

JAL MEHTA

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

HARVARD UNIVERSITY 2013 - present
Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education Cambridge, MA

HARVARD UNIVERSITY 2008 - 2013
Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Education Cambridge, MA

HARVARD UNIVERSITY 2006 - 2008
Post-Doctoral Fellow, Graduate School of Education Cambridge, MA

EDUCATION

HARVARD UNIVERSITY 2006
Ph.D. Sociology and Social Policy Cambridge, MA

HARVARD UNIVERSITY 2002
M.A. Sociology Cambridge, MA

HARVARD UNIVERSITY 1999
B.A. Social Studies, *Magna Cum Laude* Cambridge, MA

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

2013 *The Allure of Order: High Hopes, Dashed Expectations and the Troubled Quest to Remake American Schooling*. New York: Oxford University Press.

2012 *The Future(s) of School Reforms*, eds Jal Mehta, Robert Schwartz and Frederick Hess. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

2004 Katherine Newman, Cybelle Fox, David Harding, Jal Mehta and Wendy Roth. *Rampage: The Social Roots of School Shootings*. New York: Basic Books.
• **Finalist, C. Wright Mills Book Award, Society for the Study of Social Problems**

Dissertation:

2006. "The Transformation of American Education Policy, 1980-2001: Ideas and the Rise of Accountability Politics." Harvard Department of Sociology and Social Policy.
• **Winner, Exemplary Dissertation Award, Spencer Foundation**
• **Winner, Outstanding Dissertation Award, American Education Research Association (AERA), Politics Section**

Articles and Book Chapters:

- Forthcoming. Jal Mehta. "When Professions Shape Politics: The Case of Accountability in K-12 and Higher Education." Forthcoming in *Educational Policy*.
- 2014 Jal Mehta and Robert Schwartz. "Building a 21st Century School System: Creating a Teaching Profession and Multiple Student Pathways." In *Improving the Odds for America's Children: Future Directions for Policy and Practice*, eds. Kathleen McCartney, Hiro Yoshikawa, and Laurie Forcier. (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press).
- 2014 Jal Mehta and Steven Teles. "Professionalization 2.0: The Case for Plural Professionalism in Education." In *Teacher Quality 2.0: Will Today's Reforms Hold Back Tomorrow's Schools?*, eds. Michael McShane and Frederick Hess (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press).
- 2013 Jal Mehta, "From Bureaucracy to Profession: Remaking the Educational Sector for the 21st Century." *Harvard Educational Review*, 83(3): 463-488.
- 2013 Scott Davies and Jal Mehta. "Educationalization" in *Sociology of Education: An A to Z Guide*, ed. James Ainsworth (pp. 229-231). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- 2013 Jal Mehta. "The Penetration of Technocratic Logic into the Educational Field: Rationalizing Schooling from the Progressives to the Present." *Teachers College Record* 113 (5): 1-40.
- 2013 Jal Mehta. "How Paradigms Create Politics: The Transformation of American Educational Policy, 1980-2001." *American Educational Research Journal* 50(2): 285-325.
- 2013 Jal Mehta. "Why American Education Fails—And How Lessons From Abroad Could Improve It." *Foreign Affairs* 92:3 (May/June), 105-116.
- 2013 Jal Mehta and Joe Doctor. "A Board Exam for Teaching." *Phi Delta Kappan* 94(7): 8–13.
- 2012 Jal Mehta, Robert Schwartz, and Frederick Hess. "The Futures of School Reform: If We Keep Doing What We're Doing, We're Not Going to Get There." In *The Futures of School Reform*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- 2012 Jal Mehta, Louis Gomez, and Anthony S. Bryk. "Building on Practical Knowledge: The Key to a Stronger Profession is Learning from the Field." In *The Futures of School Reform*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- 2012 Jal Mehta. "The Courage to Achieve Our Ambitions: Five Pathways for the Future." In *The Futures of School Reform*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- 2012 Jal Mehta and Sarah Fine. "Teaching Differently ... Learning Deeply." *Phi Delta Kappan* 94(2): 31-35.

- 2011 Jal Mehta and Steven Teles. "Jurisdictional Politics: A New Federal Role in Education," in *Carrots, Sticks and the Bully Pulpit: Lessons From a Half-Century of Federal Efforts to Improve America's Schools*, eds. Frederick Hess and Andrew Kelly. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.
- 2010 Jal Mehta and Robert Schwartz. "Ontario, Canada: Reform to Support High Achievement in a Diverse Context." In *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education: Lessons From PISA*, eds. Andreas Schleicher and Richard Hopper. OECD.
- 2010 Robert Schwartz and Jal Mehta. "Finland: Slow and Steady Reform for Consistently High Results." In *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education: Lessons From PISA*, eds. Andreas Schleicher and Richard Hopper. OECD
- 2010 Jal Mehta and Christopher Winship. "Moral Power." In *Handbook of the Sociology of Morality*, eds. Steven Hitlin and Steven Vaisey. New York: Springer.
- 2010 Jal Mehta, "From 'Whether' to 'How': The Varied Roles of Ideas in Politics." In *How Ideas Matter: Reframing Political Research*, eds. Daniel Beland and Bob Cox. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 2010 Jal Mehta and Jim Spillane. "Unbundling: Promises and Problems." *Phi Delta Kappan* 92 (3): 48-52.
- 2008 Jal Mehta, "How Did We Get Here? Paradigms, Fields, and Professions in Education Policy." *Politics of Education Association Bulletin* 33(1): 1-7.
- 2004 Stephen Morgan and Jal Mehta. "Beyond the Laboratory: Is Disidentification a Plausible Explanation for Racial Differences in Achievement?" *Sociology of Education* 77: 82-101.
- 2003 David Harding, Jal Mehta, and Katherine S. Newman. "No Exit: Mental Illness, Marginality, and School Violence in West Paducah, Kentucky." In *Deadly Lessons: Understanding Lethal School Violence*, eds. Mark H. Moore, Carol V. Petrie, Anthony A. Braga, and Brenda L. McLaughlin. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- 2002 Wendy Roth and Jal Mehta. "The Rashomon Effect: Combining Positivist and Interpretivist Approaches in the Analysis of Contested Events." *Sociological Methods and Research* 31 (2): 131-173. Reprinted in *Philosophical Foundations of Social Research Methods*, ed. Malcolm Williams. 2005. London: Sage Publications.
- 2002 David Harding, Cybelle Fox, and Jal Mehta. "Studying Rare Events Through Qualitative Case Studies: Lessons from a Study of Rampage School Shootings." *Sociological Methods and Research* 31 (2): 174-217.
- 2002 Ronald Ferguson and Jal Mehta. "Why Racial Integration and Other Policies Since *Brown v. Board of Education* Have Only Partially Succeeded at Narrowing the Achievement Gap." In *Achieving High Educational Standards for All*, eds. T. Ready, C. Edley, Jr., & C. T. Snow. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Newspaper Articles, Book Reviews, Short Articles, and Comments:

- 2014 “The Elusive Quest for Deeper Learning.” (With Sarah Fine.) *Harvard Education Letter* 30:4 (July/August 2013).
- 2013 “Teachers: Will We Ever Learn?” *New York Times*, p. A21, April 13, 2013.
- 2013 Frederick Hess and Jal Mehta. “Data Isn’t a Deus ex Machina: Building a Healthier Relationship to Data,” *Educational Leadership* 70:5: 71-75.
- 2012 “The Futures of School Reform: Five Pathways to Fundamentally Reshaping American Schooling.” *AEI Outlook* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute).
- 2011 “Schooling as a Knowledge Profession.” *Education Week*, March 30, 2011. (With Anthony Bryk and Louis Gomez.)
- 2010 “Inverting the Pyramid of School Reform.” *Harvard Education Letter* (November/December).
- 2009 Review of Donna Foote’s “Relentless Pursuit: A Year in the Trenches With Teach for America.” *Teachers College Record*.
- 2009 “The Promise of Play.” *The Religion and Culture Web Forum*, January 2009.
- 2008 Review of Nel Noddings’ “When School Reform Goes Wrong.” *Teachers College Record*.
- 2007 “Standard Error.” Review of Linda Perlstein’s *Tested* and Richard Kahlenberg’s *Tough Liberal*. *American Prospect*, November 2007.
- 2006 “Gaining Ground.” Review of Charles Murray’s *In Our Hands: A Plan to Replace the Welfare State*, www.newvisioninstitute.org/foresight, April 2006.
- 2006 “Politics Lost?” Review of Joe Klein’s *Politics Lost*, www.newvisioninstitute.org/foresight, March 2006.
- 2003 “Not on My Watch? Can A *Problem from Hell* Make Stopping Genocide a Priority?” *Inthefray.com*, September 2003.

GRANTS / FELLOWSHIPS

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE TO SUPPORT TEACHING | 2013 - Present |
| ▪ Gates Foundation, \$200,000 | |
| DEEPER LEARNING PROJECT | 2011 - Present |
| ▪ Hewlett Foundation, \$50,000 | |
| ▪ Carnegie Corporation, \$50,000 | |
| ▪ Spencer Foundation, \$25,000 | |

CHASTENED DREAM PROJECT	2010 - Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Milton Fund, \$40,000 ▪ Charles Warren Center Fellowship (highly competitive national fellowship, one semester leave) 	
FUTURES OF SCHOOL REFORM PROJECT	2009 - 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hewlett Foundation, \$200,000 ▪ Spencer Foundation \$25,000 	
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION DISSERTATION RESEARCH IMPROVEMENT GRANT	2004-05
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION IGERT FELLOWSHIP Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy, Harvard University	2003-04
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP	2000-03
JACOB K. JAVITS FELLOWSHIP (declined)	2000-03
HUGGINS PRIZE Awarded for best senior thesis related to Afro-American history, life or culture.	1999

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

“Jurisdictional Politics: A New Role for the Federal Government in Education.” Paper presented at American Enterprise Institute conference, May 2011. (With Steven Teles).

“The Deepening Interpenetration of Schooling in Modern Life.” Invited presentation, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, May 2011. (With Scott Davies.)

“The Chastened Dream: The Evolving Relationship Between Social Science, Social Policy and Social Progress.” Invited presentation, Department of Sociology, University of California, San Diego, April 2011.

“Rationalizing Schools: The Penetration of Technocratic Logic into the Educational Field,” paper presentation, American Educational Research Association, April 2011.

“Inverting the Pyramid: Lessons From Around the World.” Presentation to Connecticut Superintendents, April 2011.

Askwith Forum panel, panelist, Waiting For Superman, Harvard Graduate School of Education, October 2010.

“Getting in the Game: Jurisdictional Contests and Sociological Opportunities,” paper presented at the *American Sociological Association*, Sociology of Education Plenary on “Sociologists and School Reform,” San Francisco, August 2009.

“The Penetration of Technocratic Logic into the Educational Field: Rationalizing Schooling from the Progressives to the Present,” paper presented at the *Social Science History Association*, Miami, October 2008.

“Does Professional Status Affect Demands for Accountability? Comparing K-12 and Higher Education,” paper presented at the *American Sociological Association*, Boston, August 2008.

“Paradigm Change, Bricolage, and the Transformation of American Educational Policy,” paper presented at the *American Sociological Association*, New York, August 2007.

“Institutional Power and Educational Accountability,” and “From ‘Whether’ to ‘How’: The Varied Roles of Ideas and Politics,” papers presented at the *American Political Science Association*, Chicago, August 2007.

“Transforming American Educational Policy: The Politics of Accountability,” paper presented at the *American Political Science Association*, Philadelphia, September 2006.

“The Transformation of American Educational Policy: Ideas and the Rise of Accountability Politics,” paper presented at the *American Sociological Association*, Montreal, August 2006.

“The Transformation of American Educational Policy, 1980-2001,” invited presentation at the *Department of Sociology Colloquium, University of Michigan*, December 2005.

“Ideas, Frames and Policy Change,” invited lecture for graduate course, *Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*, September 2005.

“Ideas and Politics: Towards a Second Generation,” roundtable presentation at the *American Sociological Association*, Philadelphia, August 2005.

“Beyond the Laboratory: Is Disidentification a Plausible Explanation for Racial Differences in Achievement?” (with Stephen Morgan), paper presented at the *American Sociological Association*, Anaheim, August 2001.

“Explaining the Black Male-Female Gap in Educational Attainment: Family Structure and Black Female Exceptionalism” (with Andrew Clarkwest), poster presented at the *American Sociological Association*, Anaheim, August 2001.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

BOOK PROJECT: BOSTON COPS AND PRAGMATIC JUSTICE 2003

Research Assistant

- Researched and prepared memos on Habermas and Dewey for Christopher Winship in preparation for a forthcoming book on pragmatism, deliberative discourse and the Boston crime-reduction “miracle.”

CONGRESSIONAL STUDY ON RAMPAGE SCHOOL SHOOTINGS (Paducah, KY) 2001-02

Co-Author and Qualitative Interviewer

- Part of two-member graduate student team that conducted more than 100 interviews, and gathered legal, police and psychological records to write a complete case study and later serve as co-authors of a book on multiple-victim school shootings.

THREE CITY STUDY OF WELFARE REFORM (Boston, MA)

1999-2000

Ethnographer

- Worked as participant observer and conducted interviews with community leaders and residents in South Boston as part of a broader study seeking to understand the mechanisms underlying neighborhood effects in communities of varying racial/ethnic composition.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Awards:

MORNINGSTAR AWARD

2014

- Presented annually to the best teacher at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

DEREK BOK CENTER CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

2004

- Awarded for receiving 4.8 out of possible 5.0 on student evaluations.