

**2017
MASA Richard Green Scholar
Presentation**

**Focusing on the Wrong Gap:
Achievement or Assimilation?**

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Superintendent, Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools**



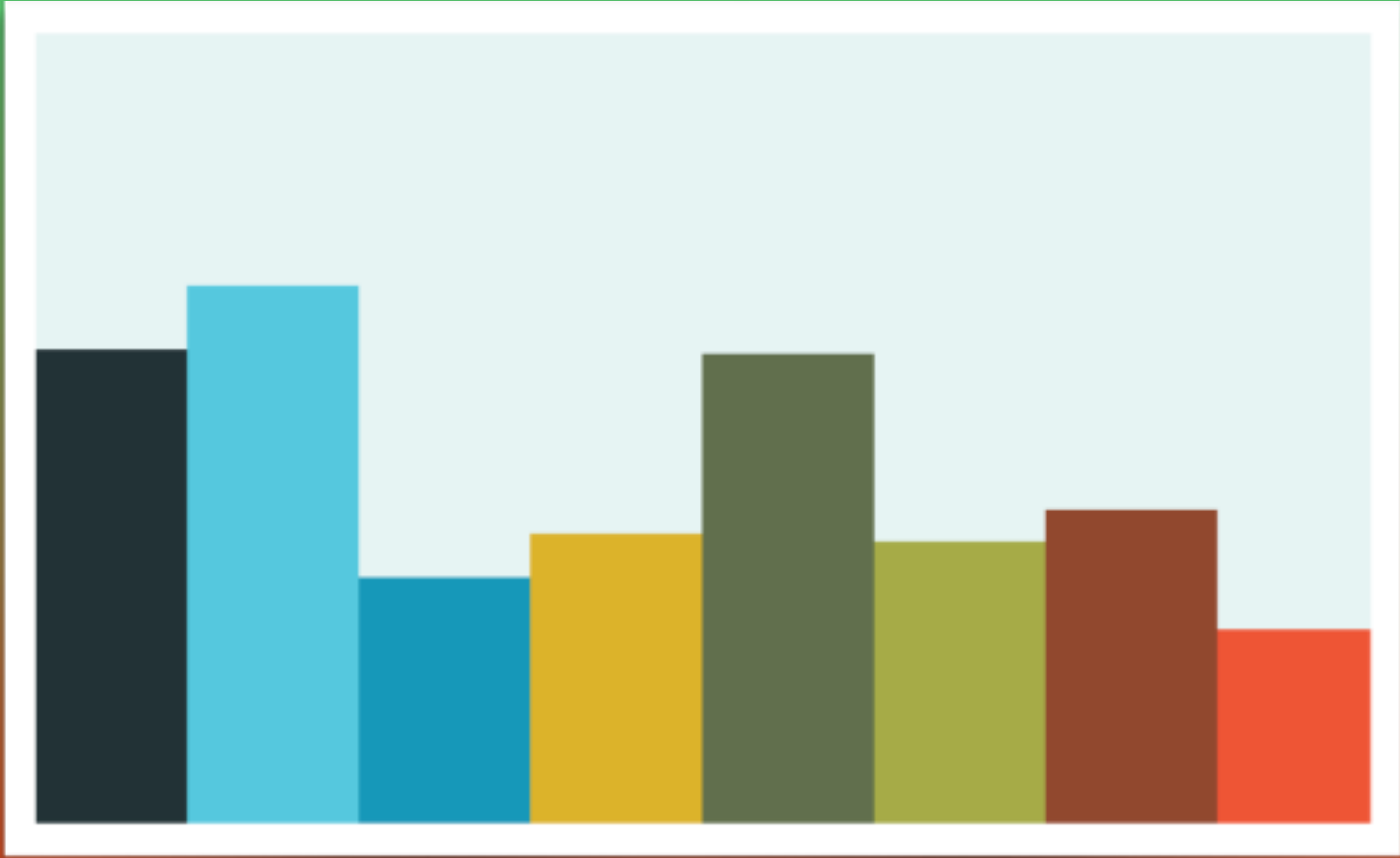
Thank you

Mia Urick and MASA

Cunningham Group Architecture

Learning Targets

- **1) Rural Minnesota schools deserve recognition.**
- **2) Add qualitative research methods to your toolkit.**
- **3) Review the case study to deconstruct the general concept of achievement gaps.**



Achievement Gaps

Minnesota Statewide MCA Reading - All Grades 2015 (MinnCAN)

- Assimilation and diversity have no inherent value.

- Values are assigned by people based upon their experiences.

- An achievement gap is unlikely to close without utilizing a cultural asset model.

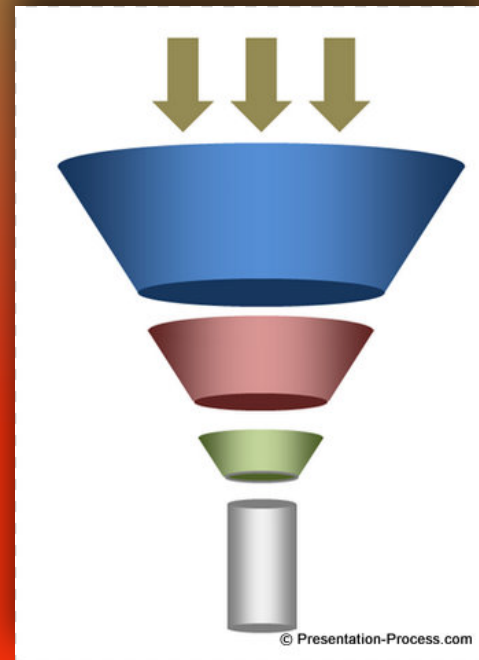


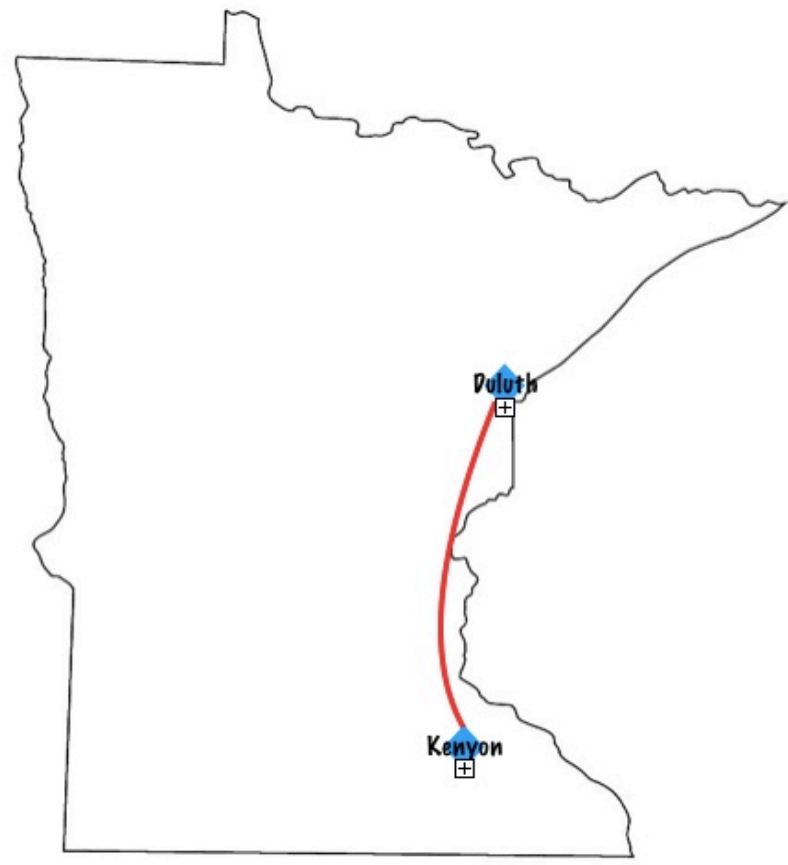
Which data do you use to solve your achievement gap?

**Quantitative =
Testing a hypothesis**

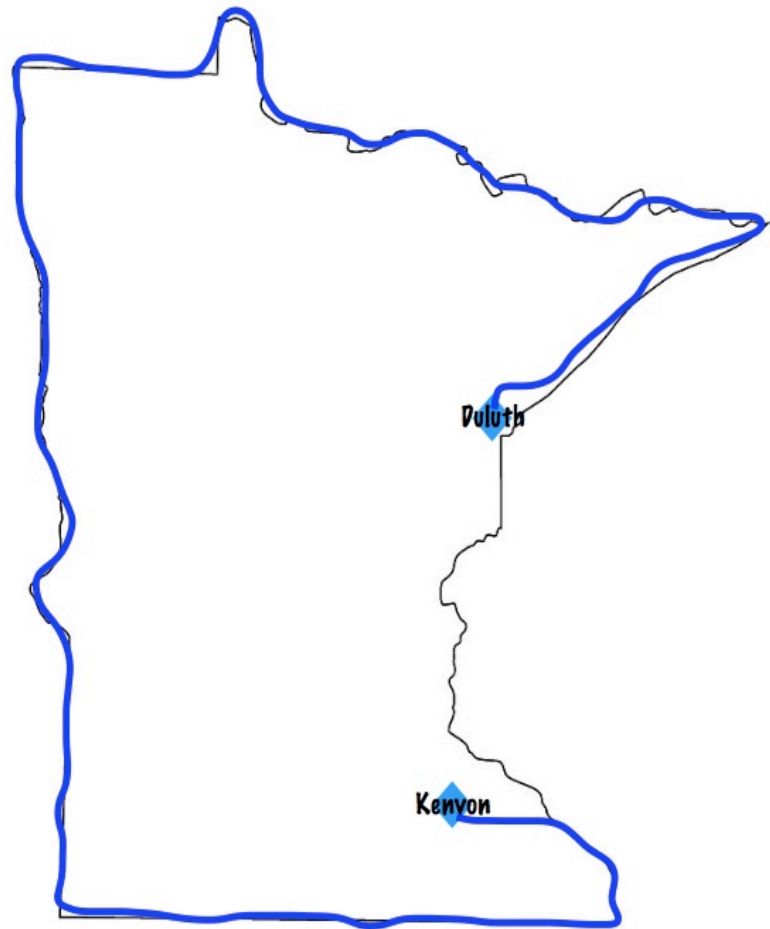


**Qualitative =
Following the story**





QUANTITATIVE



QUALITITATIVE

Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is the definition of?

“Clearly, there is much to learn from...studies that seek to determine phenomena without reification or quantification. Once researchers and educators delve beneath the surface of quantitative analyses, the dynamics of achievement among racially and culturally different groups may be more fully understood.”

(Durand & Massey, 2004)

Every school employee is a social scientist



The case study “Across the Tracks”

**Inspired by the Chicago School’s
groundbreaking work in sociology:**

- An analysis of everyday life**
 - Focus on communities**
 - Symbolic interactions**
 - Ethnography**
- Participant observation**
 - Ethnography**
 - Grounded theory**



**“Anyone that’s making anything new
only breaks something else.”**

(Goldsmith, 2009)



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only breaks something else.”**

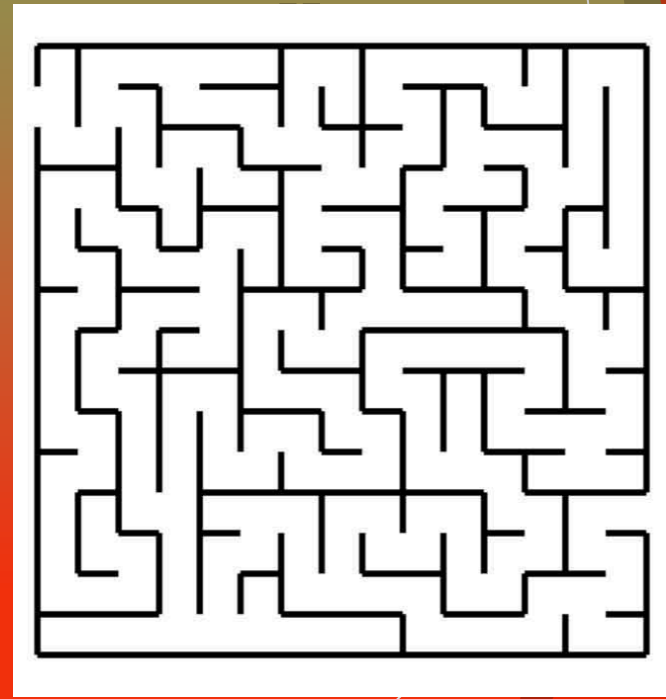
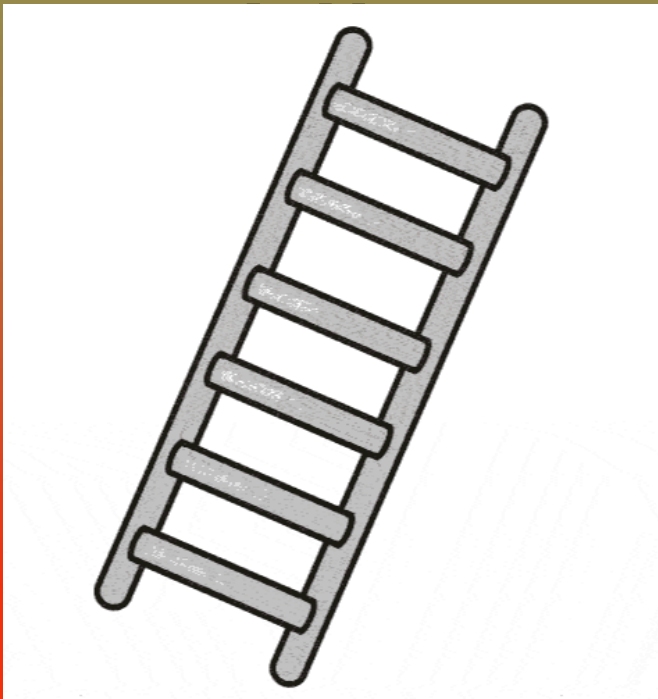
(Goldsmith, 2009)



Transnational = Migrant populations living in a country other than their country of origin while simultaneously retaining strong ties to their home country (Tsakiri, 2005).



Assimilation in a Postmodern World



Postmodern Factors

- **Global economies**
- **The technology of a flat world**
- **The power of remittance**
- **Border disruptions**
- **Criminalization of migration**

An assimilation gap reinforced through:

- Pedagogic action (habitus and field)**
- Code switching**
- Fatalism and dualism**
- Home language(s)**
- Faith identity**
- Absorptive capacity limits**
- Segregation and undocumented existence**
- Most influentially – bonding social capital!**



Conclusion:

**The primary factor that can close an
assimilation gap is
bridging social capital.**



Learning Targets Checklist

- 1.) Rural Minnesota schools deserve recognition.**

Learning Targets Checklist

2.) Add qualitative research methods to your toolkit.

Learning Targets Checklist

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