefore, if the purpose of SGH is to allow students to dismiss past experiences and start a new life, it is a completely failed project. By providing a second-rate education in the name of second-chance schooling, SGH only perpetuates its students' second-class status.

While SGH's environment and reputation as a place for the "pariah crowd" were detrimental to those trying to rehabilitate their student life, it provided an optimal niche for those who enjoyed pariah culture. The "immature" group of students was aware that SGH was known as a school that allowed students to smoke—a school that indulges pariahs. Therefore, they took full advantage of their experience at SGH by identifying with the pariah element. Arguably, SGH reinforced pariah identity by institutionally legitimizing it. Furthermore, these students' taste for SGH culture, based on immaturity or their acquiescence to a "loser" identity, overrode their possible negative feelings about having dropped out of mainstream school.

As it turns out, SGH betrayed the teachers' insistence that the school cared about its students' futures, for it did not better the lot of either group

of students. SGH's rhetoric exhorted students to gain a new identity, but it did not empower them to do so. Both mature and immature students reasoned that since they had been expelled from mainstream schools for misbehavior, they deserved their second-rate environment. The two groups diverged according to their degree of frustration, low self-esteem, resignation, and fatalism, but both groups internalized their low status. By identifying themselves as second-rate students, second-chance school students justified their placement in second-rate schools and prepared for their future as lower-class citizens. What SGH provided was a bottom-tier education that only served to reassert its students' bottom-class identity.

THE SECOND-CHANCE SCHOOL AS AN IDEOLOGICAL SITE

SGH's climate legitimized criticism of mainstream schools and provided a safe place to engage in such discussion. SGH catchphrases such as "humanitarian education" and "liberal teachers" helped to sharpen students' criticisms of mainstream schooling. When students compared SGH teachers to the teachers at mainstream schools, they were naturally inclined to criticize the latter. Some students also complained about the many unnecessary customs, rules, regulations, and ceremonies observed at mainstream schools. Their critical voices highlighted unsatisfactory structural features of the mainstream school system. The SGH environment awakened these voices: had the students not encountered kind teachers at SGH, they might not have been provoked to criticize the arbitrary disciplinary practices prevalent in mainstream schools. However, I have also argued that SGH students' criticism of mainstream schools did not lead them to attribute their failure solely to mainstream school practices. As noted earlier, most SGH students blame themselves more than the school system for the fact that they fell by the wayside. Though their critiques of bureaucratically oriented teachers and school policies are thoughtful and accurate, these criticisms are voiced only in the particular context of SGH and do not extend to larger and more substantial critiques of the educational system as a whole.

Unlike American urban youth in John Ogbu's studies (1994) or Jay MacLeod's (1987) data about "hallway hangers" (urban white dropouts), SGH students were not able to make the connection between their personal failures and the structural flaws of the school system. Rather, they were left with feelings of self-blame, which were followed by their resignation to a second-rate studenthood. They developed contradictory feel-

ings similar to those revealed by American suburban dropouts: "There are lots of things wrong with school. It didn't work for me, but I should have been able to cope (especially because most of those around me coped)" (Stevenson and Ellsworth 1991, 287).

At this juncture, the question of whether SGH functions as a political or potentially transformative site needs to be reexamined. SGH prides itself on the innovative ways in which it challenges mainstream educational practices. As my data suggests, however, the SGH environment failed to blend and channel students' sentiments into a larger movement. Rather, it covertly reinforced the message that dropping out is attributable to the individual student, and it discouraged or muffled students' accusations that mainstream schools were unfavorable environments for lower class students. Let us return to Yongwoo's story. After returning to SGH, Yongwoo was able to forgive the teachers at mainstream schools who had ceaselessly harassed him. He remarked, "It's all over. My hostility, anger, and rage are fading away. I just want to forgive them because I have become different than what I was." In Mingyu's case, his negative perceptions of mainstream schools enabled him to enjoy the second-chance school. He went as far as to say, "At the time of leaving school, I was so devastated. But I think it turned out for the best. I think it is good that I was expelled, because I am now in this paradise school."

SGH students criticized mainstream schools, but their criticism was not strong or united enough to lead them to demand policy changes; rather, their criticism took the shape of personal complaints. Thus SGH failed to provide a ground from which students could act as "transformative agents" (Giroux and McLaren 1986). Caught between their criticisms of mainstream school and their self-criticism, they reasoned, "I did wrong and school did wrong to me. Everything turned out okay because I go to school now anyway." But students at second-chance schools were aware that their schools were devalued, stigmatized venues with inadequate facilities, low reputations, and "abnormal" school cultures. Thus second-chance schools did nothing to shelter these students from the mainstream value system that produced these judgments; if anything, they reinforced students' awareness of the mainstream value scheme, priming students to confirm their lower social position.

At first glance, it may be surprising that a school like SGH does not manage to serve as a political site where transformative voices converge. The school appears and purports to challenge mainstream schooling by implementing innovative policies and allowing alternative student cultures

to flourish. However, SGH's "different" policies and practices have very little transformative power. Young people who were considered "good" students were forced to regret their exit from mainstream school and to dismiss critiques of mainstream schooling that, in another context, might have been sharpened. For the "immature" students, SGH provided a cultural sanctuary that allowed them to reconfirm their status as lower-class citizens. In this regard, SGH's differentiation strategies work to position the school as "inferior" in relation to mainstream schools. Ironically, the school's mission, its teachers' supposedly liberal attitude, and its students' seemingly radical culture are well supported by the prevailing wind of South Korean neoliberal education discourse: "disrupt homogeneity," "challenge the militaristically rigid school culture," and "promote individual freedom" (see chapter 2, by Jae Hoon Lim, in this volume). Within this discursive climate, SGH's students recognize their educational plight as an individual issue rather than as a series of social and structural problems. I contend that at SGH, the reproduction of social and economic stratification is achieved through this ideological manipulation of selfhood. Second-chance schools supposedly promote equality by enabling dropouts to achieve mobility through earning their diplomas. However, this study shows that in spite of this egalitarian mission, second-chance schools play their part in reinforcing social stratification by individualizing the problems of lower-class students and obscuring the unjust expulsion policies of mainstream schools (for more discussion, see Choi 2005). If social inequality is reinforced through schooling, then I would argue that second-chance schools inadvertently act in collusion with this scheme.

4. Homeschooling Adventures of the Middle Class

Deok-Hee Seo

South Korea is known worldwide for its unrivaled "education fever," embodied in parents' yearning for their children's successful schooling (Hyukgyu Lee 2003; O 2000; see also Seth, chapter 1 in this volume). As schooling has been the best guarantor not only of success but also of a normative life in South Korea (see Choi, chapter 3 in this volume), that there are children living with their families who do not attend school is nearly impossible for most people to grasp. South Koreans ask, "What on earth led those parents to not send their children to school?"

My research on homeschooling, however, began from a very different perspective: my admiration of such parents' dauntless resistance to South Korea's deep-seated collective education fever. In the course of my research, however, a very different reality drew my attention: my astonishment at the fact that some urban homeschooling families had decided to send, or had already sent, their children back to school. Here my question was different: What on earth led them to send their children back to the very schools that they had once harshly criticized and resolved to have their children leave?

I came to understand that the answers to these two queries were intimately tied. Both the departure from and the return to mainstream schooling can be explained by a middle class *habitus*, that is, those dispositions or preferences that generate a system of distinctive features or practices, or a "lifestyle" (Bourdieu 1984, 170). Consequently, I argue that in the aftermath of South Korea's IMF bailout in 1997–98, middle-class families could not overcome their class habitus, such that their homeschooling adventure

embodies a neoliberal logic, namely a class reproduction strategy for the global economy.

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH HOMESCHOOLERS

It was in 2000 that I first met homeschoolers while assisting with my colleague's research on "The Present Situation and Vision of the De-Schooling Movement"(Hye-young Lee 2000). At that time, as a former public high-school teacher myself—one who had not been satisfied with the realities of South Korea's school system, including its bureaucratic administration, uniform instructions to drive students to cram for competitive college entrance examinations, and emphasis on controlling student behavior over extending their autonomy—I was preparing for an academic career as a graduate student.

Beginning in the late 1990s in South Korea, the crisis of the public school system was widely proclaimed, and parental dissatisfaction with schools seemed nearly universal (Hyuk-gyu Lee 2003; Seo 2003). Indeed, it was as if my leaving the K-12 teaching profession had foreshadowed the emergence of this critique! Hardly a day went by that the media did not disclose realities of schooling such as teachers' inability to control unwieldy students in the classroom, students' inattentiveness and truancy, or parents' mistrust in their children's academic development: in sum, these realities were dubbed *kyosil punggoe*, or "classroom collapse" (see Lim, chapter 2 in this volume). As the metaphor suggested, "school" was somehow on the verge of collapse. These objections aside, parents could not so easily turn their backs on schooling, given its centrality to guaranteeing their children's future success, or at least preventing their social marginalization. It was in this context that I was fascinated by the courage of homeschooling parents who were fashioning an alternative course for their children.

I hypothesized that parents' choice to homeschool indicated that they were not narrowly focused on their children's entrance to elite universities or guaranteed high status in mainstream society, but that they were instead motivated by the intrinsic value of education. I saw them as *kaech'ŏkja*, or pioneers, as one parent called herself, who were struggling to find their own way to a humane and creative education against the grain of the collectivistic pressure of South Korean society. Indeed, I was deeply enamored of homeschooling parents' vision of and activities for a more holistic education. So inspired, I began my own research on the homeschooling and de-schooling movement.

DE-SCHOOLING VERSUS NEOLIBERALISM: COMPETING DISCOURSES ON HOMESCHOOLING AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

I first interpreted homeschooling as a struggle to revive the intrinsic value and rationale of education, which has been "colonized" by the state. This feature of homeschooling speaks to Ivan Illich's (1971) concept of "de-schooling"; Illich's followers criticize the "institutionalization of values" of modern institutions, epitomized by the public school system (Holt 1982). According to Illich and also Reimer (1971), public school systems do not guarantee the original value of education by which their existence could be legitimized. Rather, Illich (1971, 1) contests that "the pupil is 'schooled' to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new." Furthermore, they maintain, like many other critical researchers on schooling (e.g., Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976), that the established school system has exacerbated education inequality even though it has been rationalized by the liberal belief that it can give equal opportunity to all children regardless of their economic background.[1] De-schooling advocates do not have any hope of improving the public school system. Instead, as its alternative, Illich (1971) proposes a "learning web" as a "convivial institution" for education, and Reimer (1971) suggests a "learning network" distinct from the present public school system. As if responding to their proposal, indeed, the free school and homeschooling movements boomed for the first time in United States in the 1970s and early 1980s (Holt 1982; Lines 1991). Echoing these scholars, all the early literature on homeschooling in South Korea (Jae-woong Kim 1999; Kwon 2002; Hye-young Lee 2000; Seo 2002) began by delineating the relation between homeschooling and the de-schooling movement. They considered homeschooling as an attempt to resist the "schooled" society.

First, they paid heed to homeschooling parents' "autonomous" activism to fashion their own holistic education, instead of merely following the majority's instrumental "education" designed only to send their children to prestigious colleges. I admired homeschoolers for their resistance to collective "schoolism," namely the prevailing ideas that "schooling is the royal road to education," that "obligations to the state (especially, mandatory education) should be observed," and that "it is dangerous to be isolated from the majority" (Seo 2002). Second, they took note not only of autonomy and diversity but also of communitarian features that alternative education activists struggled to embrace (Jong-tae Lee 2001). In this

vein, I wrote of homeschoolers' "emergent" culture as a search not only for an identity and a role for the family in education, but also for social relationships as a life force, and education not as an obligation to the state but as a civil right (Seo 2002).[2] As an alternative education movement, homeschooling struck me as a case of autonomous communitarianism. *Mindle* (dandelion), an alternative education publishing company and a major voice in South Korea's de-schooling discourse, sloganized homeschooling as "standing on one's own and nurturing each other."

Fascinated by such possibilities for homeschooling, like its advocates I overlooked its economic or class-specific features, but public education advocates did not. These advocates persistently criticized both the state's education reform and alternative education as "neoliberal" in nature. They argued that the first neoliberal education reform was enforced in 1995, with the catchphrase *suyoja chungsim kyoyuk* (consumer-centered education), whose aim it is to meet the needs of consumers (e.g., students and their parents) within the escalating globalization of the economy.[3] However, what they more severely criticized as privatizing and marketizing public education were the Kim Dae Jung regime's education reforms after the IMF bailout. According to the IMF's restructuring requirements, these reforms aimed to enforce the large-scale privatization of the public education system, including approving independent private schools and charter schools, and opening the market to foreign teachers and schools, and so on (for more on this issue, see the introduction to this volume). In his discussion of homeschooling in the United States, Michael Apple (2000) has argued in this vein that the "politics of recognition" claimed by homeschoolers can negatively impact the "politics of redistribution."

These criticisms and reflections led me to query specifically how middle class homeschooling parents respond to the inevitable impediments their children face as an education minority and to what extent their homeschooling practices exceed their class-specific limitations. These questions address the possibility and limitations of the homeschooling of urban middle class families as a de-schooling movement, that is, the extent to which it can embody the autonomous rationale of education within the particular discursive context of South Korean society.

RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCESS

With this transformed focus, I met my former research participants again and interviewed their children. Of the six families I had previously worked

with, I interviewed three families including six homeschooling children. From April 2002 to October 2003, I interviewed Ms. Jang, a former participant, and her children, Jaemyong (15 in 2002) and Semyong (12). Ms. Jang was a member of a local association for homeschoolers in the city of Inch'ŏn, where I met two other former participants, Ms. Nam, Jieun (15) and Jihee's (15) mother, and Ms. Um, the mother of Hyejeong (15) and Hyejun (11). I hoped to meet high-school-aged adolescents because I wondered how homeschooling had affected their thoughts about entering college, and how they navigated the dominant discourse about college entrance. I was able to identify a new family, the Kims and their two children, Gichol (18) and Gijune (15). All of the families featured here began homeschooling circa 1999.

The families were from lower-middle to middle class in terms of their school career, job, and housing. The participants, especially the mothers, were all in their early and mid-forties in 2002, and three were graduates from colleges of education. All of the mothers, who were the main homeschooling partners for their children, had teaching experience as individual tutors or lecturers in private for-profit academic institutes (about which see chapters 6 and 7 in this volume, by Kim and Park respectively). With the exception of one medical doctor, all of the fathers were self-employed entrepreneurs. They lived in the metropolitan areas of Inch'ŏn (2), Ansan (1), and Ilsan (1) near Seoul. All the families lived in quite spacious apartments, a symbol of middle-class membership in South Korea. Though the participants of this study do not represent all middle-class homeschooling families in South Korea, their homeschooling adventure and their return to school reveal the class contours of South Korean middle-class families at a particular historical juncture.

In the following, I first analyze children's shared homeschooling experiences. Through their narratives, I consider the extent to which middle-class homeschooling parents' beliefs and thoughts about educational practice have been embodied by their children and how these children have negotiated the dominant discourse about schooling. I am interested in how homeschooling parents, along with their children, have navigated their adventure through competing discourses on education (e.g., de-schooling, neoliberal reform, public education reinforcement, etc.) at a particular historical moment (the IMF bailout and the discourse of "classroom collapse"). I ask then how the class-specific features, or habitus, of middle-class homeschooling families, in the face of neoliberal discourses, have circumscribed or transformed their beliefs and ideas about education.

ADVENTURES IN THE NAME OF HOMESCHOOLING

In April 2002, Jaemyong welcomed me when I visited his family nearly two years after our initial encounter. At the time, he seemed to really be enjoying his homeschooling life. He studied mathematics with an "uncle-like" tutor, played basketball in an apartment playground, and chatted or played computer games with his friends on the internet. Most of all, he liked reading history books. Sometimes he helped his busy parents with chores such as washing dishes, doing laundry, and cleaning the house. But Semyong, his sister, was not to be seen. He advised me not to meet Semyong that day because she was very busy preparing to return to school. Going back to school?

Ms. Jang, his mother, explained to me that Semyong was eager to go back to school. I was astonished, but I soon learned that returning to school was not unique to Semyong. During an interview, Ms. Jang revealed that some homeschoolers, including a number of my previous research participants, had already returned to school or had plans to do so. Ms. Nam sent her twin daughters back to school, one in South Korea and the other in New Zealand. Ms. Kim, a new key participant in the research, was planning to send her younger son back to high school that year. Besides, I learned that even Jaemyong went to a private institute almost daily to prepare for high school—more specifically for a "special purpose" high school for foreign languages.[4]

Although not every homeschooling parent sent their children back to school, these cases are nonetheless noteworthy. For my part, I still remembered the parents' harsh criticisms of the public school system. What made these parents change their minds? Why would their children want to go back to the very school system that they had condemned? Had the homeschooling experience somehow transformed these parents and their children? I had to re-read my old interview transcripts to understand how they had come to change their minds.

FLASHBACK

I first met Ms. Jang, Ms. Nam, and Ms. Um in the City of Inch'ŏn in January 2000. At that time, these three families had been meeting regularly to share their homeschooling experiences and to discuss common problems. Also, they taught their children subjects in which they each had expertise. Further, these gatherings gave their children the chance to make friends with other homeschooling children.

During the first interview, Ms. Nam criticized the improper behaviors of teachers in mainstream schools, such as slapping her daughter's cheek and forcing her to pay a bribe (parents' monetary gifts to teachers have been common and expected in mainstream schooling in South Korea, as Seth describes in chapter 1 in this volume). Ms. Um had complained about the inflexible curriculum and overly busy life cycle of schooling. She said, "I was not hesitant at all to pull my children out of school. If they went to school, they would have no time to learn what they like to learn." Likewise, Ms. Jang complained of the ever-changing curriculum and a class atmosphere that was designed not for "taking care of the children" but for "keeping pace with the times":

> Schooling led to endless conflicts for me. Nevertheless, my children had been good at school. As for me, I didn't like the annual change of class. I didn't like being concerned about the fact that my children changed their dispositions whenever their homeroom teachers changed. Also, I thought it was a big waste that instead of taking care of the children teachers were busy keeping pace with the times. Teachers, educational organizations, and we parents were all busy doing *yŏllin kyoyuk*.[5] My children seemed to change their dispositions continuously. You know what, they changed their behaviors without proper thinking. They just followed the changing atmosphere. Anyone who let their children go to school would think so. Meanwhile I was informed of this meeting [for homeschooling] and I felt empowered.

By the time of the first interview, Ms. Jang's children—Jaemyong and his younger sister, Semyong—had been homeschooled for six months. Before homeschooling they had been good students in an elementary school. Jaemyong had been the vice president of the student council and Semyong was also a leader in her class. But Ms. Jang had been unhappy with their behavior and thinking for the reasons she described above. As she put it, "schooling deprived them of most of the time and energy that they could devote to thinking." Although Jaemyong hesitated to leave school at first, he ended up leaving in the fifth grade. Unlike her brother, Semyong heartily welcomed her mother's suggestion to homeschool in the third grade. Both left school in the fall semester in 1999. It was thus the parents' initiative and supervision that launched their homeschooling adventure.

GROWING UP IN LEISURE

All of my participants had practiced homeschooling since 1999, and each family had its own way of homeschooling. At first, Ms. Jang laid out a

more demanding and laborious curriculum than the school curriculum. After about six months of homeschooling, she sent Jaemyong and Semyong to an elementary school in New Zealand for a year and then to another homeschooling family's house in Taejŏn for six months. After that, she let the children choose whatever topics they wanted to study. Ms. Nam emphasized teaching Jihee and Jihyun how to read books and discuss them and how to make the girls see the natural beauty in suburban areas by traveling. Ms. Um did almost the same as Ms. Jung, but Hyejeong and Hyejun spent much time learning English and sometimes teaching English in their parents' language institute. Ms. Kim, after traveling to many different places for several months, helped Gichol and Gijune establish ways of studying on their own without relying on private academic institutes (see chapter 6, by Misook Kim, in this volume for a discussion of "institute dependency"). Despite this variation in homeschooling methods, the experiences of urban homeschooling children were indeed radically different from those during their mainstream schooling days; homeschooling fostered creative and contemplative thinking, self-directed learning, self-reliance, and active social relationships.

What drove these families to homeschool was their belief that school knowledge is not valuable for their education. Jaemyong, Hyejeong, and Hyejun went to a *toksŏdang* (a private academic institute for reading and discussing). The adviser in charge told me about the drastic difference between these children and ordinary students. "With time and leisure, they have a more in-depth understanding of the content of books and think about the material even in a philosophical way, whereas ordinary students and their parents are impatient and ask me only to teach them the writing skills needed for taking the college entrance exams." Because homeschooling parents emphasize reading, the children read more books than ordinary students, and most knew that the "truth" in any one textbook represents only one opinion, so that textbooks are no more authoritative than other books.

This way of thinking leads to self-directed learning. Most of the children said that they tried to find their own learning style, and some had grown accustomed to searching for books to read on their own. Jaemyong, who was once severely scolded by a teacher for reading books during class time, was absorbed in reading history books. He often read book review articles in newspapers and then asked his mother to buy the books. Gichol, through a long struggle with his mother, was able to study whatever and whenever he wanted. He said, "It is faster to study alone than to be taught by a teacher with forty or more classmates in school. Also, when study-

ing alone, I am able to learn more accurately by searching for this or that book."

The children also came to appreciate the importance of independence. Most helped their parents with chores. At home, they learned how difficult it is for their parents to make a living. Some were working part-time at a restaurant, internet café, or academic institute. Hyejeong, Ms. Um's sixteen-year-old daughter, said, "These days parents don't seem to let their children live their own lives, but instead they themselves want to live their children's lives." Sometimes she taught her peers and younger students English conversation at her parents' language institute. Furthermore, some of the homeschooling children, like Hyejeong, wanted to be financially independent. Hyejeong's mother figured that because of Hyejeong's independence, "she probably won't suffer from ordinary adolescent distress and conflicts."

Finally, they learned to cherish their friends, because they had fewer chances to make friends than in school. Most homeschooling children had difficulty overcoming feelings of isolation and marginalization, especially in the early homeschooling period. Gichol, Ms. Kim's nineteen-year-old boy, said to me, "After quitting school, I realized how selfish I had been. I hated others' comments about me and wanted others to understand me and do everything for me. Now, I have come to know how to understand and be receptive to others." Because he worked part-time as a waiter and in a small factory for a while, he learned how to be on good terms with people of various ages, occupations, personalities, and social status.

These narratives represent homeschoolers' changed perspectives, which were, indeed, what most of them wanted to achieve from the beginning: creative and contemplative thinking, self-directed learning, self-reliance, and active social relationships. Their thinking was that it was in leisure or free time that such goals could be best achieved. As Ms. Um said, "Once they don't have to fulfill endless demands from school, and have much time, they can see all things from a distance." Also, Gijune said, "When I was in school, I was so busy that I did not have time to think about anything but preparing for tests." Leaving school seemed to have given homeschoolers physical and mental space for reflecting on themselves and their lives.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

Despite these positive homeschooling experiences, why did so many urban homeschooling children return to the school system? To my question, Semyong answered,

> I have wanted to get back to school since returning from New Zealand. Unexpectedly, I came to think that there are many things I can get only at school. I can play with friends. . . . I'd like to make friends, play with friends and go on a graduation trip with them. Of course, after I finish the sixth grade and get a diploma, I'd like to go to New Zealand. Though they said I don't need a diploma, I think having a diploma is better than not having one. Of course, I think having been in New Zealand is good for me, but now I may be lacking knowledge in specialized subjects like social studies and natural science. I'd like to compete with peers. . . . At school, there is competition. It is natural that people want to be superior to others. So, going back to school would be better.

Most homeschooling children who were eager to go back to school offered similar responses. The themes that emerged from their narratives are threefold: friends, competition for excellence, and credentials.

More than anything else, for homeschooling children school was a valuable place for peer-group formation. As Semyong put it, "Not going to school means not having friends." They said that many people were prejudiced against adolescents who do not go to school, whether they left voluntarily or not. Gijune explained, "My boyfriend who had gone steady with me in school has been reluctant to meet me since I left school. I have wondered why. One day, I overheard by chance on the phone his parents telling him not to keep company with me." Like many of her homeschooling peers, Gijune also struggled with fragile friendships: "I do want to make intimate relationship with peers. But while homeschooling, I had difficulty making friends because I didn't have the opportunity get to know their inner personality." Though older children like Gichol and Hyejeong didn't have many problems making friends, most of the younger children did not make long-lasting friendships.

Second, most of the urban homeschooling children I interviewed, if not all, had a desire to be superior to others. As it was difficult to satisfy these desires outside of school, they wanted to regain the chance to succeed in school. After returning from New Zealand, Semyong came to yearn for prestigious universities like Harvard. She thought that competing with classmates would offer a more efficient way for her to excel. They wanted to know where they ranked academically. Gijune, who was not as good at studying as Semyong, said, "Why not me? Recently success is possible not only by studying, but by doing something like being a chef or doing computer programming if only one graduates from a college or university. Anyway, what matters is that one has to be an elite or the first in the class in one's field." We get a similar sense in the remarks of his elder

brother, Gichol, who had been learning electric guitar since 1999 but had not improved as rapidly as he had expected. He had grown nervous about it, saying, "I have done nothing while others have been preparing for the entrance exam." He finally decided to give up guitar to prepare for the entrance examination like his friends.

Finally, most of the urban homeschooling children came to think that it is easier to go to school to obtain a credential than to take the *kŏmjŏnggosi* (qualification examination, equivalent to an American GED). They needed credentials to be able to enter a college or university so as not to be discriminated against. In order to get a part-time job, Gichol once lied to a manager: "I lied that I had the equivalent of a high-school diploma, because many people think that the boys without it could not behave themselves and act like gangsters." Besides, due to a long examination-free period, most urban homeschooling children were afraid of being tested and assessed in new situations. For the *kŏmjŏnggosi,* they had to study the textbooks and reference books relevant to the standardized curriculum regardless of their interests. In this situation, Gijune said, "I think it is easier to go to school. At school, I would have only to listen to teachers everyday to get a diploma."

Friends, competition for excellence, and credentials seemed to be what they had missed in homeschooling and what they expected of the school system. Indeed, they grasped the social meaning of schooling even at their young age from the prejudice and discrimination of mainstream society that they suffered as "pioneers." In their succinct words: "Outside school, it is difficult for children to be on intimate terms with friends." "If a person is not a genius, it is harder to succeed out of school than in school." "It is easier to get a credential in school than to take *kŏmjŏnggosi*." These statements reflect the ideology of "schoolism," albeit a different version from that of my earlier research mentioned above (Seo 2002). Ironically, after several years of their adventure, they ended up surrendering to the dominant discourse about schooling.[6]

THE MEANING OF THE HOMESCHOOLING ADVENTURE OF MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILIES

How difficult was it for children to withstand collective "schoolism"? Of course, "schoolism" might be more difficult for homeschooling children than for their parents. What matters, however, is that schoolism was already recognized by the homeschooling parents as the dominant discourse that deterred homeschooling in my earlier research. Despite their recognizing and withstanding the effects of schoolism in the beginning

stages of homeschooling, why did homeschooling parents respond to their children's suffering just by sending or planning to send them back to school? Unlike their earlier determined resolve to pursue homeschooling against schoolism, they seemed to let their children surrender to it without much hesitation. It seems too simple to conclude that they were merely following the whims of their children. First, the transformation of homeschooling children's beliefs could have enabled them to withstand schoolism; as Semyong put it, "Since there is always prejudice in a human society, I don't mind." Additionally, their children's negative experiences of homeschooling could have been mediated by a more critical discourse about schooling, such as the de-schooling discourse, as it had been four years earlier. What is more, their parents could have tried every means possible to search for solutions to their children's problems. Indeed, their homeschooling had been launched at their parents' initiative and suggestion, and their homeschooling practices had always been directed by their parents' continuous supervision and evaluation.

As is the case of teachers who provide specific institutional and normative discourses that students appropriate to interpret their experience (see Choi, chapter 3 in this volume), homeschooling parents are the major agents who provide particular normative discourses that their children appropriate to signify their experience. Besides, in homeschooling situations parents have a stronger authority over their children than in schooling. To understand what underlies their adventure, namely, the process of homeschooling and then returning to school, I needed to understand this apparent transformation—from resistance against to acceptance of schoolism.

DE-SCHOOLING WITHOUT THE CORE

Homeschooling parents had employed the de-schooling discourse that had been mobilized by some magazines and newspapers against schoolism, along with the discourse of "classroom collapse" discussed by Jae Hoon Lim in chapter 2. Without appropriating a de-schooling discourse, they probably would not have decided to practice homeschooling. In January, 1999, *Mindle* circulated the general motto, "Education: standing on one's own and nurturing each other" as well as specific mottos against schoolism, "Education outside of schooling is possible" and "Education is different from schooling" (Hyun 1999a, 3). Their criticism of the public school system focused on deep-seated military authoritarianism and an atmosphere of relentless competition.

In the beginning, my participants articulated their own and their children's negative experience at school and were excited about de-schooling discourse, which became the explicit conceptual tool with which they could signify and scaffold their educational activity as well as criticize the public school system. As Ms. Um shared, "I saw a cartoon in *Mindle*. In the cartoon, a child threatens a flower in a pot, saying, 'You shall die if I don't water you.' Then, all of a sudden, it begins to rain! After reading it, I realize that it means that the child is a school and the flowers are children. Even without schooling, children can grow!" Also, the de-schooling discourse gave them a subject position as "pioneers," as opposed to cowards sticking to the old and "collapsing" schoolism. In fact, in the beginning no one family among these urban homeschoolers could avoid the severe apprehension, coercion, and even curses meted out by their relatives and neighbors, such as, "You want to ruin your children, don't you?" (Seo 2002). Many people in South Korea think that the high school or college a person graduates from is a key factor that determines whether a person will be able to build a social network to help or inspire them to succeed in mainstream society. In such a situation, Ms. Jang welcomed the subject position of the "have-nots," a term usually reserved for those with few economic resources. In our first interview, she said, "For the sake of educating our children and developing our country, the 'haves' should be open to homeschoolers, rather than worrying about losing what they have and dissuading or hushing homeschoolers." The parents must have felt like not only educational but also social activists. Indeed, they once *were* pioneers.

Though Ms. Jang and Ms. Nam decided to begin homeschooling after reading Ms. Um's homeschooling story in a major daily newspaper, at first they depended a great deal on *Mindle* as a center for networking homeschoolers. From 1999 to 2000, all the participants in this study often participated in the Kajŏng hakkyo moim (Homeschoolers' association) supported by *Mindle* to get information and communicate with experienced homeschoolers as well as other beginners. Ms. Um, Ms. Jang, and Ms. Nam met at the office of *Mindle* for the first time and agreed to establish a local association in Inch'ŏn.

In fact, they tried to solve their children's problems by making a local association. Without continuous and practical cooperation with homeschoolers, urban homeschooling children could not make friends with, learn from, and compete with other homeschooling children in a reciprocal or communitarian way. Also, without reflecting on their experience from others' viewpoint, urban homeschooling parents had difficulty making their own way and breaking through the firm wall of schoolism in a legal

way. These were the lessons that they learned during the adventure; as Ms. Nam said, "It was really hard to outline everything alone, really hard to do it all by myself. However important my awakening may be, it means nothing without sharing it with others." Despite this crucial awareness, they quit meeting together after no more than three months. After that time, they confined their practice only to individual solutions instead of building productive social relationships. Consequently, their practice failed to solve their children's problems, and to realize the primary alternative project of de-schooling discourse, that is, to create an autonomous teaching and learning network. Their rationale for homeschooling might have been de-schooling in the beginning, but its core disappeared rapidly from view.

EGOISTIC FAMILISM, CONSERVATISM, AND MERITOCRACY

Why did parents quit cooperating with each other? What caused them to fail? What prevented these homeschoolers from striving to build communitarian social relationships? In the course of searching for an answer to these questions, I eventually settled on the middle-class habitus of homeschooling families, namely, egoistic familism, conservatism, and meritocracy. According to Ms. Nam, each family stuck to its own interests so firmly that they had difficulties finding common ground on which they could stand together. She said, "One of us seems to think that the other members took advantage of her family for their own benefits alone, not for all." They did not trust each other enough to endure seemingly not very useful activities for the sake of communitarian values. After a couple of months of meeting, they came to think that homeschooling alone could be more efficient and comfortable than together. Likewise, instead of encouraging her younger son to venture to the *Mindle* office to participate in diverse activities with other drop-outs, Ms. Kim instructed him to memorize some English vocabulary every day and she took charge of checking it herself.

Homeschooling parents were also afraid of their children becoming marginalized, or straying from the moral, academic, or practical standards of mainstream society. Some of them were more stubborn and conservative than others in terms of conventional standards. Jaemyong himself censored his behavior related to computer games. He often said to me, "If my mother sees me doing this stuff, she won't leave me alone." Gichol, a nineteen-year-old boy, sometimes had trouble with his mother because she prohibited him from doing things that deviated from conservative norms, such as smoking, drinking, or going out a date with a girlfriend

who attended a technical art high school where mostly low-achieving students are enrolled. Also, Ms. Kim demanded that her children should get over the average 90 points in the *kŏmjŏnggosi*, saying, "These points are equal to the grade level in school. We cannot ignore this society entirely. We have to conform to some aspects of this society."

What matters most is that urban homeschooling parents did not protest against the excessive competition of the South Korean status quo. Rather, most wanted to conform to meritocratic ideals as members of the middle class. Despite criticizing useless competition for comparatively good grades in the present school system, they thought more highly of getting on in the world or becoming a leading elite than of "nurturing one another." Proclaiming "the harder our children devote themselves to their favorite things, the more they will be able to win over others," Ms. Jang had her children watch television programs about super-elites such as Harvard students or young CEOs (chief executive officers). Ms. Kim collected and read her children newspaper reports about successful leaders who managed to make their own way to success under difficult circumstances. Also, one of the reasons why Ms. Um let her children quit school was that "the school system is inefficient, doing nothing more than pushing excellent students downward."

As a result, despite criticizing the prevalent prejudice against dropouts, urban homeschooling children differentiated themselves from so-called problem youths: as Gichol put it, "It looks awfully ridiculous to spell 'hospital' as 'hosfital.' So, I don't say I have no credential. I don't want to be treated that way." Also, some of them considered *kongbu* (studying the standardized school curriculum) to be critical to a successful life; as Semyong says, "I think we have to study. If one doesn't study, one cannot speak properly in front of others." Also, they grew nervous about test taking just like mainstream school students; as Gijune said, "These days, about eight months before the *kŏmjŏnggosi*, I feel so nervous that I'm not interested in playing with friends. When talking with them, we always talk about which college we will be able to enter."

These homeschooling parents and children did not seem to have reflected critically on these dominant middle class values embedded in their lives. According to research by Mun, Ch'oe, and Chŏng (2000), the middle class in South Korea has been forming its identity and culture over the last twenty-to-thirty-year period of rapid economic development. They argue that the South Korean middle class is afraid of declining from its present standard of living due to the lack of social security, which leads to egoistic familism and overheated credentialist fervor. Also they report that with

mass higher education, middle-class people place a high value on education for conservative values and Westernized ideals of individualism and meritocracy; and that they consider themselves smart people who like and try to learn new and unique things. What is more important, they contend that the middle class are critical of social inequality and authoritarianism but pay little attention to productive social activities for the community. To my surprise, all of these features of South Korea's middle class are consistent with the behaviors and commitments of urban homeschooling parents.

By understanding homeschooling failure in terms of middle class culture in South Korea, ironically I could understand more clearly why these parents began homeschooling in 1999. Although the discourse of "classroom collapse" could have been a decisive trigger to launch homeschooling, from the very beginning most urban homeschooling parents emphasized the fluctuating and unstable economic environment such as the mass layoffs during the IMF crisis period (1997–2001), unlimited competition in the global economy, and post-Fordist transformation toward a knowledge-based industry. Indeed, three of the lower-middle-class families in my study experienced hardships during the IMF crisis period and both parents worked part- or full-time even while homeschooling. They often talked about the futility of efforts to win a competitive edge in the public school system and the uselessness of the knowledge gained at school in terms of their own career experience. Also, although they did not publicly express their intention to teach their children English during the interviews, all of them focused on their children's improving their English skills. From an economic viewpoint, as is seen in what follows, it is probable that homeschoolers searched for a more efficient way than the "manufacturing" school system to make their children "invest" in "what they want to do" and to "survive" as creative and "self-managed" "entrepreneurs" in the perceived globalized economy. In the words of several mothers:

MS. JANG: Especially in the twenty-first century, we can't survive without changing our thinking style. It's very dangerous to kill children's thought. If they can't think freely, they can't survive anywhere. . . . When I sent Semyong to Taejŏn three years ago, even though she was only ten years old, I was not worried about her because she self-managed better than her brother.

MS. UM: For example, she will have to invest for what she wants to do. When she is old, she will have to get driver's license and buy her own car. She thinks she has to do something practical. She often thinks of standing on her own.

MS. NAM: Jihyun once said to me, "Everything depends on me, whether homeschooling, or going to school, or studying abroad." The moment I heard that, I became fairly comfortable. Now I think it makes little difference whether children go to school or not.

As can be inferred from Ms. Nam's remark, these parents did not send their children back to school because the school system became suddenly desirable. They did so because they thought that their children had sufficiently transformed themselves into creative and self-managed individuals able to survive in a rapidly changing global economy. Of course, the urban homeschooling children's changed ways of life, such as creative thinking, self-directed learning, and self-reliance, could be virtues of de-schooling if embodied in a communitarian way. However, they also could be considered the very "neoliberal" values or mentalities attuned to a postindustrial and globalizing competitive economy, if materialized in an egoistic, conservative, and meritocratic way.[7] Their fundamental reasons for experimenting with a new lifestyle, homeschooling, and then quitting it seemed to be not so different from each other.

CONCLUSIONS: THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL CHILD

In the beginning, urban homeschooling families were pioneers, judging from their resistance to schoolism and their search for new modes of education. The schoolism that they struggled against was a dominant discourse integral to South Korea's deep-seated authoritarian collectivism. And the de-schooling discourse with which they criticized schoolism was revolutionary in that it drew public attention to the fact that the public school system might be colonizing an autonomous educational realm, and parents and their children could fashion their own way. Indeed, as pioneers during their homeschooling period they relinquished a blind adherence to schoolism. What they gained as pioneers, by contrast, was not only creativity but also self-directed learning, self-reliance, and active relationships.

Homeschoolers' earlier resistance to schoolism, however, and their appropriation of de-schooling discourse seem to have been encompassed by a larger neoliberal discourse, which has appealed to many parents with slogans such as diversity, choice, competition, excellence, and efficiency since the state education reforms of 1995 (see chapters 2 and 7 in this volume, by Lim and Park respectively). By failing to *sŏro rŭl sallida* (nurture each other), or embrace the autonomous or intrinsic nature of education, the "diversity" of educational curricula for relishing intrinsic educational

values took on a life instead as a diversity of methods from which the savvy education consumer could *choose* in order to achieve excellence. In this way, liberal democracy takes on life as rhetoric for extending and disseminating neoliberal rationality (Brown 2003); the de-schooling discourse is replaced by a market logic. Although parents ended up returning their children to school, homeschooling had paid off by equipping their children with a neoliberal mentality well suited to survival in a relentlessly competitive global economy.

With these findings, I do not mean to suggest that these homeschooling families calculated gains and losses from the outset. At first, they consciously and eagerly tried to fashion a collaborative association. In some cases both children and their parents, even if fleetingly, did experience anew the autonomous and intrinsic value of leisure and sharing. Yet they ended up failing quite quickly because it was too hard for them to free themselves from their habitus as middle class South Koreans. The children's changed way of life, which included creative thinking and "self-management" (self-directed learning, self reliance, and active social relationships), was however in sync with the neoliberal turn of the economy against the backdrop of the IMF bailout. The adversity that these children faced as homeschoolers perhaps fashioned them as more self-disciplined and self-managed middle-class members as they returned to school.

What strikes me most with these findings is that even family education seems to have been colonized by the rationale of the market. Without any direct endeavor by the state to govern families with a market logic or a neoliberal mentality, these middle-class homeschoolers came to embrace neoliberalism "autonomously" in the course of embodying a middle class habitus in their homeschooling adventure, as if proving that "neoliberal subjects are controlled through their freedom" (Brown 2003). More discouraging still, their practices offered a stage for the state to enforce neoliberal education reform with ease, as some public education activists predicted. Major newspapers in South Korea, unlike in the initial stage of homeschooling, began to represent homeschooling as an effective and shortcut method for becoming "elite" (Seo 2006). I no longer think of these middle-class homeschoolers as pioneers of the de-schooling movement, but rather as neoliberal entrepreneurs on the cutting edge.

5. Overcoming the "Pseudo-University"

The Transformative Learning of Adult Women

Kiyeon Yi

In this chapter, I explore the hopes of middle-aged women who return to education by enrolling at Korea National Open University (KNOU), a distance-education provider that is now Korea's largest higher-education institution. I focus on women enrolled at KNOU who were deprived of higher education at the conventional college age because of their family's poverty or their gender. Typically these women went to work immediately after high school in order to earn money for their families. They then stayed at home for more than ten years after marriage, working as housewives and mothers. These are the kinds of women who, at about age forty, enroll at KNOU and other adult-education institutions or nontraditional schools. I discuss these women's education-related desires and disappointments, arguing that in spite of dashed educational hopes, their participation in study groups with women of similar ages has proven enormously transformative. This chapter's findings depart from the argument made elsewhere in this volume that South Korea's "other" educational spaces are mired in the conventions and values of mainstream schooling. While these concerns do limit returning students' enthusiasm about KNOU itself, students are able to create truly alternative educational spaces through grassroots-initiated study groups. This chapter draws from an ethnographic exploration of one such study group and from the accounts of a member of another parallel group.

I employ the concepts of "transformation" and "conscientization" to characterize the experiences of adult learners (Freire 1970; Giroux 1986; Mezirow 2000). Adult-education researchers use the term "transformative learning" to describe both the process through which learners experience significant changes in beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge, and the outcomes of that process. Transformative learning involves the exchange

of constructive discourses that allow the experiences of others to become a resource with which to assess old assumptions and to act on the basis of new insights (Burge and Haughey 1993; Mezirow 2000). For the women in this study, transformative learning processes (the development of knowledge and skills for mobilizing critique) merge with conscientization, or the awakening of critical awareness. Some researchers who argue for the link between conscientization and transformative learning point out that the critical reflection that happens in adult learning may result in significant personal and social transformation (Mezirow 2000). My research participants realized that personal experiences could become a means to achieving liberation from psychological repression as well as social and political oppression.

These concepts also align with feminist pedagogical theories that examine how women's educational experiences can contribute to "consciousness raising" (Belenky and Goldberger 1997; Hayes and Flannery 2000). Scholars of feminist pedagogy contend that education has a direct relationship to individual and collective emancipation or empowerment. Scholars who pay attention to women's experiences in adult education argue that the ways in which women learn often differ from the ways in which knowledge is produced and defined in a male-dominated culture (Belenky and Goldberger 1997). Through adult-education experiences, women can realize the pressures that patriarchal culture exerts on their lives and awaken to their own strengths (Hayes and Flannery 2000; Hayes and Smith 1994; Saltiel 1998; Tisdell 1993).

KOREA NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY: DISTANCE LEARNING AND THE EXTENSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Since the late 1990s, the development of extensive distance-learning programs in higher education has become a global phenomenon. In the case of large countries such as the United States and Russia, distance learning is being used to overcome restrictions faced by students who do not live close to a university. In late-developing countries—and here South Korea is a case in point—distance learning often allows for state-sponsored expansion of higher education at a relatively low cost. In South Korea, distance learning at KNOU has contributed to the equalizing of educational opportunities by providing a much larger group of people with access to higher education.

KNOU was established in 1972. Since then, the number of students has gradually increased. In 1972, the freshman admission quota was 12,000,

but by 1998 it had increased to 60,000, with more than 200,000 total enrollees. KNOU is among the largest institutions of higher education in South Korea (KNOU 2002), but it offers only a very limited number of face-to-face classes, about twenty per semester. These courses help students to overcome the isolation often experienced in distance learning by allowing them to form affiliations with colleagues. The escalating size of KNOU has not come with a corresponding increase in the quality of the education that it provides. In the minds of many people, KNOU is thought of as somewhat a sham, or what I dub here a "pseudo-university" (compare with the second-chance high school described by Jung-ah Choi in chapter 3 in this volume). It is widely believed that the education offered in KNOU is inferior to that offered by conventional universities. Indeed, KNOU diplomas have little practical value, since individual degree holders are often discriminated against both socially and professionally. In keeping with trends in adult distance learning internationally (Bowman and Will 1994; Woodley, Taylor, and Butcher 1993), most students enrolled at KNOU are female, disabled, or economically marginalized. According to a 2001 survey, the average age of new students at KNOU was 33, with 40 percent being over 35; 70 percent were women, and 25 percent were housewives (KNOU 2002). These figures reveal that KNOU's students are often those who have been excluded from higher education earlier in their lives.

MY POSITION AS A RESEARCHER

My own research position is relevant to both the method I pursued and to this study's findings. At the time a student at KNOU myself, I was literally a participant-observer. Before enrolling in a Ph.D. program (at another university), I attended classes in the early childhood department at KNOU from 1998 to 2001. At that time, I was involved in a self-governing collaborative daycare center located in my district, and I served as a volunteer for curriculum development and evaluation with a team of teachers. Still, I felt the need to return to college to acquire more knowledge about early-childhood development.

While I was taking face-to-face classes at KNOU and meeting with my classmates, I was pleasantly surprised by their enthusiasm for studying and by their passion for obtaining a college degree. They reminded me of my cousins and friends who had been unable to attend college for financial reasons or due to patriarchal discrimination against daughters. They had to end their studies after middle school or high school and then work at home or get a job to support their families; often these women also helped

to support their elder brothers' academic pursuits. Although my story was slightly different from theirs (I had a bachelor's degree), the other students and I shared a similar age and status as housewives.

In 2000, when I began my Ph.D. courses, I remained impressed with my KNOU classmates' educational lives and decided to research them. I began a journal about my school life with my classmates at KNOU and in 2001 I interviewed two women who attended the education department at KNOU. In this project, I was positioned as an insider. As a member of a research group who affects and is affected by the research field and the research participants, I am not an objective researcher who looks down from on high. Furthermore, the course of research has had real positive effects on my own life, since I was able to build collaborative, reciprocal, trusting, and friendly relations with the research participants (Denzin 2003; Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Olesen 2000).

THE LIFE COURSE OF KNOU RETURNING WOMEN STUDENTS

The past experiences of women who resume their education at KNOU reflect drastic changes in the nature of college attendance in South Korea. Since the 1970s, as South Korean society has gone through the processes of industrialization and modernization, a college degree has become essential to anyone who wants to enhance his or her socioeconomic status. However, until the 1980s higher education was less accessible to those who from lower socioeconomic strata. Additionally, women have been disadvantaged in educational opportunity as a result of Confucian beliefs and the prevalence of patriarchal ideologies. Since the 1980s, higher-education opportunities and the percentage of high-school graduates who go to college have rapidly increased. In 2001, 70 percent of high-school graduates applied to college (KNOU 2002). Indeed, today South Korean education is available to the masses: whoever wants to receive a postsecondary education can apply. Consequently, a college diploma no longer enhances socioeconomic status to the same degree. A person's status is instead primarily influenced by the rank of the college that he or she attends. Nonetheless, people feel that a college education is necessary in order to live a "decent" adult life. Middle-aged women who have missed the opportunity for higher education thus often suffer from feelings of decreased self-worth.

As educational social pressures and gender expectations have continued to change, many middle-aged women have found themselves caught in

the midst of the shift. One of my participants is in her late thirties and attended a vocational high school. After graduating she worked as a bank clerk before getting married. Another participant, who is in her late forties and grew up in a rural town, said that most of her female friends did not go to college. It therefore felt natural not to attend college at that time. However, as social expectations continued to change, my participants said that they came to feel that the people around them looked down on them, and they both suffered from low self-esteem.

Another participant, who is in her early fifties and very outgoing, said that she felt the necessity of a college diploma when she wanted to volunteer for adolescent counseling or when she decided to get involved in election politics. Her lack of a degree made her less confident in social situations in which having one is common or assumed. She identified a moment of epiphany: "Two years ago, when there was an election for an assembly member, I was very active in a voting campaign for a particular candidate. The wife of the candidate was impressed by my active engagement and asked me to be the head of the women's division. Then, she asked what school I went to. I replied, 'I didn't attend college.' She replied with surprise: 'You're kidding!' Upon hearing her response, I became determined to attend college. I felt like I didn't have any other choice in this kind of social milieu." When these women participate in certain social activities, they are often asked questions about what university they attended, what they majored in, and the year in which they graduated. When they encounter these questions, they feel ashamed and embarrassed. The perceived handicap of missing out on a college education becomes an obstacle, and it makes them feel less confident in their lives and their social activities.

Another important reason that middle-aged women return to school is that they feel that they have lost their social identity. Identity conflicts play an important factor in women's decisions to return to school (Parr 2000; Pascall and Cox 1993). Since many have lived as mothers or wives for over a decade, they have almost forgotten their given names and their identities as social beings. After marriage, women are typically no longer called by their given names, but instead are referred to by their family role as wife or mother. In this way, married women's lives are verbally reconstituted by the terms of a male-dominated order. The experience of losing their own names leads them to perceive themselves merely as caregivers, and being recognized only by their familial roles makes it difficult for them to develop their own identities. This perceived loss of identity is one of the primary motivations for returning to college. Now that most

of these women are in their forties and fifties, they have more free time because their children are older and need less maternal involvement. Under these circumstances, they have the opportunity to reflect more seriously on their lack of a college education.

DIFFICULTIES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS AT KNOU

Though these women hoped that attending college would help them develop confidence and establish their own identity, the women in this study reported experiencing several difficulties and disappointments when they began attending KNOU. The first difficulty they confronted was academic pressure. Because most graduated from high school over ten years ago, with no ensuing academic experience, many of the women worried about keeping up with the fast academic pace. They also encountered difficulties with distance-learning methods, since it was challenging to adjust to a nontraditional learning setting in which they were expected to study by themselves using textbooks, cassette tapes, radio and television broadcasts, videotapes, and other supplementary materials provided by KNOU. These nontraditional methods initially confused them because they had little idea of how to begin their studies. Scholars of feminist pedagogy identify such women as "lonely learners," since they are cut off from educational relationships with instructors and peer groups (Bowman and Will 1994; Gibson and Graff 1992; Kirby and Chugh 1992). Furthermore, these teaching modes did not register with their vision of the "college experience"—an experience that they clamored for because they had "missed" it during their youth.

The women's greatest disappointment in KNOU was its negative reputation among employers, scholars, and society at large. When they entered KNOU, most were not bothered by its reputation. Rather, they were only concerned about going to college and receiving a diploma from an affordable school, a schedule that would allow them free time, and open admission. Once they entered, however, they began to care about the school's social reputation and what kind of benefits they would have as college graduates. They soon found that KNOU diplomas provide little practical value for individual degree holders. While they once believed that they were looked down upon because they did not attend college, they now feel that they are discriminated against because people speak derisively about the college they do attend. These women are aware that there is a great deal of social prejudice against KNOU, and they are forced to face judgments such as, "KNOU is a place where people who do not have a college diploma can get one," "KNOU is different from regular universities," and

"KNOU is a pseudo-university." Thus, they still feel marginalized by a society that discriminates against people based on their educational background (see also Choi, chapter 3 in this volume).

OVERCOMING THE PSEUDO-UNIVERSITY: SOLIDARITY IN A VOLUNTARY STUDY GROUP

The returning female students were able to overcome some of these academic hardships and feelings of marginality through meetings with classmates in face-to-face classes and in voluntary study groups. As mentioned above, KNOU offered little face-to-face time for these students; the little time it did provide, however, proved to be the gateway for their transformation. They began to realize that many of their peers had led lives parallel to their own, and this revelation allowed them to form communities of learning and reflection. Through their study group, returning female students overcame the limitations of the "sham" or pseudo-university, since the group itself supplanted the role of the university by becoming the primary forum in which transformative learning took place.

Though many of these women enrolled in college to combat social isolation, the distance-learning format did not allow them to break out of that isolation. It was not until they attended their first face-to-face class that they felt emotional affiliation with their professors and classmates. Face-to-face classes provided students with the space to meet not only with their instructors but with their peers as well. One of the participants talked about what she felt when she first sat in a face-to-face class: "I was very uncomfortable sitting in the classroom when I took a face-to-face class for the first time. I was self-conscious, thinking that everyone was looking at me. But I gradually learned that people were like me and realized that we were in the same boat." These women came to feel a strong sense of camaraderie and empathy because they shared similar backgrounds, and these empathetic identifications allowed them to develop companionship and solidarity. This sort of emotional solidarity is regarded as an important factor for women's learning (Hayes and Flannery 2000; Belenky and Goldberger 1997). The students started to talk about the difficulties that they faced in studying and, as a group, they began formulating strategies to overcome their individual struggles and loneliness. This solidarity and sense of community is key to how I conceptualize the possibilities for transforming identities through adult learning. First, I will talk about the group in which I was a participant, and then I introduce Lee's study group, whose members I interviewed.

THE STUDY GROUP'S EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

The women in my study group first became familiar with one another because of the seating arrangements in a face-to-face class. There, we had conversations about the difficulties we faced in studying, and we shared strategies about how to study for a particular subject. In our second year at KNOU, we agreed that it would be helpful if we could study together and we initiated a study group. We studied together at the library in a branch campus of KNOU, sharing our test preparation materials and working on assignments together. Also, we spoke about the difficulties we faced everyday, including our feelings of loneliness and isolation, the challenges of returning to school at our age, and our lack of familial support. After tests, we ate out together to relieve our stress.

Because of this emotional solidarity, we not only shared the joy and anger of our daily lives, but we also talked about how the knowledge we obtained in school connected with our own personal experiences. The study group therefore not only enhanced our confidence in our formal schoolwork, but it also radically altered how we perceived our own identities and place in the world. The group transformed our lives by allowing us to reclaim our original names, to connect knowledge with experience in order to read the world more critically, and to change our ways of living and participating in community work.

The possession of a name symbolizes one's existence as an independent social being (Simmonds 1996). In South Korea, most married women who do not have a job and who stay at home as housewives are rarely called by their own names, and this practice reaffirms the male-centered family unit. Commonly, married women are referred to as "so-and-so's daughter-in-law," or wife, or mother (often of her eldest child). In this way, married women's lives are reconstructed by the terms of a male-dominated order. With only a few exceptions, most of us had the experience of losing our own name after marriage; we felt that our only purpose was to provide help for our family members' lives, and we could not find room for our own lives.

As KNOU students, however, we were called by our own names. The moment we were first called by our names in the face-to-face class was the moment that we re-recognized our identities as independent individuals. Since our names had been lost for such a long time, the process of regaining them was significant and moving. Within the study group, the act of calling each other by name was a gesture of recovering and validating our social identities. The act of re-recognizing our names and affirming

ourselves as independent individuals allowed us to develop our own distinctive voices and to speak about our lives (Hayes and Flannery 2000; Hayes and Smith 1994). In doing so, we actively challenged our status as dependant beings within the male-dominated family system, and we decisively established our identities as independent and unique people with our own social lives.

Adult learners who experience transformation through educational experiences are usually self-directed, problem-centered, and motivated by internal factors (M. Knowles 1980; Mezirow 2000). We did not accept that the knowledge we learned in school was self-evident or absolutely true, and we refused to learn information only for the sake of the test. As adult learners, we were continually connecting our new knowledge with past experiences and reflecting critically on our existing knowledge (Hayes and Flannery 2000; Hayes and Smith 1994; Saltiel 1998; Tisdell 1993). As women returning to higher education, we took an active part in our study group, preferring the collaborative learning style because it met our needs. We felt comfortable in an environment in which others valued the knowledge that we had gained from years of experience, and so we didn't hesitate to share our experiences or to collaborate on problems. This sharing process allowed us to learn from and instruct each other according to our own knowledge and experiences, thereby reinforcing our social consciousness.

One example of the way in which we collaborated to connect school knowledge with our experiences occurred in a study meeting following a face-to-face class about Korean history. The instructor had focused on the relationship between economic structure and political power in the military governments, and his lecture prompted many discussions and arguments in our group. He had lectured about the closed, adhesive relationship between political power and plutocrats, insisting that the IMF crisis of the late 1990s was caused by "import–foreign currency policy," "export-directed policies," and "monopolistic capital" under South Korea's military dictators. This lecture was shocking to most of us, because we thought that this national economic crisis had been caused by the civil government's misguided economic policy. Most of us had believed that even though the previous military government had been condemned as a dictatorship, it at least had a sounder economic policy than the civil government. In our study group, we argued seriously about the concepts raised in the lecture. To understand them, we called on memories and experiences from our pasts. A woman who had grown up in a rural area, for example, described how rural villages were destroyed through the government's economic policy of promoting industrialization and urbanization. We discussed how

the government implemented a low grain price policy in order to move the population from the countryside to urban areas, thereby bringing down the labor fee rate of products for export. Through this process, we came to understand that the IMF crisis resulted from a history of imprudent or erroneous economic policies. We, daughters of farmers, recognized the reasons why our parents gradually became poor even though they were diligent. Through this discussion, we came to realize that this was not an individual or family problem, but a structural problem connected with national economic policy.

One of my study group members said that this process allowed her to comprehend her past in a new light: "Now I could understand the source of my family's struggles. We didn't suffer from lack of food because we had a farm. But my parents never had enough money for their children to go to school. It was hard to make money selling the products of our farm. This was the result of the low grain price policy. Naturally we, as daughters, were excluded from higher education. It was beyond my parents' capacity to support all of their children." This was a moment when we re-recognized our past adversity not as of our own individual making, but rather as the result of social and political problems. By awakening our social consciousnesses, this discussion allowed us to overcome the low self-esteem caused by our lack of degrees—it made us realize that our personal troubles were connected to larger social issues. Sometimes we argued with each other's opinions, but these arguments only sharpened our critical consciousness. We gradually opened our eyes to the society in which we lived and our own position in it.

This transformation allowed us to think about our present positions in our society and to read the world more critically. Gradually we became more concerned about community affairs and took a greater part in social work. We knew how hard it would be to procure a regular job after graduating from KNOU, especially since age- and gender-based discrimination still exists in South Korea. However, even this potentially disheartening recognition led us to hope that we could actively participate in creating a more democratic society by putting into practice what we had learned. One of the participants started to do volunteer work to take care of disabled children in a community center during her senior year. When we heard that she was volunteering at the community center, we asked her why and she explained, "I know I cannot get a job with this school diploma and at my age. But it is a pity that I can't use what I have learned. So I started volunteer work to use my knowledge to help disabled children. I think this is a way that I can spend my life more valuably." Also, she said she had

been busy living from hand to mouth until very recently, but now that her children were grown she had room to share her time and energy with people in need. We were impressed and motivated by her remarks and sought to find ways to put our own education to good use. In this way, we influenced each other's way of thinking and living.

THE ACTIVITIES OF LEE'S STUDY GROUP

I introduce another study group to show how widespread and important this practice is for returning students. Lee, a senior in the education department who participated actively in a study group, went so far as to argue that KNOU is being maintained by study groups. She emphasized that study groups were not only crucial for succeeding academically, but that they also played a crucial role in achieving a "good life."

Lee was first introduced to her study group at the new students' orientation offered by the education department's student association in a branch learning center in Kyŏnggi Province. However, she was not able to participate regularly in the study group's evening meetings because her husband disapproved of her going out in the evening. One day she confessed to her classmates the difficulties of studying alone. Some of her classmates suggested that they work together, and a new study group was formed. The central members were *ajumma* (married women with children) and conveniently lived in nearby apartments. They met weekly during the daytime when their kids and husbands were in school and work; members took turns providing their apartment as a meeting place. Through these regular meetings they became friendly with their classmates, which helped them to keep pace with the academic work. Lee talked about the process through which camaraderie formed: "At first, it was a bit awkward. But to be intimate, we tried to keep up one meeting each week. Now we are so close that we can read others' mind without talking. Eventually, we became very close, to the point where we cared enough to be concerned about one another's family issues, and sometimes we hold family picnics together." Within the study group, they cherished their colleagues and encouraged each other to study hard, to overcome the feeling of isolation, and to stay in the program. Lee took particular note of two aspects of the experience: the fact that the women overcame hardship together and that they shared their whole lives with one another.

Scholars of critical feminist pedagogy emphasize the importance of collaborative modes and emotional solidarity in women's learning. They assert that female learners favor a more connected educational environ-

ment in which they can better reveal their capacity and draw on their personal experiences (Hayes and Flannery 2000; Hayes and Smith 1994; Saltiel 1998; Tisdell 1993). Lee's is certainly a case in point, since she experienced such substantial benefits from the emotional solidarity of a small group. She seriously considered quitting school several times because her husband accused her of neglecting her household duties when she attended study meetings or prepared for exams. Her husband, a conservative man who thought that "women have to take care of the household," would chide, "Why do you devote yourself to that college? What is it that you think you can do after graduation?" Whenever she heard her husband complain, Lee felt hopeless and contemplated dropping out. However, when she told her study group about her conflicts with her husband, other members could understand and share her mental anguish because of their own similar experiences. In a patriarchal social order, women are often regarded as means to support the male-centered family system. Married women can study only with the permission and consent of their husbands or parents-in-law. The tacit assumption is that study will be possible only if it does not interfere with household duties or the lives of other family members. Some of my friends had to skip a midterm or a final test because the test date overlapped with a family event such as a birthday party for a parent-in-law or a wedding ceremony for one of their husband's relatives.

When the members of Lee's study group recognized themselves as independent and unique social beings, they could insist on the importance of study in their lives. They discussed strategies for insisting on their right to study and advised one another on how to settle familial conflicts. In this way they received psychological support, as well as study strategies, from the group. Lee's study group designed a family picnic as a strategy to solve familial conflicts and to garner their husbands' help and consideration. The group arranged a family picnic near a college campus on a Saturday afternoon, and though their husbands resisted the idea at first, they managed to persuade them to go. Once their husbands met together and had a conversation, their understanding of their wives' education evolved. The group began a tradition of holding family picnics two times a year. The women gradually overcame their conflicts with their husbands, and these picnics helped to shift their husbands' attitudes so that they were understanding and supportive of the learning process rather than antagonistic.

As time passed, the women became so comfortable with each other that they could talk over everything that was on their minds, including their misfortunes and regrets. They shared the frustrations that they felt about not attending college earlier, and the problems that they experienced

because they were not able to tell others that they were attending KNOU. They understood one another's marginalized position. In this intimate relationship, they recovered from their wounded self-esteem and experienced self-awareness, they became proud of the fact that they had recommenced their study at an older age, and they acknowledged one another's willingness to help each other through hardships. Lee's fellow study group members became good neighbors as well as good friends. Since the women lived in the same residential area, they helped each other by taking care of each other's children and exchanging clothes that their children had outgrown. If one member had a problem, they worked together to solve it. As the old idiom says, they were such good neighbors that they knew how many spoons each woman had in her house. And they recognized that many neighbors were experiencing severe economic difficulties. As a result of the IMF crisis, there were many broken families and children living alone. The women recognized these unfortunate realities and acted together to try to relieve some of their neighbors' economic burdens. At one woman's suggestion, they gathered materials that they no longer used at home anymore, and after cleaning and repairing them sent them to an orphanage operated by the Catholic Church. Thus they gathered their emotional, intellectual, and physical resources in order to participate in the social work of their local community. This continued participation and practice sustained their relationships with one another.

On the basis of personal narratives from these two study groups, I argue that women's study groups allow returning female students to experience the transformative power of education. Most of these women first began to study to compensate for the low self-esteem that they felt because of their lack of a college diploma. After entering KNOU, they felt marginalized because of both the reputation of the school and their own difficulties as they resumed schooling. However, in their voluntarily initiated study groups, they experienced a transformation of their identities. The camaraderie and psychological support of their fellow group members allowed them to stop feeling marginalized by the educational system. They recognized themselves as unique beings, they regained their given names and learned to express their social identities, and they synthesized the knowledge they obtained in school with their past experiences. These experiences not only transformed identities but also changed their ways of living. Through these experiences, they recovered their self-esteem and confidence as social beings and began to live actively in their communities.

PART III

Supplementary Education

6. Private Institutes as Educational Sedatives

Misook Kim

It is often said that there are two kinds of people in South Korea today: the graduates of first-class colleges and everyone else. This popular saying reveals that in South Korea social status is highly dependent on educational achievement. Studies of social mobility report that status attainment is strongly affected by educational achievement and in turn that educational attainment is closely related to family background (Bang and Kim 2001, 2002; Y. Kim and B. Kim 1999). Students face intense competition in the college entrance examination, especially for the top-tier universities. In order to seek top-tier educational credentials under these circumstances, the vast majority of South Korean students rely on after-school education at private institutes (*hagwŏn*). The South Korean government has long exerted tight control over private tutoring and private institutes, which have been perceived as institutions that increase class inequality and destroy the state's authority to govern schools (see chapter 7, by So Jin Park, in this volume). Nevertheless, a diverse and extensive supplementary education market has developed both in the informal and formal economy. This market has escalated both because people have such a strong desire for "good college" credentials and because of the lack of systematic policies to curb the excessive value placed on educational credentials (see also chapter 1 in this volume, by Michael Seth).

With the increasing marketization of education in South Korea, private institutes are booming. They appeal to the public both because they answer to middle-class anxieties about the maintenance of class status and because they offer a pedagogy of care and comfort. It is ironic that the pedagogy of yesteryear's public schooling—rote memorization—is the method of choice at most institutes. Students tend to feel freer and more comfortable in private institutes than they do in school: they feel free to ask about what

they do not understand well, they can choose or reject teachers, they can choose their clothing, and they do not need to write down what instructors teach in class. The relatively authoritarian or compulsory style of mainstream schooling makes private institutes more popular by comparison. Many students and parents find institutes' teaching and style helpful and reassuring, but some consumers also fret that they (or their children) are being robbed of their capacity for independent study and success.

The institute market has necessarily affected daytime public and private schooling, especially since institutes teach ahead (this method is known as *sŏnhaenghaksŭp*, or "learning in advance"), namely, anticipating the material that students will learn in school. However, there are few well-developed studies of private institute education, and it has been difficult to gauge the effect of this kind of education on academic achievement or to understand how South Koreans inhabit this important educational space. In this regard, the study by J. Lee et al. (2002) stands out because it uses empirical data to demonstrate the effect of *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* on academic achievement. With *sŏnhaenghaksŭp*, the primary teaching strategy of private institutes and tutoring, students learn nationally standardized lessons three to twenty-four months earlier than they are scheduled to be taught in regular schools. Interestingly, J. Lee et al. (2002) found that private learning in advance of school instruction had less of an effect on a student's school grades than on a positive academic attitude, a finding that runs counter to the widespread beliefs of students, parents, and instructors alike.

Why do South Koreans invest so heavily in costly supplementary education even though it may have only a minimal effect on academic achievement? Is this private industry driven by the false consciousness of its consumers? After conducting a series of studies, I have come to believe that faulty estimations of educational effect provide only a partial explanation for people's deep investment in and attachment to this escalating market. In this chapter, I argue that the institutes have become a "sedative," providing students and their parents with a way to respond to and relieve their educational anxiety. I thus proceed to explain the complex dynamics at work in this educational arena. Specifically, I explore the ways in which middle-class people are involved in supplementary education. To do so, I examine how private institute education operates in terms of pedagogy, marketing strategy, and customer management, and how these institutes differ from public school. Also, I focus on how students, parents, and instructors perceive private institutes. The data I analyze here were collected through two projects conducted by the South Korean

Educational Development Institute, "Analysis of the Educational Situation of Cram Schools Designed to Prepare Students for the College Entrance Examination" (Y. B. Kim and M. Kim 2002); and "The Effect of Private Learning in Advance of Actual School Instruction" (J. Lee et al. 2002). As one of the primary researchers, I was heavily involved in both projects, particularly in the process of gathering qualitative data.

To study the effect of *sŏnhaenghaksŭp*, we looked at eight secondary-school students. We chose two schools in lower-class residential areas and two in middle-class residential areas. Then, based on survey results, we categorized the students into two groups: those with extensive experience in private institute education and those with little or no experience. After selecting eight relatively high achievers among them, we conducted interviews with the students, their parents, the private instructors, and their schoolteachers. We observed English and mathematics classes in their schools and in their private institutes once or twice. Additionally, we examined participants in science contests, since many of these students had received an intense type of *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* experience in order to succeed in such contests.

In order to study the actual conditions of private institutes, we intended to observe two institutes in both middle-class areas and lower-class areas, but we were only given permission for class observation at the middle-class area institutes for high-school students. We surmise that they gave us permission because these were well-known popular institutes that were confident enough to welcome outside observers.[1] I call them here the Independent Study Academy[2] (an English institute) and the Elite Academy (a math institute). We observed upper- and lower-track institute classes (since classes were stratified within each institute) two times each, focusing on math and English classes, since they were the most popular. We conducted interviews with the heads of the institutes, instructors, students of upper-track and lower-track classes, their parents, and counselors. We presented field notes and video materials to English and math specialists for professional comment.

Manufacturing Anxiety: The Management Strategies of Private Institutes

Private institutes have developed a series of unique management strategies in order to entice "consumers." Private institutes advertise educational services that students will not receive in the course of regular schooling, including learning ahead, teaching to the test, and tracking. In addition,

private institutes have developed specific networking strategies, relying on word of mouth and the social networks of influential mothers to extend their reputation. These management and pedagogical strategies foster students' dependence on the institutes by drawing on the larger social pressure to excel in school. By teaching in advance and teaching to the test, institutes not only convince current institute students of the value of institute education, but also promote anxiety in those students who are not yet attending institutes, prompting them to believe that the education they receive in school is inadequate or incomplete.

Learning in Advance: Repetition and Memorization

As mentioned above, learning in advance (*sŏnhaenghaksŭp*) is a popular institute method. Before the semester starts, institutes teach up to the point of the midterm exam, and once the semester begins they teach at a much faster pace than the schools. Finally, during the exam period, they review the material again. Private instructors often claim that *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* is essential because it gives students an advantage over noninstitute students, since institute students have already been introduced to the material that they are learning in school. Suny, a math teacher at one of the institutes, explained how *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* helps students to learn and retain information:

SUNY: Students forget what we taught after two months so we need to help them to remember. And if they re-learn at school what they learned here, they find it easy and familiar. That's why we do *sŏnhaenghaksŭp*.

MISOOK: Why don't you just review what the students learn at school instead of previewing what students will learn in school?

SUNY: That would be impossible. Private institutes survive because of preparation for lessons and exams to come. Otherwise, students wouldn't come here because they would have already learned the lessons at school.

One of the reasons that learning in advance is so popular is that it gives students a reason to attend institutes. Institutes employ *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* as a clever marketing strategy to ease the anxiety of students and parents while simultaneously promoting the anxiety of students and parents who do not attend institutes, thereby compelling them to become future customers. Thus institutes make sure that all students, whether high or low achievers, become potential customers. This works in a highly competitive college exam environment because most people are chronically nervous and worry about being left behind. It is significant to note, however,

that the anxiety only mounts upon attending institutes. According to a study I undertook with Y. B. Kim (2002), more than 39 percent of student respondents answered that after attending private institutes, they became more nervous about school grades, while roughly 37 percent said that they become more competitive with their friends. Thus, by manipulating exam anxiety and college entrance competition, private institutes have developed *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* as an efficient marketing strategy to continue to recruit students.

The most significant teaching strategy for *sŏnhaenghaksŭp* is repetition and memorization, since students will return to each subject multiple times in order to prepare for exams. The instructional techniques of private institutes tend to leave principles and theories behind and to focus instead on drills and rote learning. Instructors reported that students were easily bored and frustrated when they were asked to learn the principles behind the problems that they had to solve. Thus, the institutes "restructured" lesson units so that they could be understood more easily. Typically, they asked students to repeat and memorize formulas if they did not understand the process through which the formulas were obtained.. The instructors themselves, however, were not naïve enough to believe that simply memorizing formulas promotes learning the principles behind them. Nonetheless, instructors continue to teach students through memorization and repetition because it remains the most efficient and reliable way to increase students' success on exams. Since private institutes are businesses and must attract and retain students in order to survive, they focus on increasing students' ability to perform well on exams rather than attempting to develop students' critical or creative thinking skills.

Most instructors think that repetition is the most efficient system for achieving higher test grades. As one of them said, "No matter how dumb they are, if we make them practice the same problem again and again, their grades are bound to improve." Suny explained it this way: "In my previous class, there were high-school students who got sixteen or eighteen points in school examinations . . . I let them keep solving problems in the textbook for a month. They practiced again and again. And they later got eighty points on the exams. They were so happy with it. They never solved difficult problems. They did only the easy ones. They got more confident and their school grades improved . . . There is no way but repeated practice." Suny described the method that she has developed to help students memorize mathematical formulas more efficiently: "I give students three to five minutes to memorize formulas and ask them in turn to make sure they really have them memorized. Fortunately, we can ask them individu-

ally since we have only fifteen students. It is more effective than asking them to memorize the formulas by the next day. I make them memorize and ask them on the spot and I make sure to do it again the next day. If I ask them to memorize by tomorrow, many of them wouldn't, except for a few hard working students."

Significantly, students tend to like the ways in which they are taught at institutes. Many students reported that the private instructors' lessons were clearer and easier to understand than the lessons at school. Mi-young, a first-year student in high school who has attended institutes since first grade and whose grades are a little higher than average, explained the advantages of institute methods:

MI-YOUNG: Institutes progress really quickly. In seventy minutes, they manage to teach two units. It is better since they summarize them clearly and simply, even though they move so quickly.

MISOOK: What do you mean by "clearly and simply"?

MI-YOUNG: They make us understand them in a neat and simple way. They give us a simple and clear explanation.

MISOOK: What about schoolteachers?

MI-YOUNG: They are boring. But institute instructors simplify and put things in my brain in a neat and strong way.

MISOOK: What do you mean by "neat and strong way"?

MI-YOUNG: Schoolteachers try to explain everything, but institute instructors summarize them. They summarize and arrange them in order.

While school curricula present information in a more holistic way, private institutes work to communicate information in the easiest and most efficient way possible. Instead of asking the students to learn everything about a subject, they let students memorize questions that have a higher probability of being asked on examinations. Although students might enjoy the more creative pedagogy of school, they still say that they prefer the methods of private institutes because they are simple, clear, and efficient.

Instructors at private institutes explained that their emphasis on memorization derives from the needs of lower achievers. They said that they could not reach their absolute goal, which is improving their students' grades in school, if they taught students in a way to help them "understand" math or English. From their perspective, the only way to markedly improve students' achievement is to make students repeat and memorize information. Even in the upper-track classes, for example, instructors

gave students homework to memorize one hundred English words on Monday, and they were tested within only ten minutes of their arrival on Wednesday. Similarly, those students who were training for science contests, some of the highest achievers in their classes, had to repeatedly memorize questions and practice their answers (Misook Kim 2002). Although higher achievers are assigned more advanced material and learn more words, there is no essential pedagogical difference between lower- and higher-track classes. Thus institutes' popular and dominant teaching method, memorization and repetition, is not simply employed for the lower-track students. Rather, instructors have carefully chosen this method because it yields maximum results (i.e., an improvement in student grades) in a minimum amount of time for all students.

Teaching to the Test

Ultimately, all teaching and learning in private institutes is devoted to exam preparation. If information will not be asked in an examination, it is not taught, even if it is essential. For instance, writing is an important component of learning English, yet it is not taught because there is no writing question on the college entrance examinations. Since past examinations put emphasis on English grammar, institutes devote time to teaching grammar. However, since recent examinations emphasize reading and comprehension, instructors tend to teach grammar only to the extent that it is helpful for understanding the text.

To familiarize students with the types of examinations, instructors let students mark the questions most often asked on examinations, or they say, "This is often asked on the College Scholastic Ability Test," or "This is a critical problem. You have to know it." In English classes at the Independent Study Academy, instructors prompted students to underline the grammar, words, and idioms that were most often asked and read them several times or asked them to memorize them. Students described their experience of this form of pedagogy:

> MI-YOUNG: During the exam period, we practice math problems again and again. We keep practicing them. By doing this, it is said that we develop a sense of the types of questions. They say, "In this unit, this kind of problem will be asked." They just keep doing this. We really practice thousands of these questions. They pick them out and we practice them . . . After we practice all of them, they mix them up since we get bored . . . So I know how to solve [the problems] without thinking, even if I just glance at the questions.

JUNG-WOO: They give many questions. We work through questions. We memorize them. We memorize what kind of questions they are. In the case of a multiple choice, I can pick out the right answer effortlessly. Even though I see a number of words, I can see at once which one is a right answer. Institutes give lots of questions during the exam period. They keep distributing them.

By virtue of this repeated practice, many students said that they have come to a point where they are able to automatically pick out the right answer at once, even if they just glance at questions during real examinations.

In recent years, school grades have been given more weight than the College Scholastic Ability Test (SAT) scores for college entrance (see the introduction in this volume). Correspondingly, preparation for school examinations has become more important to both students and private institutes. Thus, in the school examination period, institutes reclassify students according to their schools and summarize their textbooks, which differ from school to school. Byung-ho, a first-year high-school student, described how institute instructors prepare students for exams: "In the exam period, instructors rush through the exam material. During the process they often say, 'I have a feeling that this will be asked on the exam,' or they pick out possible exam questions by looking at the textbooks. In fact, questions that are only a little bit different or similar [e.g., the change of a digit] are often asked in the real exam." Instructors even collect real exam questions after the school exam period by presenting small gifts to students who give their exams to the instructors. This accumulated information is sold to the next group of students, year in and year out. The institutes' devotion to exam preparation allows them to market themselves to students and parents who are heavily invested in receiving high test scores and good grades.

Tracking: Taking Individual Differences into Consideration

It is noteworthy that private institutes are unabashed about their tracking methods and are seldom criticized for them, even as a majority of South Koreans oppose tracking in school. Private institutes, particularly those in middle-class areas, stress the fact that they run classes that meet students' individual needs. Institutes organize small classes (five to fifteen students per class) and track on the basis of "ability," which is determined by the institute's own tests or by school grades. After testing and regrouping students, the institutes divide them into three to five different ability classes. Some institutes do not accept low achievers in order to control their qual-

ity and reputation. More remarkably, some institutes turn away even high achievers so as to give the impression that they are so popular and rigorous that they do not have the time or space to accommodate even such strong students. Institutes often brag that they are much better at tracking than regular schools, in which the teacher-student ratio (1:35) precludes refined classification and where more careful tracking is prohibited due to the dearth of teaching materials and parental opposition. The institutes' refined tracking system allows them to market themselves as a system tailored to the abilities and needs of individual students.

Curriculum differentiation remains a controversial issue among education scholars. For instance, Oakes (1985) opposes tracking since it is unfair, particularly for students from lower-class backgrounds who are placed in lower-track courses in school. Oakes and many others have argued that higher-track students are more likely to be encouraged to develop a higher level of thinking skills, such as analytical or critical thought, whereas lower-track students are guided through repetition and rote practice. Researchers have also observed that tracking impacts learners' self-esteem, such that lower-track students tend to have lower self-esteem. Page (1991) argues that the meaning of tracking varies according to the dynamics and circumstances in which teachers and students construct lower-track lessons. Most scholars agree that schools should consider student differences in order to administer proper education, but that they should not discriminate against students. Instructors at South Korean private institutes were enthusiastic supporters of institute tracking mechanisms because they allowed them to teach students more effectively in light of their individual abilities. They emphasized the effectiveness of tracking for improving grades, while ignoring potential damage (e.g., to students' self-esteem).

Gi-hoon, one of the math instructors at the Independent Study Academy, voiced her support of tracking: "In the lower-track class, I repeat a lot and explain slowly. Although we use the same text as one of the upper-track classes, in the lower track we omit difficult problems that irritate lower achievers and instead we practice easy ones." A popular math lecturer at the same institute, Jeong-sook, explained the differences between the ways that she taught lower- and upper-track students:

JEONG-SOOK: First of all, the level of the texts are different [in the lower-track class] and the progress of classwork is slower since their intelligence levels are different. It is not only related to their intelligence but also to their attitude. With the lower achievers I have to go out of my way to encourage them, so it is more difficult. So I

try to teach them in an easy manner. I only teach them textbook material. I do nothing else. I only give them the basic points.

MISOOK: How about the upper-track class?

JEONG-SOOK: I try to teach them various approaches to solving a problem. If there are three ways of solving it, I put all three ways down on the blackboard. For example, when we have cylinder and cone problems, I compare them and ask what the difference is between them. I make them think a lot. When it comes to the lower track, I teach one easy way and let them memorize it.

According to Jeong-sook, lower-track students sometimes have attitude problems and are often absent or late depending on their mood. She explained that even though both tracks use the same texts, difficult problems are often omitted in the lower-track class. English instruction in the Elite Academy shares this tendency. In the upper-track class there, teachers inform students of many synonyms, whereas in the lower-track class only a small number of easy synonyms were introduced.

Although heads of private institutes insist that instructors respond to students from both tracks with the same level of time and devotion, the lecturers admitted that they prepare more carefully when teaching higher-track students because higher achievers were more likely to point out their mistakes. Jeong-sook offered these details: "Since I teach the upper-track class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, I work hard on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday to prepare. I almost memorize the contents before class. In the lower-track class, the progress of classwork is slow and I just prepare handouts. They do not know even if I teach something wrong." Similarly, Ji-sung, a math instructor at another private institute located in a lower-middle-class area, remarked:

> There are two or three ways to solve problems. I teach the easiest way to lower achievers and introduce more sophisticated ways of solving problems to higher achievers. They like these ways of teaching. For example, when we're solving a linear function problem in the upper-track classes, I introduce different ways to approach it—we solve it by writing out a formula, drawing a graph, and other ways . . . If I teach various ways of solving problems to lower achievers, they feel it is very complex and get confused. Teaching various methods only disturbs them. So, if it is not necessary to teach various ways, I just teach one way.

These interviews reveal that there is a clear difference between the ways that teachers prepare for upper- and lower-track classes in terms of

teaching methods, teacher preparation, and classroom content. Although instructors do tailor their lessons depending on the students' track, both tracks were still taught through memorization and repetition. Though the upper-track students may be presented with more problem-solving tactics, instructors do not emphasize critical thinking or independent study. Rather, their pedagogy is orchestrated to enhance test-taking skills.

The Maternal Network

Institutes rely on familial networks, particularly on networks of influential mothers, to help them to increase enrollment, retain students, and improve their reputation. The heads of the institutes recognize that South Korean mothers are responsible for child rearing and education and that securing the approval and aid of these mothers is a critical management strategy. A mother's ability to send her children to good colleges is a significant criterion according to which her success as a wife and mother is evaluated, and this is particularly true for middle-class mothers (Kim, Lee and Park 1993; see also Park, chapter 7 in this volume). Accordingly, many Korean middle-class mothers spend considerable time helping with and monitoring their children's study. Collecting useful information on the "right" instructors and institutes is a mother's business. Mothers participate in the orientations of numerous private institutes and check their success rates of college entrance, their study materials, their study plans, and the quality of their instructors. Information about the institutes is shared among certain social networks such as mothers (largely full-time housewives) of students who attend the same school, obtain similar grades, or live in the same area. These social groups have formed since their children were in kindergarten, and they are often exclusive. If an outsider asks for advice about which instructor or institute is effective, they are reluctant to divulge information, especially to those parents whose sons or daughters are competing with their own children. Some mothers say that it is better for them to get advice from mothers of seniors and graduates who no longer need to feel competitive. Mothers and students choose instructors and institutes primarily on the basis of people's recommendations, as well as from leaflets and mass media advertisements (Y. B. Kim and M. Kim 2002). Below, Jung-woo's mother describes how she chose institutes, beginning when Jung-woo was in the first year of middle school (seventh grade).

> I heard from my son's friend's mother who sent her older son there that it was a really good institute. If mothers tell you it is good you can trust it. If it wasn't a good place, why would everyone be talking about it? Because the institute is proven very effective. If a student's school

> grades are not good, it is not the institute's problem, but the student's problem. It is important to know that you have to adjust to the institute before you can expect your grades to improve. I figured that if things went well there, his grades would be good . . . Once I choose a place, I wait and see how things go for about six months.

Ah-yong, a third-year middle-school student, says that she relies on recommendations to assess the quality of her program: "I don't know whether [stories of the school's success are] true or not. Yet many students are faithful to this place because their older sisters or brothers have told them that it is the best." Private institutes consider it a badge of honor to be able to assert that they gather their students only by recommendation and word of mouth. Jae-hyun, the head of the Independent Study Academy, put it this way: "We don't advertise at all. Other institutes spread leaflets, but we fill up with students who come our way by word of mouth." Though Jae-hyun speaks of the dissemination of the school's reputation as if it were a natural process, reputations are carefully crafted and nurtured. Institutes work hard to manage their reputations. For example, institutes hold meetings with influential mothers, and they call the mothers of high achievers hoping that they will become spokeswomen in their social circles. By relying on maternal networks and associating themselves with the best students, institutes can develop a more positive reputation, thereby attracting more students.

A STRENUOUS AND INSECURE JOB: INSTITUTE INSTRUCTORS

Instructors recognize that focusing on exams and the repeated practice of problem solving is problematic. However, they assert that these methods are necessary to insure their job security and the survival of their institutes. If there is a significant decrease in re-registered students, instructors get fired. Students often quit institutes when they feel that an instructor provides boring and difficult lessons, does not do a good job answering their questions, does not prepare them well for the exam, or does not help them to improve academically. The very competitive private institute market truly speaks to "the survival of the fittest," and this certainly characterizes the difficult job of the institute instructor.

Instructors at private institutes are paid according to the number of students they teach, and they do not receive benefits such as pensions, medical insurance, or workers' accident compensation. There are highly paid instructors who earn over $50,000 a year, but they are a minority.

The great majority of instructors earn $20,000–30,000 annually. These insecure working conditions mean that instructors do not have the luxury of considering what kinds of instructional methods would be educationally desirable. Instead, they are more likely to care only about whether a certain instruction method is efficient so as to yield better exam results. Within these confines, many institute instructors work very hard to be "a good instructor," spending a substantial amount of time preparing for class, even at the expense of their health or their personal lives:

JEONG-SOOK: I got only seven to ten days off last year. Typically I was at the institute till one or two in the morning each day. Because of my irregular eating habits, I ended up getting a duodenal ulcer and I had to have surgery. This is really a difficult job to have over the long run.

JAE-HYUN: In order to thoroughly manage students, we let them finish their homework no matter what time it is. There was a boy who once finished his homework at four o'clock in the morning . . . I spend seven hours to prepare for a two-hour lecture. I ask native speakers of English, professors, and news reporters when I have something to ask . . . We have to make teaching materials that are not the same as last year's. And we have to make different materials according to the students' ability level. Schoolteachers cannot do this.

In addition to efficient instructional methods, instructors are also expected to be friendly, since more and more students expect to have approachable and down-to-earth instructors. According to the heads of the institutes, the recent tendency is to value instructors who are caring and friendly over intelligent or dynamic instructors. As the head of the Elite Academy put it, "In the past, students gathered around good lecturers, but today this is not the case. They like instructors who are friendly. Because they want to feel free to ask questions about whatever they do not understand and they do not want to be humiliated." Students and parents generally perceive private institutes to be friendlier than regular school. Interviews with two institute students and their mothers reveal the perceived differences between school teachers and institutes instructors:

GEONG-IN: [In regular school t]eachers are kings and students should obey them. That's why there is no getting close to teachers. Anyway, in school there are rules to obey.

GEONG-IN'S MOTHER: I feel that it is easier to talk with pri-

vate institute instructors than schoolteachers. Also, instructors often call. School teachers do not. They only call the troublemakers.

JI-HYUNG: In school we have to write what teachers say and listen to teachers. But in private institutes we do not have to write anything down unless we want to. And we can ask about what we don't understand . . . In school, we cannot choose teachers, but in private institutes we do. In school, I have to adapt to teachers whoever they are. But in institutes, I can select instructors who are well-suited to me. I can reject a bad instructor. I can just quit if the teacher isn't good . . .

JI-HYUNG'S MOTHER: Institute instructors tend to communicate better with the children . . . This is the difference between public and private education. [School teachers] are not fired. In institutes all we have to do is call and they get fired immediately. [Institute instructors] do their best to survive. They buy pizza for the kids and sometimes even take note of their birthdays.

JI-HYUNG: They treat us well. Really.

JI-HYUNG'S MOTHER: They do their best to make it interesting. If kids do not come, they are dismissed. So they need to work hard.

JI-HYUNG: There was an instructor who often hit kids . . . Parents called a lot, and he got fired.

In order to meet students and their parents' demands more appropriately, institutes meticulously monitor students' attendance, weaknesses and strengths in certain subjects, as well as their school grades. Moreover, instructors at private institutes were very concerned about securing a good relationship with students and parents. The combination of these demands makes the job of an institute teacher highly stressful.

SUNY: This job requires more and more patience. Once there was a teacher who scolded a student and shoved her chair to the side in frustration. Later, I saw her crying in the office . . . This job requires that we be patient—and then some—in dealing with children. But it is very difficult to do that!

Students and parents appreciate the institutes' small class size, tracking, friendly climate, strong exam preparation, and rigorous management of each student's improvement. Although institutes work hard to meet their clients' demands, there remain serious problems, which I turn to in the next section.

WHAT'S MISSING? SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Perhaps the most malignant effect of private institute education is that it encourages students to become dependent on the institutes' guidance, and this dependency seriously weakens students' capacity for self-directed learning. This is especially true for students who have attended institutes for a long period of time. For instance, Byung-ho, a first-year high-school student who had attended institutes since his first year of elementary school, lost confidence in his ability to study on his own:

BYUNG-HO: To study on my own, I have to search books. And what if there are problems that are not in the textbooks? What if the problems turn out to be important and are asked on the exam? If I attend institutes, I can just ask the instructors. If I study for myself, I have to buy reference books. It is difficult. Even then the reference book does not seem to offer enough exam questions. But institutes just give everything to me.

MISOOK: If you could not attend them, what would you do?

BYUNG-HO: I would quit studying. How could I study myself? It seems hopeless.

MISOOK: Have you tried to study by yourself?

BYUNG-HO: No, but I thought about doing that several times. I wish I could but I cannot study by myself. I cannot control myself according to a plan.

Though Byung-ho believed that institutes are a necessary for his success in school, his mother expressed reservations about his dependency on the institutes:

BYUNG-HO'S MOTHER: The problem with attending institutes is that while other students learn to study for themselves, my child is too dependent on institutes. I told him that higher achievers study hard at home and that he needs to try it. I told him that kids who do not attend institutes got the school grades he did, and I asked him why he received those school grades, even while attending institutes. My

son answered, "I can't quit the institute—if I do, it will mean quitting school." I was shocked. I think that my child has been going to institutes too long.

MISOOK: Why do you think that your son sees quitting institutes as quitting school?

MOTHER: Well, he thinks that he can't keep up if he only attends school. He thinks he will get bad grades. As he put it, "How could I possibly take exams if I only learned at school?"

MISOOK: Has he ever quit private institutes before?

MOTHER: No, he is addicted to them. But sometimes I don't know whether he is addicted or whether I'm addicted. Other kids would quit when their school grades are not so good. But my child won't.

In this competitive climate, students are incredibly nervous about their performance, and this anxiety only seems to intensify with institute attendance. Many students feel as if they study hard when they are learning at institutes, even if the knowledge is based solely on repeating and memorizing what the instructor has said rather than on the students' own self-discovery or self-directed learning. This kind of psychology makes them more dependent on private institute education. Mi-young, a student who was quite positive about the ways institute instructors taught (i.e., they explain information more easily and clearly), was also aware of some problems with their pedagogical methods: "It seems to me that it is an illusion to think that attending institutes is equal to studying. And in my case I do not study at home. Institute attendance is not really studying in fact. I am just listening to the instructors. There is a difference between listening and studying. That's why there is no effect [from private institute education], even though I feel as if I am studying."

Sol-ji, the highest achiever in her class, also recognized that institute attendance made her dependent. She thought that institutes only took her time away from real studying and so she decided to quit. She said, "In the case of math, it is better to study alone than to attend institutes. Doing nothing is better. When I attend institutes, I have no time to study and the result is not good. And I only study question collections given by institutes." This seeming confidence aside, however, Sol-ji still expressed uneasiness about not attending private institutes, worrying that she might be left behind. "Other friends take at least one extra lesson each day, like one on Mondays, one on Tuesdays, or one on Wednesdays . . . They live with stress, compared to me. But sometimes I feel I am inferior. I get so

nervous. But I think I have to work based on my standard, not others. But I still end up feeling that maybe I am not working hard enough. So I might end up going to institutes again." The heads and instructors of institutes report that it is very difficult for even the highest-ranked students to remain disciplined because they are children. They insist that the institutes help them to control themselves and work efficiently until the college examination.

However, some higher achievers chose not to attend institutes or only attended them temporarily in order to supplement subjects that were difficult for them to understand. Ji-hae, a first-year high-school student and one of the highest-ranked students in her class, pinpointed the problems of private institute education based on her own experience. She registered at an institute during summer vacation in her third year of middle school, but quit after only three days; over the winter break she attended for only a month.

> I like to study for myself. They [instructors] push too much. So I lost interest in studying. They give us too much homework, which I am not sure is necessary. Even then we have to do it there. I cannot study that way . . . When I study in institutes, I do not feel that the work is really mine. There is less pleasure in achievement, too. It might improve school grades if one only studies things that have been summarized well by instructors. But when I study for myself, it stays in my head for a longer time. When I study only "important" things or things already summarized by the teacher, I don't get to learn about other things that I am curious about.

Ji-hae's mother and older sister often advise her to study alone and to not give in to the pressure to attend institutes. Her mother believes that the institutes' pedagogy is anti-intellectual, and she criticizes it for taking away the independent learning habits of students.

PRIVATE INSTITUTES AS SEDATIVES IN SOCIAL STATUS COMPETITION

In South Korea, one's social status is strongly affected by one's educational credentials. This social situation leads South Koreans to concentrate on obtaining good credentials for themselves and for their children, with a particular focus on college credentials. Under intense competition for the college entrance examination, the majority of South Korean students and their families worry about lagging behind other students, and they rely

heavily on private tutoring and institutes in order to secure a comparative advantage.

Private institutes' primary concern is gathering more students so as to enhance their profits. In order to make the most visible outcome in the minimum amount of time, private institutes employ teaching methods such as repetition, simplification, rote memory, and drills, targeting questions that appear frequently on tests. Also, their classes are small and tracked by ability, and they maintain close interaction with students and parents in order to satisfy their customers' needs and desires.

For students and parents, attending private institutes acts as a kind of "sedative" to relieve the considerable stress of obtaining higher academic achievement. By attending private institutes, students often have the feeling that they study hard, that they are keeping pace with other students, and that they are individually cared for. However, private institutes play a critical role in producing dependency. *Sŏnhaenghaksŭp* and other typical institute techniques damage students' capacity to learn on their own. The longer students attend private institutes, the more likely they are to become dependent. Of course, private institutes are not solely responsible for the damage of students' capacity to learn on their own. Living in a society in which college credentials have a relatively enduring effect on their lives, South Koreans still tend to value conformity over autonomy or creativity. Thus, students and parents might reason that it is more rational to seek efficient ways of obtaining college credentials rather than to focus on educationally desirable teaching methods that develop high-level thought.

7. Mothers' Anxious Management of the Private After-School Education Market

So Jin Park

> A few days ago, I saw a TV documentary about a couple who had immigrated to Canada for their children's education. I could not agree more with the father. To summarize in a sentence, he said, "South Korean education is completely out of whack." All of us are crazily gasping for air in a broken-down system . . . As you know, the burden of private after-school education is simply growing and growing. Children have no time to play. But if I don't push them to study, then my children fall behind. On the other hand, if I follow the trend, all that the children do is to study . . . Moreover, *I'm not sure that [making children attend so many private after-school programs] is really right. Is it really so helpful for their future?* Most of all, I pity [*pulssanghada*] my children that they don't know how to play even though it is me who makes them like that . . . In reality, when I see my children idling around, I can't help feeling anxious and saying things like, "Did you finish your homework?" (Ch'anho's mother, with two sons in grades 2 and 4 in 2002, emphasis added)

When I first met Ch'anho's mother, she was chauffeuring her two sons around to their after-school programs in her family's small second car, bought for this purpose. As her comments above illustrate, she feels considerable anxiety and frustration about managing her children's education. In this passage, she expresses dissatisfaction with both South Korea's educational atmosphere, declared to be "completely out of whack," and the growing dependency of children on private after-school education. In contrast to her own childhood, which she characterizes as a time of freedom (i.e., almost completely free time after school), she laments the tight schedules of her own children (and South Korean children in general), composed of tightly packed private after-school programs. "If I had studied as much as Ch'anho [her elder son], I would have been the top student in

my school," she joked. However, at the heart of her own frustration was her sense of maternal responsibility in fashioning her children's childhoods and her anxiety about whether devoting so much time to private after-school education was the right thing to do. Drawing on my 2001–3 fieldwork in Seoul, this chapter explores this heightened sense of maternal responsibility for and anxiety over the management of children's education—in particular, at private after-school programs or institutes—by women like Ch'anho's mother.

I argue that this shared sense of anxiety among mothers reflects the larger neoliberal transformation of South Korea, including extensive economic restructuring—and as a result, growing unemployment and instability of employment—and recent educational reforms that have promoted new educational values. Although most mothers are familiar with the old virtues of "hard work, memorization, and repetition" (i.e., the old virtues of citizenship in the authoritarian, developmentalist South Korea), they are still strangers to the recent emphasis on "excellence" and "creativity" (i.e., the new virtues of twenty-first-century citizenship in an increasingly competitive global economy). They are often bewildered by public rhetoric that announces, "Now is the time to raise children who are creative rather than memorize and imitate well" (as the advertisement copy of the most popular worksheet company in South Korea pronounced in summer 2000).[1] It is in this context that mothers continuously negotiate what this new rhetoric means for their children's education, and how to instill the new values, regardless of what they think of them.

Today, the escalating private after-school market, freed from state regulation in accordance with neoliberal education reforms, demands much more of mothers than formal schooling ever did. For instance, in the opening passage Ch'anho's mother is keenly aware of her increasing responsibility for managing her children's after-school programs. As she points out, in her own childhood school was the only place she studied; at home all she did was homework by herself. In contrast, today it is the after-school education that is most critical, and she is responsible for managing it.

The mothers whom I interviewed were charged with and devoted enormous energy to making crucial decisions about their children's private after-school education: they collected information about the market through diverse channels (e.g., through other mothers), made decisions that took their financial limitations into account, and managed their children's tight schedules as they moved between public school and private after-school activities. However, like Ch'anho's mother, many mothers expressed ambivalence and

confusion about their children's education and the decisions that they had to make. Mothers struggled to make sense of and make micro-decisions about their children's education in the context of South Korea's broader transformations. Meanwhile, inextricable from both their calculations and their confusions are mothers' reflections on their own lives and educational histories. I emphasize that in the face of these demands, women mobilize diverse class capital—economic, cultural, and social—distributed unequally among different groups (Bourdieu 1984, 1986; Laureau 1989; Reay 1998). This chapter thus focuses on how diverse mothers imagined their children's future in a transforming world. In particular, I examine women's negotiation of both old and new rhetoric about educational success in relation to changing educational values.

This chapter is organized in three sections. First, I examine the rapid escalation of the private after-school market in the context of recent neoliberal educational reform. I emphasize that there is still little consensus about the private after-school market, even as long-standing state controls have been lifted. I argue that these recent transformations facilitate both mothers' dependency on and their ambivalence about this market. I then discuss the growing importance of mothers' economic, cultural, and social resources in their management of the diverse and stratified private after-school market. Finally, relying on ethnographic details, I focus on women's pervasive and shared ambivalence and confusion about their own management practices, tracing the subtle class inflections of these reactions.

NEOLIBERAL EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE PRIVATE AFTER-SCHOOL MARKET

Private after-school education (*sakyoyuk*), or the private after-school market (*sakyoyuk sijang*), in South Korea is one of the world's largest markets of its kind, a composite of diverse private institutions (*hagwŏn*),[2] private or group tutoring (*kaein kwaoe* or *kŭrup kwaoe*),[3] and home-visiting worksheet teachers (*haksŭpchi*) operating outside formal schooling. At the dawn of the new millennium only this market seemed to be flourishing, while mass media, educational scholars, and educators were diagnosing the South Korean formal education system as a whole, including schools, to be in peril (Seo 2003; see also chapter 2 in this volume, by Jae Hoon Lim). Strikingly, by the late 1990s family expenditures for private after-school education almost equaled the country's entire education budget (Ju-ho Lee 2004, 223). According to a report from the Korean Educational Develop-

ment Institute (S. Choi et al. 2003), the largest government-supported educational research institute, 72.6 percent of school-aged students (83.1 percent of elementary students) participated in the private after-school market in 2002.[4] This follows more than twenty years of rapid expansion: the participation rate grew from 15 percent in 1980 to 22 percent in 1991, 54 percent in 1997, and 58 percent in 2000 (J. Yang 2003, 289). This growth is not limited to secondary education; remarkably, the elementary after-school market is the industry's fastest growing sector.

This recent escalation is all the more remarkable in light of the broader history of postwar South Korean education, which was committed, at least ideologically, to equal opportunity, exemplified by the decades-long policy of "school equalization." Under the military government of Park Chung Hee (1961–79), there were two critical educational reforms that have shaped the development of the South Korean educational field in the ensuing years: the "middle-school entrance without entrance examination" reform (*chunghakkyo musihŏm iphak chedo*) and the "high school equalization policy" (*kogyo p'yŏngjunhwa chŏngch'aek*). With these two policies, South Korean secondary schools have remained relatively—at least in theory—uniform under the state's strong control until recently. Unlike Japan or the United States, the significance of private schools has thus remained trivial.

Unlike Japan,[5] the recent expansion of an education market in South Korea is strongly linked with the complex history of state regulation and deregulation. In 1980, in the name of "equality of educational opportunity," the military government of Chun Doo Hwan (1980–87) announced the "July 30 Educational Reform," which stringently prohibited all kinds of private after-school education. However, throughout the 1990s, the state gradually loosened its control over this market, especially that for secondary students. In April 2000 South Korea's Constitutional Court finally made a decision that state regulation, which had technically prohibited private educational institutes since 1980, was in violation of the Constitution, which guarantees parents the right to regulate their children's education and the freedom to choose employment. Along with the new adoption of English as an elementary school curriculum in 1997, this court decision had an important effect on the private after-school market, especially for elementary students. This is one of the reasons why this sector in particular has grown so quickly in recent years. By the end of the 1990s, South Korea boasted one of the world's most vibrant private after-school educational markets, with few limits in the name of equality.

More important, this court decision should be understood in relation

to the context of neoliberal educational transformation, which triggered dramatic rhetorical changes in educational values from an emphasis on "uniformity and equality" to one on "creativity, excellence, and diversification." The Kim Dae Jung government (1998–2003) accelerated these reforms, which were initiated under the first civilian government of Kim Young Sam (1993–97). Although South Korea has undergone a series of education reforms, the recent ones from the mid-1990s are appreciated as the most radical and comprehensive to date (Mok, Yoon, and Welch 2003, 58; Seth 2002, 169).

A primary goal of neoliberal educational reform is to prepare South Korea (and hence its citizenry) to compete in the twenty-first-century global economy. In contrast to the emphasis on the "uniformity," "standardization," and "equality" of education during South Korea's successive authoritarian regimes (1961–92), the recent reforms (the new seventh revised national curriculum) pursue a "decentralized and diversified" curriculum that can promote "excellence" and "creativity" in students. These reforms apply the principles of a market economy—"free competition" and "deregulation"—to education, emphasizing the diverse choices that educational consumers (students and parents) enjoy (C. Kim 1997; Y. Lee 2001; Ro 1998, 1999). Yoon (2000, cited in Mok, Yoon, and Welch 2003, 61) also summarizes South Korea's recent education transformation in terms of three key shifts: from standardization to autonomy, diversification, and specialization; from provider to consumer; and from classroom education to open and lifelong learning. Yi Hae-chan, the first Minister of Education during the Kim Dae Jung regime, wrote in a public letter in 1998:

> The Age of the 21st Century in Which Creative Persons Can Succeed [subtitle]. . . . The society of the 20th century demands uniformity and homogeneity, but the society of the 21st century is different because it needs people who can think more creatively [*ch'anŭijŏk*] and flexibly [*chayuropke*]. Therefore, the model students [*mobŏmsaeng*] of the 21st century will be transformed in these ways, and education should produce such people. (H. Yi 1998)

However, and perhaps more important, while pointing to the recent rapid escalation of the private after-school market Yi also encouraged parents to avoid "excessive private education" (*kwayŏl kwaoe*). He argued that "rote memorization-oriented, private after-school education" (*chisik amgi wiju ŭi kwaoe kyoyuk*) would not help children anymore because of the recent reforms, which stressed creativity and excellence over the old values of uniformity and homogeneity.

Amid this radical transformation, though, new educational values could

not entirely replace old ones. Rather, they coexist, competing and conflicting with each other, despite their uneven discursive power. These tensions and conflicts between new and old have left South Korean educational consumers bewildered and perplexed. For instance, soon after the Constitutional Court lifted the state regulation of the private after-school market, the Minister of Education mentioned publicly that the state might subsidize private after-school education for low-income families. This statement provoked severe criticism from politicians, educators, and the public, who argued that this would lead to the collapse of the public schooling system, which was already in a state of crisis.[6] This episode reveals the extent to which the topic of private after-school education is politically and historically charged, as well as in flux.

Another heated issue—how the state measures and regulates "extravagant tutoring" (*koaek kwaoe*)[7]—drew public attention in the summer of 2000, since the Constitutional Court decision still left open the possibility of state regulation of "antisocial extravagant tutoring" (*pansahoejŏk koaek kwaoe*). Despite heated debates about what constitutes "extravagant tutoring," including several public hearings and surveys, the Ministry of Education quickly and quietly gave up on state regulation, realizing that the criteria could not help but be too arbitrary (J. R. Kim 2001). During this debate, reports of "extravagant tutoring" facilitated many South Koreans' awareness of the increasing gap in educational opportunities between the rich and the poor, a problem that had already been under scrutiny in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s.

These widespread and varied reactions reveal that the state and the Ministry of Education itself neither anticipated nor prepared for the extensive effects of the educational reforms. As we can see in Yi's public letter, the reforms directly criticized previous values such as uniformity and homogeneity. However, there was no clear vision of how the new educational values, such as creativity and diversity, could be articulated alongside "educational equality," which has been always been coupled with "uniformity of education" and which remains an important educational value in South Korea. Freed from state regulation, the private after-school market could emerge as a system working against educational equality. Critics argued that it was ironically these reforms that made for confusion among students and parents and thus fostered their dependency on private after-school education—despite Yi's attempt to deter them—because public schools were never prepared to entertain new educational values such as individualization and choice (Baek 1999; S. Lee 2002).

These conflicts and debates are especially intense at the elementary school level. As I pointed out earlier, the private after-school market for elementary students is growing rapidly, faster than that for secondary students. The booming of this market in all subjects reflects two recent reforms—the adoption of English as a formal subject (*kyogwamok*) in elementary schools in 1997[8] and the 2000 Constitutional Court decision effectively deregulating this market.[9] The consequent heavy burdens that after-schooling places on young children have received widespread criticism, particularly after the UN Committee on the Rights of Children criticized the "educational climate" of South Korean schooling, asserting that exam-oriented education and the character of "early education" (*chogi kyoyuk*) violated the rights of South Korean children by causing them severe stress. Given mothers' involvement, it is not surprising that the media and public discourse generally accused mothers of being responsible for these problems.

Within this complicated discursive context, most mothers I interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with and ambivalence about the entire South Korean education situation, including their children's schools, national education, and the expanding private after-school market. One mother said, "Nobody could be satisfied with the South Korean education situation," while another one cynically remarked, "Nowadays, children from affluent families cannot help but study well." According to my own survey, 71.9 percent of parents said that they were either "very dissatisfied" or "dissatisfied" with Korean educational policies, while only 3.7 percent expressed their satisfaction (with 0.1 percent being "very satisfied"). Many women also pointed out that they could not count on school alone for their children's education because many children increasingly depend on private after-school education. They thus felt that the mother's responsibility for her children's academic success has become more and more critical, but that it is very difficult for mothers to determine how to make the best choices.

While the government and citizens of South Korea remain perplexed, the after-school industry has learned to manipulate the changes enacted by the new seventh national curriculum. The after-schools have already discovered how to promote the new educational values in ways that will induce anxiety in students and parents and thus encourage consumption (see chapter 6, by Misook Kim, in this volume). Their ability to adapt to these new values is exemplified by the worksheet-company advertisement I quoted near the beginning of this chapter: "Now is the time to raise children who are creative rather than memorize and imitate well." The private

after-school market lures its confused customers by asserting that it can offer a much more diverse and stratified menu for facilitating students' creativity than the public schools can.

WHAT IS BEST FOR MY CHILDREN? SHARED AMBIVALENCE AND CONFUSION

Table 1 lists the extracurricular activities of four third-graders I interviewed in the course of my field research. Using these examples alone, we can observe the diversity of the private after-school market. Unlike more uniform schools, the after-schools offer a diversified and stratified menu in terms of format (worksheets, private tutoring, diverse extracurricular institutes, etc.), content (English, math, science, music, art, athletics, etc.), and cost.

Let me compare Suni's and Hosin's private after-school education in English. At first glance, it is apparent that Suni only has a worksheet for English, while Hosin has a worksheet and goes to an extracurricular institute. However, under closer examination, other significant differences emerge. Suni and her younger brother (in first grade) spend most of their time after school in an "after-school study-room" at a local church, attending a program designed for the children of working-class mothers who work outside the home.[10] Suni subscribes to worksheets for three subjects: English, Korean, and Math.[11] Because her mother works outside the home (in unstable employment), she and her brother join their mother's friend's daughter, a second-grader, at her home, where their worksheet teacher visits once a week. Within an hour, the worksheet teacher instructs Suni in Korean, math, and English, and the second-grader and first-grader in Korean and math. Suni's mother said that Suni's younger brother and the second-grader could have picked up knowledge of English by watching Suni's English lesson. The price of a worksheet subscription for English is about 25,000 won (ca. U.S.$21) per month.

Hosin also subscribes to an English worksheet service, but its price is over double that of Suni's English worksheet (60,000 won—about U.S.$50—per month) because this worksheet company specializes in English. Like Suni's instructor, his worksheet teacher visits once a week and spends about thirty minutes with him, but she works as his private tutor and focuses only on English. In addition, the worksheet teacher phones Hosin three times a week to check on his progress. The content and focus of the two worksheets are also different; many mothers discussed the differences among worksheet companies. Moreover, Hosin attends a children's English program at

TABLE 1 Examples of Private After-School Programs for Third-Graders

*Suni (ca. $100 per month)**
Piano (*hagwŏn*)
Worksheets: Korean, math, English
Mijin (ca. $167 per month)
All-subject institute (*posŭp hagwŏn*)
Worksheet for Chinese characters
English worksheet
Art (Specialty-Aptitude Education within school)
Youngho (ca. $375 per month)
Piano (*hagwŏn*)
Violin (*hagwŏn*)
Art (*hagwŏn*)
English (English specialized institute)
Math (Math specialized institute)
(Korean) Composition (group tutoring)
Soccer (Specialty-Aptitude Education within school)
Hosin (ca. $375 per month)
English (English specialized institute)
Worksheets for Korean, Math, Chinese characters
English Worksheet
(Korean) Composition (group tutoring)
Soccer Club (institute)

*U.S. dollars. Exchange rate: $1 = 1,200 won.

a very prestigious university three times a week for about two hours each time.[12] His English teacher in this institute is a foreigner whose mother tongue is English, unlike the worksheet teachers who have often not even majored in English. The price of this lesson is about 170,000 won (about $142) per month.

Most of the mothers I interviewed were keenly aware of such distinctions among private after-school institutions, and thus they carefully gathered information about them. In fact, in this stratified market, family resources are critical when women are juggling different private programs and trying to make the right choices for their children, as the following comments reveal:

> Affluent mothers who don't have to worry about finances, like mothers in the Kangnam area,[13] prefer one-on-one private tutoring [*kaein kwaoe*]. (a middle class mother of second and fifth graders)
>
> I can't afford the English specialized institute in which foreigners teach. I heard that it costs 100,000 to 200,000 won . . . (a working-class mother of first- and second-graders)

However, it is not only family resources that affect children's education. While celebrating diverse consumer choice, the private after-school market hails self-conscious consumers who are distinguished both by their ability to pay and by their "taste." Thus, educational decisions rely not only on a family's resources, but also on its (and particularly the mother's) cultural and social capital. In support of their children's private after-school education, mothers engaged in diverse everyday practices such as collecting information for choices and decisions, and continuous scheduling, monitoring, and evaluating so as to determine whether to hold things constant or effect change. Thus, many mothers emphasize that "mothers' ability to collect and judge information" (*ŏmma ŭi chŏngboryŏk*) about their children's education is becoming more and more crucial.

However, amid neoliberal transformation, rather than confidently celebrating consumer choices, many women expressed ambivalence and confusion about what they should do about their children's education. According to Diane Reay (1998), British working-class mothers struggle with feelings of "ambivalence," "uncertainty," and "inadequacy" about their involvement in their children's primary education, while their middle-class counterparts are more confident. However, this contrast does not easily apply to South Korean mothers. Although there are some class differences in mothers' reactions, class lines are not so easily drawn. Rather, I found that feelings of ambivalence and confusion were pervasive across the class spectrum.

Middle-Class Mothers' Ambivalence: Higher Education as a Prerequisite for the Future

Middle-class mothers, with their comparatively greater economic, cultural, and social resources, tend to procure more diverse and expensive private educational services for their children, but this is not always the case. Even within the class there exists a wide range of economic, cultural, and social resources, and these resources usually affect the kinds of private after-school programs these mothers purchase. Further, mothers' vari-

ous resources do not automatically become "benefits" for their children; rather, these resources must be "activated" (Lareau and Horvat 1999).[14]

Some middle-class mothers choose strategies that differ from their class peers. For instance, Min's mother, who lived in an apartment and had one son (an only child) in the sixth grade, decided not to depend on private after-school programs. When I first interviewed Min's mother, Min's only after-school classes were piano and violin—a very sparse and unusual menu for a sixth-grade child from a family of his economic level.[15] Indeed, in their middle-class apartment complex, most sixth-graders have packed afternoons that include school subject extra-curricular classes, above all math and English.

Min's teacher introduced Min's mother to me at a PTA meeting, suggesting that because Min's mother had spent three years in Scandinavia, she would be able to offer an interesting comparative perspective on children's schooling. Min's mother explained that her family had lived in Scandinavia for three years (1998–2000) because of Min's father's job at an international branch of his company, and that Min had attended an English-speaking school. In a coffee shop on the outskirts of her neighborhood, Min's mother began by suggesting that as a woman without strong opinions (*chugwan*), she would have little to offer me about South Korean education. This caveat delivered, she went on to explain, in very eloquent terms, both her vision for and ambivalence toward her child's education.

When I first asked Min's mother about her work experience, she answered that she was "just a housewife," but later on she revealed that she was working as a part-time private tutor for children's math and English. However, she quickly added that she seldom told people about this work. Although she herself was a tutor/teacher in the private after-school market, she explained that she was ambivalent about these programs. Because Min had been out of the country for a long time, she had decided that she would manage his progress in math and the other subjects. Clearly, she had made a self-conscious decision to "home-after-school" Min. Min's mother was most worried that a dependency on private education would destroy Min's ability to study alone—to be a so-called self-learner.[16] She was certain that in the future, Min's ability to learn independently would be critical to his academic and personal success.

Min's mother also criticized mothers' tendency to depend on private after-school market. She explained that what has changed in South Korea recently is not really the curriculum (i.e., the new seventh national curriculum, which stresses "creativity") but the mothers. "Actually, the basic content of textbooks is unchanged. . . . What is changed, however, are the

minds of mothers who want to get everything so quickly. . . . Mothers don't understand the meaning of 'creativity.' . . . Education is a slow process, but all they care about these days is results. They are only interested in news flashes about the 'thirteen-year-old boy with the perfect TOEFL score' or the 'young genius who is attending a university.' And they think about their own children in relation to these media sensations."[17]

She described the mothers in her midst, most of whom wanted their sons to become medical doctors. For her part, she wanted Min to fulfill his own dreams, but she admitted that in order to "feel happy" (*haengbokhada ko nŭkkida*) in South Korea, people need to both feel good about themselves, and more important, garner the approval of outsiders (*nam ŭi imok*). She offered this example: someone can own a small store and say that they are happy, but if outsiders wonder to themselves whether the person is in fact really happy because of the low status of the job, then the person could become frustrated. In the final analysis, Min's mother conceded that it is necessary to attend prestigious universities (*myŏngmundae*) in order to join the mainstream.

These criticisms of others aside, however, Min's mother also communicated the ambivalence that she felt about her own ambition (*yoksim*) for Min's education, an ambition that was in fact not so different from that of other mothers. She detailed her unrelenting agony over the apparent effects of other children's private after-school education—especially the effect of "learning in advance" (*sŏnhaenghaksŭp;* see Misook Kim, chapter 6 in this volume)—while pointing out how she oscillated between "ambition" as a mother and "objective evaluation" as a private tutor. She said, "children distinguish themselves to the extent that their mothers push them, especially during elementary school."

In contrast to Min's mother, most middle-class mothers tend to depend on diverse private after-school programs, but they also often express ambivalence. Returning to the vignette that opened this chapter, Ch'anho's mother expressed her criticism about South Korean education as a whole, her ambivalence toward her children's packed private after-school programs, and her own frustration about her own role in fashioning their childhood.

Against the rhetoric of recent education reforms (i.e., developing children's talent and creativity), Ch'anho's mother argued that children are still required to be "versatile" (*tajaedanŭng*) in order to go to college. Since high school grades (*naesin*) now play a more important role in college acceptance, students need to learn to excel in all subjects in the high-school curriculum. She said that she did not know the details of the frequent changes

in the university entrance exam—"Nobody can keep up," she said. She then spoke about one of the neighbors in her apartment complex who was up to date on the recent trends in South Korean education and preparing accordingly, beginning with her son's elementary education. For instance, although this woman's son was good at math, she also sent him to private art and athletic institutes because she knew that her son would need to do well in these classes to get good grades (*naesin*) in middle and high school; these grades, in turn, would play a significant part in helping him to get accepted into college. This conversation worried Ch'anho's mother because she knew that her son would not have enough time to develop such skills. Still referring to this family, however, Ch'anho's mother also critically pointed out, "Parents who have elite educations tend to push their kids too much because they themselves graduated from elite schools and were academically excellent." In this way, she acknowledged that getting into a good university is still crucial for children's future in South Korea. She wondered whether the value of higher education had really changed after the IMF crisis as so many people suggested, and concluded, "In reality, children are still afforded more opportunities only when they graduate from college in South Korea."

While continuously juggling their children's education and their own futures, Ch'anho's mother and father finally decided to immigrate to New Zealand, where they thought the educational atmosphere would be much better than in South Korea. Ch'anho's family's immigration story became an object of envy among their neighbors, who had also considered visiting (or living) abroad or "early study abroad" (*chogiyuhak*), especially for their children's English education. However, as Ch'anho's mother also acknowledged, not all mothers have this kind of option available, and thus most mothers cannot help but adjust to the current South Korean educational system (Massey 1993; Nelson 2000).[18]

Working-Class Mothers' Ambivalence: What College Education Guarantees

Now let me turn to stories of other mothers who have fewer economic, cultural, and social resources than Min's and Ch'anho's mothers. I had a group interview with six women who lived in the same neighborhood, one known as a working-class neighborhood, in which most houses are composed of multiple-household dwellings (*tasedae chut'aek*). While talking about their children's private after-school education, most said that they were envious of more affluent mothers who could send their kids

to more expensive and fancier private after-school programs. They talked about the high cost of tuition for new kinds of English or math specialized private institutes (*chŏnmun hagwŏn*). They could not afford them, they said, although they thought that those institutes would be best for their children. Instead, they usually depended on worksheets. These mothers' feelings toward these affluent mothers are complex, combining envy and ambivalence. For instance, Mijin's mother pointed out that she did not want to blame them because she would support her own children's education in the same way if she could afford to. However, she also emphasized that she and her neighbors try to support their children as much as they can (i.e., according to their own level). If they continuously compared themselves to more affluent families, she said, it would only make them frustrated.

Despite the ambivalence that she felt about stratified private after-school education, Unhee's mother pointed out that these days her neighbors, including herself, have changed their life focus. Rather than accumulating money to buy a house, she explained, they tend instead to "invest" in their children's education. She said, "That's not so we'll receive mercy from our children later. The lives of our children will be better if they study further . . . Even if I have to live without ever owning a home . . . I'm going for my children's education." Other mothers of this group agreed, while acknowledging their own growing expenses for their children's private after-school education, even within their stringent budgets. With middle-class mothers, they shared the idea that the role mothers play in their children's education—especially in private after-school education—has become increasingly important. Significantly, they also shared the middle-class mother's ambivalent feelings about what they should do for their children's education amid the recent transformations.

Inho's mother expressed her own ambivalence about higher education for their children in the recent economic climate, saying, "Children should have a goal. Mothers should support them to achieve the goal. But frankly speaking, nowadays, graduating from college doesn't guarantee good jobs or more money. It might be better to pursue professional skills [*chŏnmun kisul*]. Right? So these days, we try to find and develop our children's talent [*t'ŭkki*], rather than emphasizing 'studying, studying' [*kongbu*]." Like Min's mother, Inho's mother echoes the new rhetoric (i.e., facilitating children's talent or "what they want to do"). However, unlike Min's and Ch'anho's mothers, who confirmed that the conventional academic path would be a prerequisite for children's happiness, Inho's mother here wondered more about what higher education would promise for her children's

future. She also pointed out that many college graduates were currently unemployed.

For these women, however, the idea of finding and developing their children's talents as a seemingly attractive alternative to college was also anxiety producing. Listening to what Inho's mother said, Junglim's mother expressed her own interest in supporting her daughters, who have athletic talents. Then another mother pointed out that it is more difficult for mothers to find their children's talent than it is to make them study. Others continued saying that it also costs too much to support "what children want to do" or "their special talents," even if mothers can identify these special skills. Junglim's mother then agreed and expressed her own frustration. She said that she was shocked by how much money one of her neighbors (who was not there) spent on her son's special dance party for people in the broadcasting industry. She explained that this woman's son was in his first year of high school and had a talent for dancing, and that he became a backup dancer for a famous pop group. Mijin's mother then argued, "If you think about his future, though, throwing such a dance party, even an expensive one, isn't really such a bad thing. . . . Think about how much [Junglim's mother] will need to spend to support her son's higher education." In this conversation, we can understand how these women, while engaging in the everyday practices of their children's education, are struggling to understand and imagine the transforming world and their children's future in it—a daunting task.

Like this group, most mothers in this working-class neighborhood similarly pointed out that they wanted to support their children's skills and talents—whether it be a specific skill (*kisul*), like hair-design, or a talent (*t'ŭkki* or *chaenŭng*) such as painting and dancing. However, this desire to support their children did not preclude these mothers from noticing that higher education is still a mark of privilege in South Korean society. A working-class mother of a second-grader stated, "If my daughter wants to study further, I will support her as much as I can, without any hesitation . . . If she doesn't want to study further, I will not push her for higher-education . . . However, nowadays "credentials" [*hakbŏl*] and "higher education" [*kohangryŏk*] are becoming more important in our society . . . Maybe even beauticians [*miyongsa*] and machine operators will be college graduates in the future . . . So, frankly, I'm really worried." Like this mother, many mothers who have fewer economic, cultural, and social resources than middle-class mothers expressed both their interest in and ambivalence about their children's higher education. However, they

often emphasized that they would support their children's higher education if their children studied well, while most middle class mothers, such as Min's and Ch'anho's mothers, took for granted that their children would pursue higher education in order to have a happy life.

This chapter argues that the private after-school market is a crucial education space in South Korea. It examines the complex history of state regulation and deregulation of this market in the recent context of transformation. I emphasize how this market has continued to be the focal point of diverse educational problems and how its meaning is still in flux, even after its release from state regulation. Moreover, recent educational transformations have also facilitated both mothers' dependency on and ambivalence about the private after-school market. The burgeoning private after-school market is now highly diversified and stratified, and it is swiftly adapting its marketing strategies to reflect new education values.

This chapter's ethnographic details have revealed the pervasive ambivalence of mothers across the class spectrum. Middle-class mothers expressed their ambivalence toward private after-school education, recent educational reforms, and their own practices on behalf of their children. Working-class mothers shared middle-class mothers' ambivalence about stratified private after-school education and recent transformations, while also expressing their anxiety about the leeway accorded more affluent mothers. Most mothers' narratives echoed the new rhetoric (e.g., raising creative children, facilitating children's talent) in accordance with recent transformations, including educational reforms, while showing subtle class inflection in the way that they related to ideas about their children's higher education. While middle-class mothers firmly considered higher education as a prerequisite for the children's happy future, most working class mothers were more ambivalent.

The current transformational moment is critical for South Korean education and its future because recent reforms have tried to redirect the South Korean education field. In this moment, the burgeoning private after-school market offers a particularly privileged vantage point for observing these transformations. As I have shown, this is in large part because the continuous debates over this market and its meanings in relation to the whole education field are still in flux. In the debates about this market, the new rhetoric of educational value ruptures the old, and thus there are pervasive conflicts between the two sets of competing discourses, such as uniformity versus creativity, and equality versus diversification. Although the issue of education and social (in)equality is at the heart of these debates, mothers

who occupy multiple class positions experience feelings of ambivalence and confusion about their children's private after-school education and their own management practices. This pervasive confusion reflects the unsettling character of the ongoing debates over this market in particular, and over the South Korean educational field in general.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. South Korean *chogi yuhak* (early study abroad), that is, the educational exodus of pre-college students, escalated from the mid 1990s into the new presidential regime of Lee Myung-bak in 2008. Not surprisingly, in the immediate aftermath of the IMF crisis (1997–2000) the rate of increase in *chogi yuhak* slowed, reflecting decreased cash flows and economic confidence. Nevertheless, the absolute number of *chogi yuhak* students continued to increase. Between 1998 and 2006, the number of *chogi yuhak* students increased nineteenfold, from 1,562 to 29,511. Sudden increases in *chogi yuhak* students beginning in 2000 (with economic recovery), with the highest escalation in 2003–4, reflect the social and political changes of post–IMF crisis South Korea (*Hankyoreh* 2007). A 2007 survey reported that 52 percent of parents favored sending their children abroad at an early age for study (S. Cho 2007).

In South Korea, study abroad at one's own expense is technically permitted only for students who either graduate from middle school or have equivalent credentials. Exceptions are made for middle-school students with special talent in science, art, or sports and are recommended by their principals and recognized by the Ministry of Education. *Chogi yuhak* is also authorized when families relocate abroad, as in the case of employees of South Korean overseas corporate offices. However, these two types of exceptions constitute only a very small portion of the *chogi yuhak* exodus. Most South Korean *chogi yuhak* is unauthorized. South Korean *chogi yuhak* students go to boarding schools, stay with a patron (usually arranged by *chogi yuhak* agencies), and, although much less common, are adopted by relatives already settled in the host countries. Since the 2000s, *chogi yuhak* has become more common among elementary school children. According to a 2005 survey, out of 122,358 children who were obliged to attend elementary school, as many as 11,278 requested a delay to enter school (H. W. Kim 2005).

Into this era of increasing *chogi yuhak*, it is perhaps most accurate to suggest that simultaneously some restrictions were being relaxed to allow for

"legally sanctioned" *chogi yuhak*, particularly at the high school level, while other restrictions were being put in place particularly for younger students. It is not an exaggeration to say that this growth has signaled a veritable educational, economic, and national crisis, with so many youth exiting with their skills, their money, and even possibly their futures.

2. Kang and Abelmann 2011.

3. In 2002, the ratio of participation in the private market among total school-age students was 72.6 percent. According to official Ministry of Education reports, 58 percent of school-age children (71 percent of elementary students) participated in some private after-school program in 2000 (Hyun et al. 2003).

4. Some scholars and reformers refer to the rapidly increasing private after-school market as an excuse or reason to legitimate "school diversification"—that is, privatization—against the state's long-standing equalization policy (see Ju-ho Lee 2004 for the recent debates over "school equalization policy").

5. According to a Seoul National University report, in 2000, half of the freshmen were Seoulites, and in turn half of the Seoulites were from the Kangnam area. Additionally, the parents of nearly half of the freshmen had professional jobs. The editorial on the same day in the *Hankyoreh* daily newspaper criticized this phenomenon, arguing that Seoul National University reproduces the heredity system of families who have wealth and power.

CHAPTER 1

1. In 1997, the Third International Math and Science Study tested thirteen-year-olds in forty-one countries. South Korean students placed second (behind Singapore) in math and fourth in science (*The Economist*, March 20, 1997, 21–23).

2. The mean primary-school enrollment rate for the fifty-six poorest nations measured in 1970 GNP per capita (which includes South Korea) grew from 37 percent to 53 percent in 1960 and 72 percent in 1970. For secondary-school enrollments, the figures are 5.3, 9.4, and 17 percent respectively (Meyer and Hannan 1979, 40). In the case of South Korea, if we start in 1945 (1950 figures are unreliable) we find that primary-school enrollment grew from about 37 percent to 96 percent in 1960 and 100 percent by 1965. At the secondary level, it grew from about 4 percent in 1945 to 29 percent in 1960.

3. Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education 1955, 93–95.

4. Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education 1963, 336–37; Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education 1961, 347–51.

5. Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education 1996.

6. *Korean Report* 6 (1958): 95–96.

7. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2009.

8. OECD reports summarized in *Yonhap News*, September 13, 2005.

9. *Korea Times*, September 3, 1959.

10. Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education 1958, 305, 310, 318.
11. For one example, see *Donga Ilbo*, June 3, 1949.
12. *Korea Newsreview*, February 4, 1995, 12; *Korea Herald*, January 24, 1995.
13. *Korea Times*, January 19, 1999.
14. *Korea Times*, August 6, 1997.
15. *Korea Times*, May 20, 1958.
16. Educational Planning Mission to Korea 1954, 105.
17. Ibid., 88.
18. Ibid., 44.
19. Ibid., 45, 128.
20. Ibid., 40, 62–72.
21. Ibid., 103.
22. Ibid., 108.
23. *Korea Newsreview*, January 7, 1995, 28.
24. See Seth 2009.
25. Hanguk Kyoyuk Munje Yŏnguso 1974, 705–6.
26. Central Educational Research Institute 1967, 33.
27. *Korea Times*, June 6, 1966.
28. *Korea Herald*, January 27, 1995.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter is a revised version of a paper originally presented at the eleventh Hahn Moo-Sook Colloquium in the Korean Humanities at The George Washington University (GWU), October 23, 2004. The colloquium papers were edited by Young-Key Kim-Renaud, R. Richard Grinker, and Kirk W. Larsen, and published as *The Sigur Center Asia Papers*, no. 24 (2005) by GWU's Sigur Center for Asian Studies.

1. In this chapter, I used the term "school collapse" as the English translation of *hakkyo punggoe* (school collapse) or *kyosil punggoe* (classroom collapse). Rather than using indirect, meaning-based translation (e.g., "school crisis" or "classroom crisis"), this direct translation effectively conveys the disturbing character of the phenomenon and hence the tenor of the debate in South Korean society. In general, "school collapse" refers to two aspects: (1) a fundamental breakdown of the traditional relational order in K-12 classrooms that makes it impossible for teachers to proceed with normal instructional tasks, and (2) various dissatisfactions with, and even complete rejection of, the role and function of the public school system in South Korean society (M. Kim 2000). I found five Korean terms to be used frequently by South Korean scholars and newspapers in the course of the "school collapse" debate: *hakkyo punggoe* (school collapse), *kyosil punggoe* (classroom collapse), *kyoyuk punggoe* (education collapse), *hakkyo kyoyuk wigi* (school education crisis), and *kyosil wigi* (classroom crisis).

CHAPTER 4

1. "Liberal" can be confusing in that political liberalism and economic liberalism have different meanings. In this sentence I refer to political liberalism, signifying an order in which the state exists to secure the freedom of individuals on a formally egalitarian basis. See Brown 2003, n6.

2. I borrow the term "emergent" from Williams 1977. Williams distinguishes cultural forms into dominant, residual, and emergent (1977, 203–5). While some innovations are movements and adjustments within the dominant and become its new forms, as he points out (205), I thought homeschooling was emergent with its struggle against the dominant culture.

3. Interestingly, to the public *suyoja chungsim kyoyuk* seemed to be a step toward the "democratization" of school administration by empowering the rights of parents and students who had been theretofore neglected.

4. Special-purpose high schools, which originally started in the late 1970s only for art and athletics in order to complement the high-school equalization policy, expanded during the mid-1990s in accordance with the educational reforms, which emphasized the "diversification, specialization, and autonomy" of schools. These schools are specifically designated to nurture talents for the new economy, including technical, science, and foreign language skills (E. J. Kim 2003).

5. *Yŏllin kyoyuk* is a kind of progressive education for the purpose of promoting the autonomy and flexibility of teachers and students in contrast with the uniformity and rigidity of the curriculum and teaching method of conventional education. However, some argue that *yŏllin kyoyuk* confused teachers because it was enforced in a top-down way by the government.

6. By "schoolism" I mean the dominant discourse concerning the meaning and value of schooling in South Korea (Hŭi-dong Kim 2000; Seo 2002, 146–47).

7. To my surprise, Wendy Brown (2003), drawing upon Lemke's interpretation of Foucault's neoliberal rationality, had already articulated my conception: "Neoliberalism normatively constructs and interpellates individuals as entrepreneurs in every sphere of life. It figures individuals as rational, calculating creatures whose moral autonomy is measured by their capacity for 'self-care'—the ability to provide for their own needs and service their own ambitions."

CHAPTER 6

1. The heads of the schools in lower-class areas were particularly disinclined to participate, worrying foremost that the illegality of the programs or other problems that they faced might be revealed. Additionally, many students and parents were reluctant to be the objects of our research. Parents worried about disturbing their children's studies, the possibility that they were engaged in illegal activity, and the possibility that reporting the research results might negatively affect their children's competitive edge.

2. All names of private institutes and people in this chapter are pseudonyms.

CHAPTER 7

1. Worksheet companies usually make their own distinctive worksheets and hire worksheet teachers, who bring worksheets to students at home. Worksheets are intended to allow students to work at home by themselves (or with their parents) during the week, and worksheet teachers visit the home to check the students' work.

2. The category *hagwŏn* includes extracurricular institutes (e.g., art or athletic institutes), subject-specialized institutes (*chŏnmun hagwŏn;* e.g., English specialized institutes), and cram schools (*ipsi hagwŏn*).

3. The Korean term *kwaoe* has two meanings. Narrowly, it means "private tutoring" (*kaein kwaoe* or *kŭrup kwaoe,* individual tutoring or group tutoring). More broadly, similar to the term *sakyoyuk* it sometimes refers to the diverse private after-school programs, including private tutoring and *hagwŏn.* In order to evade confusion, here I use *kwaoe* only in its narrow meaning, unless direct quotations use this term in its broader sense.

4. The statistics for elementary students who participated in this market vary. One report pointed out that it was already 87 percent in 1994, and 90 percent in 1995 (Seth 2002, 188). According to my own survey among parents of third- and sixth-graders at seven elementary schools in Seoul in 2002 (n = 753), almost 95 percent of students participated in some private after-school program.

5. Japan's private after-school education, such as *juku,* is well known to Americans and is often compared to the South Korean case. However, South Korea's unique history of state regulation and deregulation of this market makes for a number of distinctive features.

6. The Minister of Education then stepped back and tried to clarify that what he had said was just his private opinion.

7. Here, *kwaoe* is not limited to private tutoring, but since most *koaek kwaoe* is private tutoring, I translate this as "extravagant tutoring."

8. See Jung and Norton (2002) and Kim Mi-sŏn (2002) on this new policy. See also Park and Abelmann (2004) on parental fever for English education.

9. Until 2000, elementary students had been legally banned from attending private institutions (*hagwŏn*) for major school subjects (e.g., math, Korean, science), although some sorts of institutions, e.g., *soksem hagwŏn* (institutes of speed calculation), *posŭp hagwŏn* (supplementary institutes), and even art institutions, often have "cheated" by providing lessons for major school subjects. However, after 2000, diverse *hagwŏn* for major elementary-school subjects have rapidly increased. The daily newspaper *Hankyoreh* (August 16, 2002) reported that the enrollment of elementary students (and kindergarteners) in private after-school institutes (*hagwŏn sugang*) rapidly increased between 1998 and 2002. In the same period, this increase is surprisingly larger than that of junior-high and high-school students. The reason for this trend is inferred from the rapid expansion of private early-education for English.

10. After-school study rooms (*pangkwahu kongbubang*) provide study

space for students in lower grades every day except Sunday (the cost is 30,000 won per month, or about U.S.$25). According to Suni's mother, most mothers whose children go to this study room expect only that the rooms will provide protection for their children while they work. The public school where I recruited informants also has a city-sponsored "after-school program" (*poyuksil*) for lower grades. A teacher in the school explained that the program is unique to this school, and that it exists because of the character of this residential area, in which most of the children are from double-income families and lower-class families. However, according to the teacher, parents usually prefer private after-school institutes (*hagwŏn*) to this program, if they are concerned about their children's educational progress.

11. Here, "subscribe" does not refer to mail-order homework. Rather, as I explained in note 1 above, "worksheet teachers" typically bring worksheets to students at home. I use this translation because most mothers use the Korean word *kudok hada* (subscribe).

12. Since the private after-school educational market for elementary students, especially for English, is growing rapidly, many private universities create (or expand) English programs for young children. These programs are very similar to the ones offered by other private English-specialized programs, but some mothers prefer those sponsored by prestigious universities because the names of the universities give them more confidence.

13. The "Kangnam" area (Gangnam-gu) refers to the affluent neighborhood south of the Han River in Seoul. In South Korea, "Kangnam" stands for wealth and educational privilege. See S. Park (2006), 140–57.

14. Lareau and Horvat (1999) emphasize "the difference between possession and activation of capital," while pointing out that the value of capital depends heavily on particular social settings.

15. In fact, when I last interviewed her in summer 2003, Min had become a junior-high-school student and her private after-school education—only piano and violin—had not changed at all.

16. Recently, some educators and scholars have claimed that children who depended only on private after-school education (especially, *hagwŏn*) could not study by themselves, labeling this syndrome an "*hagwŏn* addiction" (*hagwŏn chungdok;* see chapter 6, by Misook Kim, in this volume). Among middle-school and high-school students, according to a survey, 45.6 percent of students agreed that "[i]t is nerve-wracking to study by myself without *hagwŏn*," and 8 percent agreet that "I can never study alone without *hagwŏn*," while only about 38 percent students concurred that "I can study by myself" (*chosun Ilbo*, June 22, 2003; see also E. J. Kim 2003).

17. Why TOEFL scores matter even for elementary-, middle-, or high-school students is related to recent neoliberal educational reform, particularly the significant change of the university entrance exam system during the Kim Dae Jung government. As I explained above, while emphasizing the move from the policy of "one avenue for entry" (*han chul seugi*) to that of "multiple avenues for entry" (*yŏrŏ chul seugi;* i.e., the "diversification" of routes to college

entrance), the government advertised that a creative student who excels at only one subject (e.g., English, computer, writing), can now enter university more easily. Although there have been continuous debates about the effectiveness and negative by-products of this change, it partly affects the current English education boom and the private after-school market for children's preparation of TOEFL or TOEIC in particular.

18. In her ethnography of women's consumption in South Korea, Laura Nelson (2000) points out the distinction between the "immobility" of working-class women and the "mobility" of upper-middle class women *within* Seoul, a metropolitan city. Moreover, here, we can observe the inequality between those who can move freely beyond national boundaries and those who cannot (Massey 1993).

Bibliography

Abelmann, Nancy. 1997. "Women's Class Mobility and Identities in South Korea: A Gendered, Transnational, Narrative Approach." *Journal of Asian Studies* 56(2): 398–420.

———. 2003. *The Melodrama of Mobility: Women, Talk, and Class in Contemporary South Korea*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Adams, Donald K. 1990. "Education Change and Korean Development." In *Dynamic Transformation: Korea, NICs and Beyond*, edited by Gill-Chin Lim and Wook Chang. Urbana, IL: Consortium on Developmental Studies.

Anderson, Gary L. 1989. "Critical Ethnography in Education: Origins, Current Status, and New Directions." *Review of Educational Research* 59(3): 249–70.

Anyon, Jean. 1981. "Social Class and School Knowledge." *Curriculum Inquiry* 11(1): 3–42.

Apple, Michael W. 1982. *Education and Power*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

———. 1996. *Cultural Politics and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

———. 2000. "Away with All Teachers: The Cultural Politics of Home Schooling." *International Studies in Sociology of Education* 10: 61–80.

———. 2001. *Educating the "Right" Way: Markets, Standards, God, and Inequality*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Paek, Il-u. 1999. "Kwaoe haengwi e taehan kyoyuk kyŏngjehakchŏk ihae" (An educational economic understanding of the activities of private tutoring). *Kyoyukhak Yŏn'gu* (Korean journal of educational research) 37(4): 291–305.

Bakhtin, M. M., and Michael Holquist. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. University of Texas Press Slavic series, no. 1. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Pang, Ha-nam, and Ki-hŏn Kim. 2001. "Pyŏnhwa wa sesŭp: han'guk sahoe ŭi sedaegan chiwi sesŭp mit sŏngch'wi kujo" (Change and inheritance:

The structure and process of social status achievement in South Korea). *Han'guk Sahoehak* (Korean journal of sociology) 35(2): 1-30.

———. 2002. "Kihoe wa pulp'yŏngdŭng: kodŭng kyoyuk kihoe e issŏsŏ sahoe kyech'ŭnggan pulp'yŏngdung ŭi punsŏk" (Opportunity and inequality: educational stratification in Korea). *Han'guk Sahoehak* (Korean journal of sociology) 36(4): 193–222.

Barnes, Elaine Milam. 1960. *The Schools of Taegu, Kyongsang Pukto Province, Korea, in 1954–1955: An Investigation into the Interaction between Culture and Education*. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms.

Belenky, Mary Field, and Nancy Rule Goldberger. 1997. *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*. New York: Basic Books.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

———. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by John G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Jean Claude Passeron. 1977. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. London: Sage Publications.

Bowles, Samuel, and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books.

Bowman, A., and R. Will. 1994. "Distance Education for Women: Peril or Possibility?" In *Feminism and Education: A Canadian Perspective*. edited by Frieda Forman. Toronto: Centre for Women's Studies in Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Brown, Wendy. 2003. "Neo-Liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy." *Theory & Event* 7(1): 1–19.

Burge, Liz, and Margaret Haughey. 1993. "Transformative Learning in Reflective Practice." In *Reforming Open and Distance Education: Critical Reflections from Practice*, edited by T. Evans and D. Nation. London: Kogan Page.

Central Educational Research Institute. 1967. *A Study for Solving the Problems of Compulsory Education*. No. 34. Seoul: CERI.

Chang, Kyung-Sup. 1999. "Compressed Modernity and Its Discontents: South Korean Society in Transition." *Economy and Society* 28(1): 30.

Chŏng, Yu-sŏng. 2000. "Saeroun hakkyo kyoyuk mohyŏng ŭi t'amsaek" (A new school system in the new millennium). *Kyoyuk Iron kwa Silch'ŏn* (Theory and practice of education) 11(1): 77-95.

Cho, Hae-Joang. 1995. "Children in the Examination War in South Korea: A Cultural Analysis." In *Children and the Politics of Culture*, edited by S. Stephens, 141–68. Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cho, Soon. 2007. "Parent Responsibility and Children Studying Abroad." *Korea Focus* 15 (2): 50–51.

Cho, Yong-hwan. 1997. *Sahoehwa wa kyoyuk* (Socialization and education). Seoul: Kyoyuk Kwahaksa.

Cho Han, Hye-jŏng (Cho, Hae-Joang). 1999. "Kŭndae ŭi pop'yŏnjŏk yangsang ŭrosŏŭi hakkyo punggoe wa han'gukchŏk t'ŭksŏng" (School collapse as the universal phenomenon of modernity, and Korean-specific peculiarities). In *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan* (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival), edited by Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union), 161–77. Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

———. 2000. "You Are Entrapped in an Imaginary Well: The Formation of Subjectivity within Compressed Development—a Feminist Critique of Modernity and Korean Culture." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 1(1): 49-69.

Choi, Jung-ah. 2004. "Disrupting the Discourses of High School Dropouts in South Korea." *Educational Practice and Theory* 26(2): 21–33.

———. 2005. "New Generation's Career Aspirations and New Ways of Marginalization in a Postindustrial Economy." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 26(2): 269–83.

Ch'oe, Sang-gŭn, et al. 2003. *Sakyoyukpi kyŏnggam pangan* (A plan for reducing the cost of private after-school education). Research Report. Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Chŏn, Chong-ho. 1999a. "Haech'edoenŭn hakkyo" (Schools in disarray). In *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan* (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival), edited by Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union), 97–124. Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

———. 1999b. "Hakkyo punggoe hyŏnsang e taehan kyoyukchuch'e ŭi ŭisik chosa yŏn'gu" (A survey study on the perceptions of major educational agents regarding the phenomenon of school collapse). In *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan* (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival), edited by Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union), 229–86. Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

Ch'ŏn, Po-sŏn, and Hak-han Kim. 1998. *Sinjayujuŭi wa han'guk kyoyuk ŭi chillo* (Neoliberalism and the direction of Korean education). Seoul: Hanŭl.

Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union). 1999. *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan* (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival). Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

Chŏn'gyojo Chŏngch'aek Yŏn'guso Hakkyo Kyoyuk Yŏn'gusil (Research Center for School Education, Korean Teachers Union Policy Research Institute). 1999a. "Hakkyo kyoyuk ŭi wigi punsŏk kwa chindan" (An analysis and diagnosis of school crisis). In *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo*

rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival), edited by Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union), 127–60. Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

———. 1999b. "Konggyoyuk kanghwa ka usŏnida" (Emphasis on public education is first). In *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan* (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival), edited by Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union), 179–92. Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

Chŏn'gyojo Kyoyuk Charyosil (KTU Center for Educational Materials). 2000. *Chŏn'gyojo Kuil Kodŭnghakkyo punhoe yŏnsu charyo* (KTU Kuil High School subdivision educational material). Seoul: Ch'ŏnbosŏng.

Chŏn'gyojo Sinmun (Korean Teachers Union newspaper). 1999. "Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap" (Korean Teachers' Union and Education Workers' Union). Seoul, November 17.

Chosun Ilbo (Chosun daily). 1999a. "Kajŏng hakkyo nŭrŏnanda" (The increasing number of families turning to home schooling). June 21.

———. 1999b. "Kyosil i munŏjigo itta" (The classroom is collapsing). August 31.

———. 1999c. "Kyosil punggoe magŭryŏmyŏn" (To prevent classroom collapse). September 1.

———. 1999d. "Yŏngjaedŭl kal kosi ŏpta" (No place for gifted students). November 11.

———. 2001. "Taeip, kyoyukpu esŏ haebangsik'ija" (Unshackle university admissions from MOE's control). December 5.

———. 2002. "Ponji, kudongnyul yŏldongnyŭl modu aptojŏk irwi" (Our newspaper, the subscription and faithful reader rates are number one). March 5.

Clough, Patricia Ticineto. 1992. *The End(s) of Ethnography: From Realism to Social Criticism*. London: Sage.

Darder, Antonia. 2002. *Reinventing Paulo Freire: A Pedagogy of Love*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Dei, George J. Sefa. 1996. "Black Youth and Fading out of School." In *Debating Dropouts: Critical Policy and Research Perspectives on School Leaving*, edited by Deirdre M. Kelly and Jane S. Gaskell. New York: Teachers College Press.

Denzin, Norman K. 2003. *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

———. 2008. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Educational Planning Mission to Korea. 1954, *Rebuilding Education in the Republic of Korea: Report of the UNESCO-UNKRA Educational Planning Mission to Korea*. Paris: UNESCO, May.

Ensminger, Margaret E., and Anita L. Slusarcick. 1992. "Paths to High School Graduation or Dropout: A Longitudinal Study of a First-Grade Cohort." *Sociology of Education* 65(2): 95–113.

Fairclough, Norman. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fine, Michelle. 1991. *Framing Dropouts: Notes on the Politics of an Urban Public High school*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Flax, Jane. 1990. "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory." In *Feminism/Postmodernism*, edited by Linda J. Nicholson, 39–62. New York: Routledge.

Foley, Douglas E. 1990. *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Tejas*. Contemporary Ethnography series. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Foucault, Michel. 2003. *L'ordre du discours*. Paris: Gallimard.

Fraser, Jim, Phillip W. Davis, and Ravinder Singh. 1997. "Identity Work by Alternative High School Students." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 10(2): 221–35.

Fraser, Nancy, and Linda Nicholson. 1990. "Social Criticism without Philosophy: An Encounter between Feminism and Postmodernism." In *Feminism/Postmodernism*, edited by Linda J. Nicholson, 19–38. New York: Routledge.

Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder.

———. 1994. *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Freire, Paulo, and Donaldo Macedo. 1987. *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*. Critical Studies in Education series. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey.

Gee, James Paul. 1999. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. London: Routledge.

Gibson, C.C., and A.O. Graff. 1992. "Impact of Adults' Preferred Learning Styles and Perception of Barriers on Completions of External Baccalaureate Degree Programs." *Journal of Distance Education* 7(1): 39–51.

Giroux, Henry A. 1983. "Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the New Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis." *Harvard Educational Review* 53(3): 257–93.

———. 1986. "Radical Pedagogy and the Politics of Student Voice." *Interchange* 17(1): 48–69.

Giroux, Henry A., and Peter McLaren. 1986. "Teacher Education and the Politics of Engagement: The Case for Democratic Schooling." *Harvard Educational Review* 56(3): 213–38.

Greene, Maxine. 1995. *Releasing the Imagination*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Han'guk Hyŏngmyŏng Chaep'ansa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe (Compilation Committee for the History of the Korean Revolutionary Tribunal). 1962. *Han'guk hyŏngmyŏng chaep'ansa* (History of the Korean revolutionary tribunal). Seoul: Han'guk Hyŏngmyŏng Chaep'ansa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe.

Han'guk Kyoyuk Munje Yŏn'guso (Korean Educational Problems Study) 1974.

Mun'gyosa (1945–1973) (History of education, 1945–1973). Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Munje Yŏn'guso.

Hankyoreh (Hankyoreh daily). 2007. "Chogi yuhak 3 manmyŏng yukpak" (Number of ESA students approximately 30,000). September 26.

Harris, David. 1987. *Openness and Closure in Distance Education*. London: Falmer Press.

Hayes, Elisabeth, and Daniele D. Flannery. 2000. *Women as Learners: The Significance of Gender in Adult Learning*. Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hayes, Elisabeth R., and Letitia Smith. 1994. "Women in Adult Education: An Analysis of Perspectives in Major Journals." *Adult Education Quarterly* 44(4): 201–21.

Hemmings, Annette. 2002. "Youth Culture of Hostility: Discourses of Money, Respect, and Difference." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 15(3): 291–307.

Holt, John. 1982. *Teach Your Own*. Liss, UK: Lighthouse Books.

hooks, bell. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Hwang, Kap-jin. 2001. "Intŏnet e nat'anan kyosil punggoe tamnon ŭi yuhyŏng" (Patterns of online discourses about school failure). *Simin Kyoyuk Yŏn'gu* (Theory and research in citizenship education) 33: 407–38.

Hyŏn, Byŏng-ho. 1999a. "Kili toepsida" (Let's be the way). *Mindŭlle*, January/February: 2–3.

———. 1999b. "Yŏljung shwiŏ! Ch'aryŏ! Ap'ŭro naranhi!" (At ease! Attention! Forward in line!). *Mindŭlle*, January/February: 2–3.

Hyŏn, Ju, Chae-bun Yi, and Hye-yŏng Yi. 2003. *Han'guk hakpumo ŭi kyoyungnyŏl punsŏk yŏn'gu* (A study of the educational fever of Korean parents). Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Illich, Ivan. 1971. *Deschooling Society*. World Perspectives, 44. New York: Harper & Row.

Im, Han-young. 1960. "Korean Private Education." In *Korean Commission for UNESCO, Korean Survey*, 383. Seoul: Dong-a Publishing Company.

———. 1980. *Its Land, People and Culture for All Ages*. Seoul: Hagwŏnsa.

Janelli, Roger L., and Dawnhee Yim. 1993. *Making Capitalism: The Social and Cultural Construction of a South Korean Conglomerate*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Chang, Su-myŏng. 2002. "Taehak kyoyuk ŭi kyŏngjehak" (Economics of college education). *Nodong Chŏngch'aek Yŏn'gu* (Quarterly journal of labor policy) 2(1): 20–47.

Jeong, Insook, and Michael Armer. 1994. "State, Class, and Expansion of Education in South Korea: A General Model." *Comparative Education Review* 38(4): 531–45.

Cho, Yong-hwan. 1997. *Sahoehwa wa kyoyuk* (Socialization and education). Seoul: Kwahaksa.

———. 2001. "Munhwa wa kyoyuk ŭi kaltŭng: sangsaeng kwan'gye" (Con-

tradictory and/or reciprocal relations between culture and education). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 4(2): 1–27.

Joongang Ilbo (Joongang daily). 2001. "Kyosa kyŏngjaengnyŏk" (Teachers' competitiveness). January 13.

Jung, Sook Kyung, and Bonny Norton. 2002. "Language Planning in Korea: The New Elementary English Program." In *Language Policies in Education: Critical Issues*, edited by James W. Tollefson. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Kang, Jiyeon, and Nancy Abelmann. 2011. "The Domestication of South Korean Pre-College Study Abroad in the First Decade of the Millennium." *Journal of Korean Studies* 16(1): 89–118.

Kelly, Deirdre M. 1996. "Choosing the Alternative: Conflicting Missions and Constrained Choice in a Dropout Prevention Program." In *Debating Dropouts: Critical Policy and Research Perspectives on School Leaving*, edited by Deirdre M. Kelly and Jane S. Gaskell. New York: Teachers College Press.

Kim, Ch'ŏn-gi. 1997. "Sijangjuŭi wa kyoyuk kyŏngjaengnyŏk kanghwa e taehan pip'anjŏk punsŏk" (Critical analysis of marketism and promoting educational competitive ability). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Yŏn'gu* (Journal of Korean education research) 4: 80–104.

Kim, Tae-yong. 2002. "Han'guk ŏllon ŭi kyoyuk hyŏnsil e taehan insik kwa kŭ munjejŏm pip'an" (A critical review of the Korean press's understanding of educational reality and related problems). *Kyoyuk Ch'ŏlhak* (Korean journal of the philosophy of education) 27(2): 19–36.

Kim, Ŭn-ju. 2003. "Haksaengdŭl i chigak hanŭn kyosil punggoe ŭi wŏnin kwa taech'aek" (Students' perceptions of the causes of and solutions for classroom collapse). *Inmun Sahoe Kwahak Yŏn'gu* (Educational studies in humanities and social science) 6: 139–63.

Kim, Hŭi-dong. 2000. "Hakkyojuŭi rŭl nŏmŏsŏ" (Beyond schoolism). *Mindŭlle* 7 (2000): 13–16.

Kim, Hong-wŏn. 2005. "Chogi yuhak e kwanhan kungmin ŭisik kwa silt'ae" (A study of the realities and people's perceptions of ESA). In *Chogi yuhak: kungmin ŭisik kwa silt'ae* (Early study abroad: Realities and people's perceptions), 3–44. Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Kim, Hye-gyŏng. 2002. "Ch'odŭng hangnyŏng adong homsŭk'ulling ŭi ch'odŭng kyoyuk ŭroŭi kanŭngsong e kwanhan yŏn'gu" (A study of the possibility of homeschooling as elementary education). M.A. thesis, Korea National University of Education.

Kim, Chae-ung. 1999. "Homsŭk'ulling ŭi kyoyukchŏk chŏngch'ijŏk ŭimi" (The educational and political meaning of homeschooling). *Kyoyukhak Yŏngu* (Korean journal of educational research) 37(4): 255–74.

Kim, Chung-sŏp. 2001. "Han'guk kyoyuk ŭi wigi wa inkwŏn" (Korean education in crisis and human rights). *Hyŏnsang kwa Insik* (Phenomenon and cognition) 24(4): 1–14.

Kim, Chŏng-rae. 2001. "Kwaoe kŭmji wihŏn p'an'gyŏl kwa sakyoyuk sijang ŭi hwaktae" (Decision of a violation of the constitution for the prohibition

of *kwaoe* and the expansion of the private educational market). In *2000 Han'guk Kyoyuk P'yŏngnon* (2000 review of Korean education), edited by KEDI, 135–58. Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Kim, Min. 2000. "Hakkyo punggoe: sinhwain'ga hyŏnsirin'ga" ("School collapse": Myth or reality?). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 3(2): 1–29.

Kim, Mi-sŏn. 2002. "Ch'odŭng hakkyo yŏngŏ kyogwa toip e taehan kyokyuk sahoehakchŏk t'amgu" (A sociology of education study of the introduction of English in elementary school curriculum). M.A. thesis, Korea National University of Education.

Kim, Mi-suk. 2002 (Kim, Misook). "Kwahak kyŏngsidaehoe ka kannŭn kyoyukchŏk ŭimi" (The educational meaning of science contests). *Han'guk Kyoyuk* (Journal of Korean education) 29(1): 31–58.

Kim, Seung-kyung, and John Finch. 2002. "Living with Rhetoric, Living against Rhetoric: Korean Families and the IMF Economic Crisis." *Korean Studies* 26(1):120–39.

Kim, Sŏng-yŏl, and Ch'ang-gyu Ko. 2000. "Kyosil punggoe wa kyoyuk chŏngch'aek: kyosil punggoe tamnon ŭl chungsim ŭro" (Classroom collapse and educational policy: An analysis focusing on the discourse of school collapse). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 3(2): 153–91.

Kim, Wang-bae. 2001. *Sanŏp sahoe ŭi nodong kwa kyegŭp ŭi chaesaengsan: ilsang saenghwal segye ŭi pulp'yŏngdŭng e taehan sŏngch'al* (Labor in industrial society and the reproduction of class: Inequality in everyday life). Hanul sahoehak kangjwa. Seoul: Hanul.

Kim, Wŏn-jung. 2000. "'Kyosil punggoe ŭi kyoyuk simnihakchŏk punsŏk" (An analysis of "classroom collapse" from the perspective of an educational psychologist). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 3(2): 79–138.

Kim, Yang-bun, and Mi-suk Kim (Misook Kim). 2002. *Ipsi hagwŏn silt'ae punsŏk* (Analysis of the educational situation of cram schools designed to prepare students for the college entrance examination). Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Kim, Yŏng-ch'ŏl, Sŭng-shil Yang, Yŏng-hwa Kim, and Chu-ho Yi. 2001. "Sakyoyukpi haeso pangan: kwayŏl kwaoe rŭl chungsim ŭro" (For a resolution of problems of private educational expenses focusing on excessive private tutoring). *Kyoyuk Haengjŏnghak Yŏn'gu* (Journal of educational administration) 19(3): 149–80.

Kim, Yŏng-hwa, and Pyŏng-gwan Kim. 1999. "Han'guk sanŏphwa kwajŏng esŏŭi kyoyuk kwa kyech'ŭng idong" (Education and social mobility in the South Korean industrialization process). *Kyoyukhak Yŏn'gu* (Korean journal of educational research) 37(1): 155–72.

Kim, Yŏng-hwa, In-hyo Yi, and Hyŏn-jŏng Pak. 1993. *Han'gugin ŭi kyoyukyŏl yŏn'gu* (A study of the educational enthusiasm of South Korean people). Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Kirby, David M., and Urmil Chugh. 1992. "An Investigation of Instructors' Perception of Elements in the Audio-Teleconferencing Environment." *Journal of Distance Education* 7(1): 25–38.

KNOU (Korea National Open University). 2002. 2001 *Sinipsaeng p'yŏnipsaeng sŏlmun chosa* (Survey of new and transfer students in 2001). Seoul: KNOU.

Knowles, J. Gary. 1988. "Introduction: The Context of Home Schooling in the United States." *Education and Urban Society* 21(1): 5–15.

Knowles, J. Gary, Stacey E. Marlow, and James A. Muchmore. 1992. "From Pedagogy to Ideology: Origins and Phases of Home Education in the United States, 1970–1990." *American Journal of Education* 100(2): 195–235.

Knowles, Malcolm S. 1980. *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. Wilton, CT: Association Press.

Kwŏn, Kŭn-suk. 2002. "Urinara homsŭk'ulling ŭi hyŏnhwang kwa silch'ŏnsarye yŏn'gu" (A study of the present condition and cases of homeschooling in Korea). M.A. thesis, Gyeongsang National University.

Kyoyuk Pip'yŏng (Education criticism). 2000. Issue 1. Seoul: Kyoyuk Pip'yŏng.

Lareau, Annette. 1989. *Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Intervention in Elementary Education*. Education Policy Perspectives series. London: Falmer Press.

Lareau, Annette, and Erin McNamara Horvat. 1999. "Moments of Social Inclusion and Exclusion: Race, Class, and Cultural Capital in Family-School Relationships." *Sociology of Education* 72(1): 37–53.

Lather, Patricia Ann. 1991. *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy with/in the Postmodern*. Critical Social Thought series. New York: Routledge.

Yi, Hye-yŏng. 2000. *T'alhakkyo undong ŭi hyŏnhwang kwa chŏnmang* (The present situation and vision of the de-schooling movement). Korean Education Development Institute research report. Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Yi, Hyŏk-kyu. 2003. "Chilchŏk sarye yŏn'gu rŭl t'onghan kyosil punggoe hyŏnsang ŭi ihae wa chindan" (A qualitative case study for the understanding and diagnosis of the phenomenon of classroom crisis). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 6(2): 125–64.

Yi, Chong-t'ae. 2001. *Taean kyoyuk kwa taean hakgyo* (Alternative education and alternative schools). Seoul: Mindŭlle.

Yi, Chong-t'ae, et al. 2002. *Sŏnhaenghaksŭp hyogwa e kwanhan yŏn'gu* (The effect of private learning in advance of actual school instruction). Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Lee, Ju-ho (Yi, Chu-ho). 2004. "The School Equalization Policy of Korea: Past Failures and Proposed Measure for Reform." *Korea Journal* 44(1): 221–34.

Yi, Su-gwang. 2002. "Kyoyungnyŏl ŭi sigak esŏ pon Kim Tae Chung chŏngbu ŭi sakyoyukbi chongch'aek" (Kim Dae Jung's policy on the cost of private education from the perspective of education fever). Paper presented at the 2002 International Conference on Education Fever: Diagnosis of Education Fever among Countries, Kangwon University, South Korea, July 3–4.

Yi, Yun-mi. 2001. "Che 7 ch'a kyoyuk kwajŏng chŏkyong kwa sinjayujuŭi nonjaeng" (Application of the Seventh Curriculum and the debate on neoliberalism). In *2000 Han'guk Kyoyuk P'yŏngnon* (2000 review of Korean education), edited by KEDI, 181–97. Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Lett, Denise Potrzeba. 1998. *In Pursuit of Status: The Making of South Korea's "New" Urban Middle Class*. Harvard East Asian Monographs, 170. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.

Lim, Gill-Chin, and Wook Chang. 1990. *Dynamic Transformation: Korea, NICs and Beyond*. Urbana, IL: Consortium on Development Studies.

Lines, Patricia. 1991. "The Size and Growth of the Movement." In *Homeschooling: Political, Historical and Pedagogical Perspectives*, edited by J.A. Van Galen and M.A. Pitman. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.

MacLeod, Jay. 1987. *Ain't No Makin' It: Leveled Aspirations in a Low-Income Neighborhood*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Massey, Doreen. 1993. "A Global Sense of Place." In *Studying Culture: An Introductory Reader*, edited by Ann Gray and Jim McGuigan. London: E. Arnold.

Mayberry, Maralee. 1995. *Home Schooling: Parents as Educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

McLaren, Peter. 1986. *Schooling as a Ritual Performance: Towards a Political Economy of Educational Symbols and Gestures*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

McNeil, Linda M. 1986. *Contradictions of Control: School Structure and School Knowledge*. Critical Social Thought series. New York: Routledge.

Meyer, John W., and Michael T. Hannan. 1979. *National Development and the World System: Educational, Economic, and Political Change, 1950–1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mezirow, Jack. 2000. *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*. Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mok, Ka-Ho, Kiok Yoon, and Anthony R. Welch. 2003. "Globalization's Challenges to Higher Education Governance in South Korea." In *Globalization and Educational Restructuring in the Asia Pacific Region*, edited by Ka-Ho Mok and Anthony R. Welch, 58–78. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mun, Suk-chae, Hye-gyŏng Ch'oe, and Sun-hŭi Chŏng. 2000. *Han'guk chungsanch'ŭng ŭi saenghwal munhwa* (Middle-class culture in South Korea). Seoul: Chimmundang.

Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation. 2000. *MBC ch'ŏngsonyŏn paeksŏ* (MBC whitepaper on youth). Seoul: MBC.

Nelson, Laura C. 2000. *Measured Excess: Status, Gender, and Consumer Nationalism in South Korea*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Olesen, Virginia. 2000. "Feminism and Qualitative Research at and into the Millennium." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N.K. Denzin and S.L. Yvonna. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

O, Uk-hwan. 2000. *Han'guk sahoe ŭi kyoyungnyŏl: kiwŏn kwa simhwa* (South Korea's education fever: Its origins and intensification). Seoul: Kyoyuk Kwahaksa.

Oakes, Jeannie. 1985. *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ogbu, John U. 1994. "Racial Stratification and Education in the United States: Why Inequality Persists." *Teachers College Record* 96(2): 264–98.

Ŏm, Ki-hyŏng. 1999. "Hakkyo punggoe hyŏnsang ŭi pip'anjŏk ihae" (A critical understanding of school collapse). In *Hakkgyo rŭl ŏttŏke sallil kŏsin'ga* (How can we revive our schools?), edited by the Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers and Education Workers' Union), 197–202. Seoul: Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers and Education Workers' Union).

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 1998. *Reviews of National Policies for Education: Korea*. Paris: OECD.

———. 2001. *Knowledge and Skills for Life: First Results from PISA 2000*. Paris: OECD.

———. 2009. *Education at a Glance 2009*. Paris: OECD.

Osgood, Cornelius. 1951. *The Koreans and Their Culture*. New York: Ronald Press Co.

Pae, Kyŏng-nae. 2000. *Inkwŏn ŭn kyomun ap esŏ mŏmch'unda* (Human rights stop at the school's doorstep). Ch'ŏngsonyŏn rip'ot'ŭ (Youth report) 2. Seoul: Uri Kyoyuk.

Page, Reba Neukom. 1991. *Lower-Track Classrooms: A Curricular and Cultural Perspective*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Page, Reba Neukom, and Linda Valli. 1990. *Curriculum Differentiation: Interpretive Studies in U.S. Secondary Schools*. Frontiers in Education series. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Park, Bu Kwon. 1988. "The State, Class and Educational Policy: A Case Study of South Korea's High School Equalization Policy." Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin.

Park, So Jin. 2006. "The Retreat from Formal Schooling: Educational Manager Mothers in the Private After-School Market of South Korea." Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Park, So Jin, and Nancy Abelmann. 2004. "Class and Cosmopolitan Striving: Mothers' Management of English Education in South Korea." *Anthropological Quarterly* 77(4): 645–72.

Pak, Yun-bae, and Kyŏng-sik Kim. 2002. "Hakkyo kyoyuk chuch'edŭl i chigak hanŭn kyosil punggoe hyŏnsang ŭi wŏnin" (Causes of classroom crisis perceived by students, teachers, and parents). *Kyoyuk Sahoehak Yŏn'gu* (Korean journal of the sociology of education) 12(3): 101–20.

Parr, Janet. 2000. *Identity and Education: The Links for Mature Women Students*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Pascall, Gillian, and Roger Cox. 1993. *Women Returning to Higher Education*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.

Peters, Michael. 1999. "Power-Knowledge-Economy: Marginson on Markets and Education." *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 20(1): 167–75.

Reay, Diane. 1998. *Class Work: Mothers' Involvement in Their Children's Primary Schooling*. Women & Social Class series. London: UCL Press.

Reimer, Everett W. 1971. *School is Dead: An Essay on Alternatives in Education*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education. 1955. *Taehan kyoyuk yŏn'gam 4288* (Statistical yearbook of education, 1955). Seoul: Mun'gyobu.

———. 1958. *Mun'gyo kaegwan* (Outline of education). Seoul: Mun'gyobu.

———. 1961. *Taehan kyoyuk yŏn'gam 4294* (Statistical yearbook of education, 1961). Seoul: Mun'gyobu.

———. 1963. *Mun'gyo t'onggye yoram* (Outline of educational statistics). Seoul: Mun'gyobu.

———. 1975. *Mun'gyo t'onggye yŏnbo 1975* (Statistical yearbook of education, 1975). Seoul: Mun'gyobu.

———. 1996. *Kyoyuk t'onggye yŏnbo 1996* (Statistical yearbook of education, 1996). Seoul: Kyoyukbu.

Republic of Korea, Office of Information and Research. 1958. *Korean Report: Reports from the Cabinet Ministries of the Republic of Korea* (Washington, DC: Korea Pacific House, 1952–59), 6: 95-96.

No, Sang-wu. 1998. "Kim Young Sam chŏngbu ŭi kyoyuk kaehyŏk inyŏm ŭi munje wa han'gye, kŭrigo taeanjŏk tamnon mosaek" (The problem of the educational reform doctrine of the Kim Yong-Sam government, and searching for its alternative). *Kyoyukhak Yŏn'gu* (Korean journal of educational research) 36(1): 53–71.

———. 1999. "Sinjayujuŭijŏk kyŏngje nolli wa minjujŏk kyoyuk nolli" (The market logic of neoliberalism and democratic educational logic). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Yŏn'gu* (Journal of Korean education research) 1:1–23.

Rumberger, Russell W. 1983. "Dropping Out of High School: The Influence of Race, Sex, and Family Background." *American Educational Research Journal* 20(2): 199–220.

———. 1995. "Dropping Out of Middle School: A Multilevel Analysis of Students and Schools." *American Educational Research Journal* 32(3): 583–625.

Saltiel, Iris M. 1998. "Defining Collaborative Partnership." In *The Power and Potential of Collaborative Learning Partnerships*, edited by I. M. Saltiel, A. Sgroi, and R. G. Brockett. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Seo, Tŏk-hŭi (Seo, Deok-Hee). 2002. "Kajŏng hakkyo silch'ŏn ŭi kyoyukchŏk ŭimi" (An educational meaning of homeschooling practices: Focusing on parental life). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 5(1): 119–52.

———. 2003. "'Kyosil punggoe kisa e taehan pip'anjŏk tamnon punsŏk" (A critical discourse analysis of the "classroom collapse" reports: Focusing on those of *Chosun Ilbo*). *Han'guk Kyoyuk Illyuhakhoe* (Korean society for the study of anthropology of education) 6(2): 55–89.

——. 2006. "'Kyosil punggoe ihu sinjayujuŭi kyoyuk tamnon ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwa kŭ chŏhang-homsŭk'ulling e kwanhan tamnon punsŏk ŭl chungsim ŭro" (The formation of neoliberal discourse on education after "classroom collapse," and resistance to it: A critical discourse analysis on homeschooling reports in South Korea). *Kyoyuk Sahoehak Yŏn'gu* (Korean journal of the sociology of education) 16(1): 77-105.

Seth, Michael J. 2002. *Education Fever: Society, Politics, and the Pursuit of Schooling in South Korea*. Hawai'i Studies on Korea series. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press and Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawai'i.

——. 2009. *A Concise History of Modern Korea*. Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield.

Shin, Gi-Wook, and Kyung-Sup Chang. 2000. "Social Crisis in Korea." In *Korea Briefing: 1997–1999: Challenges and Change at the Turn of the Century*, edited by Kong Dan Oh, 75–99. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Sim, Sŏng-bo. 1999. "Kyoyuk kaehyŏk ŭi oryu wa hakkyo punggoe ŭi kongdongch'ejŏk kŭkpok" (Shortfalls of educational reform and the communitarian approach to overcome school collapse). In *Hakkyo punggoe: chugŏganŭn hakkyo rŭl toesalligi wihan sŏngch'al kwa chindan* (School collapse: Analyzing our imperiled schools and envisioning a reform for revival), edited by Chŏn'guk Kyojigwŏn Nodong Chohap (Korean Teachers' and Education Workers' Union), 193–225. Seoul: P'urŭn Namu.

——. 2001. "Wit'aeroun t'algŭndaejuŭi: Cho Han Hyejŏng non" (Perilous postmodernism: Cho Han Haejoang's theory). *Kyoyuk Pip'yŏng* (Education criticism) 3: 106–22.

Simmonds, F. N. 1996. "Naming and Identity." In *Reconstructing Womanhood, Reconstructing Feminism: Writings on Black Women*, edited by D. Jarrett-Macauley. London: Routledge.

Sŏl, Tong-hun. 1994. "Han'guk nodongjadŭl ŭi sedaegan sahoe idong 1987–1989 nyŏn, samujik kwa saengsanjik ŭi namnyŏ nodongja rŭl chungsim ŭro" (Intergenerational social mobility of Korean laborers, 1987–1989, with a focus on male and female office and production workers). In *Kyegŭp kwa han'guk sahoe* (Class and Korean society), edited by Han'guk Sanŏp Sahoe Yŏn'guhoe. Seoul: Hanul.

Song, Jesook. 2003. "Shifting Technologies: Neoliberalization of the Welfare State in South Korea, 1997–2001." Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Song, Tae-jung. 2002. "Ch'abyŏlhwadoenŭn sijang, taejunghwadoenŭn sijang" (Discriminated market, publicized market). *LG chugan kyŏngje* (LG weekly economy), July 3.

Sorensen, Clark W. 1994. "Success and Education in South Korea." *Comparative Education Review* 38(1): 10–35.

Stevenson, Robert B., and Jeanne Ellsworth. 1991. "Dropping Out in a Working Class High School: Adolescent Voices on the Decision to Leave." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 12(3): 277–91.

——. 1993. "Dropouts and the Silencing of Critical Voices." In *Beyond Silenced Voices: Class, Race, and Gender in United States Schools*, edited by Lois Weis and Michelle Fine. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Tisdell, Elizabeth J. 1993. "Feminism and Adult Learning: Power, Pedagogy, and Praxis." *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 57: 91–103.

Valenzuela, Angela. 1999. *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. Social Context of Education series. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Weedon, Chris. 1987. *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Weis, Lois. 1990. *Working Class without Work: High School Students in a De-Industrializing Economy*. Critical Social Thought series. New York: Routledge.

Whitty, Geoff. 1985. *Sociology and School Knowledge: Curriculum Theory, Research, and Politics*. London: Methuen.

Whitty, Geoff, Sally Power, and David Halpin. 1998. *Devolution and Choice in Education: The School, the State, and the Market*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Williams, Raymond. 1977. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Willis, Paul E. 1977. *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wilson, Elizabeth Cecil. 1959. *The Problem of Value in Technical Assistance Education: The Case of Korea, 1945–1955*. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms.

Woo, Jung-en. 1991. *Race to the Swift: State and Finance in Korean Industrialization*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Woodley, Alan, Lee Taylor, and Bernadette Butcher. 1993. "Critical Reflections on Developing as Equal Opportunities Action Plan for Black and Ethnic Minorities." In *Reforming Open and Distance Education Critical Reflections from Practice*, edited by T. Evans and D. Nation. London: Kogan Page.

Yang, Ch'un. 2000. *Han'guk sahoe ŭi kyech'ŭngjŏk tonghak* (Hierarchical class dynamics in Korean society). Seoul: Korea University Press.

Yang, Chŏng-ho. 2003. "Kyoyuknyŏl, suhak kwaoe hwaltong, sahoejŏk p'yŏngdŭng: TIMSS-Rŭi sigyejŏk ilbanhwa sŏnhyŏng mohyŏng punsŏk" (Education fever, math after-school programa, and social equality: From TIMSS-R Korea data). Paper presented at the 2003 International Conference on Education Fever, Kangwon University, South Korea, July 3–4.

Yang, Kŏn-man. 1999. "Kyosil suŏp ŭn p'ilsu ka anin sŏnt'aek" (Classroom instruction is not a must, but a choice). *Chosun Ilbo*, November 2.

——. 2000. "Sŏnsaengnimdŭl ege chejari rŭl" (Allow teachers their own space). *Chosun Ilbo*, March 4.

——. 2001. "Iltŭng do kkoltchi do ŏmnŭn pungŏppang kyoyuk'" (The

"cookie-cutter" education for the gifted as well as slow learners). *Chosun Ilbo,* April 6.

Yi, Hae-ch'an. 1998. "Kwaoe rŭl hakkyo hyŏnjang ŭro kkŭrŏdŭrigessŭmnida" (The promise to absorb private after-school education into school). *Shindonga,* June.

Yi, Ki-yŏn (Yi, Kiyeon). 2006. "Sŏngin yŏsŏng ŭi haksŭp e kwanhan chilchŏk yŏn'gu: pangsongdae chubu haksaeng ŭi sarye" (A qualitative study of the learning experience of adult women: The case of housewife-students in KNOU). Ph.D. diss., Seoul National University.

Im, Kuk-t'aek. 1999. "Sŏnsaengnimdŭl ŭi iyagi rŭl tŭrŏboja" (Let's listen to the stories of the teachers. A manuscript searching for possible solutions to classroom crisis). Discussion materials for Contemporary Educational Issues. Seoul: Saegyoyuk Kongdongch'e Wiwŏnhoe (Committee of New Educational Community).

Im, To-yŏk. 1999. "Taejŏn tongsanjung 1100 yŏmyŏng: sarang ŭi mae ch'okku daehoe yŏrŏ" (Taejŏn Tongsan Middle School's 1,100-plus students: Opening a campaign for "cane of love"). *Chosun Ilbo,* March 31.

Young, Michael F. D. 1971. *Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education*. Open University Set Book. London: Collier-Macmillan.

Yu, P'al-mu, and Chŏng-hun Kim. 2001. *Simin sahoe wa simin undong 2: saeroun chip'yŏng ŭi t'amsaek* (Civil society and civil movements 2: Searching for a new foundation). Seoul: Hanul.

Yun, Ch'ŏl-gyŏng, Yi In-gyu, and Pak Ch'ang-nam. 1999. *Hakkyo punggoe silt'ae mit taech'aek yŏn'gu* (A study of the current status of school collapse and strategies for solutions). Seoul: Han'guk Kyoyuk Kaebarwŏn (KEDI).

Contributors

NANCY ABELMANN is Associate Vice Chancellor for Research—Humanities, Arts, and Related Fields; and Harry E. Preble Professor of Anthropology, Asian American Studies, East Asian Languages and Cultures, and Gender & Women's Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She co-directs the Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI, www.eui.uiuc.edu) and served as the director of the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies from 2005 to 2008. She has published books on social movements in contemporary South Korea, women and social mobility in postcolonial South Korea, Korean America, and South Korean film, and most recently, *The Intimate University: Korean American Students and the Problems of Segregation* (2009). With the psychologist Sumie Okazaki she is writing *Domestic Toil: How Korean American Teens and Parents Navigate Immigrant America*, based on field and survey research in Chicagoland.

JUNG-AH CHOI is an adjunct faculty member at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Her areas of scholarship and teaching are the social foundations of education, ethnographic research, and teacher education. Her recent publications appear in *Educational Foundations* (2008) and *The Clearing House* (2009).

MISOOK KIM is an assistant professor in the Graduate School of Educational Policy and Administration at Korea National University of Education. Her recent works include "The School-Level Impact of Student Assessment Policy on Educational Practices (2011)," and "2008 College Admission Policy: The Proportional Impact of Strengthened School Records on Schooling (2010)." Currently she is conducting research on school choice and the middle class.

JAE HOON LIM is an assistant professor of educational research at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Her research focuses on the intersection of gender, race, and class in STEM education as well as on transnational students in various schooling contexts. Her research has been published in several journals including *Equity and Excellence*, *Race and Ethnicity in Education*, and *ZDM: International Journal on Mathematics Education*. Her

most recent publication is an extensive qualitative research method chapter appearing in *The Oxford Handbook of Reciprocal Adult Development and Learning* (2011).

SO JIN PARK is a research fellow at the Institute for Social Development Studies, Yonsei University. She received her Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her publications include "Educational Manager Mothers: South Korea's Neoliberal Transformation" (2007), "College Rank and Neo-Liberal Subjectivity in South Korea: the Burden of Self-Development" (2009, with Nancy Abelmann and Hyunhee Kim), and "Reconsidering Korean Culture and Society and Seeking Self Identity in the World: Short-Term Study Abroad Motivation and Experiences" (2010, in Korean). Currently she is working on Chinese college students in Korean universities as well as *noraebang* (Korean-style *karaoke*) culture.

DEOK-HEE SEO is an assistant professor of education at Chosun University. In 2008 she published a book on homeschooling in South Korea (*My Encounters with Homeschooling*, in Korean), and she has contributed chapters to books on multicultural education and the lives of immigrant women and their children (*Understanding Multicultural Society: The Present Reality and Vision of Multicultural Education*, in Korean, 2007; and *Korean Multiculturalism: Family, Education, and Policy*, in Korean, 2011). Her recent research interests include alternative education, multicultural education, and educational welfare in South Korea.

MICHAEL SETH is an associate professor of history at James Madison University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Hawai'i, and his M.A. and B.A. from the State University of New York at Binghamton. He is the author of *Education Fever: Society, Politics and the Pursuit of Schooling in South Korea* (2002), *A Concise History of Korea from the Neolithic Period through the Nineteenth Century* (2006), and *A Concise History of Modern Korea* (2009). Currently he is working on a history of North Korea.

KIYEON YI is a marriage and family therapist for the Korean Community in the Los Angeles area. She received her M.A. and Ph. D. in education from Seoul National University and an M.A. in marriage and family therapy from Hope International University in California. She is pleased to serve Korean immigrant families and is interested in the motivation and mental health of youth in Korean immigrant families.

Index