

Giroux's creativity, his openness to questions, his curiosity, his doubt, his uncertainty with respect to certainties, his courage to take risks, and his rigorous methodological and theoretical approaches to important themes characterize him as one of the great thinkers of his time not only in the United States, but also in many foreign countries where he is widely and critically read and where the force and clarity of his thinking have contributed to the shaping of current philosophical and educational discourse.

What I would like to highlight about Giroux and his total understanding of the world and its process of transformation is his view of history as a possibility. For Giroux there is no hope without a future to be made, to be built, to be shaped. For Giroux, history as possibility means that tomorrow is not something that necessarily will happen, nor is it a pure repetition of today with its face superficially touched up so it can continue to be the same. Giroux's comprehension of history as possibility recognizes the unquestionable role of subjectivity in the process of knowing. This mode of comprehension, in turn, characterizes his critical and optimistic way of understanding education.

To the extent that I understand history as possibility, I recognize:

1. That subjectivity has to play an important role in the process of transformation;
2. That education becomes relevant to the extent that this role of subjectivity is understood to be a necessary historical and political task; and
3. That education loses meaning if it is not understood, as all practices are, as being subject to limitations. If education could do everything there would be no reason to speak about its limitations. If education could not do anything, there would still be no reason to talk about its limitations.

History as possibility means our refusal to accept dogma as well as our refusal to accept the domestication of time. Men and women make the history that is possible, not the history that they would like to make or the history that sometimes they are told should be made.

It is not possible to deny the force with which Giroux speaks to us, nor the force with which he directs us to a renewed hope, even when his analysis may sadden us. In this new book, Henry Giroux once again challenges us with his critical and brilliant theoretical discussion of trends that constitute the bedrock for both the understanding and the advancement of the present discourse in education.

Introduction: Teachers as Intellectuals

Critical Educational Theory and the Language of Critique

Radical pedagogy emerged in full strength as part of the new sociology of education in England and the United States over a decade ago as a critical response to what can be loosely termed the ideology of traditional educational practice.¹ Preoccupied with the imperative to challenge the dominant assumption that schools are the major mechanism for the development of a democratic and egalitarian social order, critical educational theory set itself the task of uncovering how domination and oppression are produced within the various mechanisms of schooling. Rather than accept the notion that schools are vehicles of democracy and social mobility, educational critics make such an assumption problematic. In doing so, their major ideological and political task is to unravel how schools reproduce the logic of capital through the ideological and material forms of privilege and domination that structure the lives of students from various class, gender, and ethnic groupings.

Radical critics, for the most part, agree that educational traditionalists generally refused to interrogate the political nature of public schooling. In fact, traditionalists entirely eluded the issue through the paradoxical attempt of depoliticizing the language of schooling while reproducing

GIROUX, H. (1988)
Teachers as Intellectuals. NY: Bergin & Garvey

and legitimating capitalist ideologies. The most obvious expression of this approach can be seen in the positivist discourse that defined and still defines mainstream educational research and policy and which takes as its most important concerns the mastery of pedagogical techniques and the transmission of knowledge instrumental to the existing society.² In the world view of the traditionalists, schools are merely instructional sites. That schools are also cultural and political sites is ignored, as is the notion that they represent areas of accommodation and contestation among differentially empowered cultural and economic groups. From the perspective of critical educational theory, traditionalists suppress important questions regarding the relations among knowledge, power, and domination.

Out of this analysis emerged a new theoretical language and mode of criticism which argues that schools do not provide opportunities in the broad Western humanist tradition for self and social empowerment in the society at large. In opposition to the traditionalist position, leftist critics provide theoretical arguments and empirical evidence to suggest that schools are, in fact, agencies of social, economic, and cultural reproduction.³ At best, public schooling offers limited individual mobility to members of the working class and other oppressed groups, but it is a powerful instrument for the reproduction of capitalist relations of production and the dominant legitimating ideologies of ruling groups.

Radical critics of education provide a variety of useful models of analysis and research to challenge traditional educational ideology. Against the conservative claim that schools transmit objective knowledge, radical critics developed theories of the hidden curriculum as well as theories of ideology that identify the specific interests underlying different knowledge forms.⁴ Rather than viewing school knowledge as objective, as something to be merely transmitted to students, radical theorists argue that school knowledge is a particular representation of dominant culture, a privileged discourse that is constructed through a selective process of emphases and exclusions.⁵ Against the claim that schools are only instructional sites, radical critics point to the transmission and reproduction of a dominant culture in schools. Far from being neutral, the dominant culture in the school is characterized by a selective ordering and legitimating of privileged language forms, modes of reasoning, social relations, and lived experiences. In this view, culture is linked to power and to the imposition of a specific set of ruling class codes and experiences.⁶ But school culture, it is claimed, functions not only to confirm and privilege students from

the dominant classes, but also through exclusion and insult to disconfirm the histories, experiences, and dreams of subordinate groups. Finally, against the claim by traditional educators that schools are apolitical, radical educators illuminate the ways in which the State, through its selective grants, certification policies, and legal powers, influences school practice in the interest of particular dominant ideologies.⁷

Despite its insightful theoretical and political analyses of schooling, radical educational theory suffers from some serious flaws, the most serious being its failure to move beyond the language of critique and domination. That is, radical educators remain mired in a language that links schools primarily to the ideologies and practices of domination or to the narrow parameters of the discourse of political economy. In this view, schools are seen almost exclusively as agencies of social reproduction, producing obedient workers for industrial capital; school knowledge is generally dismissed as a form of bourgeois ideology; and teachers are often portrayed as being trapped in an apparatus of domination that works with all the certainty of a Swiss watch. The tragedy of this position has been that it prevents left educators from developing a programmatic language for either pedagogical or school reform. Within this type of analysis there is little understanding of the contradictions, spaces, and tensions that characterize schooling. There is little possibility for developing a programmatic language either for a critical pedagogy or for institutional and community struggle. Radical educators have focused on the language of domination to such a degree that it undercuts any viable hope for developing a progressive, political educational strategy.

But critical theorists, with few exceptions, have done more than misrepresent the contradictory nature of schools, they have also retreated from the political necessity of challenging the conservative attempt to fashion ideological support for their vision of public education. Consequently, conservatives have adroitly exploited public fears about schools in a manner that has gone almost uncontested by radical educators. Conservatives have not only dominated the debate about the nature and purpose of public schooling, they have also increasingly set the terms around which policy recommendations have been developed and implemented, locally and nationally.

In effect, radical educators have undercut the opportunity both to challenge the conservative attack on schools and the current ways in which schools reproduce deep-seated inequalities and to reconstruct a discourse in which teacher work can be defined through the categories of democracy,

empowerment, and possibility. For radical pedagogy to become a viable political project, it has to develop a discourse that combines the language of critique with the language of possibility. In doing so, it has to provide analyses that reveal the opportunities for democratic struggles and reforms within the day-to-day workings of schools. Similarly, it has to provide the theoretical basis for teachers and others to view and experience the nature of teacher work in a critical and potentially transformative way. Two elements of such a discourse that I think are important are the definition of schools as democratic public spheres and the definition of teachers as transformative intellectuals. While these categories are taken up in depth in the rest of the book, I will sketch some of their broader implications and the practices they suggest.

Schooling, the Public Sphere, and Transformative Intellectuals

Any attempt to reformulate the role of educators has to begin with the broader question of how to view the purpose of schooling. I believe that central to a realizable critical pedagogy is the need to view schools as democratic public spheres. This means regarding schools as democratic sites dedicated to forms of self and social empowerment. In these terms, schools are public places where students learn the knowledge and skills necessary to live in an authentic democracy. Instead of defining schools as extensions of the workplace or as front-line institutions in the battle of international markets and foreign competition, schools as democratic public spheres are constructed around forms of critical inquiry that dignify meaningful dialogue and human agency. Students learn the discourse of public association and social responsibility. Such a discourse seeks to recapture the idea of critical democracy as a social movement that supports individual freedom and social justice. Moreover, viewing schools as democratic public spheres provides a rationale for defending them along with progressive forms of pedagogy and teacher work as essential institutions and practices in the performance of an important public service. Schools are now defended in a political language as institutions that provide the ideological and material conditions necessary to educate a citizenry in the dynamics of critical literacy and civic courage, and these constitute the basis for functioning as active citizens in a democratic society.

This position owes a great deal to John Dewey's views on democracy, but it goes beyond his position in a number of ways, and these are worth mentioning. I use the term discourse of democracy as both a referent for critique and as ideal grounded in a dialectical notion of the school-society relationship. As a referent for critique, the theory and practice of democracy provides a model for analyzing how schools block the ideological and material dimensions of democracy. For instance, it interrogates the ways in which the discourse of domination manifests itself in forms of knowledge, school organization, teacher ideologies, and teacher-student relationships. Furthermore, inherent in the discourse of democracy is the understanding that schools are contradictory sites; they reproduce the larger society while containing spaces to resist its dominating logic. As an ideal, the discourse of democracy suggests something more programmatic and radical. First, it points to the role that teachers and administrators might play as transformative intellectuals who develop counterhegemonic pedagogies that not only empower students by giving them the knowledge and social skills they will need to be able to function in the larger society as critical agents, but also educate them for transformative action. That means educating them to take risks, to struggle for institutional change, and to fight both *against* oppression and *for* democracy outside of schools in other oppositional public spheres and the wider social arena. So, in effect, my view of democracy points to a dual struggle. In the first instance, I accentuate the notion of pedagogical empowerment and in doing so point to the organization, development, and implementation of forms of knowledge and social practices within schools. In the second, I accentuate the notion of pedagogical transformation in which I argue that both teachers and students must be educated to struggle against forms of oppression in the wider society and that schools only represent one important site in such a struggle. This is very different from Dewey's view, because I see democracy as involving not only a pedagogical struggle but also a political and social struggle, one that acknowledges that a critical pedagogy is but one important intervention in the struggle to restructure the ideological and material conditions of the wider society in the interest of creating a truly democratic society.⁸

There is another important and related issue at work in defining schools as democratic public spheres, one that I stress throughout this book. By politicizing the notion of schooling, it becomes possible to illuminate the role that educators and educational researchers play as intellectuals who operate under specific conditions of work and who perform a particular

social and political function. The material conditions under which teachers work constitute the basis for either delimiting or empowering their practices as intellectuals. Therefore, teachers as intellectuals will need to reconsider and, possibly, transform the fundamental nature of the conditions under which they work. That is, teachers must be able to shape the ways in which time, space, activity, and knowledge organize everyday life in schools. More specifically, in order to function as intellectuals, teachers must create the ideology and structural conditions necessary for them to write, research, and work with each other in producing curricula and sharing power. In the final analysis, teachers need to develop a discourse and set of assumptions that allow them to function more specifically as transformative intellectuals.⁹ As intellectuals, they will combine reflection and action in the interest of empowering students with the skills and knowledge needed to address injustices and to be critical actors committed to developing a world free of oppression and exploitation. Such intellectuals are not merely concerned with promoting individual achievement or advancing students along career ladders, they are concerned with empowering students so they can read the world critically and change it when necessary.

Before I address the specifics of what it means to critically appropriate the concept of transformative intellectual as part of a wider discourse that views radical pedagogy as part of a form of cultural politics, I want to elaborate on some of the concerns that are central to an ontological grounding for what it means to make the pedagogical a form of radical praxis.

There are a number of important concepts that have methodological implications for teachers and researchers who assume the role of a transformative intellectual. The most important referent for such a position is "liberating memory"—the recognition of those instances of public and private suffering whose causes and manifestations require understanding and compassion. Critical educators should begin with those manifestations of suffering that constitute past and immediate conditions of oppression. Uncovering the horror of past suffering and the dignity and solidarity of resistance alerts us to the historical conditions that construct such experiences. This notion of liberating memory does more than recover dangerous instances of the past, it also focuses on the subject of suffering and the reality of those treated as "the other." Then we can begin to understand the reality of human existence and the need for all members of a democratic society to transform existing social conditions so as to eliminate such suffering in the present.¹⁰ Liberating memory points to

the role that intellectuals might play as part of a pedagogical web of solidarity designed to keep alive the historical and existential fact of suffering by uncovering and analyzing those forms of historical and popular knowledge that have been suppressed or ignored and through which we once again discover the "ruptural effects of conflict and struggle."¹¹ Liberating memory represents a declaration, a hope, a discursive reminder that people do not only suffer under the mechanisms of domination, they also resist. Moreover, such resistance is always linked to forms of knowledge and understanding that are the preconditions for saying both a "No" to repression and a "Yes" to the dynamics of struggle and the practical possibilities to which it addresses itself.

There is another important dialectical element that constructs the notion of liberating memory. It "remembers" power as a positive force in the determination of alternatives and counterhegemonic truths. It is a notion of historical remembrance that sustains the memory of social movements that not only resist but also transform in their own interests what it means to develop communities around an alternative horizon of human possibilities. It is, simply, to develop a better way of life.

It is also essential that transformative intellectuals redefine cultural politics with regard to the issue of knowledge, particularly with respect to the construction of classroom pedagogy and student voice. For transformative intellectuals, radical pedagogy as a form of cultural politics has to be understood as a concrete set of practices that produces social forms through which different types of knowledge, sets of experience, and subjectivities are constructed. Put another way, transformative intellectuals need to understand how subjectivities are produced and regulated through historically produced social forms and how these forms carry and embody particular interests.¹² At the core of this position is the need to develop modes of inquiry that not only investigate how experience is shaped, lived, and endured within particular social forms such as schools, but also how certain apparatuses of power produce forms of knowledge that legitimate a particular kind of truth and way of life. Power in this sense has a broader meaning in its connection with knowledge than is generally recognized. Power in this instance, as Foucault points out, not only produces knowledge that distorts reality but also produces a particular version of the "truth."¹³ In other words, "Power is not merely mystifying or distorting. Its most dangerous impact is its positive relation to truth, the effects of truth that it produces."¹⁴

The chapters in this book offer a range of perspectives which have been

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forged over the past few years. The topics range from literacy to writing classroom objectives to the work of liberation theologians. Yet contained within this wide range are common themes that speak to reconceiving schools as democratic public spheres where both teachers and students work together to forge a new emancipatory vision of community and society. Also in this book are attempts to develop a new language and new categories with which to situate the analysis of schooling. While many of the categories have been selectively appropriated from the sociology of knowledge, theology, cultural studies, and other traditions, they offer educators a unique opportunity for reflecting critically on their own practices and the relationship between schools and the wider society.

I am providing not a recipe so much as I am acknowledging that any discourse, including my own, needs to be engaged critically and selectively so that it can be used within specific contexts by those who see value in it for their own classroom teaching and social struggle. What is at work in this book is a particular way of seeing, a critical discourse that is unfinished, but it is one that may illuminate the specifics of oppression and the possibilities for democratic struggle and renewal.

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Rethinking the Language of Schooling

By HENRY A. GIROUX

In the current political climate, there is little talk about schools and democracy and a great deal of debate about how schools might become more successful in meeting industrial needs and contributing to economic productivity. Against a landscape of shrinking economic resources, the breakup of liberal and radical public school coalitions, and the erosion of civil rights, the public debate about the nature of schooling has been replaced by the concerns and interests of management experts. That is, amidst the growing failures and disruptions in both American society and in the public schools, a set of concerns and problems has emerged conjured up in terms like "input-output," "predictability," and "cost-effectiveness."

Unfortunately, at a time when we need a different language of analysis to understand the structure and meaning of schooling, Americans have retreated back into the discourse of management and administration, with its focus on issues of efficiency and control. These issues have overshadowed concerns regarding understanding. Similarly, the need to develop at all levels of schooling a radical pedagogy concerned with critical literacy and active citizenship has given way to a conservative pedagogy that empha-

sizes technique and passivity. The stress is no longer on helping students to "read" the world critically; instead, it is on helping students to "master" the tools of reading. The question of how teachers, administrators, and students produce meaning, and whose interest it serves, is subsumed under the imperative to master the "facts." The script is grim.

These issues raise fundamental questions about how educators and schools contribute to these problems, yet they simultaneously point to the possibility of developing modes of language, thinking, and teaching that may be used to overcome them, or at least help to establish the conditions that may be used to resolve them. I want to pursue this issue by examining a central concern: how can we make schooling meaningful so as to make it critical and how can we make it critical so as to make it emancipatory?

Theory and Language

I want to analyze this question and the ways in which "traditional" views of schooling have responded to it. The precondition for such an analysis is the need for a new theoretical framework and mode of language that will enable teachers, parents, and others to understand both the limits and the enabling possibilities that characterize schools. Currently, traditional language about schooling is anchored in a rather mechanical and limited worldview. Essentially, it is a worldview borrowed primarily from the discourse of behavioristic learning psychology, which focuses on the best way to learn a *given* body of knowledge, and from the logic of scientific management, as reflected in the back-to-basics movement, competency testing, and systems management schemes. The result has been a language that prevents educators from critically examining the ideological assumptions embedded in their own language and the schooling experiences that they help to structure.

Generally speaking, the notion of language is evaluated according to whether it is simple or complex, clear or vague, concrete or abstract. However, this analysis falls prey to a theoretical error; it reduces language to a technical issue, i.e., the issue of clarity. But the real meaning of educational language has to be understood as the product of a specific theoretical framework, via the assumptions that govern it, and, finally, through the social, political, and ideological relations to which it points and which it legitimates. In other words, the issue of clarity often becomes

a mask that downplays questions about values and interests while applauding ideas that are well packaged in the language of simplicity. Any educational theory that is to be critical and emancipatory, that is to function in the interests of critical understanding and self-determining action, must generate a discourse that moves beyond the established language of administration and conformity. Such a discourse requires a struggle and a commitment in order to be appropriated and understood. The way language can mystify and hide its own assumptions becomes clear, for instance, in the way educators often label students who respond to alienating and oppressive school experiences with a whole range of resistant behaviors. They call such students deviant rather than resistant, for such a label would raise different questions about the nature of schooling and the reasons for such student behavior.

resistant or
opposed?

Generating a New Discourse

Implicit in my analysis is the need to construct a new discourse and mode of analysis about the nature of schooling that would serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, it should analyze and indict the shortcomings and failures inherent in traditional views of schooling. On the other hand, it should reveal new possibilities for thinking about and organizing school experiences. In order to explore the possibilities for reorganization, I want to focus specifically on the following concepts: rationality, problematic, ideology, and cultural capital.

Rationality

The notion of rationality has a dual meaning. First, it refers to the set of assumptions and practices that allows people to understand and shape their own and others' experiences. Second, it refers to the interests that define and qualify how one frames and engages problems confronted in lived experience. For instance, interests exhibited in teacher talk and behavior may be rooted in the need to control, to explain, or to act from principles of justice. Rationality, as a critical construct, can also be applied to classroom materials such as curriculum packages, films. Such materials always embody a set of assumptions about the world, a given subject, and a set of interests. This becomes evident in many of the "teacher proof"

instructional materials now flooding the market. These materials promote a deskilling of teachers by separating conception from execution and by reducing the role that teachers play in the actual creation and teaching of such materials. Teacher decisions about what should be taught, how it might meet the intellectual and cultural needs of students, and how it might be evaluated are rendered unimportant in these packages, since they have already predefined and answered such questions. The materials control teachers' decisions, and, as a result, teachers do not need to exercise reasoned judgment. Thus, teachers are reduced to the role of obedient technicians, carrying out the dictates of the curriculum package. Needless to say, teachers may ignore such packages, may use them for different purposes, or may fight their use in the schools. But the real issue is understanding the interests embedded in such curriculum packages and how such interests structure classroom experiences. The language of efficiency and control promotes obedience rather than critique.

Problematic

All modes of rationality contain conceptual structures identified both by the questions raised and questions ignored. These are called problematics. Problematics refer not only to what is included in a worldview, but also, to what is left out and silenced. That which is not said is as important as that which is said. The value of this concept becomes more obvious when one remembers that traditional educational theory has always been wedded to the visible, to the literal, and to what can be seen and operationalized. Educational theory has usually not included a language or mode of analysis that looks beyond the given or the phenomenal. For instance, traditional concerns of educators center around the formal curriculum, and, as a result, the issues that emerge are familiar ones: what subjects are going to be taught? what forms of instruction will be used? what kinds of objectives will be developed? and how can we match the objectives with corresponding forms of evaluation? As important as these concerns are, they dance on the surface of reality. They do not include a focus on the nature and function of the hidden curriculum, that is, those messages and values that are conveyed to students silently through the selection of specific forms of knowledge, the use of specific classroom relations, and the defining characteristics of the school organizational

structure. Sexist, racist, and class-specific messages that stalk behind the language of objectives and school discipline are conveniently ignored.

Ideology

Ideology, as I use the term, is a dynamic construct that refers to the ways in which meanings are produced, mediated, and embodied in knowledge forms, social practices, and cultural experiences. In this case, ideology is a set of doctrines as well as a medium through which teachers and educators make sense of their own experiences and those of the world in which they find themselves. As a pedagogical tool, ideology becomes useful for understanding not only how schools sustain and produce meanings, but also how individuals and groups produce, negotiate, modify, or resist them. For instance, an understanding of how ideology works presents teachers with a heuristic tool to examine how their own views about knowledge, human nature, values, and society are mediated through the "common sense" assumptions they use to structure classroom experiences. Assumptions about learning, achievement, teacher-student relations, objectivity, school authority, etc., need to be evaluated critically by educators.

Hegemony

Cultural Capital

Just as a country distributes goods and services, what can be labeled as material capital, it also distributes and legitimates certain forms of knowledge, language practices, values, modes of style, and so forth, or what can be labeled as cultural capital. One must only consider what gets labeled as high status knowledge in the schools and universities and, thus, provide legitimacy to certain forms of knowledge and social practices. Currently, the fine arts, the social science disciplines, and classical languages are not considered as legitimate as those bodies of knowledge found in the natural sciences or those methods of inquiry associated with the areas of business and management. These decisions are arbitrary and are based on certain values and questions of power and control, not to mention a certain view of the nature of society and the future. The concept of cultural capital also represents certain ways of talking, acting, moving, dressing, and socializing that are institutionalized by schools. Schools are not merely instructional sites but also sites where the culture of the

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dominant society is learned and where students experience the difference between those status and class distinctions that exist in the larger society.

Traditional Schooling

The rationality that dominates traditional views of schooling and curriculum is rooted in the narrow concerns for effectiveness, behavioral objectives, and principles of learning that treat knowledge as something to be consumed and schools as merely instructional sites, designed to pass onto students a "common" culture and set of skills that will enable them to operate effectively in the wider society. Steeped in the logic of technical rationality, the problematic of traditional curriculum theory and schooling centers on questions about the most thorough or most efficient ways to learn specific kinds of knowledge, to create moral consensus, and to provide modes of schooling that reproduce the existing society. For instance, traditional educators may ask *how* the school should seek to attain a certain predefined goal, but they rarely ask *why* such a goal might be beneficial to some socioeconomic groups and not to others, or *why* schools, as they are presently organized, tend to block the possibility that specific classes will attain a measure of economic and political autonomy.

The ideology that guides the present rationality of the school is relatively conservative: it is primarily concerned with how-to questions and does not question relationships between knowledge and power or between culture and politics. In other words, questions concerning the role of school as an agency of social and cultural reproduction in a class-divided society are ignored, as are questions that illuminate the intersubjective basis of establishing meaning, knowledge, and what are considered legitimate social relationships. The issue of how teachers, students, and representatives from the wider society generate meaning tends to be obscured in favor of the issue of how people can master someone else's meaning, thus depoliticizing both the notion of school culture and the notion of classroom pedagogy. In my view, this is a limited and sometimes crippling rationality. It ignores the dreams, histories, and visions that people bring to schools. Its central concerns are rooted in a false notion of objectivity and in a discourse that finds its quintessential expression in the attempt to posit universal principles of education that are lodged in the ethos of instrumentalism and a self-serving individualism.

Alternative Theories

Against the theoretical shortcomings that characterize traditional views of schooling and curriculum new theories of educational practice must be developed. Such theories must begin with a continuous and critical questioning of the "taken for granted" in school knowledge and practice. Moreover, an attempt must be made to analyze schools as sites that, while basically reproducing the dominant society, also contain possibilities for educating students to become active, critical citizens (not simply workers). Schools must come to be seen and studied as both instructional and cultural sites.

One of the most important theoretical elements for developing critical modes of schooling centers around the notion of culture. Schools must be seen as institutions marked by the same complex of contradictory cultures that characterize the dominant society. Schools are social sites constituted by a complex of dominant and subordinate cultures, each characterized by the power they have to define and legitimate a specific view of reality. Teachers and others interested in education must come to understand how the dominant culture functions at all levels of schooling to disconfirm the cultural experiences of the "excluded majorities." It also means that teachers, parents, and others should fight against the powerlessness of students by affirming their own cultural experiences and histories. For teachers, this means examining their own cultural capital and examining the way in which it either benefits or victimizes students. Thus, the central questions for building a critical pedagogy are the questions of how we help students, particularly from the oppressed classes, recognize that the dominant school culture is not neutral and does not generally serve their needs. At the same time we need to ask how it is that the dominant culture functions to make them, as students, feel powerless. The answer to this lies, in part, in revealing the myths, lies, and injustices at the heart of the dominant school culture and building a critical mode of teaching that engages rather than suppresses history and critical practice. Such an activity calls for a mode of dialogue and critique that unmask the dominant school culture's attempt to escape from history and that interrogates the assumptions and practices that inform the lived experiences of day-to-day schooling.

Educators and parents will have to come to view knowledge as neither neutral nor objective and, instead, to view it as a social construction embodying particular interests and assumptions. Knowledge must be

linked to the issue of power, which suggests that educators and others must raise questions about its truth claims as well as the interests that such knowledge serves. Knowledge, in this case, does not become valuable because it is legitimized by curriculum experts. Its value is linked to the power it has as a mode of critique and social transformation. Knowledge becomes important to the degree that it helps human beings understand not only the assumptions embedded in its form and content, but also the processes whereby knowledge is produced, appropriated, and transformed within specific social and historical settings.

Certainly, a critical view of school knowledge would look different from a traditional view of school knowledge. Critical knowledge would instruct students and teachers alike about their status as a group situated within a society with specific relations of domination and subordination. Critical knowledge would help illuminate how such groups could develop a language and a discourse released from their own partially distorted cultural inheritance. The organizing question here would be: what is it that this society has made of me that I no longer want to be? Put another way, a critical mode of knowledge would illuminate for teachers and students how to appropriate the most radical and affirmative aspects of the dominant and subordinate culture. Finally, such knowledge would have to provide a motivational connection to action itself, it would have to link a critical decoding of history to a vision of the future that not only exploded the myths of the existing society, but also reached into those pockets of desires and needs that harbored a longing for a new society and new forms of social relations, relations free from the pathology of racism, sexism, and class domination.

Teachers and administrators need to address issues concerning the wider functions of schooling. Issues that deal with questions of power, philosophy, social theory, and politics must be opened to scrutiny. Teachers and administrators must be seen as more than technicians. The technocratic, sterile rationality that dominates the wider culture, as well as teacher education, pays little attention to theoretical and ideological issues. Teachers are trained to use forty-seven different models of teaching, administration, or evaluation. Yet, they are not taught to be critical of these models. In short, they are taught a form of conceptual and political illiteracy. Educators should dissuade individuals who reduce teaching to the implementations of methods from entering the teaching profession. Schools need prospective teachers who are both theoreticians and practitioners, who can combine theory, imagination, and techniques. More-

over, public school systems should sever their relations with teacher-training institutions that simply turn out technicians, students who function less as scholars and more as clerks. This move may seem harsh, but it is a small antidote compared to the critical illiteracy and incompetency such teachers often reproduce in our schools.

Instead of mastering and refining the use of methodologies, teachers and administrators should approach education by examining their own perspectives about society, schools, and emancipation. Rather than attempt to escape from their own ideologies and values, educators should confront them critically so as to understand how society has shaped them as individuals, what it is they believe, and how to structure more positively the effects they have upon students and others. Put another way, teachers and administrators, in particular, must attempt to understand how issues of class, gender, and race have left an imprint upon how they think and act. Such a critical interrogation provides the foundation for a democratic school. The democratization of schooling involves the need for teachers to build alliances with other teachers, and not simply union alliances. Such alliances must develop around new forms of social relations that include both teaching and the organization and administration of school policy. It is important that teachers break through the cellular structure of teaching as it presently exists in most schools. Teachers need to acquire more control over the development of curriculum materials; they need to have more control over how such materials might be taught and evaluated and how alliances over curriculum issues could be established with members of the larger community.

The present structures of most schools isolate teachers and cut off the possibilities for democratic decision making and positive social relations. Relations between school administrators and teaching staff often represent the most disabling aspects of the division of labor, the division between conception and execution. Such a management model is demeaning to teachers and students alike. If we are to take the issue of schooling seriously, schools should be the one site where democratic social relations become a part of one's lived experiences.

Finally, any viable form of schooling needs to be informed by a passion and faith in the necessity of struggling in the interest of creating a better world. These may seem like strange words in a society that has elevated the notion of self-interest to the status of a universal law. And yet our very survival depends on the degree to which the principles of communality, human struggle, and social justice aimed at improving the privileges

of all groups eventually prevail. Public schools need to be organized around a vision that celebrates not what is but what could be, a vision that looks beyond the immediate to the future, and a vision that links struggle to a new set of human possibilities. This is a call for public institutions that affirm one's faith in the possibility of people like teachers and administrators taking risks and engaging life so as to enrich it. We must celebrate the critical impulse and lay bare the distinction between reality and the conditions that conceal reality. Such is the task that all educators must face, and I am quite sure that it will not be met by organizing schools around the goals of raising reading and math scores or, for that matter, improving students' SAT scores. These are not minor concerns, but our primary concern is to address the educational issue of what it means to teach students to think critically, to learn how to affirm their own experiences, and to understand the need to struggle individually and collectively for a more just society.

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Toward a New Sociology of Curriculum

By HENRY A. GIROUX

Anthony Giddens, the English sociologist, once remarked that those who are waiting for a Newton of the social sciences "are not only waiting for a train that won't arrive, they're in the wrong station altogether."¹ Giddens's remark could very well have set the stage for one of the most interesting and urgent debates now taking place in the curriculum field in the United States.

At the heart of this debate is the question of whether the curriculum field can continue to pattern itself after the model of the natural sciences. It is not simply that the field suffers from serious misconceptions regarding its mode of reasoning and methodology. What is at stake is more than a conceptual problem. The real issue centers on whether the field is moribund, both politically and ethically. Is the curriculum field in a state of arrest, incapable of developing either emancipatory intentions or new curricular possibilities?²

Debate of this sort is not new. Questions concerning the role that schools and curriculum play in reproducing the values and attitudes necessary for the maintenance of the dominant society have been raised by educators since the turn of the century. What is new is the scope as well

as the nature of some of the questions being raised. This should not suggest that a new school or paradigm has appeared in the field. Such an assumption would be both misleading and inaccurate. It would be misleading because those who make up what I will label as the new sociology of curriculum movement represent many critical strands and traditions. It would be inaccurate to call such a movement a paradigm because it would oversimplify its varied members' relatedness and depth of commitment to a new world view, one that speaks to a unifying set of assumptions and guidelines for the development of curriculum theory and practice. Though such a paradigm doesn't exist at the present time, the foundations for such a paradigm can be recognized in some of the broad concerns and related questions voiced by a number of emerging disparate critical traditions.³

The singular theme that unites all of these critical traditions is their opposition to what might be called the technocratic rationality that guides traditional curriculum theory and design. This form of rationality has dominated the curriculum field since its inception and can be found in varied forms in the work of Tyler, Taba, Saylor and Alexander, Beauchamp, and others. William F. Pinar claims that between 85 and 95 percent of those who work in the curriculum field share a perspective that is either tied or closely related to the dominant technocratic rationality.⁴ Herbert Kliebard has further argued that this form of rationality has evolved in a manner parallel to the scientific management movement of the 1920s, and that early founders of the curriculum movement such as Bobbitt and Charters warmly embraced the principles of scientific management.⁵ The school as factory metaphor has a long and extensive history in the curriculum field. Consequently, modes of reasoning, inquiry, and research characteristic of the field have been modeled on assumptions drawn from a model of science and social relations closely tied to the principles of prediction and control.

The new sociology of curriculum critics see their task as more than an attempt to clear up what might be called a conceptual muddle. In the first place, the concepts that underlie the traditional curriculum paradigm serve as guides to action. Secondly, these concepts are inextricably linked to value judgments about standards of morality and questions concerning the nature of freedom and control. More specifically, these assumptions not only represent a set of ideas that educators use to structure their view of curriculum; they also represent a set of material practices embedded in rituals and routines thought of as necessary and natural facts. Thus,

they have become forms of objectified history, common-sense assumptions that have been severed from the historical context from which they developed.⁶

The new sociology of curriculum views the basic assumptions embedded in the traditional curriculum paradigm as the basis for both a critique and a limit situation to be overcome in developing new orientations and ways of talking about curriculum. Hence, it is important that we specify what these assumptions are: (a) Theory in the curriculum field should operate in the interest of lawlike propositions that are empirically testable; (b) The natural sciences provide the "proper" model of explanation for the concepts and techniques of curriculum theory, design, and evaluation; (c) Knowledge should be objective and capable of being investigated and described in a neutral fashion; and (d) Statements of value are to be separated from "facts" and "modes of inquiry" that can and ought to be objective.

In the most general sense, the technocratic model of curriculum has been criticized both for its stated claims to the truth and the assumptions implicit in the *kinds* of questions it ignores. Regarding its stated truth claims, critics argue that the traditional model rests on a number of flawed assumptions about the nature and role of theory, knowledge, and science. Moreover, these assumptions have resulted in truncated forms of inquiry that ignore fundamental questions concerning the larger relationship between ideology and school knowledge as well as meaning and social control.⁷

Shortcomings of the Dominant Model

The "new" critics claim that theory in the dominant curriculum model is either ignored altogether or is badly instrumentalized. In other words, theory is important to the degree that it can be rigorously formulated and empirically tested. Its ultimate purpose here is a technocratic one: to reveal lawlike propositions about curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation that can be either factually proven or disproven. Theory is thus reduced to an empirical explanatory framework for social engineering. From this critical perspective, theory appears incapable of stepping outside of its empirical strait jacket in order to raise questions about the nature of truth, the difference between appearance and reality, or the distinction between knowledge and mere opinion. Most importantly,

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theory in the dominant curriculum paradigm appears unable to provide a rational basis for criticizing the "facts" of the given society. Theory in this case not only ignores its ethical function, it is also stripped of its political function.⁸

Knowledge in the dominant curriculum model is treated primarily as a realm of objective facts. That is, knowledge appears objective in that it is external to the individual and is imposed on him or her. As something external, knowledge is divorced from human meaning and intersubjective exchange. It no longer is seen as something to be questioned, analyzed, and negotiated. Instead, it becomes something to be managed and mastered. In this case, knowledge is removed from the self-formative process of generating one's own set of meanings, a process that involves an interpretive relationship between knower and known. Once the subjective dimension of knowing is lost, the purpose of knowledge becomes one of accumulation and categorization. Questions such as "Why this knowledge?" are superseded by technical questions such as "What is the best way to learn this given body of knowledge?" Within the context of this definition of knowledge, curriculum models are developed that stress "mission specificity," "time on task variables," and "feedback obtained to make adjustments."⁹ This view of knowledge is usually accompanied by top-to-bottom classroom social relationships conducive to communiques, not communication.¹⁰ Control, not learning, appears to have a high priority in the traditional curriculum model. What is lost here is the notion that knowledge is not simply "about" an external reality, it is more importantly self-knowledge oriented toward critical understanding and emancipation.

A pivotal force in the traditional curriculum model is the claim to objectivity. Objectivity in this case refers to forms of knowledge and methodological inquiry that are untouched by the untidy world of beliefs and values. While the severance of knowledge and research from value claims may appear to be admirable to some, it hides more than it uncovers. Of course, this is not meant to suggest that challenging the value-neutrality claims of mainstream curriculum theorists is tantamount to supporting the use of bias, prejudice, and superstition in pedagogical inquiry.

Instead, the notion that objectivity is based on the use of normative criteria established by communities of scholars and intellectual workers in any given field is espoused. Intellectual inquiry and research free from values and norms are impossible to achieve. To separate values from facts or social inquiry from ethical considerations is pointless. As Howard Zinn

points out, it is like trying to draw a map that illustrates every detail on a chosen piece of terrain.¹¹ But this is not just a simple matter of intellectual error; it is an ethical failing as well.

The notion that theory, facts, and inquiry can be objectively determined and used falls prey to a set of values that are both conservative and mystifying in their political orientation. As critics such as Paulo Freire have pointed out, schools do not exist in precious isolation from the rest of society. Schools embody collective attitudes that permeate every aspect of their organization.¹² In essence, they are not things, but concrete manifestations of specific rules and social relationships. The nature of their organization is value-based. Similarly, curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation always represent patterns of judgments about the nature of knowledge, classroom social relationships, and the distribution of power. To ignore this is to lose sight of the origins and consequences of the belief system that guides one's behavior in the school setting.

Traditional curriculum represents a firm commitment to a view of rationality that is ahistorical, consensus-oriented, and politically conservative. It supports a passive view of students and appears incapable of examining the ideological presuppositions that tie it to a narrow operational mode of reasoning. Its view of science ignores the competing elements and frames of reference within the scientific community itself.¹³ Moreover, it ends up substituting a limited form of scientific methodology based on prediction and control for critical scientific inquiry.

Instead of promoting critical reflection and human understanding, the dominant curriculum model emphasizes the logic of probability as the ultimate definition of truth and meaning. Not only do the concepts that characterize this model appear less than critical, they appear as blank checks that support the status quo. One example of this can be found in the powerful influence of learning psychologists in the field of education with their endless studies on "performance and the interchange between students and teachers."¹⁴ Some critics view this as a strong measure of the political conservatism that dominates the curriculum field. The learning psychology perspective fails to examine the way schools legitimize certain forms of knowledge and cultural interests.¹⁵

The Challenge

The new sociology of curriculum has mounted a serious challenge against many of the deeply held beliefs and assumptions that characterize tra-

ditional curriculum. This challenge is far from uniform and has its roots in continental philosophies as diverse as existentialism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, and phenomenology. The new sociology of curriculum speaks a language that might seem strange when compared to the input-output language of the traditional curriculum model. The new language may be difficult, but it is necessary, because it enables its users to develop new kinds of relationships in the curriculum field and to raise different kinds of questions. This is not a moot point. It would be spurious indeed to dismiss these critics for drawing upon what might appear to be alien forms of language and thought, and some of their detractors have done just that. However, the real point of concern should be whether the language and concepts used are raising profoundly important questions and issues about the curriculum field itself. While it is not possible to present the various factions and issues that make up the new sociology of curriculum movement, the nucleus of some of the more general ideas that run through this perspective can be analyzed briefly.

The new sociology of curriculum group strongly argues that schools are part of a wider societal process and that they must be judged within a specific socioeconomic framework. In addition, the curriculum itself is viewed as a selection from the larger culture. From this perspective the new critics argue for a thorough re-examination of the relationship between curriculum, schools, and society. This re-examination focuses on two broad interrelationships. On the one hand, the focus is on the relationship between schools and the dominant society. The focus here is primarily political and ideological; its emphasis is on highlighting how schools function to reproduce, in both the hidden and formal curricula, the cultural beliefs and economic relationships that support the larger social order. On the other hand, the focus is on how the very texture of day to day classroom relationships generates different meanings, restraints, cultural values, and social relationships. Underlying both of these concerns is a deep seated interest in the relationship between meaning and social control.

A number of these critics have been particularly concerned about how meaning is constructed and acted upon in schools. They support the view that the social construction of the principles that govern the operation of curriculum design, research, and evaluation are often ignored by curriculum specialists and classroom teachers. One consequence has been that many educators often operate out of common-sense assumptions that fail to raise fundamental questions about how teachers perceive their classroom

experiences and students. Also ignored are questions about how students perceive and generate meaning in the classroom; similarly, questions concerning how particular classroom materials mediate meanings between teachers and students, schools and the larger society, also go unquestioned. Within this limited view of meaning, prejudices and social myths are relegated to the realm of unquestioned habits of mind and experience.

Given this mode of behavior, there is little room for students to generate their own meanings, to act on their own lived histories, or to develop an attentiveness to critical thought. Learning under such circumstances, it is argued, degenerates into a euphemism for a mode of control that imposes rather than cultivates meaning. This is a crucial point. If teachers do not bracket their own basic assumptions about curriculum and pedagogy, they do more than transmit unquestioned attitudes, norms, and beliefs. They unknowingly may end up endorsing forms of cognitive and dispositional development that strengthen rather than challenge existing forms of institutional oppression. Commonly accepted definitions about work, play, achievement, intelligence, mastery, failure, and learning are socially constructed categories that carry with them the weight of specific interests and norms. To ignore this important notion is to relinquish the possibility for students and teachers alike to shape reality in an image other than the one that is socially prescribed and institutionally legitimated. The failure of curriculum workers to appreciate that there are fundamental interests of knowledge other than prediction, control, and efficiency is not just a matter of misunderstanding, it is a serious ethical and political failing.

Critics such as Michael Apple have gone far beyond stressing the need for a model of curriculum that generates interpretive understanding and purposive learning. These critics have raised the debate over curriculum to a new level of criticism by calling for a view of curriculum that defines it as a study in ideology.¹⁶ In this view, questions concerning the production, distribution, and evaluation of knowledge are directly linked to questions of control and domination in the larger society. This can be more fully understood by examining some of the types of questions that would provide the basis for viewing curriculum from this perspective. These questions would include:

1. What counts as curriculum knowledge?
2. How is such knowledge produced?
3. How is such knowledge transmitted in the classroom?

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4. What kinds of classroom social relationships serve to parallel and reproduce the values and norms embodied in the accepted social relations of other dominant social sites?
5. Who has access to legitimate forms of knowledge?
6. Whose interests does this knowledge serve?
7. How are social and political contradictions and tensions mediated through acceptable forms of classroom knowledge and social relationships?
8. How do prevailing methods of evaluation serve to legitimize existing forms of knowledge?

At the core of these questions is the recognition that power, knowledge, ideology, and schooling are linked in everchanging patterns of complexity. The nexus that gives form to these interrelationships is social and political in nature, and it is both a product and process of history. In more concrete terms, curriculum theorists, teachers, and students alike embody certain beliefs and practices, concepts and norms that strongly influence how they perceive and structure their educational experiences. These beliefs and routines are historical and social in nature; moreover, they may be the object of self-reflection, or they may exist unnoticed by the individual they influence. In the latter case, they serve to dominate rather than serve the individual in question.

This approach calls for forms of curriculum that push beyond appreciating that knowledge is a social construction. Also, it stresses the need for examining the constellation of economic, political, and social interests that different forms of knowledge may reflect. To put it another way, curriculum models must develop forms of understanding that relate explanations of social meanings to wider societal parameters in order to be able to judge their claims to the truth.¹⁷

Significance for the Future

If one purpose of curriculum is to generate possibilities for individual and social emancipation, we will have to develop a new language and new forms of rationality to accomplish such a task. The predicament of the age is no different from the predicament the curriculum field presently faces. And this predicament is as engaging as it is radical: to build the conditions that allow humanity to search for its self-understanding and meaning. The new sociology of curriculum movement provides us with

a number of possibilities for developing more flexible and humanizing forms of curriculum.

We must develop a mode of curriculum that cultivates critical theoretical discourse about the quality and purpose of schooling and human life. We need to develop broader perspectives that enrich rather than dominate the field. Critical curriculum theory must be situational. It must analyze the various dimensions of pedagogy as part of the historical and cultural conjunctures in which they occur. And it must do this with the tools that are fashioned from a variety of disciplines. This does not mean that we have to become political scientists or sociologists in order to study curriculum. That is not the case, and it would be inappropriate to do so. Our center of gravity is curriculum, but we need to enrich our focus by drawing upon the concepts and tools that other disciplines offer us.

The foundation for a new mode of curriculum must be as deeply historical as it is critical. In fact, the critical sensibility must be seen as an extension of historical consciousness. The genesis, development, and unfolding of ideas, social relationship, and modes of inquiry and evaluation must be viewed as part of an ongoing development of complex, historically bound social conditions of formations.

The new mode of curriculum must be deeply personal, but only in the sense that it recognizes individual uniqueness and needs as part of a specific social reality. We must not confuse self-indulgence with critical pedagogy. Individual and social needs have to be linked and mediated through a critical perspective tied to notions of emancipation. Curriculum models must address themselves to the concrete personal experiences of specific cultural groups and populations. Curriculum educators must be able to recognize the relevance and importance of accepting and using multiple languages and forms of cultural capital (systems of meaning, tastes, ways of viewing the world, style, and so on). At the same time, educators must acknowledge that the call for cultural pluralism is empty unless it is recognized that the relationship between different cultural groups is mediated through the dominant cultural system. Thus, our task is to unravel these relationships for different cultural groups to emancipate them from the imposed kinds of definitions and emotional pain that minorities of class and color have a history of in this country.

A new mode of curriculum must abandon the ideological pretense of being value-free. To acknowledge that the choices we make concerning all facets of curriculum and pedagogy are value-laden is to liberate our-

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seives from imposing our own values on others. To admit as such means that we can begin with the notion that reality should never be taken as a given, but instead, has to be questioned and analyzed. In other words, knowledge has to be made problematic and has to be situated in classroom social relationships that allow for debate and communications.

Finally, a new mode of curriculum rationality will have to subordinate technical interests to ethical considerations. The questions of means must be subordinated to questions that speak to the ethical consequences of our pursuits. Although these suggestions represent a broad theoretical sweep, they do provide a starting point for developing new modes of curriculum inquiry. Also, the somewhat disparate traditions of the new sociology of curriculum have helped to translate some of the larger abstract issues surrounding the purpose and meaning of schooling into concrete curriculum problems and avenues for further study and research.

I began this chapter by pointing out that the traditional model of curriculum was moribund, politically and ethically. I want to go back to that statement and clarify it, lest it be confused with a form of unwarranted optimism. The dominant technocratic curriculum paradigm may be aging, but it is far from a historical relic. The struggle to replace it with principles and assumptions consistent with the vision of the new sociology of curriculum movement will be difficult indeed. But one thing is certain. The struggle for a new mode of curriculum rationality cannot be approached as a technical task only. It must be seen as a social struggle deeply committed to what Herbert Marcuse has aptly termed "the emancipation of sensibility, reason, and imagination in all spheres of subjectivity and objectivity."¹⁸ The new sociology of curriculum has helped to make this struggle just a bit easier. The rest is up to us.

3

Social Education in the Classroom: The Dynamics of the Hidden Curriculum

By HENRY A. GIROUX and ANTHONY N. PENNA

The belief that schooling can be defined as the sum of its official course offerings is a naive one. Yet such an implicit belief served as the theme of the social studies curriculum development reform movement of the 1960s and early 1970s. Developers believed that if they changed the curriculum of the nation's schools, the schools' ills would be remedied.¹ In recent years, however, numerous reasons have been offered to explain the seeming inability of the reform movement to penetrate the traditional patterns of instruction in the schools. Inadequate teacher preparation and curriculum materials which overestimated the perceived capabilities of students represent the more familiar, albeit uncritical, explanations offered by educators. Now, some of them lend uncritical support for the back-to-basics movement in social studies education, assuming once again that new curriculum materials will provide an answer to the question of how to bring about change in social studies education. Attend to the cognitive needs and capabilities of students, they argue, and the failures of the recent reform movement will be overcome.²