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# EQUITY ALLIANCE AT ASU NEWS RELEASE

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## NOTED SCHOLARS FIND THAT DYNAMIC VIEWS OF CULTURE ARE NEEDED TO ADDRESS THE DISPROPORTIONATE PLACEMENT OF CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Tempe, Ariz. – *How is disproportionality explained and what are the limitations of these explanations? What are the underlying views of culture used in these explanations? What are the implications of this analysis for future research, policy, and practice?*

Equity Alliance at ASU's principal investigators Alfredo Artiles and Elizabeth, along with Stanley Trent, David Osher, and Alba Ortiz analyze arguments that justify disproportionality, identify explanations of the problem, and critique the views of culture that underlie these explanations in *Justifying and Explaining Disproportionality, 1968-2008: A Critique of Underlying Views of Culture* (Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol. 42, No. 4 March/April 2010, p. 84).

The authors respond to these emerging concerns through an analysis of arguments that justify disproportionality, identify explanations of the problem, and critique the views of culture that underlie these explanations. The authors conclude with a brief discussion of implications and future directions.

Arguments that justify disproportionality based on single factors (e.g., student poverty) or claims that special education placement is justified due to the support systems made available to minority students are not necessarily supported by contemporary theory and research. The views of culture used in disproportionality research are fragmented, of varying soundness, and lack a clear link to student learning. This analysis suggests that a more complex, dynamic, and historical perspective on culture can assist us to understand better this long-standing predicament. More importantly, such a view of culture can inform future research priorities and policymaking in general and special education; document how special education practice, research, and policy is enacted in racially and economically stratified schools and communities; and lead to significantly improved educational outcomes for students from historically underserved groups.

The article is available online in *Exceptional Children*, the journal of the Council of Exceptional Children: <http://vnweb.hwwilsonweb.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/hww/jumpstart.jhtml?recid=obc05f7a67b1790e875b6f6e46758977520869ab9bd4b4923e9ca87523eac21850065c34b9567337&fmt=H> Justifying and Explaining Disproportionality, 1968-2008: A Critique of Underlying Views of Culture. Teaching Exceptional Children v. 42 no. 4 (March/April 2010) p. 84