Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory/Revue canadienne de théorie politique et sociale. Vol. IX, No. 3 (Fall/automne) 1985.

RADICAL EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATIVE INTELLECTUALS

STANLEY ARONOWITZ and HENRY GIROUX

We are today in the midst of a new debate on the role of intellectuals in processes of social and historical structure and transformation. In the first place, far from viewing intellectuals as marginal figures capable of grasping the totality of social and political relations, recent writers have argued that they have become central to the reproduction of both production and social life. On the one hand, intellectuals have been transformed into a technical intelligentsia performing a wide variety of functions in late or advanced industrial societies. On the other hand, the traditional intellectual, possessed of critical knowledge, seems to have passed from the contemporary scene; we are all subject to the rationalizing and specializing character of modern organizations. The intellectual has been integrated in proportion as knowledge/information becomes a vital productive force, and ideological reproduction is central for the legitimation of late capitalist and state socialist societies.

One of the striking formulations of this phenomenon has been that of Pierre Bourdieu who has invented the category *cultural capital* to subsume a wide range of relations characteristic of the role of intellectuals in our societies. The key repository of cultural capital are the schools who confer such capital on students in differential degrees that determine, more or less, their life chances.[1]

The concept of cultural capital is a deliberate analogue to material capital; it signifies the transformation of social relations from a fundamental reliance on craft and mechanical knowledge, to knowledges, derived originally from traditional culture, that have become core scientific and ideological machinery for the reproduction of the prevailing order. Culture itself is a form of capital and those possessing it may be said to occupy crucial niches within, and not opposed, to the economic, political and ideological spheres that constitute advanced or late industrial societies.

To assert that knowledge/information are productive forces is by now commonplace; but to argue that those who possess such cultural capital constitute new historical actors is not. Within the last two decades, social theory has taken two routes away from the historical marxist idea of the proletariat as revolutionary agent and class itself as defined by production relations alone. Foucault, Derrida and others who follow the French turn away from essentialism and logocentrism have argued that the notion of the *subject* from which all historical transformation emanates is itself questionable. Either there are no subjects, only sites, or there are a multiplicity of subjects situated in particular places in the social structure, none of which holds, *a priori*, the "key" to social change. Foucault goes so far as to

privilege the command over knowledge as a crucial detonator of structuration. He stresses the *site of contestation* rather than referring to agency. Similarly, Jurgen Habermas while not adopting the epistemological critique of the so-called "post" structuralists, has proposed a theory of communicative action that locates the problematic of social transformation spatially rather than temporally, and focuses on linguistic and moral development.[2] For Habermas, concepts of historical agency have lost their validity because advanced industrial societies have achieved considerable rationality in the organization of economic relations. But, like Daniel Bell, he argues for a notion of "cultural" contradictions as the locus of crisis tendencies in these systems.[3]

In contrast, Alain Touraine[4] joins some German commentators especially Kluge and Negt in holding that the "actor" has not disappeared from the stage of history, but has been displaced to the new social movements, especially youth and women who in the late sixties and seventies constituted important oppositional forces. Touraine focusses on generational and gender features of these movements, but admits at the same time that such locations are by no means fixed. Conceivably, groups situated in other sites within the organization of social relations might emerge as historical actors depending on the specificity of economic, political and cultural relations.

However, the idea of "new" social movements does not vitiate the possibility of viewing intellectuals as emergent historical actors, if these movements are seen as displacements of the activity of possessors of cultural capital. The appearance of these movements can be explained in terms of the centrality of knowledge, specialized discourses and the existence of new discursive communities where information is exchanged and acquired. Perhaps Alvin Gouldner's literal appropriation of the notion of cultural capital is the most explicit statement of intellectuals as a new class whose centrality in the "dialectic of ideology and technology" makes them the most important actors in late capitalist and state socialist societies.[5]

Bourdieu formulated his theory of cultural capital in the course of examining the role of schools in reproducing late capitalist social relations. He found that schools had become crucial sites of economic, political and ideological reproduction and their role in conferring such capital constituted an important 'arbitrary' in the formation of the labor force and the ideological cohesion of the system of social relations.

There is a crucial conundrum in virtually all recent and older theories about intellectuals. Karl Mannheim's earlier effort to valorize intellectuals as an epistemologically privileged layer relied on the older concept of the traditional intellectual who was marginal to capitalist social relations. Similarly, Gouldner and Bell have acknowledged the integration of intellectuals and their transformation into technical personnel, managers and professionals, but have not drawn the conclusion from this insight. Perhaps the most forthright argument against intellectuals as a critical class emanates from Andre Gorz who, in the late 1970s, proclaimed his earlier idea of intellectuals as a new working class, that is, asserted the proletarianization of intellectuals as the clue to historical agency in the automated age, dead.[6] Gorz argued that if intellectuals are subject to the capitalist

division of labor with its hierarchical and bureaucratic mode of organization, they cease to be intellectuals in the sense employed by earlier theorists, including Marx, Weber, Lenin and Mannheim. There simply are no sources of *class* opposition in late capitalism, only movements linked to sites.

Gorz's scepticism notwithstanding, we believe there are grounds for retaining the *hope* and the expectation for the formation of intellectuals in the classic meaning of the designation: a layer of people who despite their subordination to the organization of late capitalist relations, fight in those sites where cultural capital is formed for the transformation of the technical intelligensia into a new kind of intellectual.

Of course, there is no question of individuals transgressing the boundaries of cultural capital. The formation of intellectuals in the wider meaning of the term requires community building, setting the conditions for collective effort such as exists, at least potentially, in journals, organizations such as labor unions, and political parties or intentional associations. Further, those who aspire to create a public space within which takes place critical discourse about issues affecting collective life are obliged to name those sites within which intellectual formation takes places.

Obviously, the schools are prime sites where various types of intellectual and manual labor is "produced" through the organization of knowledge and pedagogy. While Bourdieu and the new sociology of education have produced an impressive body of theoretical and empirical research to demonstrate the subordination of schools to specific regimes of social and cultural domination as well as training for existing occupational hierarchies, and other writers have specified schools as sites of resistance not only to school authority but to social authority, the question of the role of teachers and of teaching has barely been explored within these frameworks. School authority has been linked to economic and political hegemony and student resistance to working class formation; there is ample literature treating of the question of the status of professionals and their training within the social and occupational order. But there is a tacit acceptance that teachers, especially in primary and secondary schools, are simply a part of the apparatus of domination. Their proletarianization through the removal of curricular decisions and pedagogical methods from their control is virtually ignored.

The core argument in this essay is that if schools are a crucial site for the production of intellectual labor, and the acquisition of cultural capital, and intellectuals are, potentially, new historical actors, then the treatment of teachers as intellectuals is at the center of the discussion of new social movements, new sites of contestation, and the contradictions of cultural capital.

Rethinking the Nature of the Intellectual

In what follows, we want to argue that one way to rethink and restructure the nature of teacher work is to view teachers as intellectuals. The category of intellectual is helpful in a number of ways. First, it provides a theoretical basis for examining teacher work as a form of intellectual labor, secondly, it clarifies the ideological and material conditions necessary for intellectual work; thirdly, it helps

to illuminate the various modes of intelligibility, ideologies, and interests that are produced and legitimated by teacher work.

By viewing teachers as intellectuals, we can illuminate and recover the rather general notion that all human activity involves some form of thinking. That is, no activity, regardless of how routinized it might become is abstracted from the functioning of the mind in some capacity. This is a crucial issue because by arguing that the use of the mind is a general part of all human activity, we dignify the human capacity for integrating thinking and practice, and in doing so highlight the core of what it means to view teachers as reflective practitioners. Within this discourse, teachers can be seen not merely as "performers professionally equipped to realize effectively any goals that may be set for them. Rather, [they should] be viewed as free men and women with a special dedication to the values of the intellect and the enhancement of the critical powers of the young."[7]

Furthermore, viewing teachers as intellectuals provides a strong citique of those ideologies that legitimate social practices that separate conceptualization, planning, and designing from the processes of implementation and execution. It is important to stress that teachers must take active responsibility for raising serious questions about what they teach, how they are to teach it, and what the larger goals are for which they are striving. This means that they must take a responsible role in shaping the purposes and conditions of schooling. Such a task is impossible within a division of labor where teachers have little influence over the ideological and economic conditions of their work. There is also a growing political and ideological tendency as expressed in the current debates on educational reform to remove teachers and students from their histories and cultural experiences in the name of pedagogical approaches that will make schooling more instrumental. These approaches generally mean that teachers and students alike are "situated" within curricula approaches and instructional management schemes that reduce their roles to either implementing or receiving the goals and objectives of publishers, outside experts, and others far removed from the specificities of daily classroom life. This issue becomes all the more important when seen as part of the growing objectification of human life in general. The concept of teacher as intellectual provides the theoretical posture to fight against this type of ideological and pedagogical imposition.

Moreover, the concept of intellectual provides the theoretical groundwork for interrogating the specific ideological and economic conditions under which intellectuals as a social group need to work in order to function as social actors. This last point takes on a normative and political dimension and seems especially relevant for teachers. For if we believe that the role of teaching cannot be reduced to merely training in the practical skills, but involves, instead, the education of a "class" of intellectuals vital to the development of a democratic society then the category of intellectual becomes a way of linking the purpose of teacher education and public schooling, to the very principles necessary for the development of a democratic order and society.

Neither teacher training institutions nor the public schools have viewed themselves historically as important sites for educating teachers as intellectuals. In part, this has been due to the pervasiveness of a growing technocratic rationality that

separates theory from practice and contributes to the development of modes of pedagogy that ignore teacher autonomy; it is also due to the predominance of theories and forms of school leadership and organization that gives teachers little control over the nature of their work. The latter not only shape the structure and experiences of what teachers do in schools, but also the way in which they are prepared in teacher training institutions. What is generally overriding in most teacher education programs is the emphasis on having prospective educators master pedagogical techniques that generally eschew questions of purpose and the discourse of critique and possibility.

We have argued that by viewing teachers as intellectuals we can begin to rethink and reformulate those historical traditions and conditions that have prevented schools and teachers from assuming their full potential as active, reflective scholars and practitioners. We want to both qualify this point and extend it further. We believe that it is imperative not only to view teachers as intellectuals, but also to contextualize in political and normative terms the concrete social functions they perform. In this way, we can be more specific about the different relationships that teachers have to both their work and to the society in which such work takes place.

Any attempt to reformulate the role of teachers as intellectuals has to also include the broader issue of how to view educational theory in general. It is imperative to view educational theory as a form of social theory because the discourse of educational theory can be understood and interrogated as representing forms of knowledge and social practice that legitimate and reproduce particular forms of social life. Educational theory in this case is not viewed as merely the application of objective scientific principles to the concrete study of schooling and learning. Instead, it is seen as an eminently political discourse that emerges from and characterizes an expression of struggle over what forms of authority, orders of representation, forms of moral regulation, and versions of the past and future should be legitimated, passed on, and debated within specific pedagogical sites. All forms of educational theory and discourse represent a form of ideology that has an intimate relation to questions of power. This is evident in the way such discourses arise out of the and structure the distinctions between high and low status knowledge, legitimate cultural forms that reproduce specific class, racial, and patriarchal interests, and help to sustain specific organizational patterns and classroom social relations.

Educational theory should also be seen as having a deep commitment to developing schools as sites that prepare students to participate in and struggle to develop democratic public spheres. This means that the value of educational theory and practice should be linked to providing the conditions for teachers and students to understand schools as public spheres dedicated to forms of self and social empowerment. It also means defining teacher work against the imperative to develop knowledge and skills that provide students with the tools they will need to be leaders rather than simply managers or skilled civil servants. Similarly, it means fighting against those ideological and material practices that reproduce privileges for the few and social and economic inequality for the many.

By politicizing the notion of schooling and revealing the ideological nature of

educational theory and practice, it becomes possible to be more specific in defining the meaning of the category of the intellectual and to interrogate the political and pedagogical function of the intellectual as a social category. There are two related but separate points by which to venture a definition of the intellectual. The more general definition is rooted in a quality of mind that is characterized as having a creative, critical and contemplative relationship to the world of ideas. Richard Hofstadter epitomizes this position in his distinction between the meaning of intellect and the meaning of intelligence. Intelligence, for him, is "an excellence of mind that is employed within a fairly narrow, immediate predicatable range; it is a manipulative, adjustive, infailingly practical quality. . . . Intellect, on the other hand is the critical, creative, and contemplative side of mind. Whereas intelligence seeks to grasp, manipulate, reorder, adjust, intellect examines, ponders, wonders, theorizes, criticizes, imagines."[8]

Paul Piccone provides a similar distinction but places it within a larger social context.

> . . . unless one fudges the definition of intellectuals in terms of purely formal and statistical educational criteria, it is fairly clear that what modern society produces is an army of alienated, privatized, and uncultured experts who are knowledgeable only within very narrowly defined areas. This technical intelligentsia, rather than intellectuals in the traditional sense of thinkers concerned with the totality, is growing by leaps and bounds to run the increasingly complex bureaucratic and industrial apparatus. Its rationality, however, is only instrumental in character, and thus suitable mainly to perform partial tasks rather than tackling substantial questions of social organization and political direction.[9]

Herb Kohl is more specific and provides a definition of the intellectual that relates it directly to teachers. He writes:

> An intellectual is someone who knows about his or her field, has a wide breadth of knowledge about other aspects of the world, who uses experience to develop theory and questions theory on the basis of further experience. An intellectual is also someone who has the courage to question authority and who refuses to act counter to his or her own experience and judgement.[10]

In our view all of these positions make distinctions that are important but fall into the problem of suggesting that intellectual inquiry is either the repository of specific groups of people or that the quality of intellectual inquiry is only operative within specific social functions. We do not suggest that the question of what qualities of mind constitute intellectual inquiry is not an important one. These positions are informative because they suggest that intellectual inquiry is characterized by someone who has a breadth of knowledge about the world, who views ideas

in more than instrumental terms, and who harbors a spirit of inquiry that is critical and oppositional, one that is true to its own impulses and judgments. But we want to make a distinction between those characteristics of intellectual inquiry as they exist in various degrees and proportions among different individuals *and* the social function of intellectual work itself. In his attempt to turn the issue of the nature and role of the intellectual into a political question, Antonio Gramsci provides a more helpful theoretical elaboration on this issue. For Gramsci, all men and women are intellectuals, but not all of them function in society as intellectuals. Gramsci is worth quoting at length on this issue.

> When one distinguishes between intellectuals and non-intellectuals, one is referring in reality only to the immediate social function of the professional category of the intellectuals, that is, one has in mind the direction in which their specific professional activity is weighted, whether towards intellectual elaboration or towards muscular-nervous effort. This means that, although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist. But even the relationship between efforts of intellectual-cerebral elaboration and muscular-nervous effort is not always the same, so that there are varying degrees of specific intellectual activity. There is no human activity from which every form of intellectual participation can be excluded: *homo faber* cannot be separated from *homo sapiens*. Each man (sic), finally, outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a 'philosopher', an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought.[11]

For Gramsci, all people are intellectuals in that they think, mediate, and adhere to a specific view of the world. The point is that varying degrees of critical and common sense thought is endemic to what it means to be human. The significance of this insight is that it gives pedagogical activity an inherently political quality. For instance, Gramsci's view of political activity was deeply rooted in the task of raising the quality of thought of the working class. At the same time, by arguing that all people do not function in their social capacity as intellectuals, Gramsci provides the theoretical groundwork for analyzing the political role of those intellectuals who had to be considered in terms of the organizational and directive functions they performed in a given society.

In the broadest sense, Gramsci attempts to locate the political and social function of intellectuals through his analyses of the role of conservative and radical *organic* intellectuals. For Gramsci, conservative organic intellectuals provide the dominant class with forms of moral and intellectual leadership. As agents of the status quo, such intellectuals identify with the dominant relations of power and become the propagaters of its ideologies and values. This group represents a stratum of

intellectuals that gives ruling classes a homogeneity and awareness of their economic, political, and social interests. In the advanced industrial countries organic intellectuals can be found in all strata of society and include specialists in industrial organizations, professors in universities, journalists in the culture industry, and various levels of executives in middle management positions.[12]

Gramsci's categories illuminate the political nature of intellectual work within specific social functions. Moreoever, Gramsci's analysis helps to refute the idea that the nature of intellectual work is determined by one's class location. On the contrary, there is no immediate correspondence between class location and consciousness; but there is a correspondence between the social function of one intellectual's work and the particular relationship it has to modifying, challenging, or reproducing the dominant society. In other words, it is the *political nature* of intellectual work that is the issue at hand. This is a major theoretical advance over the ongoing debate among Marxists and others as to whether intellectuals constitute a specific class or culture.[13] Furthermore, by politicizing the nature of intellectual work, Gramsci strongly challenges dominant theoretical traditions that have decontexualized the role that intellectuals play in education and the large society. In other words, he criticizes those theorists who decontextualize the intellectual by suggesting that he or she exist independently of issues of class, culture, power, and politics. Inherent in such a view is the notion that the intellectual is obliged to engage in a value-free discourse, one that necessitates that he or she refuse to make a commitment to specific views of the world, refuse to take sides on different issues, or refuse to link knowledge with the fundamental principles of emancipation. Such a view reinforces the idea that intellectuals are free floating and detached in the sense that they perform a type of labor that is objective and apolitical.

Similarly, Gramsci's notion that intellectuals represent a social category and not a class raises interesting questions as to how educators might be viewed at different levels of schooling in terms of their politics, the nature of their discourse, and the pedagogical functions they perform. But Gramsci's terms need to be expanded in order to grasp the changing nature and social function of intellectuals in their capacities as educators. The categories around which we want to analyze the social function of educators as intellectuals are: a) transformative intellectuals, b) critical intellectuals, c) accommodating intellectuals, and d) hegemonic intellectuals. It is imperative to note that these are somewhat exaggerated, ideal-typical categories whose purpose is to bring into bold relief the cluster of integrated elements that point to the interests and tendencies to which they refer. Needless to say, there are teachers who move in and out and between these categories and defy being placed in any one of them; moreover, it is conceivable that teachers under different circumstances may opt out of one tendency and move into another category. Finally, these categories are irreducible to any one specific political doctrine. They indicate forms of ideology and social practice that could be taken up by any number of diverse political positions or world views.

Transformative Intellectuals

The category of transformative intellectuals connotes a fusion of critical discourse

with political practice. These teachers as intellectuals are by no means limited by the professional and academic discourses within which they are obliged to function but seek links with groups fighting to change the schools, to oppose their tendency towards authoritarian modes of teaching and administration. The transformative intellectual is not only aware of her/his position within social life but attempts to create a public sphere not only within which critical discourse occurs, but one that permits the widest participation of teachers, students, parents and others in educational policy. Further, the transformative intellectual operates in the emancipatory interest which includes their engagement in self-criticism as a way to improve their own pedagory and to signal their anti-authoritarian intention.

Central to the category is the task of making the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogic. In the first instance, this means inserting education directly into the political sphere by arguing that schools represent both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. Thus, schooling becomes a central terrain where power and politics operate out of a relationship between individuals and groups who function in the sphere where cultural capital is in question. Within this view of schooling, critical reflection and action become part of a project to help students see themselves as social actors with claims over the conditions and outcomes of their own schooling, as well as opportunities to engage in reflexive understanding of their own situation within the system of social relations as well as schools.

In the second instance, making the political more pedagogical means utilizing forms of pedagogy which treat students as agents, problematizes knowledge, invokes dialogue, and makes knowledge meaningful so as to make it critical in order to make it emancipatory. In part, this suggests that transformative intellectuals take seriously the need to give students an active voice in their learning experiences, it means developing a critical vernacular that is attentive to problems experienced at the level of everyday life, particularly as these are related to pedagogical experiences connected to classroom practice. As such, the starting-point pedagogically for such intellectuals is not with the isolated student but with collective actors in their various cultural, class, racial, historical, and gendered settings, along with the particularity of their diverse problems, hopes, and dreams. It is at this point that the language of critique unites with the language of possibility. That is, transformative intellectuals must take seriously the need to come to grips with those ideological and material aspects of the dominant society that attempt to separate the issues of power and knowledge, which means working to create the ideological and material conditions in both schools and the larger society that give students the opportunity to become agents of civic courage. We mean citizens who have the knowledge and courage to stake seriously the need to make despair unconvincing and hope practical. In short, the language of critique unites with the language of possibility when it points to the conditions necessary for new forms of culture, alternative social practices, new modes of communication and a practical vision for the future.

Critical Intellectuals

Critical intellectuals are ideologically alternative to existing institutions and

modes of thought, but they do not see themselves as connected either to a specific social formation or as performing a general social function that is expressively political in nature. Their protests constitute a critical function, which they see as part of their professional status or obligation as intellectuals. In most cases, the posture of critical intellectuals is self-consciously apolitical, and they try to define their relationship to the rest of society as free-floating. As individuals they are critical of inequality and injustice, but they often refuse or are unable to move beyond their isolated posture to the terrain of collective solidarity and struggle. Often this retreat from politics is justified on the basis of arguments that posit the impossibility of politics for reasons as ideologically diverse as the claim that we live in a totally administered society, or that history is in the hands of a technology out of control, or the simple refusal to believe that human agencies exist that have any effect on history.

Of course, the most celebrated effort to establish the status of intellectuals as a "free floating" critical social layer was that of Karl Mannheim.[14] He argued that genuine intellectuals could not be situated in any particular social class even if, in their origins, they were in one of them. To the extent that the "man of knowledge" was engaged in the critical appropriation of "truth" he was free of the interests which, situated within a particular class, transformed knowledge into ideology. For Mannheim, any ideology was understood as inquiry subject to the contamination of social interest. It was by its nature partial knowledge. Mannheim wrestled with the Kantian question of how to achieve knowledge of the social totality and concluded that this could not be achieved within the framework of partisan research. When the intellectual is freed from particular interests, "he" can achieve distance required to grasp the truth.

Some recent attempts to continue this discourse about knowledge, such as those of Jurgen Habermas argue, from a somewhat different premises the same point.[15] Although we find much to commend Habermas's critique of Marxism's conception of the relation between knowledge and human interests, we do not share his faith in objective reason as the goal to which intellectual labor strives. Rather, we hold that the conception of rationality that believes in the possibility of separating science from ideology to be another form of ideology. Habermas wishes to free emancipatory human interests from the limits imposed by history on the capacity of social classes to make their particular interests universal. Yet by positing the autonomy of reason and the possibility of freeing knowledge from its ideological presuppositions, he has merely reasserted the ideology of modernity for which science as a value neutral discourse is possible and depends for its realization on such categories as undistorted communication, reflexive understanding and autocritique. Certainly we agree with the proposition that reflexive understanding and critical discourse are necessary to overcome the limitations imposed by the old common sense on human emancipation. Yet, this is not the same as arguing that intellectuals must remain on the margins, refusing to link with social movements whose world view condemns them to partial knowledge. The social role of the intellectual is precisely to become integral with those movements armed with emancipatory theoretical and practical knowledge. That the movements are bound to influence the intellectuals as much as be influenced by them is part of the contradictory, yet necessary result of the formation of the transformative intellectual.

We cannot here discuss in detail our assertion that the enlightenment conceptions of truth, objective reason, etc. are themselves part of the partial discourses of historical actors, situated in specific times and places. Suffice to remark here that science itself has become aware of the limits of its own aspiration for totalization, that the discovery of the ineluctability of difference is among the most important achievements of physics and biology in the 20th century. To claim as does Habermas that intersubjective understanding can clear away the tangled web of discourse is a retreat from Sartre's admonition that only the committed intellectual can arrive at assertions that serve human emancipation. In other words, critical intellectuals forget that emancipation cannot be delivered from the outside.

Accommodating Intellectuals

Accommodating intellectuals generally stand firm within an ideological posture and set of material practices that supports the dominant society and its ruling groups. Such intellectuals are generally not aware of this process in that they do not define themselves as self-conscious agents of the status quo, even though their politics further the interests of the dominant classes. This category of intellectuals also define themselves in terms that suggest that they are free floating, removed from the vagaries of class conflicts and partisan politics. But in spite of such rationalizations, they function primarily to produce and mediate uncritically ideas and social practices that serve to reproduce the status quo. These are the intellectuals who decry politics while simultaneously refusing to take risks. Another more subtle variation is the intellectual who disdains politics by proclaiming professionalism as a value system, one which often entails the spurious concept of scientific objectivity.

Hegemonic Intellectuals

Hegemonic intellectuals do more than surrender to forms of academic and political incorporation, or hide behind spurious claims to objectivism, they self-consciously define themselves through the forms of moral and intellectual leadership they provide for dominant groups and classes. This stratum of intellectuals provides various factions of the dominant classes with a homogeneity and awareness of their economic, political, and ethical functions. The interests that define the conditions as well as the nature of their work are tied to the preservation of the existing order. Such intellectuals are to be found on the consulting lists of major foundations, on the faculties of major universities as managers of the culture industry, and, in spirit, at least, in teaching positions at various levels of schooling.

For fear of these categories appearing to be too rigid, it is important to stress more specifically that the teachers who occupy them cannot be viewed merely from the perspective of the ideological interests they represent. For instance, as Erik Olin Wright has pointed out, the positions that teachers hold must also be analyzed in terms of the objective antagonisms they experience as intellectuals who occupy contradictory class locations.[16] That is, like workers they have to sell their labor power and have no control over the educational apparatus as a whole. On the other

hand, unlike workers they do have *some* control over the nature of their labor process, i.e., what to teach, how to teach, what kind of research to do, etc. Needless to say, the relative autonomy that teachers have at different levels of schooling differs, with those in some tiers of higher education, particularly the elite universities, having the most autonomy. Moreover, regardless of the ideological interests such teachers represent there is always the possibility for real tensions and antagonisms between their lack of control over the goals and purposes of schooling and the relative autonomy they enjoy. For example, in a time of economic crisis, teachers have been laid off, given increased course loads, denied tenure, and forced to implement administratively dictated pedagogies. It is within these tensions and objective contradictions that the possibilities exist for shifting alliances and movement among teachers from one category to the next.

The Discourse and Role of Educators As Transformative Intellectuals

In order to fight for schools as democratic spheres, it is imperative to understand the contradictory roles that transformative intellectuals occupy within the various levels of schooling. In the most immediate sense, the notion of transformative intellectual makes visible the paradoxical position that radical educators face in the public schools and in the universities. On the one hand, such intellectuals earn a living within institutions that play a fundamental role in producing the dominant culture. On the other hand, they define their political terrain by offering to students forms of alternative discourse and critical social practices whose interests are often at odds with the overall hegemonic role of the schools and the society it supports. The paradox is not easy to resolve, and often represents a struggle against incorporation by the university or school system which reward those educators willing to either remove critical scholarship from their teaching or to remove it from any relation to concrete political movements. At the university level, there is enormous pressure, for example, for radical educators to peddle their academic wares merely as viable commodities for academic journals and conferences. Under the banner of accountability, teachers at all levels of schooling are sometimes subtlety and sometimes not so subtlety pressured to respond to the issues, modes of research, discourse, and social practices deemed legitimate by the dominant culture. Erik Olin Wright is worth quoting on this issue:

> [Radical] theorists within . . . universities are under tremendous pressures to ask questions structured by bourgeois problems, bourgeois ideological and political practices. Such pressures are often extremely direct, taking the form of tenure criteria, blacklisting, harrassment, etc. But often the pressures are quite subtle, played out through the intellectual debates within professional conferences and journals. To publish in the proper journals one has to ask questions which those journals see as relevant, and such relevance is dictated not by the centrality of the questions to [radical social theory and practice], but to the dilemmas and problems within bourgeois social science.[17]

Rather than surrender to this form of academic and political incorporation, it is important for educators to make clear the theoretical elements that give meaning to the role of the transformative intellectual as well as to the type of critical educational theory in which such a role is grounded. One starting point would be to define the role of the transformative intellectual around what we have referred to earlier as the discourse of critique and the discourse of possibility.

By employing these discourses, transformative intellectuals can make clear the way in which power functions in schools in both a negative and positive way. Power is viewed in this instance as both a negative and positive force; its character is dialectical and its mode of operation is always more than simply repressive. In other words, domination is never so complete that power is experienced exclusively as a negative force. On the contrary, it means that power is the basis of all forms of behavior in which people resist, struggle, and fight for their image of a better world. What is essential is to understand how power is manifested in schools within the contradictory forms that it takes. One important pedagogical task that emerges from this perspective is to interrogate how knowledge, language and power come together within the formal and hidden curricula of schools so as to actively silence people.

Rather than viewing knowledge as objective, as merely something to transmit to students, teachers can demonstrate how it is constructed through a selected process of emphasis and exclusion. Such an interrogation could be analyzed around questions such as the following:

What counts as school knowledge?

How is such knowledge selected and organized?

What are the underlying interests that structure the form and content of school knowledge?

How is what counts as school knowledge transmitted?

How is access to such knowledge determined?

What cultural values and formations are legitimated by dominant forms of school knowledge?

What cultural formations are dis-organized and delegitmated by dominant forms of school knowledge?

There is also the central issue of making clear the role that language and power have at all levels of schooling. Language must be viewed as more than a tool for merely displaying thought; nor can it be reduced to issues that are technical and developmental in nature. In this case, transformative intellectuals can provide critical analyses of language as linguistic practices which embody forms of power and authority. If language itself is seen as a locus of meaning, it becomes possible to raise questions about the authority patterns that legitimate and utilize language in order to allocate resources and power to some groups while denying them to others. Central to this position is the notion that language practices can only be understood in terms of their articulation with the power relations that structure the wider society. In other words, language as both the subject and object of power represents, in part, an embattled epistemological terrain on which different social groups struggle over how reality is to be signified, reproduced, and resisted. Foucault captures this issue in the following comment:

> Education may well be . . . the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of discourse. But we all know that in its distribution, in what it permits and what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle lines of social conflict. Every education system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse. . . . What is an educational system after all, if not the ritualization of the word; if not a qualification of some fixing roles for speakers; if not the distribution and an appropriation of discourse, with all its learning and its powers.[18]

The point here is that institutionally legitimated language practices introduce teachers and students to specific questions, specific ways of life, and are constitutive of specific social relations. By establishing a relationship between language and power, it is possible for teachers to interrogate specific language practices around the questions they raise, the incapacitating silences they harbor, and how the latter bear down on students in the form of impositions that disorganize and delegitimate certain experiences and ideas. Such a view of language points to more than the need for teachers and students alike to deconstruct its hidden codes and meanings, it also imperative for them to develop alternative rhetorical structures and discursive practices, which both challenge and affirm forms of thinking, speaking and acting that support a critical pedagogy.

The relationship between power, on the one hand, and knowledge and language, on the other, needs to be supplemented with an understanding of how power works on the structure of the personality and the body so as to promote certain forms of learning. More specifically, the latter points to how educators can address the issue of how learning takes place outside the realm of mediated consciousness and rationality. For instance, how is it possible to understand learning as a function of habit, as part of the fabric of ongoing social practices that become part of what might be called sedimented histories. Put another way, how is it possible for teachers to understand how learning is mediated and produced though the unconscious so as to promote among themselves and students, for instance, forms of behavior that represent an active refusal to listen, to hear, or to engage in activities that might threaten one's world view, or, in some cases, even to affirm one's own possibilities. Of course, this issue raises serious questions about how schools through various rituals, social practices, and rules become implicated in forms of domination that bear down on the body and psyche, that "penetrate" the body in order to locate it in a grid of technologies and practices that serve to anchor in it specific ideologies and values conducive to the larger society.

The other side of this view of learning, one that engages the discourse of possibility, is that if needs can be constructed they can be unmade and reconstructed in the interests of emancipatory concerns. For example, for teachers to simply explain the ideology of sexism in order to teach students about how it oppresses women and denigrates men may be meaningless if students have internalized such an ideology as part of the habits and structure of their psyche and personality. As a constellation of needs, sexism becomes a material force that has to be reflected

upon and reconstructed through new social practices and experiences lived concretely within non-sexist classroom relations. At stake here is the notion that if creativity and talent are largely a function of social conditions, it is important to unravel how ideology as both a set of ideas and a material practice in both the overt curriculum and in those aggressively engendered silences that make up the hidden curriculum either block or promote forms of critical teaching and learning.

All of these aspects of schooling suggest the need for teachers to be more critically attentive to the ideologies embedded in the hidden curriculum and how they work to shape different aspects of school life. North American educational theory has always posited a slavish attachment to that which could be seen and observed in classroom life; this emphasis on the literal has been a formidable obstacle preventing teachers and others from looking beyond the immediacy of classroom events to that which is unspoken and unseen so as to probe deeper into the meanings, values, and ideologies at work in all aspects of school life.[19]

Graduate Centre,
CUNY, New York

Educational Leadership,
Miami University

Notes

1. Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Passeron, *Reproduction in Education and Society*, London and Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 1979.
2. Jurgen Habermas, *Communications and the Evolution of Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1979 and, more recently *A Theory of Communicative Action*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1984.
3. See especially Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1976.
4. Alain Touraine, *Le Retour D'Acteur*, Paris: Gallimard, 1983.
5. Alvin Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*, New York: Seabury Press, 1979. This work introduces a concept of cultural capital quite distinct from that of Bourdieu. Gouldner's point of departure is a definition of capital as "produced objects" that are saleable (are commodities) and legitimated by the increased productivity they cause. According to Gouldner, the extent to which cultural goods correspond to this definition, they may also be considered capital. Thus, Gouldner tears cultural capital from its function in reproduction and, makes it, instead, an ineluctable part of the infrastructure of late capitalist societies. Hence, his idea of the "new" class as producers of cultural capital, but with an essential difference from the old classes, either the proletariat or the moneyed classes: its concern with autonomy for the sake of goods and services rather than either wages or profit.
6. Andre Gorz, "Technology, Technicians and the Class Struggle" in Andre Gorz, ed., *The Division of Labour*, London: Harvester Press, 1976.
7. Israel Scheffler, "University Scholarship and the Education of Teachers", *Teachers College Record*, 70:1 (1968), p. 11.
8. Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, New York: Random House, 1963.
9. Paul Piccone, "Symposium on the Role of the Intellectual in the 1980s", *Telos* No. 50 (Winter 1981-1982), 116.

10. Herbert Kohl, "Examining Closely What We Do", *Learning* (August 1983), p. 29.
11. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Q. Hoare and G. Smith, New York: International Publishers, 1971.
12. For Gramsci, radical intellectuals also attempt to provide the moral and intellectual leadership of a specific class, in this case, the working class.
13. For an overview of this debate, see Carl Boggs, "Marxism and the Role of Intellectuals", *New Political Science* 1:(2/3) 1979, pp. 7-23.
14. The concept of the free-floating intellectual as used here is similar to that expressed by Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, New York: Harvest Book, 1936.
15. Jurgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1968; *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* Boston: Beacon Press, 1984.
16. Erik Olin Wright, "Intellectuals and the Working Class", *The Insurgent Sociologist*, 8:1 (Winter 1978), pp. 5-18.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Foucault, cited in Henry A. Giroux, *Theory and Resistance in Education* (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, 1983), p. 207.
19. *Ibid.*