

Evaluation Roots Reconsidered: Asa Hilliard, a Fallen Hero in the “Nobody Knows My Name” Project, and African Educational Excellence

Stafford Hood

Arizona State University, Tempe

Rodney K. Hopson

Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Asa Hilliard has left his mark, and his name belongs in the pantheon of esteemed African American scholars, educational researchers, teachers, and activists. Although his work has served as a clarion call for an Afrocentric orientation in psychology and education to address the needs of African American students, his contributions to the field’s thinking about educational evaluation date back 30 years and have seldom if ever been noted. For nearly three quarters of a century, issues of fairness and equity have guided and driven the work of African American scholars in educational evaluation. These issues remain uppermost in their minds today as they investigate society’s woefully inadequate schools for children from racial minority and/or poor backgrounds. It is within this space that this discourse links the legacy of African American educational researchers and evaluators during the pre-Brown era to Hilliard’s later contributions to the field’s thinking about educational evaluation.

KEYWORDS: Black education, evaluation, history.

Asa G. Hilliard’s name belongs in the pantheon of African and African American scholars, educational researchers, teachers, and activists who have unequivocally and unapologetically devoted their lives and professional careers in service of the African American community. Professor Hilliard may have been more widely known for his contributions to the discourse on “testing, ancient African history, teaching strategies, African culture and child growth and development” (Chamberlain, 2004, p. 96). Although his work has served as a clarion call for an Afrocentric orientation in psychology and education to address the needs of African American students, his contributions to rethinking educational evaluation date back 30 years but have seldom, if ever, been noted. Thus, in this historical review, we revisit, reconsider, and illuminate the roots of educational evaluation—particularly, democratic and culturally responsive evaluation. Through texts, theory, methods, and so on, we intend to give voice and authority to socially

and culturally responsive evaluators like Hilliard, whose names and contributions to the field are not known to many. We introduce Hilliard's contributions to evaluative inquiry and discuss the significance of his legacy of scholarship and activism regarding the discourse on democratic and culturally responsive evaluation. We situate his work within the context of our larger historical project that is shaping the field in new democratic directions while building a cadre of students who are equipped to think critically about these efforts.

Illuminating the Roots of African Americans in Educational Evaluation

Over the past 7 years, we have undertaken to discover and acknowledge our roots in the field of evaluation by illuminating the untold contributions of African American educational researchers and evaluators to the field of evaluation research in the United States during the pre-*Brown* era (Hood, 2001, 2004; Hopson & Hood, 2005). Through a project called "Nobody Knows My Name," we are retrieving from near obscurity the work of early contributors and pioneering African American scholars who have been excluded from what is taught as the history of educational evaluation research in the United States. In much the same way, part of our intent is to uplift Hilliard's scholarship and so bring his contributions to the fore of mainstream educational evaluation, just as his work has been incorporated into other educational subdisciplines, such as curriculum and instruction and educational psychology. Whether this exclusion has been by accident or design, we leave for the reader to answer. Our quest to revisit, illuminate, and verify our roots as African American evaluators is professionally and personally important for us, as is claiming this heritage for the benefit of others to come. Our quest is succinctly captured in the words of Maxine Greene (1993) when she asserted that the "experiences of pain and abandonment have led to a search for roots and on occasion, for a revision of recorded history" (p. 17). Therefore, this work is not intended solely to mention and proclaim this heritage but to scream aloud the names of our predecessors Reid E. Jackson (PhD in education, Ohio State University, 1938), Aaron Brown (PhD in education, University of Chicago, 1944), Rose Browne (EdD in education, Harvard University, 1939), Leander Boykin (PhD in education, Stanford University, 1949), and others who acted upon their social responsibility to serve the African American community through their substantive work in the evaluation of African American schooling during the pre-*Brown* era of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

The seminal work of a major evaluation theorist and scholar, Robert Stake, helped spark our investigation of the evaluative inquiry by early African American scholars and evaluators. Specifically, Stake's articulation of responsive evaluation (1975) has been at the core of the work that we have undertaken to expand the concept to that of culturally responsive evaluation. The intent has been to extend the boundaries of responsive evaluation (Hood, 2001) to include the tradition of African American evaluative inquiry, research, and practice in the field of evaluation. This tradition provides historical context for interpreting the significance of Hilliard's contributions to socially responsible and culturally responsive educational evaluation. This significance is partially captured in Hilliard's "Democracy in Evaluation: The Evolution of an Art-Science in Context" (1984):

Educational evaluation in a democratic society must be based on a special view of the person and his or her relationship to others and the environment. Each student has a unique environment that influences and that can be influenced by that student. The environment included culture, social class, history, family, and political condition. Each person in an environment actively interacts with it in a way that transforms reality. The natural relationship between people and their environment is a reciprocal. Evaluation in education (which is based on recognizing and understanding active learners within a context in a reciprocal relationship between person and context) is evaluation that fits the real world and makes it possible for evaluation to serve democratic needs. (p. 120)

Stake's view (1975) regarding the importance of advanced organizers and issues in responsive evaluation is germane for framing the socially responsible or culturally responsive evaluative inquiry of African American scholars during the pre-*Brown* era. Arguably, in 1940 one of our unrecognized evaluation scholars, Reid E. Jackson (1940a; first African American to receive a PhD in education from Ohio State University) framed the advanced organizers in evaluating educational programs for African Americans when he wrote, "The needs of the group, individually, and collectively, must serve as a criterion if a true democracy is to be achieved" (p. 59, as cited in Hood, 2001). The issue that underlay this democratic framework for evaluative inquiry was simply fair and equal treatment as American citizens. Nevertheless, no scholarship on the history of evaluation cites the name of Reid E. Jackson as a contributor to the evaluation discourse of the pre-*Brown* era (Alkin, 2004; Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004; Madaus & Stufflebeam, 1983). This is so, even though Jackson had conducted evaluations of statewide schooling for African American students in the states of Kentucky (Jackson, 1935a, 1935b), Florida (Jackson, 1936), and Alabama (Jackson, 1940b) and the development and character of permissive or partly segregated schools in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Arizona (Jackson, 1947).

Nor do published histories of the field of evaluation know the name of Aaron Brown, who graduated from the University of Chicago's Department of Education in 1944, when it was known as the premier center of evaluative thinking and practice. The director was Ralph Tyler, known as the father of educational evaluation, who would later become the first director of Stanford University's Center for Advanced Study (Nowakowski, 1981). Hood spent 2 days sifting through Tyler's papers at the University of Chicago archives searching in vain for a mention of Aaron Brown—even though Brown (1944) reported that Tyler was a member of his dissertation committee. Brown had in fact conducted comprehensive evaluations of accredited secondary schools for African Americans in the South in 1944 (Brown, 1944) and a statewide evaluation of Georgia's K–12 schooling for African Americans in 1947 (Brown, 1947) and the following year of its higher education system (Brown, 1948). Furthermore, from 1943 to 1954, Brown was the president of Albany State University, a historically Black college in Georgia (Wikipedia, 2008).

The history of educational evaluation to date has also failed to note Leander Boykin (first African American to receive a PhD in education from Stanford University). Boykin (1949) reported the status and trends of differentials between White and Negro teachers' salaries across 14 Southern states for the period of 1900 to 1946. Not surprisingly, Boykin found that

progress in the elimination of differentials between white and Negro teachers' salaries appears to be slow in Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. In Arkansas there has been a reduction from 91 percent in 1931-32 to 63 percent in 1944-45. The salaries paid white teachers in Louisiana and Mississippi are still more than one hundred percent in excess of those paid Negro teachers, 102.2 and 181.2 percent respectively. In fact, the differential in Mississippi in 1944-45 was actually in excess of that in 1931-32. (p. 47)

Boykin (1950) continued to examine the differentials and noted the following year,

Equality of educational opportunity for the Negro requires an attack upon the basic resources and other problems of the region [Southern U.S.], and not alone upon the quantitative, comparative analyses between educational provisions for whites and Negroes. (p. 533)

It is unconscionable not to recognize the importance of Boykin's evaluative inquiry into the "differentials in Negro education" across all the Southern states in the pre-*Brown* era when we write and teach the history of educational evaluation.

For nearly three quarters of a century, one issue has guided and driven the work of African American scholars of educational evaluation. Issues of fairness and equity were at the heart of their inquiry in the 1930s when the doctrine of the land mandated so-called separate but equal school systems for children of color. The issues of fairness and equity were central in their investigations of segregated schools during the pre-*Brown* and supposedly desegregated schools of the post-*Brown* eras. The issue of fairness remains uppermost in our minds today as we investigate our woefully inadequate schools for Black children, other children of color, and children from economically oppressed backgrounds.

It is from within this historical context that we extend this work and so link the legacy of these African American educational researchers and evaluators to Hilliard's later contributions to our thinking about educational evaluation. Without due consideration to these pioneering progenitors, the field is not able to fully appreciate the foundations for responsive evaluation in the African American tradition, nor are we able to locate Hilliard's contributions within the context of this African American tradition of culturally responsive and socially responsible evaluative inquiry.

It is worth noting and repeating that Hilliard was a stalwart for the very democratic principles that are promulgated in this country, yet it is clear that his contributions in the field of evaluation, though virtually unheralded in most evaluation programs and texts, have been as noteworthy and are consistent with those who have been acknowledged as leading mainstream scholars in the field. Not only was he echoing (and anticipating) important principles of equity and democracy in the context of evaluation and society, he was arguably ahead of his time in his treatment of these issues in the larger context of culturally responsive evaluation.

Adding Asa Hilliard's Scholarship to the Review of Educational Evaluation Literature

Hilliard's engagement in the discourse on educational evaluation is not extensive but substantive and specifically noted in three publications during the period from 1978 to 1989. The first publication during this period was "The Future of Follow-Through," published in *Viewpoints* in 1978. In this article, Hilliard echoed

the criticisms of well-recognized evaluators Ernest House, Gene Glass, Les Mclean, and Decker Walker about the major limitations of a large-scale and very expensive evaluation of the federally funded "Follow-Through" program. But Hilliard's concern was that the inadequacy of the evaluations might result in the termination of a major federal program that was primarily serving racial minority students and poor students and serving them well. Six years later, Hilliard (1984) addressed the topic more fully in his chapter "Democracy in Evaluation: The Evolution of an Art-Science in Context," included in a publication of the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. In it, Hilliard engaged in an insightful philosophical conversation on evaluation within the context of democratic principles that some in the evaluation community have continued to engage in (House & Howe, 1999; MacDonald, 1976). Finally, in 1989, Hilliard combined his Afrocentric perspective with his observations about evaluation at the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association in his keynote address entitled "Kemet (Egyptian) Historical Revision: Implications for Cross-Cultural Evaluation and Research in Education." In particular, he reminded evaluators that they are engaged in the "manipulation of power and therefore politics in its truest sense. . . . Different approaches to evaluation can result in the painting of very different pictures of reality" (p. 8).

Thus, from 1978 to 1989, we find that Hilliard made substantive contributions to the discourse on educational evaluation by expanding evaluative thinking beyond technical considerations alone. Hilliard's concern to look beyond the technical dimensions of evaluation parallels (and in some cases anticipated) these concerns in the work of evaluation theorists such as Robert Stake, Barry MacDonald, Malcom Parlett, David Hamilton, Egon Guba, and Yvonna Lincoln during this period. It can be debated which of the evaluation theorists or their respective evaluation models and approaches were the most prominent, innovative, or provocative during this period. However, those evaluation persuasions that are most congruent with our orientation about evaluation and Hilliard's contributions are namely, responsive evaluation (Stake, 1975), democratic evaluation (MacDonald, 1976), and naturalistic evaluation (Guba, 1978). We resonate most closely with these approaches because they are the most amenable to the facilitation of the evaluation process so that the perspectives of the least powerful stakeholders in the evaluation are meaningfully included in the evaluation. This is what Hilliard called for in his focus on democratic principles in evaluation, as we discuss as the first of three big points that he contributed to the field of educational evaluation. More important, what we illustrate in this article is the coincidental timing of his work with other approaches in the field, despite the fact that "nobody knew his name."

For example, Robert Stake's responsive evaluation approach has been extensively noted in the evaluation literature as one of the most important evaluation concepts and approaches to emerge during this period (Fitzpatrick et al., 2004; Guba, 1978). In some ways, responsive evaluation reflected Stake's evolving thinking on evaluation from his paper "The Countenance of Educational Evaluation" (1967), what has been considered to have launched the participant-oriented evaluation approach, which called for evaluators to move beyond the Tylerian approach of objective-oriented evaluation to one that valued and incorporated the perspectives of program participants in the evaluation process. Stake's responsive evaluation paper began to address in specific terms how evaluations

could and should be responsive to the concerns of program stakeholders. As such, this view resonated with the perspective articulated by the British evaluator Barry MacDonald (1976) as democratic evaluation, which would also receive considerable recognition in both the United States and Europe.

Democratic evaluation essentially employs democratic principles in evaluation, with the major intent of addressing the disparities of power among program stakeholders. MacDonald and Kushner (2005) asserted that in democratic evaluation “the fundamental issue is the impact of evaluation on the distribution of power” (p. 110). Therefore, those program stakeholders whose voices have typically been minimized in the evaluation process—as a result of their being the least powerful in terms of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status—are given equal voice in the process. MacDonald and Kushner further assert,

The democratic evaluator recognizes value pluralism and seeks to represent a range of interests in his issues formulation. The basic value is an informed citizenry, and the evaluator acts as a broker in exchanges of information between groups who want knowledge of each other. [The democratic evaluator’s] techniques of data gathering and presentation must be accessible to nonspecialist audiences. (p. 110)

These fundamental concepts and rationales for responsive evaluation and democratic evaluation strongly resonate with and are evident in Hilliard’s discussions regarding evaluation. When students of evaluation look for scholarship that emphasizes democracy and equity, they may neglect the scholarship of Hilliard, when in fact his work, like that of others who are considered pillars of the field, continues to poignantly address issues of power, democracy, and social responsibility. As be discussed in the following section, Hilliard’s contributions in educational and program evaluation can be situated within profound issues related to how the field and its scholars rethink and acknowledge how larger issues affect the communities that are mistreated, devalued, and oppressed.

Situating Asa Hilliard’s Contributions in Democratic and Responsive Educational and Program Evaluation

In this section, we frame the major ideas and scope of Hilliard’s work related to democratic and responsive educational and program evaluation. We distinguish work in evaluation from what is generally referred to as assessment and testing. It is safe to say that his work was connected to a larger corpus of work in evaluation, assessment, and testing (Hilliard, 1996)—but we see the need to clarify his contributions to each of these areas by highlighting his work first and foremost in evaluation.

As we see it, educational evaluation is the larger construct, sometimes mistaken for issues of assessment (classroom or formative), which, at least in the context of our work, involves the systematically determining and making sense of the merit, worth, and value of educational policies and programs for the improvement and betterment of society, the influence and/or impact of social and educational policy, and the illumination and identification of program deficiencies. We typically do not use these constructs interchangeably. Educational evaluation has its own nomenclature, standards, and guidelines, much like the fields of assessment and testing, despite there being overlap in terms and concepts. Although we address the scope of Hilliard’s work related to educational and program evaluation in the big points below, we recognize that his work extended beyond evaluation and that these big

points are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The common denominator of his work remained the same in his attention to the underrepresented and underserved. He consistently found ways to raise questions about democratic participation and acknowledgment of all, amid the glaring and dominant issues of racism, hegemony, and apartheid, which lay at the center of the educational and schooling experiences of those underrepresented and underserved children and communities. We now turn to three thematic issues to which Hilliard made brilliant contributions, while invoking a turn of phrase we associate with Hilliard:

Big Point No. 1

Democratic principles extend to the study and practice of educational and program evaluation. Or, if we want to test the reality of democracy and equality in the United States, all we have to do is focus on the social, public health, and economic status of Black and Brown folks.

As simple as this may sound, the notion of democracy, education, and evaluation were not always conjoined. Democracy and education have a long history, but their transference to evaluation has not always been the case, at least not insofar as understanding the mainstream generations and traditions of the field is concerned. Despite nobody knowing his name or referring to his work, Hilliard's contributions to the role of evaluation as a process for meaningful and democratic participation of all parties are vital for understanding the notions of democratic evaluation proposed by Barry MacDonald, Ernest House, Ken Howe, Katherine Ryan, and others who have made critically important contributions to the discourse on democratic and deliberative democratic approaches to evaluation. For example, Hilliard (1984) wrote in "Democracy in Evaluation: The Evolution of an Art-Science in Context," "If democracy in education is a goal, then democracy in evaluation should follow. It is in the context of democracy or its alternatives that the question of evaluation in education as an art-science is situated" (p. 115). Furthermore, Hilliard asserted, "Evaluation is a process that requires the meaningful and complete participation of all parties in the education process. It is not, and cannot be, a process that is managed by a few for the benefit of many" (p. 120).

Situating Hilliard's work in the context of its relevance to democratic and responsive evaluation practice and research on African peoples and their communities in the United States reveals the contributive value of his work to those whose names we "did not know." Hood's commentary (2000) on deliberative democracy and the work of more recent evaluators of color (Hopson, 2003; Madison, 1992; Symonette, 2004; Thomas, 2004) stressed, before the celebrated notions of participatory evaluation were advanced, that participants are to be recognized as active agents in the evaluation process. Hilliard noted that evaluation procedures were not ends in themselves but should be understood as being part of a larger process of ensuring social and educational processes of democratic participation and attention to goals of equity and equality in larger society.

Big Point 2

Who evaluates and why? Or, what happens when the sheep invites the lion to dinner?

Integral to Hilliard's Big Point 1 above are questions that are persistently evident in his educational evaluation work: To whom should the purpose in the

teaching/learning, program development, and social policy process and evaluation primarily serve? Who exactly is this evaluator? What are his or her motives in positioning the evaluation? What is the purpose of the evaluation? What are the core evaluation questions? These are not simple nor trite questions; instead, they correspond to historical calls by Robert Stake, Yvonna Lincoln, and Egon Guba for broadening views on responding to the needs of evaluations beyond decision makers, issues of evaluator credibility (cf. Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, forthcoming), and more.

Some background is necessary here. Emphasizing responsiveness and shared lived experiences is relatively new (Hood, 2001). Ralph Tyler's call for objective-oriented evaluation in the 1930s (Madaus & Stufflebeam, 1983), followed by description-oriented and judgment-focused evaluation over a 40-year period, as fueled by the Great Society educational reforms, altered the way that we see and attend to evaluation and its place in society (Fitzpatrick et al., 2004). Such notions, however, are not new to many of the uncelebrated African American evaluators whose work has been documented in the "Nobody Knows My Name" project. For culturally responsive evaluators, situating the shared lived experiences of the evaluator and the community in which evaluation is to take place is foundational. The cadre of African American evaluators whom we identify has always made a connection to how our evaluation work will be socially responsible (and Hilliard is no different for raising these issues as a critic but also as a friend to evaluation). Hilliard's lifelong commitment to telling the true story of African and Africa's people forces us to contemplate whether those who engage in evaluation work are committed to the same principles and, if not, how those of us who share this democratic commitment might respond to and intervene with more culturally responsive methods, processes, and understandings.

In his "Future of Follow-Through," Hilliard (1978) begins with this: "Large-scale educational evaluation studies have tended to conceal much more than they have revealed" (p. 3). This is in response to the 12 tons of data, at a cost of \$500 million, from the social policy experiment following the burgeoning development of program evaluation and the U.S. Congress's passing of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. On lessons learned from the social policy, Hilliard identified several issues that continue to be discussed 30 years later in major educational and program evaluation, among them that the Follow-Through purposes needed clarity. At a basic level, purpose identification is a critical standard in evaluation study and development (cf. Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2009). At a more profound level, Hilliard's summary is about much more than purpose identification. It relates to a third big point, as he noted:

At a public policy level, it is necessary to determine clearly if Follow-Through is to be a support or an experimental program. Whichever is to be the case, the policy position must be supported with the best possible professional rationale. That rationale should be grounded in actual educational experience and not in futuristic speculation. In other words, if Follow-Through is to be supported for a program of known quality, examples of successfully operating programs, which serve as models for public policy must be available. If the Follow-Through program is to be seen as a research program, then it is most unfair to Follow-Through children to implement it on a national scale. (p. 23)

Hilliard's big point in evaluation here is consonant with a major point that he raised in his last address at the annual meeting of American Educational Research Association in Chicago (Hilliard, 2007). His W. E. B. Du Bois Distinguished Lecture was sponsored by the association's special interest group Research Focus on Black Education (see American Educational Research Association, n.d.). Whereas the lecture focused on educational research, his analysis has implications for rethinking "Who evaluates and why?" (i.e., this second big point). When it comes to the state of education for African people in the United States, Hilliard warned against research-based books that perpetuate intellectual and cultural inferiority—namely, deficit thinking regarding African communities, schools, peoples, and children. His message of admonition and its relevance to culturally responsive evaluation is to "consider simultaneously the geopolitical context, agendas, intents, within which our educational dialogue and practice, including our research [and evaluation] are conducted" (Hilliard, 2007, p. 4).

At its core, evaluation is value laden and imbued with and responsive to a larger social political order, and evaluators are situated within contexts of study and within interactions of the setting that shape the evaluation study's logic, structure, and practices (Hopson, Greene, Bledsoe, Villegas, & Brown, 2007). The question of "Who evaluates and why?" highlights the contexts, agendas, and intentions of the evaluation and the evaluator and so raises questions about practices—sometimes commonly accepted ones—and the structures of power and the uses of those power structures for or against hegemony.

Big Point 3

Connecting audience with evaluation. Or, beyond evidence based to evidence accepted. Or, beyond evidence based to whose and what type of evidence matters most?

In the same way that the previous big points situate purpose, questions, audience, and so on, Hilliard's Big Point 3 asks, what is accepted as evidence for the multiple and key audiences and stakeholders in evaluation, especially for its most vulnerable populations and stakeholders? Current discussions about evidence-based evaluation, though seemingly important at an instrumentalist level, have not addressed more penetrating questions—for example, Whose notions of what evidence matters most? and To whom does evidence matter most? Failure to ask these questions makes it appear as if evidence is neutral and that the politics of education, accountability, and evaluation are not driven by competing interests. What is clear from the example of the Follow-Through social policy experiment is that there were as many questions as answers generated on the issues of evidence for decision makers at the federal level and for the developers and sponsors of educational programs in local school districts and sites. That is, one of the more serious problems of the large-scale evaluative studies conducted on Follow-Through was the equivocality of the studies. The myth that large-scale studies would produce clear-cut, generalizable results was just that, as Ernest House (2005) would write almost 30 years after his paper with Gene Glass, Les McLean, and Decker Walker in the *Harvard Educational Review* (House et al., 1978). Again, it is worth noting that Hilliard had anticipated these same concerns.

Today, the No Child Left Behind policy requirements that privilege evidence-based evaluations (code word *experimental design*) may be necessary, but they are insufficient to address the continued racialized achievement/opportunity gaps in

our nation's schools. If we take Hilliard's work seriously, we as evaluators ought to be looking not to exacerbate the progressively worse educational conditions and outcomes for Black and other children of color. Rather, we should be looking to emulate and accelerate their learning opportunities, even at the risk of providing differential gains for Black students, for example, in integrated and desegregated schools. Hilliard sought to identify schools and teachers that produced such differentials of high Black student achievement and then use these exemplars of excellence as a harbinger for democratic scholarly research and responsive evaluation. For instance, how might we develop an alternative vision of educational research and evaluation that is restorative, multifaceted in its diversity, and legitimating and so honors the strengths, commitments, and resiliency of Black and Brown communities and their schools?

In this regard, we pause to reconsider Asa G. Hilliard's legacy of pioneering democratic and responsive evaluation in the context of our personal encounters with him and how he engaged us intellectually in his interdisciplinary scholarly writings over many topics. The fundamental core of Professor Hilliard's scholarly legacy is its inextricable connection to the plight, history, survival, and advancement of African people in this society and the global African diaspora. The depth and clarity of his scholarship and activism are both inspiring and humbling for those of us who are trying to make our contribution to our collective cause.

Historical and Personal Reflections: *A Luta Continua* (The Struggle Continues)

A luta continua, the revolutionary slogan (in Portuguese) of the African liberation movement, captures the spirit of the historical period out of which Hilliard's scholarship and activism emerged on the heels of the 1960s. Hood first encountered Hilliard's work as a fresh PhD recipient and young evaluator of special education programs for the Illinois State Board of Education during the mid-1980s. At that time, the overrepresentation of African American students who were identified as "mentally retarded" was extensively reported in the literature (Bersoff, 1982; Brosnan, 1983; Snow, 1984). The major culprit was the use of IQ tests as the sole criteria for placement in this special education category (Cremins, 1981; Wade, 1979). During this period, one of the cases on the overrepresentation of racial minority students in programs for the mentally retarded emerged in Chicago: *PASE v. Hannon* (1980) was a class-action suit filed in 1975 by Parents in Action on Special Education against the Chicago Public Schools. This suit was filed "on behalf of minority students whose placements in classrooms for the mentally handicapped . . . were said to have been based on tests that were culturally biased" (Heaston, 1987, p. 163). Specifically, the intent of the suit was to "eliminate IQ tests as the sole determinant in the consideration of placement of Black (and Hispanic) students in EMH [educable mentally handicapped]." (p. 166). The judge would ultimately rule against the plaintiffs, but Chicago Public Schools would shortly thereafter voluntarily discontinue the use of standardized tests for screening and evaluating such students.

It is important to note the class action suit that prompted the *PASE* suit—*Larry P. v. Riles* (1984), which had been filed in California 2 years earlier—and that its outcome would be substantially different from that of the Chicago case. In *Larry P.*, federal district judge Peckham signed an agreement between the California State Department of Education and the plaintiffs in 1986 ordering the department

“to notify all California school districts that standardized individual tests of intelligence (IQ) tests can no longer be administered to Black students for any purpose” (quoted in Dent, Mendocal, Pierce, & West, 1987, p. 190). During the period following the final ruling in *Larry P.* and while the Chicago public school system was attempting to meet the provisions of a consent decree to reassess all of its EMH students in 2 years (Heaston, 1987), Hood discovered Hilliard and his work. Hilliard’s articles (1983, 1992) discussing the *Larry P.* case and his scholarly intervention would have a profound impact on the work that Hood (1988) would later take in an evaluation for the Illinois State Board of Education. In fact, this Illinois effort can be partly attributed to one of Hilliard’s discussions (1983) of the *Larry P.* and *PASE* cases:

The fundamental issues in IQ psychometry have yet to be addressed. The *Larry P. vs. Wilson Riles* and *PASE vs. Hannon* cases simply serve as symptoms of the grave difficulties that exist in applied mental measurement in education. It took court cases to bring minimal problems with the IQ system to the surface, problems such as “cultural bias.” . . . The basic problem with IQ psychometry is that the whole field rests on fundamentally erroneous assumptions about the abilities of learners and the nature of teaching. (p. 16)

For Hood, it was both reasonable and revolutionary to ask, is the overrepresentation of African American students in the Illinois special education category of “mentally handicapped” unique to Chicago Public Schools?

At that time, the extent of the overrepresentation of African American students in selected special education categories had not been evaluated in other school districts within the State of Illinois. Consequently, the Illinois State Board of Education evaluation study that Hood directed in 1988 sought to determine whether African American students were also overrepresented in EMH programs in other major urban school districts within the state. The findings of the evaluation study, *The Disproportionate Representation of Black Pupils in EMH Classes in Selected Joint Agreement/Districts in Illinois, 1984–85 to 1986–87* (Hood, 1988), were consistent with national findings. However, the results were never released to the public. From that point on, Hilliard and his work became a steady source of inspiration, confirmation, and validation for Hood as an aspiring socially responsible and culturally responsive African American educational researcher and evaluator. The following words of Asa G. Hilliard (1984) provided continuing focus for this work:

It is a false representation of reality to ignore the historical, cultural antecedents to educational events, to ignore social forces that impinge upon those events, and to fail to relate the event appropriately to the state of the art in pedagogy. Such an approach devalues the individual child in favor of a mythical average child. Such an approach also fails to recognize the place of the evaluator. (p. 120)

Professor Hilliard’s expertise also encompassed comparative education, anthropology of education, and other issues related to race, hegemony, and language in education. His work has prompted critical and profound questions across a range of disciplinary areas because he called upon us as educational researchers to take seriously how our scholarship and practice in various academic disciplines contribute to or exacerbate the problems of our work. Hilliard recognized that our own tools, methods, and techniques were not a guarantee to ameliorate the problems that beset education. For

example, his comments (Hilliard, 1978) regarding the tools of behavioral scientists have wider implications for those who study problems in schools:

A major problem for the anthropologist and the other behavioral scientists who would use their tools to help in solving educational problems today is that these behavioral scientists themselves are a part—a major and integral part—of what they are examining. . . . Behavioral scientists are not only observers with both a self interest in, and a cultural bias toward, their areas of investigation, they are, as well, active *contributors* to the phenomena being observed. (p. 113)

Hopson met Hilliard after he delivered a keynote address at a National Black Child Development Institute meeting in the late 1980s. Although Hilliard's work was not part of Hopson's formal training in evaluation, linguistics, anthropology, or other courses at the master's or doctoral level, his scholarship was foundational to what became unofficial course syllabi that addressed how education is transmitted, especially for African children in the Americas. Over the course of many conversations with Hilliard and engagement with his lectures and writing, he repeatedly pointed Hopson to classics by African and African American scholars, such as Frantz Fanon (1966, 1968), W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/1982), Carter G. Woodson (1933/1977), Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981), Barbara Sizemore (2007), among others, whose work illuminated the peculiar situation of Africans in schooling and larger society and so raised global issues to be considered in the field of evaluation.

Hopson credits Hilliard's work for laying a foundation for rethinking how the academic disciplines in which evaluation researchers are trained must come to terms with the study, process, and effects of colonization, domination, oppression, and exploitation in educational and schooling arenas. Elsewhere, he writes and implicates the concomitant inadequacy of pervasive and recurring theories of cultural and language deficiency amid a larger conservative discourse and scholarship on accountability and high-stakes testing (Hopson, 2000; Hopson et al., 2007). This deficit discourse questions the educability of African American youth and the social value and worth of communities in which these youth reside. Hilliard understood how the ideology of White supremacy has contributed to inappropriate educational designs, tests, and assessments owing to misconceptions about African American children and their culture, making the broader link between larger social and educational mechanisms that perpetuate failure and inferiority. He observed,

Language, culture history, and oppression are inextricably linked together where African American children are concerned. To attempt to analyze assessment practice by reference to language or culture alone will doom such analyses to failure. Indeed, it might well result in data that support beliefs and behaviors which would make matters worse than they already are for African American children. (Hilliard, 1997, p. 230)

The intersection of language, culture, and evaluation (in this case, as it relates to testing and assessment) requires the reexamination of core assumptions of instrument development. As such, Hilliard asserted that a reorientation is needed regarding the language and constructs in testing and assessment—a reorientation that could contribute to the need for sociolinguists, educational researchers, and evaluators to continue to build interdisciplinary approaches and professional knowledge in support of excellence in the teaching and learning process.

What I am asserting is a basic threat not only to biased testing and assessment of African American children, but to the very foundation of testing and assessment for any child. The results of standardized testing favor children who speak American English simply because these children are able to respond to questions that are couched in a familiar language based upon familiar experiences. Since the “right children”—upper class, wealthy—tend to get the top scores, it is assumed that the IQ, reading, speech, language acquisition, and other tests are valid. . . . Because the results come out “right” or appear to have “face validity,” the basic assumptions about what the testing and assessment process is supposed to be doing are left unexamined. (Hilliard, 1997, p. 235)

One implication of this analysis is that even the socially responsible and culturally responsive evaluator has an obligation to understand language and culture in assessment to help fix recurring issues that perpetuate the miseducation of students and the deficiencies that plague the professional preparation of educators and researchers.

In a 2004 interview by Steven Chamberlain for the journal *Intervention in School and Clinic*, Hilliard’s guidance regarding the utility of “high stakes” testing within the context of the No Child Left Behind Act cannot be ignored by educational evaluators today—particularly, those conducting evaluations in schools with predominantly racial minority and/or poor students. Unquestionably, the evaluation of the act’s requirements is critically important, but Hilliard noted that the dependence on high-stakes testing for Black, Brown, and poor students has potentially devastating effects on the future of these students:

Not only are [high-stakes] tests not valid for the diverse groups that make up the country but they are not valid for anyone. And not only that, but there’s no necessary or validated connection between the type of testing being used and high standards. The assessments are meant to measure standards, but the standards aren’t high at all, being little more than minimum competency, because we don’t really believe that we can reach the highest standards of quality. . . . But high-stakes testing, where invalid standardized tests are used to make life and death decisions about children is absolutely and totally inappropriate as far as I can see. (Chamberlain, 2004, p. 98)

We trust that this discussion has provided a glimpse of what may have not been known about the breadth of Asa G. Hilliard’s contributions to the discourse on educational evaluation. Hilliard is another root in the legacy of African American educational researchers and evaluators. The “Nobody Knows My Name” project, which takes its title from a book by James Baldwin, asserts that there were and are considerable contributions of Africans to the field of evaluation in the United States and that their work has helped to shape the field into what it is today. We celebrate the critical and probing work of Baba Asa G. Hilliard III (Nana Baffour Amankwatia II) in the educational evaluation literature, along with other foundational giants in the field. Our obligation is to make sure that his name is known in this field—that is, to use and situate Hilliard’s work next to others who have shaped discourses in democracy, equity, responsiveness, and fairness in evaluation.

Asa G. Hilliard III has departed this place and space for his journey home after having made a profound impact in the lives of so many. Professor Hilliard was a gentle, passionate, and relentless warrior in our collective struggle to improve the

social, economic, educational, and political circumstances of those who have traditionally been disenfranchised in our American society—particularly, African Americans. As evaluators, we recognize and acknowledge the critical importance of valid assessment tools that can contribute to meaningful evaluations of the high standards that we set and to the improvement of educational programs for all children. However, Hilliard acutely reminded us that we are certainly not there yet. We conclude by reflecting on a moment at the American Educational Research Association's 2000 meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, when Professor Hilliard delivered his address entitled "The State of African Education" for the association's Commission on Research in Black Education. Although he generally spoke about our responsibilities as educators, as part of a higher calling, he invoked the Fanonian vision on the need for succeeding generations to fulfill their destiny. As educational evaluators, we resonated with his remarks:

We need [evaluators] and leaders who are oriented towards our destiny because they are rooted in a deep understanding of our culture and traditions, [evaluators] who identify with and are a part of us, [evaluators] who see our children as their own. . . . Now is the time for the real liberators to come forward. (p. 14)

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Authors

STAFFORD HOOD is the associate dean for research and a professor of psychology in education in the College of Education at Arizona State University, where he teaches graduate courses in psychological testing, program evaluation, and multicultural counseling. His research and scholarly activities focus on the role of culture in educational assessment and culturally responsive approaches in program evaluation. Address correspondence to Stafford Hood, College of Education, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-0611; e-mail: stafford.hood@asu.edu.

RODNEY K. HOPSON is a Hillman Distinguished Professor of Education; an associate professor in sociolinguistics, ethnography, and evaluation, Department of Foundations and Leadership in the School of Education; and a faculty member in the Center for Interpretive and Qualitative Research, Duquesne University. His work emphasizes the need for evaluators to have a new set of skills, frameworks, and ethical considerations around culture, diversity, and social justice in evaluation. Address correspondence to Rodney K. Hopson, Duquesne University, 729 Fisher Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15282; e-mail: hopson@duq.edu.