

# Invited Symposium

## MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES vs. IQ

### New Evidence from Neuroscience and Educational Policy

**Organizer:** Yi-Lung Kuo (BNU-HKBU United International College)

**Session Abstract:** The idea of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) has been strongly debated since its inception. This session will provide new evidence regarding the essential validity of MI theory from a comprehensive review of over 500 neuroscientific studies and educational policy gleaned from the worldwide implementation of MI in a wide variety of contexts.

**Presenters:** Dr. Branton Shearer (Multiple Intelligences Research and Consulting)  
Dr. Mindy Kornhaber (Penn State University)

#### Is MI Valid? A Comprehensive Analysis of the Neuroscientific Evidence: 500 Studies and Counting

MI theory was one of the first modern theories of intelligence based, in part, on brain science. The evidence presented by Gardner in 1983 has not been tested despite the explosive growth of the new field of cognitive neuroscience. This presentation will share highlights gleaned from over 500 neuroscientific experiments as they pertain to the core cognitive components for each of the eight intelligences. Implications for the exciting new field of educational cognitive neuroscience will be described.



**Branton Shearer** is a developmental psychologist who earned his master's degree at Harvard University and his Ph.D. in Neuropsychological Rehabilitation at the Union Institute. He received a U.S. Dept. of Education Innovation Grant to study the use of the multiple intelligences to enhance cognitive functioning following brain trauma. His recent work focuses on a comprehensive neuroscientific review of the neural evidence for the eight multiple intelligences. He is also the creator of *The Multiple Intelligences Developmental Assessment Scales (MIDAS)* which is valid assessment that is used worldwide in a wide variety of educational and counseling contexts to enhance personal development and achievement. MIDAS has been translated and validated into Chinese, Korean, Dutch, Spanish, Persian, and other languages.

#### MI in Educational Policy

MI was developed by Howard Gardner in response to inadequacies in the standard theories focused on general intelligence, 'g'. *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, the 1983 volume in which Gardner laid out the arguments, evidence, and criteria for seven new intelligences provided only some 6 paragraphs that addressed educational uses of the theory. Within a few years, the theory was adopted by educators across the United States and in many countries around the world. In the U.S., the fate of the theory has been influenced by policies requiring test-based accountability systems that were also put forward within a few years of the theory's publication. The role of policies advocating for testing as well as policies emphasizing rich curriculum will be the focus of this talk.

**Mindy L Kornhaber** is an associate professor in the Department of Education Policy Studies at The Pennsylvania State University. Her research looks at issues of education policy and human development, with foci in issues of testing policy, education reform, and educational equity. She holds an Ed.M. focused on human development from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and an Ed.D. from the same institution focused on research in education policy. She has been a Principal Investigator at Harvard Project Zero, where she studied schools implementation of MI and school assessment practices and a Research Director at the Civil Rights Project at Harvard Law School, where she focused on testing policy and educational equity. Prior to attending graduate school, she helped organize programs in international law at the Center for Chinese Legal Studies at Columbia University Law School.



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