Chapter 20

Theorizing Politics and the Curriculum: Understanding and Addressing Inequalities through Critical Pedagogy and Critical Policy

Dave Hill

Introduction

In this theoretical chapter, in Part One, I want to look at the political nature of the National Curriculum, indeed, the political nature of any curriculum; the political nature of pedagogy and the hidden curriculum; and at how a curriculum — any curriculum, such as a national curriculum, or Every Child Matters, or a classroom curriculum — can be analysed critically.

In Part Two, I also want to look at education for equality. Here, I summarize and examine one specific approach to education for equality, critical pedagogy, referring to writers such as Paulo Freire, Antonio Gramsci, Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren. I then suggest what the task for critical, radical and socialist educators should be, and delineate a set of radical left, egalitarian, principals for education to guide such tasks.

I conclude by revisiting and refining a framework for Critical Education Policy Analysis, a series of questions which critical, radical and social justice educators should ask of education policy — any education policy — such as the/a national curriculum, or a change in teaching/learning methods, or in education policy proposals or change at the micro- (classroom or school level), meso- (local authority/school district level) or macro- (national, or global levels).

PART ONE: The National Curriculum, the Hidden Curriculum and Equality

Introduction

This chapter examines the political nature of the construction of the National Curriculum for England and Wales. One central issue addressed is whether the current national curriculum does – or could – contribute to increased equal opportunities, or even to more equal outcomes between different social class/social strata or different ethnic groups.

A second central issue, and site of labelling, stereotyping and discrimination, is the hidden curriculum, which includes the values, attitudes, and culturally loaded expectations expressed through school/institutional arrangements, through pedagogic relationships, and through rewards and punishments typical of the daily life in schools. With exceptions, and despite the best efforts of many teachers and schools, the hidden curriculum serves, in general, to reproduce the educational, social and economic inequalities in classrooms, schools and in society, rather than to expose, challenge, and contest those inequalities.

Thus, this chapter considers the formal (subject) curriculum and the hidden curriculum and their impact on equality in schooling. I discuss how the National Curriculum part of the (Conservative) 1988 Education Reform Act was developed. There are a number of concepts that are highly useful here, such as Pierre Bourdieu's (1976, 1990; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) concepts of 'cultural capital'; 'symbolic violence' and 'cultural arbitrariness', and Louis Althusser's (1971) concepts of education as an 'Ideological State Apparatus' (ISA) with some characteristics of a 'Repressive State Apparatus' (RSA).

Such concepts can, firstly, illuminate the political and ideological nature of the selection of knowledge in the formal curriculum, and, secondly, what is formally valued by teachers and schools in terms of 'know-how' and factual knowledge that comprise cultural capital. Below, I expand on these two types of knowledge, 'knowledge how', and 'knowledge that'. Different cultural behaviours, different 'knowledge that' and 'knowledge how' are privileged and rewarded through both the formal and the hidden curricula. Some school students/pupils, and their particular cultures and behaviours are negatively labelled, others positively.

Together with Marxist concepts of class (Marx and Engels, 1848) and social class reproduction (for example, in Bowles and Gintis 1976; Rikowski 2006c; Hill 2006c, 2007), these concepts provide insight into how schools and schooling systems reproduce inequalities, replicate community disenfranchisement, and structure social exclusion and alienation. Education, despite the wonderful motives of many teachers, in general can be seen to serve to advantage or disadvantage particular pupils/students – and indeed, teachers and other workers – with different 'low-status' cultural characteristics. In other words, to embed and to confirm 'race' and gendered social class inequalities in education, jobs, power and society.

Awareness, of how Capital and of how reproduction works in schools and classrooms – and in broader educational systems – can, of course, aid us in working against inequality in schooling, and in striving for more equal outcomes – a more equal, egalitarian classroom, school, schooling system, and society.

The Political Nature of the National Curriculum – and of the Conservative National Curriculum that resulted from the Education Reform Act of 1988

The National Curriculum is clearly a political creation. Any curriculum is, though some curricula are clearly more openly partisan than are others.
Curricula do not arrive on spaceships from outer space uncontaminated, unmediated, by the ideologies and beliefs and value systems and political agendas of the curriculum makers. Those who decide what 'knowledge' and 'skills' are to be compulsory in schools – and for whom – have their own political and ideological agendas. The National Curriculum of 1988 created by the Conservative Government attempted to create a Conservative hegemony in ideas, and remove liberal progressive and socialist ideas from schools and from the minds of future citizens (see Hill 1989, 1997a; Jones 1989, 2003; Tomlinson 2005).

In the process of developing and writing the separate subject guidelines for the National Curriculum, the National Curriculum subject Working Parties were pre-selected on ideological grounds – they were overwhelmingly packed with right-wingers, and were certainly not representative of the education profession. Duncan Graham, the first Chair and Chief Executive of the National Curriculum Council (appointed by the Conservative Government), accused Ministers of 'a wilful distortion for political ends'.

Within public education, the ideas and personnel of the Radical Right seized power at national level. Some of these ideologies were installed at the higher levels of education power. For example, Anthony O’Hea was a member of CATE (the Committee for the Accreditation of Teacher Education), and became a member of its successor body, the Teacher Training Agency. John Marks, a writer of the right-wing Black papers of the late 1960s and the 1970s, and member of the influential right-wing Hillgate Group of writers on education, became a member of the National Curriculum Council. Brian Cox, erstwhile radical writer of the right-wing Black Papers of the 1960s and 1970s wrote:

Since the general election a persistent rumour has been going round in education circles that the Prime Minister has agreed to a deal with right-wing Conservatives. They will go quiet in their opposition to Maestricht if he will allow them to take control of education. What truth there is in this I do not know, but it certainly fits the situation which has emerged in the last few months. (Cox 1992; cited in Hill 1994. See also, Graham and Tyler 1993; Blackburn 1992)

The radical Right was able to work itself into a central, powerful position. Activists of the radical Right – such as Martin Turner, John Marenbon and John Marks – were appointed to the National Curriculum Council and the Schools Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC) or its sub-committees and to its replacement Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) (see Simon 1992; Graham 1993a, 1993b, Lawton 1994). The radical Right consistently and controversially overruled 'professional' opinion (Jones 1989; Lawton 1994; Tomlinson and Craft 1995). In this conflict, the arbitrary powers awarded to the Secretary of State by the 1988 Act became all too viable. History was brought to a stop at 1975, lest more recent history become a licence for radical approaches (Graham 1992); science was redefined in a way that jettisons curricular attention to the social implications of scientific activity (Dobson 1992). English was reorganized so as to give priority to the Right’s main cultural themes, which involve making fetishes of the 'Standard English', a literary canon, 'traditional grammar' and spelling. Indeed, various of the chapters in the predecessor to this book (Cole, Hill and Shan 1997) referred to this political selection of knowledge in particular subject areas (see Hill 1997a for more detail on this).

**Questioning a Curriculum**

The political nature of any curriculum becomes apparent when it is subjected to particular questions about the power relations it defines.

**Questioning a Curriculum**

1. Who is the curriculum for?  
2. Who actually selected the content (e.g.) of the National Curriculum for England and Wales? And who chose them to do the selecting, and why were they chosen?  
3. Who are the curriculum(s) is/are validated and empowered? and how? Is the National Curriculum culturally elitist with emphasis on history, music, literature of the ruling upper and upper middle classes (and with a dismissal or downgrading of working class and minority ethnic cultures)? Or, conversely, and to what extent, is it an appropriately ecletic curriculum? (Or even, is a proletarian curriculum praising and validating only working-class achievements and histories and culture?)

4. Whose wins and who loses?  
5. What ideology does it represent (e.g. an individualistic competitive ideology, or a collective, collegial, ideology for social responsibility)?

What values and attitudes are affirmed? For example, does it represent and affirm the ideology, the values and attitudes, of a particular social group of people?

The Conservative National Curriculum of the 1988 Education Reform Act is widely criticized as overwhelmingly elitist, returning to more formal, test-driven methods and incorporating specific disadvantages for particular groups, such as working-class and minority ethnic groups.

Clearly a national Curriculum is, to a large extent, operationalizing the belief that the same body of formal curriculum content should be available to all (at least within the state sector – it is not compulsory for the private sector of schooling) within the primary and secondary state school systems.

The political principles behind a curriculum for national education, whether it is overtly egalitarian or anti-egalitarian, support the wider objectives of governmental policy and these are, of course, not only social but also economic. The National Curriculum has aims beyond the controlled reproduction and revalidation of particular cultural forms and elites. It is also a bureaucratic device for exercising control over what goes on in schools’ (Lawton and Chitty 1987:5).

Michael Barber noted about the 1988 Act that it 'not only provided for a market, but also a standardized means of checking which schools appeared to be performing best within it' (Barber 1996:50).
The National Curriculum and its effect on equality

The child-centred, 'liberal-progressive' curriculum that was typical of very many primary schools in the 1960s and 1970s, recognized and stimulated by The Plowden Report of 1967 (CACE 1967), was expressed both in terms of 'relevant' curriculum content, a general lack of 'intimidating' assessments, and in terms of more democratic pupil (student)/teacher (tutor) relationships. Here, both the formal and informal curriculum attempted to validate, to welcome, a whole range of home cultures and experiences. This child-centredness (typical of liberal-progressive ideology) was in reaction to the subject-centred curriculum, teacher-centred pedagogy and authoritarianism of schooling and pedagogic relationships that characterized most state education of the pre-World War Two and immediate post-war era.

In contrast, the post-1986 National Curriculum, in all three of its versions (1991, 2000, 2006), asserts the centrality of particular socio-economic/social class definitions of national culture against the increasing tendencies to both ethnic and social class pluralism that were at work in many schools and local education authorities in the 1970s and 1980s, for example, in radical, socialist LEAs such as the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) (abolished as part of the 1988 Education Reform Act). With respect to 'race' and ethnicity, the Blair and Brown New Labour governments' emphasis on 'integration', and away from 'multiculturalism', are a confirmation of a disavowal of the pluralism represented, in rhetoric at least, by policies for cultural diversity and multiculturalism. The National Curriculum is driven more by a project of cultural homogeneity than by the rhetoric of equal opportunity. Hatcher suggests:

What was crucial about equal opportunities in the 70s/80s was that a 'vanguard' of progressive teachers had been able to reach a much wider layer of teachers in the 'middle ground' – the role of LEAs and school policies was important here, and so was the prevalence of working groups on equal opportunities. At school and LEA levels these were the key organizational forms feeding equal opportunities into the wider arena. Once we had equal opportunities working groups in schools, now we have National Curriculum or SATs working groups, or none. (Hatcher 1995)

With the National Curriculum, and standardized testing, now in place, there is a greater degree of comparability attaching to student experience across the country – in purely curriculum terms, and more information regarding school performance for parents. There is now a considerably greater check, and surveillance (by parents, media, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)) on the standards of teachers and schools.

Bourdieu and the National Curriculum as Cultural Reproduction

The work of Pierre Bourdieu analyses the relationship between education and cultural formation. Bourdieu criticizes the desirability of a curriculum which is culturally elitist, culturally restorationist. The concepts of culture and cultural capital are central to Bourdieu's analysis of how the mechanisms of cultural reproduction function within schools. For Bourdieu, the education system is not, in practice, meritocratic. Its major function is to maintain and legitimate a class-divided society. In his view, schools are middle-class institutions run by and for the middle class. In summary, Bourdieu suggests that this cultural reproduction works to disadvantage working-class students in three ways:

1. It works through the formal curriculum and its assessment. Exams serve to confirm the advantages of the middle class while having the appearance of being a free and fair competition. Examinations and the curriculum clearly privilege and validate particular types of 'cultural capital', the type of elite knowledge that appears the natural possession of middle- and, in particular, upper-class children, but which is not 'natural' or familiar to non-elite children and school students, both white and Black and Ethnic Minority (BEM) children.

2. Cultural reproduction works through the hidden curriculum. This hidden curriculum categorizes some cultures, life-styles, ways of being and behaving (for Bourdieu the habitus), attitudes and values as praiseworthy, as being 'nice', being characteristic of the child for whom one can more likely expect and encourage academic aspiration and success. Thus, middle-class ways of walking, talking, accent, diction, vocabulary, and ways of interacting with teachers and authority figures, tend to be welcomed, praised and validated by schools (and universities).

In contrast, other ways of being and behaving, language, clothing, body language, and attitudes/values, attitudes to teachers and authority figures, are not viewed quite as tolerantly or supportively. 'Loud-mouthed' (i.e. assertive) girls/young women, or large African-Caribbean young men or boys, or shell-suited, cropped-headed, working-class, white young men/boys tend to be regarded as regrettable, 'nasty', alien and/or threatening – indeed, suitable subjects for exclusion, if not from school itself, then from academic expectation and success. People who walk and talk like Prince Charles are likely to be viewed very differently by teachers and schools than the children who appear in Shameless, Eastenders, or who are mocked in The Catherine Tate Show (popular television programmes in 2009 in England), those who speak with what Bernstein described as a 'restricted code' (rather than the 'elaborated code' typical of the middle class).

3. Cultural reproduction works through the separate system of schooling for the upper- and upper-middle classes, nearly all of whom, in a form of educational apartheid, send their children to private (independent) schools. Such schools attract around 7 per cent of the school population in England and Wales, but monopolize power positions in society.

Cultural Capital

Bourdieu argues that the culture transmitted by the school, and that expected by the schooling system, confers, values and validates the culture of the ruling
classes. At the same time, and as a consequence, it disconfirms, rejects and invalidates the cultures of other groups. Individuals in classrooms and school corridors bring with them and exhibit different sets of linguistic and cultural competencies.

The significant aspect of cultural capital is that school pupils/students (and, indeed, individuals in the workforce, such as teachers in schools or lecturers in colleges seeking promotion, or seeking a permanent instead of a temporary contract), stand to benefit from if they possess or show the 'right sort' of cultural capital.

This dominant cultural form is expressed in two ways. First, there is actual knowledge, of facts and concepts, acquaintance and familiarity with particular forms of historical, musical, artistic, literary, geographical, etc., culture. The current form of top Premiership soccer clubs, of the latest spat between pop stars or glamour models, or the love-life of reality television personalities, or of contemporary argot tends to be viewed as less important, of lower status in the hierarchy of knowledge than the selection of knowledge represented in the formal curriculum. This type of knowledge, knowledge that is, presented, and rewarded, or rejected and penalized for being part of, or not part of, the formal curriculum. In addition, lots of 'elite' knowledge and experiences not represented in the National Curriculum are rewarded through the hidden curriculum - the praise, estimation and expectations of teachers and of schooling. Some types of learning experiences of educational visits within the family, peer group or school - trips to the theatre, museums, exhibitions - are more highly validated and recognized than, say, a seaside holiday on the beach in Benidorm or Blackpool.

A second type of cultural capital is 'knowing how' - know-how - how to speak to teachers, not only knowing how to talk about books, but also knowing how to talk about them. It is knowing how to talk with the teacher, with the teacher with the body language, accent, colloquialisms, register of voice, grammatical exactitude in terms of the 'elaborated code' of language and its associated habitus, or code of behaviour.

In a number of social universes, one of the privileges of the dominant, who move in their world as a fish in water, resides in the fact that they need not engage in rational computation in order to reach the goals that best suit their interests. All they have to do is follow their dispositions which, being adjusted to their positions, 'naturally' generate practices adjusted to the situation (Bourdieu 1990:109, quoted in Hatcher 1998).

Some topics and ways of talking about them have more value in the eyes of schools in general. The 'nice child' is one who appears to be middle class, or who appears to be able - and willing - to cease exhibiting working-class, or Islamic or Rasta characteristics, and to adopt those of the white or assimilated middle class. In other words, the 'nice child' is usually one who also meets stereotypes of social class, gender, ethnicity and sexuality. To take one (true) example of what was perceived by some teachers as a descent from 'acceptable' cultural capital, to 'unacceptable', once a Moslem girl used to dressing in 'Western' clothes takes the decision to wear the Moslem scarf (hijab), then she is liable to be regarded as 'less acceptable' by many teachers, to be regarded as 'not as sensible as I thought you were' (quoted in, and from the experiences of, Khan 1998).

The Arbitrariness of the National Curriculum: Bourdieu and 'the Cultural Arbitrary'

Bourdieu's concept of the cultural arbitrary refers to school education being arbitrary in that the cultural values offered are not intrinsically better than any other, but are the values of the dominant class. In this sense, the selection of knowledge represented in the National Curriculum can be seen as arbitrary, as one selection of knowledge among many possible selections. The arbitrariness of the National Curriculum is far from random. It is fundamentally and primarily the imposition of ruling-class knowledge over working-class (and other subaltern cultural) knowledge.

Bourdieu and Symbolic Violence

The National Curriculum did not arrive by accident. Its content, as indeed virtually any national curriculum content, was keenly fought over. By symbolic violence, Bourdieu is referring to the way in which symbolic forms of communication such as language and culture are used as weapons to maintain power relations. The success of symbolic violence depends on the way that it is commonly unrecognized. Most accept the loaded rules or the game. Most 'buy in', at least on a conscious level, to the elitist model by which they have a deficit. As a result, many working-class children tend to become either submissive or to opt out from school academic achievement, to become alienated from and/or resistant to/dissociate of 'official' school culture. In contrast, middle-class children are familiar and at ease with 'desirable' symbolic forms. To legitimate what are, in fact, imposed meanings is a form of symbolic violence. There is a relationship between the pedagogic work of schools and the capital advantages associated with particular cultural attributes. Importantly, the school in this relationship is not neutral: it embodies the 'cultural arbitrary', the interests of the dominant class. Cultural capital is not conceived of as an individual attribute but as a 'relational concept to institutionalized class power' (Hatcher 1998:17). To appreciate the institutional role of education as part of this process, it is useful to refer to specific concepts within Althusser's work.

Althusser and Schooling as Ideological Reproduction

Althusser's analysis of schooling concerns a particular aspect of cultural reproduction, namely, ideological reproduction - the reproduction of what is considered 'only natural', or as 'common sense'. Here he drew, to some extent, on Gramsci (1978) who distinguished between 'common sense' which is a more or less chaotic and incoherent set of beliefs affected by the mass media, and 'good sense' which is critical, and sees through the 'common sense' that the ruling capitalist class is happy for people to believe. 'Good sense' in contrast, in Gramsci's terms, is superior to 'common sense': it is 'critical' and enables political action to contest the rule of 'the bourgeois' or capitalist class.
Althusser (1971) defines and shows the means by which a small but economically, politically and culturally powerful (capitalist) ruling class perpetuates itself in power, and can reproduce the existing political and economic systems that work in its favour. He distinguishes the Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs), such as the Law, the Police and the Armed Forces, from the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) such as the Family, Schooling and Education, Religion and the Media. The term ‘State Apparatus’ does not refer solely to apparatuses such as Ministries and various levels of government. It applies to those societal apparatuses, institutions and agencies that operate on behalf of, and maintain the existing economic and social relations of, production. In other words, the apparatuses that sustain capital, capitalism and capitalists. So, private schools, although not run by the state, can be regarded as ideological state apparatuses, just as much as state schools. Similarly, the mass media, owned by millionaire/billionaire capitalists and their corporations, act as ideological state apparatuses in terms of the ways they work to ‘naturalize capital’, to make competitive materialistic individualistic acquisitiveness seem ‘only natural’, rather than a product of a particular economic system – capitalism.

States, governments, and the ruling classes in whose interests they act, 11 prefer to use the second form of state apparatuses – the ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) rather than the repressive state apparatuses, the RSAs. Changing the school and initial teacher education (ITE) curriculum, or the law on strikes or picketing, is less messy than sending the troops onto the streets or visored baton-wielding police into the strike-bound mining villages or picket lines (such as at Orgreave in 1984) of Britain during the Great Miners’ Strike of 1983 – or indeed, any strike or anti-government/anti-capitalist demonstration. As Bourdieu has also noted, schooling and the other sectors of education are generally regarded as politically neutral, not as agencies of cultural, ideological and economic reproduction. The school, like other institutions in society such as the legal system and the police, is always presented in official discourse as neutral, non-political, and non-ideological. All ISAs play their part in reproducing ‘the capitalist relations of production’, that is, the capitalist/worker economic relationship based on the economic power of the former over the latter, and the social relationships (of, for example, dominance and subservience) that are produced by those economic relationships.

For Althusser, the dominant, the most important ISA in developed capitalist societies/economies/social formations is the educational ideological state apparatus. In this are included all aspects of the education system, from schools, to further (vocational) and higher (university) education, to what is of particular importance in ideological and in cultural reproduction, the ‘teacher training’ and education system. For Althusser, School (or, to use Althusser’s phrase, the Educational ISA) and Family have replaced the Church and Family ISAs as the dominant, most powerful ISAs. Church and Family were the dominant structures in ideological reproduction in previous centuries. Schools are particularly important since no other ideological state apparatus requires compulsory attendance of all children for eight hours a day for five days a week.

How does the school function as an ISA? Althusser suggests that what children learn at school is ‘know-how’. But besides techniques and knowledge, and in the course of learning them, children at school also learn the ‘rules of good behaviour’, ‘rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination.’ The school takes children from every class at infant-school age, and then for years in which the child is most ‘vulnerable’, squeezed between the family state apparatus and the educational state apparatus, it drill in them, whether it uses new or old methods, a certain amount of ‘know-how’ wrapped in the ruling ideology in its pure state (Althusser 1971: 147)

I. Ideological and Repressive State Apparatuses in Schooling and Initial Teacher Education

Althusser suggests that every Ideological State Apparatus is also in part a Repressive State Apparatus, punishing those who dissent:

There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus ... Schools and Churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection etc., to ‘discipline’ not only their shepherds, but also their flocks. (Althusser 1971: 138)

The education ISAs engage in repressive activities. Thus they often sideline, dismiss, or render likely to be dismissed, teachers and lecturers who are trade union and/or socialist activists, and those who teach subjects derided by the government. School and college/university subjects can be made invisible, as is explained below: the potentially ‘critical’ subjects of sociology, philosophy and politics can be virtually exorcized from the teacher education/teacher training curriculum, for example, and their protagonists made redundant (see Hill 1997b, c. d). And it affects school students and university students too. Resistant, ‘stroppy’, pupils/students who challenge the existing system, either individually, or by leading/joining ‘walkouts’ over local or national political issues are liable to be excluded from school. And resistant, counter-hegemonic teachers/lecturers are likely to be excluded from promotion.

Schooling and the Reproduction of Existing Society and Economy

The particular theoretical insights of Bourdieu and Althusser among others referred to in this chapter show how the current National Curriculum, a political construct ultimately designed by politicians, and the hidden curriculum, which just as ideological even though hidden, are central to a grossly unequal schooling and education system; a system that in very many ways reproduces and justifies the economic inequalities of an elitist hierarchy, along with the cultural and ideological discrimination that support it.
Dethorized Initial Teacher Education in England and Wales

The amount of freedom/autonomy, the space for individual (or group) 'agency', available to teachers, teacher educators, schools and other educational institutions is particularly challenged when faced with the structures of capital and its current neoliberal project for education (as argued in Hill 2001a, 2004, 2005a, 2006c, 2007, 2009). How much agency, autonomy, freedom of manoeuvre and action we have, as educators, has always been circumscribed. Critical Marxist voices and critical organizing always have been. In England and Wales, since the 1988 Education Reform Act and National Curriculum for schools, and with the 1992/1993 restructuring of teacher education (renamed 'training'), with its heavily circumscribed and monitored tick-box list of 'standards' that trainee teachers have to reach, spaces within the subject curriculum and within pedagogy - the methods we use - have been narrowed - though not removed!

Of course, many teachers and students do resist, and, by virtue of the material conditions of their own and their families' and communities' existence, do see through the capitalist 'common sense' acceptances of capitalist society and a quietist schooling system. But many do not.

PART TWO: Critical Pedagogy, and Education for Equality

What does education do in unequal Capitalist Britain (indeed, in any capitalist country). Recognizing the limitations - but also the opportunities - of our efforts as socialist and critical and radical educators and teachers, as people who try to work, in Gramscian terms (Gramsci 1978), as critical organic public transformative intellectuals where should we, as teachers in different sectors of the education state apparatuses, put our efforts?

There are considerable constraints on progressive and socialist action through the ideological and repressive apparatuses of the state, such as schooling and the academy/universities. Non-promotion, sidelining, denigration, threats, even dismissals, are common among socialist activist teachers, among egalitarians who 'rock the boat'.

Education for Equality, or (one version of it) Critical Education for Economic and Social Justice - or socialist education - is where teachers/educators try to act as Critical Transformative and Public Organic Intellectuals within and outside of sites of economic, ideological and cultural reproduction. Such activity is both deconstructive and reconstructive, deconstructing and critiquing the aims, workings and effects of capitalism, including capitalist schooling. It also embraces utopian politics of anger, analysis, action, and hope that recognizes, yet challenges, the strength of the structures and apparatuses of capital, that challenges the current system of education for inequality.

Educators have a privileged function in society - or can have. Within classrooms, critical transformative intellectuals - socialist educators - seek to enable student teachers and teachers (and school students) to critically evaluate; that is, from a Marxist perspective, to evaluate a range of salient perspectives and ideologies - including critical reflection itself - while showing a commitment to egalitarianism and socialism. There are other arenas: in/with local communities, and in national and global arenas.

In the next section, I suggest that it is useful to recognize that capitalism - transnational and national business corporations - wants particular services from schools (and from education in general). The particular agendas that business has regarding education - including primary schools - are set out below.

The Business Agenda in Education

The capitalist agenda for education is that education should produce a labour force that is structured into different tiers in a hierarchy of skill, pay and power. A labour force that has its labour powers (its skills, personality characteristics, knowledge) developed (or restrained and moulded) to fit the hierarchically-tiered labour market. This substantially reproduces the existing social class relations in the labour market, in incomes, wealth, life chances, quality. Most working-class children/young people get working-class jobs (whether in the blue collar or white collar strata of the working class), most so-called middle-class kids which in Britain is taken to signify the sons and daughters of the managerial and supervisory strata of the working class, whereas in the USA middle class refers to skilled workers; get middle-class jobs; most upper-class kids, the scions of the capitalist class, learn to rule and boss. Rich kids in the USA get to Ivy League, and there is a social class/strata-based tiered system of universities, as there is in Britain. 'Rich kids' get to Oxbridge, middle strata to the Russell Group (old) universities, and a proportion of the lower supervisory and skilled (blue collar manual and white collar) sections of the working class get to the 'new' universities, the former polytechnics - pretty much vocationalized skill development factories. And the same is true in most countries. Is this the capitalist agenda for education? This is the capitalist, or business agenda for education, to, by and large, produce a hierarchically skilled and tiered labour force that substantially reproduces not only the capitalist system, but also reproduces patterns of class inequality; that is, reproduces ('raced' and gendered) social class advantages and disadvantages.

The Business Agenda for Education

The other aspect of the capitalist agenda for education is to reproduce ideological conformity and acquiescence - to restrict and define 'youth rebelliousness' as under-age drinking, having sex or wearing 'yooz' clothes or piercings.

Reproducing ideological conformity means accepting those forms of 'yooz rebellion' that do not threaten the existing social and economic (capitalist) system. But this agenda, of reproducing ideological conformity, means that schools (and the media) do not allow children/young people to be 'exposed to', listen to, question, develop seriously alternative ideas, such as socialism. So here, schools and universities and the mass media function as what Althusser [1971] termed 'Ideological State Apparatuses', reproducing, more or less, the prevailing individualistic, materialistic, competitive, acquisitive, hedonistic ideology of contemporary neoliberal capitalism.
Critical Pedagogy: The Resistant Role of Critical Cultural and Education Workers and Critical Pedagogy

Paolo Freire

The Brazilian educator and political activist, Paulo Freire, argued that while there are exceptional academics and a handful of organizations dedicated to conducting research which serve egalitarian ends, not enough academics are working as critical 'cultural workers' who orient themselves toward concrete struggles in the public and political domains in order to extend the equality, liberty, and justice they defend (Freire 1998). He maintained that '[t]he movements outside are where more people who dream of social change are gathering', but points out that 'there exists a degree of reserve on the part of academics in particular, to penetrate the media, participate in policy debates, or to permeate policy-making bodies' (Shor and Freire 1987:131).

Freire argued that any curriculum which ignores racism, sexism, the exploitation of workers, and other forms of oppression at the same time supports the status quo (Heaney 1995). For Freire, critical educators attempt to develop 'conscientization', a process through which learners develop critical consciousness, becoming more aware of oppression, and of becoming a subject rather than an object of politics, of history. Through becoming conscious of becoming a subject in common with other oppressed subjects, this leads to becoming part of a process of changing the world. This is a very different concept of the teacher than 'teacher as technician', delivering someone else's curriculum, as de-theorized and thereby deskillled. Leena Helavara Robertson's Chapter 1 in this volume (Robertson 2009) exposes the very different ideological agendas and values regarding early years curricula in England, citing the Freirean-type principles in the Reggio Emilia model of pre-school education, and the 'Every Child Matters' agenda in England, with its opening statement 'Every Child Matters is all about improving the life chances of all children, reducing inequalities and helping them achieve what they told us they wanted out of life'. This is not Freirean in the sense that this statement would seem to accept children's (and their communities') current state of desire and expectation, which is commonly rather less than challenging the existing macro-economic and political structures that reinforce and reproduce their inequality, rather than challenging it, and working to overcome/replace it. (But it is more progressive than the rival National Curriculum KS1 and 2, and the Early Years Foundation Stage).

Freire argued that if scholars, researchers, or educators want to transform education to serve democratic ends, they cannot simply limit their struggles to institutional spaces. They must also develop a desire to increase their political activity outside of the schools. To engage as critical cultural workers would require academics to politicize their research by becoming social actors who mobilize, develop political clarity, establish strategic alliances, and work closer to the nexus of power, or the 'real levers of transformation' (Shor and Freire 1987:131).

Antonio Gramsci

The Italian communist leader and theoretician of the 1920s and 1930s (until his death in one of Mussolini's Fascist jails) wrote extensively about the role of intellectuals, especially concerning their potential, as transformative intellectuals, in developing 'good sense', a critical analysis of society, as differentiated from 'common sense', fairly akin to 'folklore'. He wrote that educators have a privileged function in society – or can have. In this sense, as Gramsci put it, 'all men are intellectuals ... but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals' (Gramsci 1971:10), maintaining that the notion of intellectuals as being a distinct social category independent of class was a myth. By 'organic', Gramsci was referring to those intellectuals – such as school teachers – who remain or become part of the social class they are working with, linked into part of participating in, local struggles, campaigns and issues, and who work towards developing critical consciousness – class consciousness and analysis. Many teachers do this, taking on the issues and experiences and demands of the local community, of the community from which their children are drawn. This is in contrast to those 'traditional intellectuals' who see themselves as a class above and separate from class struggles, or who ally themselves with the dominant pro-capitalist ideology.

United States Critical Educators/ Pedagogues

The writings of leading US critical educators, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, and Ira Shor, were all inspired in part by Paulo Freire and his Marxist inspired/ Marxist (though not Marxist) theories and also by Gramsci (and by the Culturalist Marxism of the Frankfurt School, themselves affected by Gramsci's work). These stressed the need for ideological intervention in the perennial 'culture wars' between the ideas of the capitalist class and the ideas of subalterns oppressed social groups such as minorities, women, workers.

For critical pedagogy, teachers and lecturers should be critical transformative intellectuals who seek to enable student teachers and teachers (and school and university students) to critically evaluate a range of salient perspectives and ideologies – including critical reflection itself – while showing a commitment to egalitarianism. For Peter McLaren, 'critical pedagogy must ... remain critical of its own presumed role as the metatruth of educational criticism' (McLaren 2000:104). This does not imply forced acceptance or silencing of contrary perspectives, but it does involve a privileging of egalitarian and emancipatory perspectives, not in liberal fashion, sitting on the fence. Critical pedagogy espouses a metanarrative (a story), a critique of oppression and a hope and call for emancipation. It has an ethical, moral, ideological component – and an activist demand.
Critique of liberal versions of critical pedagogy

Critical pedagogy can be vapid, pluralistic, idiosyncratic, a mish-mash of 'now let's sit down and discuss this in a non-threatening and non-authoritarian manner' with 'now let's all choose what we want to do classroom projects on'. It can dissolve into the liberal-progressivist/child-centred individualism and feel-good practice that was typical of much of primary schooling in England and Wales of the sixties and seventies. While for many, this liberal-progressivism, and the Plowden Report (CACE 1967) that legitimized it, was a very welcome advance on the traditional teacher-centred teaching methods and rigid subject-centred curriculum of the fifties and before, and while it did actually prioritize schools being happy places, it did tend to ghettoize working-class and minority ethnic children in to their social class communities, and tried to make the curriculum 'relevant', without criticizing or seeking to go beyond felt needs of relevance.

Critical pedagogy might call for liberation, emancipation, the ability to critique and deconstruct the individual, social, media and political world, and to actively organize and work for a more equal world. It isn't socialist or Marxist, nor does it claim to be. It does not seek to change society radically, by replacing capitalism with socialism. As Rikowski notes:

'Socialist pedagogy becomes a form of Left liberalism, where social justice, equality, social worth etc. (in general, and in relation to education specifically) can be solved or resolved within the existing framework of capitalist society. The solutions appear to rest on equalizing resources and rewards, and on changing attitudes towards certain groups (Rikowski 2007).

Of course, many or most people reading this chapter will be quite satisfied with reforms, making existing society a bit better. Others (such as me) want more radical change. While welcoming reforms – little steps – in classrooms, schools, and at Local Authority (LA) and national level, they can have, of course, major life-enhancing impacts on the children and young people we teach.

Critical Revolutionary Pedagogy

In the USA a new, and Marxist, development in critical pedagogy, is critical revolutionary pedagogy. Some of their work, and some of their theorized praxis in schools and colleges and in wider arenas, is published in online journals such as the Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies (www.jceps.com) that I edit, Cultural Logic (at http://clogic.eaver.org/) and Workplace, a Journal of Academic Labor (at http://www.cust.educ.ubc.ca/workplace/). Of course these are drops in the ocean of racist, sexist and pro-capitalist individualistic imperialistic capitalist media and schooling.

McLaren (2000) extends the 'critical education' project into 'revolutionary pedagogy', which is clearly based on a Marxist metanarrative. Revolutionary pedagogy

would place the liberation from race, class and gender oppression as the key goal for education for the new millennium. Education . . . so conceived would be dedicated to creating a citizenry dedicated to social justice and to the reinvention of social life based on democratic socialist ideals. (ibid.:196)

Revolutionary Critical Pedagogy, which sounds very un-English and un-American, so I prefer to anglicize it as Socialist Education, must remain self-critical, and critique its own presumed role as the metathought – the gospel – of educational criticism. It has to critique itself, not just the existing system. It is not a gospel, immune from criticism.

The task of radical educators/teachers

As I see it, radical educators and teachers who are socialist or Marxist seek equality – more equality of outcome – rather than simply equal opportunities to get on in a grossly unequal society. The task of democratic Marxist/Socialist teachers, and of resistant egalitarian Socialist and Marxist counter-hegemonic teachers, students, cultural workers, policy makers and activists is:

1. to expose and organize and teach against the actual violence by the capitalist state and class against the 'raced' and gendered working class;
2. to expose the ways in which they perpetuate and reproduce their power, that of their class, through the ideological and repressive apparatuses of the state (such as the media, the schooling, further education and university systems);
3. in particular, the way they do this through demeaning and deriding the 'cultural capital' and knowledge of the 'raced' and gendered) working class through what Pierre Bourdieu termed 'cultural arbitrary' and 'symbolic violence'; the way working-class kids are largely taught they are worth less – or worthless – and upper-class kids are taught they will control and inherit the earth, and some middle-class kids are taught how to manage it for them;
4. to argue for, propagate, organize, agitate for and implement democratic egalitarian change and policy.

Some Radical Left Principles for Education Systems: Part of an Eco-Socialist Manifesto

One of the academic/educational/propagandizing roles I try to play is by developing, collaboratively, with other socialists/Marxists/ radicals, suggestions, ideas, and codified ideas as draft manifestos for education, for what a Marxist education would be like. What education could be! Here, in developing democratic Marxist proposals for an egalitarian education system, the following nine aspects of education need to be considered:

The Aims of Education

1. Curriculum/Content, e.g. what is selected, who by, how it is organized – in subjects, as interdisciplinary learning, as problem solving?
2. Pedagogy, the hidden curriculum, our relationship with pupils/students, e.g.
democratic or authoritarian classrooms and schools – what patterns of 
to the different ('racial' and gendered) 
social class groups of children/young people in our classrooms and schools?
3. Relationships with the Communities we serve, e.g. are we open or closed to 
parents and local school communities, for example, in connection with 
questions of 'really useful knowledge' for the local communities; are we 
keeping the communities out or in?
4. The Macro-Organization of Schooling e.g. who controls the school system 
at local or national level, what are the different types of schools, who do they 
serve (which 'racial' and gendered social class groups or stratas), what is 
their funding, are there private schools alongside state schools, or not?
5. The Organization of Pupils/Students within Schools, e.g. how should school 
students be organized – as mixed ability, or 'banded' or 'streamed'?
6. The Organization of Education Workers and the Forms of Management 
within Schools, e.g. what is the degree of collegiality, of shared decision-
making, the degree of 'brutalist managerialism' typical of 'new public 
managerialism'?
7. The Control of Education at National and at Local and at School Levels, 
e.g. who controls schools – is there democratic control, private control, 
workers' control, pupil/student control, central government control, 
business control, religious leaders' control, police control?
8. The Resourcing and Funding of Education, e.g. is more spent on education 
than defence, or less? Is more money given to funding disadvantaged areas 
groups of pupils/students, or is there no positive discrimination in funding, 
or is mostly given to to the most advantaged?
9. Evaluating How We Are Doing with all the above ... who is gaining what 
and who is losing what? And How?

In connection with – indeed, as some answers to – the above questions, here are 
some suggestions for schooling for equality:

Schooling for Equality: 20 Policies

1. Vastly increased funding for education, resulting in, for example, smaller 
class sizes, better resources and hugely improved low-environmental-impact 
school buildings, set in grounds conducive to children's development of a 
love of nature as well as of their communities;
2. A complete end to selection and the development of fully comprehensive 
schooling, further and higher education;
3. A complete ban on private schools;
4. Schools and colleges on a 'human scale' within or as local to communities as 
possible;
5. Greatly increased provision of free school transportation, including, where 
possible, 'walking buses';
6. Free nutritious school food, prepared on site with the use of locally-sourced 
produce where possible;
7. Cooperation between schools and local authorities, rather than competitive 
markets;
8. Greatly increased local community democratic accountability in schooling 
and further education, rather than illusory 'parental choice';
9. Increased powers for democratically elected and accountable local 
government to redistribute resources, control quality and engage in the 
development of anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic policies and 
practices;
10. The enactment of egalitarian policies aimed at achieving greatly more equal 
educational outcomes, irrespective of factors such as social class, gender, 
'race', sexuality or disability, while recognizing that what education can 
achieve is limited unless part of a thoroughgoing social transformation to 
eliminate poverty and discrimination;
11. An anti- elitist, anti-racist, flexible common curriculum that seeks to support 
the transition from current social relations to those based on socialist 
cooperation and ecological justice, to be negotiated by local and national 
governments in cooperation with workers' representatives and communities;
12. The curriculum to be rich and varied, allowing themes, natural and human 
processes to be explored in a range of ways – artistically, musically, 
scientifically, politically, ecologically;
13. Place-based learning, concerned with the meaning of everyday life: critical 
studies of environmental impacts of capital on local scales alongside 
historical injustices arising out of the circuits of capitalist social, political and 
ultimately economic relations;
14. Teaching and learning to foster critical awareness, sensitivity towards and 
confidence and ability to challenge ecological and social injustice – a 
planetary consciousness rooted in an internationalist global citizenship, and 
empowerment to act in defiance of the oppressed, of other species and 
ecosystems;
15. The abolition of punitive testing regimes and the exploration and 
establishment of alternative creative assessment practices;
16. Teachers educated to exercise authority in democratic and anti-authoritar-
ian ways, engaging in critical pedagogy, with a commitment to 
developing their school and community as sites of ecological and political 
awareness and activism;
17. A breaking down of boundaries fixed within educational systems e.g. 
between childhood dependency and adult responsibility and between 
subject specialisms;
18. Teachers and administrators who act as role models of integrity, love, care 
and thoughtfulness in institutions capable of embodying ideals in all of their 
operations, avoiding hypocrisy in a separation of academic and theoretical 
ideas from reality;
19. A recognition on the part of teachers and officials that all knowledge 
aquired in schools and FE and HE institutions carries with it the 
responsibility to see that it is well used in the world;
20. A fostering of cultures within classrooms and schools and further/vocational 
education and higher education institutions which is democratic, egalitarian, 
collaborative and collegiate, promoting an educational system the aim 
of which is the flourishing of society, collectives, communities.
Some might say that under the existing system, this is all a bit overwhelming, and, can this be done under the existing system? To which I respond: do teachers wanting equality want the above? Any of the above? Some of them? So, is it better to try or to shrug our shoulders and say, ‘we can’t do anything. Let’s just be lovely teachers and work to develop the best we can from our children’. Which is what many wonderful teachers, committed to the children they teach, do ‘doing their best’, say and do. But how much better to try to create a system that allows, and encourages – and demands – education for equality, so the system works with egalitarian teachers, and does not hinder – or suffocate – those noble aims!

Others might say, ‘but how can we possibly achieve all of the above? Won’t we be dissipating our energies trying for all of that? To which my response is that piecemeal reforms, victories on one front or another are hugely important. But without dreaming of, and articulating, an overall education (and social) utopia, we will never reach it.

Conclusion

Critical education policy analysis

In helping us reach education for equality, the following form of policy critique may be useful – a list of questions that can be applied to any education policy – for a change in classroom practice, in school admissions, in the curriculum, in school meals policy, in funding policy within a school, or between schools, a policy of academy schools, or of privatization, or of relations with the community/communities, of headteacher or governors’ powers, for example.

Thus, one way of analysing policy (any education policy, any policy, at global, or national, or local education authority/school district level, or school/college or classroom level) is to ask about any policy the following questions:

Critical Policy Questions to Ask

The Policy Itself
1. What is it?
2. Who/what does it impact on/regulate/deregulate?
3. What are the policy features/changes?
4. Who proposed/originated the policy?
5. Who opposed it?
6. Who carried it out?
7. When? And when does/did it become operational?

Aims
8. What do its originators (e.g. the government, their ideologists/news media/think tanks, or, e.g. the school governors/headteacher/principal/administration) claim are the reasons for it? What problem(s) is the policy intended to ‘solve’?
9. What do they claim are its intended aims (what it is intended to do, or solve) and what are its likely effects?

10. What do others (e.g. its opponents, critics) say are the aims of the policy? (i.e., are/are/were there hidden alternative additional aims?)
11. What do others (e.g. its opponents) say are the likely effects of the policy?

Context
12. How does the policy relate to wider social trends, in ideological developments and in government policies – does the policy form part of an overall policy of, for example, redistributing power to, or from, particular social groups, particular class strata? Or is it part of a broader project of privatization, or ‘rolling back the state’? What is the wider context, nationally and internationally (e.g. is there ‘policy borrowing’, e.g. copying a US policy, or a British policy)?

Impacts
13. Who actually wins and who loses as a result of the policy – which (‘raced’ and gendered) social class, or social class layers (or ethnic group, gender, religious or other group) gain, or, alternatively, lose power/wealth/income/educational and economic opportunity as a result of the policy? In other words, ‘who gets the gravy, and who has to make it’?
14. How resets the policy, how and why, and how successfully – in the short term (policy proposal stage), medium term (policy legislation stage) and the long term (the policy implementation and consolidation stages)?
15. What, if any, are the unintended consequences of the policy?

Asking critical questions such as these, in particular, the question, ‘who wins and who loses’, of any education (or other) policy can enable us to better evaluate what is going on at local (classroom/school) level, at local authority/school district levels, and at national level. Without such critical questioning, the rampant inequalities that exist in education systems will continue to be reproduced. Critical questioning is not enough. It needs to lead to action and activism/action within the classroom, within teachers’ associations, trade unions, social and community groups and movements. But within the classroom is a good start, teaching against racism, sexism, homophobia, disability, and against social class inequality and discrimination and labelling, and modelling that egalitarianism in our own behaviour in the classroom and staffroom.

The two Promoting Equality in Schools books of the late 1990s (Cole et al. 1997; Hill and Robertson Helavaara 2009) (this publication; Cole 2009), do attempt to show how each curriculum subject can be used to promote equality in schools and classrooms, and also (in many cases) enable teacher, student teachers and teaching assistants, to evaluate how subjects can and do work against promoting equality. A new curriculum, or an interpretation of the existing curriculum subject, could be validating, speaking to, speaking about and representing a range of cultures, rather than being restricted – overwhelmingly and fundamentally – to the cultural forms traditionally associated with those who rule our society.

Teachers and schools can use and can creatively develop or ‘subvert’ the formal and the hidden curriculum, to develop critical reflection in pupils and students. At a wider level, radical teachers, teachers promoting equality, can
themselves work towards a wide-ranging comprehensive restructuring of the schooling and education systems so that they can maximize both equality of opportunity and a far greater degree of equality of outcome. In this way, the negative labelling of millions of children in our primary schools, with its ‘raced’ and gendered and other types of social class-based stereotyping, discrimination, hurt and inequality, can be replaced by a loving, egalitarian and emancipatory system of schools, classroom experiences, and, ultimately, society.

Notes
1 An earlier version of sections of this chapter appeared as ‘The National Curriculum, the Hidden Curriculum and Equality’, in Hill and Cole (2001).
2 This is not to be over-deterministic. Ten thousand teachers who are aware of such issues, do try to make sure that class, race and gender stereotypes and labelling do not happen in their classrooms and schools. Within Marxist educational theory, see Giroux 1983 for a succinct summary of the work of ‘reproduction theory’ writers, such as Althusser, Bowles and Gintis, and Bourdieu. Giroux, as a ‘resistance theorist’ was contesting what he saw (and sees) as the over-determinism of reproduction theory, the theory that sees schooling and state apparatuses as reproducing the existing capitalist system economically (as in Bowles and Gintis), culturally (as in Bourdieu) and ideologically (as in Althusser) (for a similar set of views, see Cole 1988). My own writing as a structuralist and classical Marxist, accepting reproduction theory, but not as deterministic. My own theoretical analysis of the relationship between the state, ideology and the curriculum is contained, for example, in Hill 1989, 2001a, 2003a, also Hill 2004 and Kelsh and Hill 2006.
4 Cited in Docking (1996:10). Varius of the subject by subject chapters in Cole, Hill and Shaw (1997) and Hill and Cole (1999a) and in this volume (Hill and Robertson 2009) and in Cole 2009, detail some of the debates. Several of the Programmes of Study were manipulated by Prime Minister and ministerial dictate. This is clearly set out in Margaret Thatcher’s autobiography (Thatcher 1993) and in those of Minister of Education, Kenneth Baker (1993), and the first Chair of the National Curriculum Council between 1988–1991, appointed by Kenneth Baker, Duncan Graham (see Graham 1992, 1993a, b; Graham and Tydor 1995).
7 There is a Left-wing critique of liberal–progressive and socially differentiated schooling and curricula. It draws primarily on the work of Gramsci (see Epstein 1993; Hill, Cole and Williams 1997). Gramsci considered that schooling is and should be hard work, that while developing a critical perspective and attitude, working-class children need to study and become inducted into and familiar with the elite, dominant culture. Sare’s summary and discussion of Gramsci (Sarep 1988 and the chairman of Gramsci (Sarep 1988) is very clear.
9 See Robertson and Hill 2001, for a discussion of how some minority ethnic groups are, in relative terms, excluded from the Literacy Hour.
10 Bernstein 1971. For a brief summary, see Atherton 2008.

11 The Marxist analysis of social class and society is most famously, perhaps, expressed in the following quote: ‘The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles … oppressor and oppressed stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes ... Our epoch ... has simplified the class antagonisms ... into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeois and Proletariat. (Marx and Engels 1848).
12 In the footnote to The Communist Manifesto, it is explained that ‘By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labor’ and that ‘By proletariat, the class of modern wage laborers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labor power in order to live. [Note by Engels – 1888 English edition]. The Communist Manifesto was first published in February 1848 in London. It was written by Marx and Engels for the Communist League, an organization of German emigre workers living in several western European countries. For documents/data relating to Marxism, see http://www.anu.edu.au/policr/marx/marx.html, or read (British) Marxist online newspapers and journals, such as those by The Socialist Party at http://www.socialistparty.org.uk, The Socialist Workers Party at http://www.swp.org.uk, The International Socialist Group at http://www.isg.org.uk, and its international review at http://www.isg-ili.org.uk/spip.php?rubrique27.
13 Parts of this section are a summary of and taken from Hill (2009).
14 This is a Gramscian phrase, used widely in critical pedagogy. See, in particular, Giroux 1988; Hill 1989, Aronowitz and Giroux 1993; Borg, Buntijeg and Mayo 2002; Hamm and McLaren 2003; Hill and Boyle 2003; Harding 2003; Hill and Boyle 2003; and Hare and Hill 2003.
15 The common classification of social class in the UK is that used by the census, national statistics, formerly the Registrar-General’s classification of social class. It is a series of classifications based on education, income and lifestyle/consumption patterns. It is based on Weberian sociology which emphasizes patterns of consumption rather than what Marxists do, which is to look at the relationships of people to the means of production – i.e., are they members of the capitalist class, the owners of labour power, or are they the proletariat, those who sell their labour power. As a Marxist, my own analysis, when referring to ‘middle-class kids’ is that in Marxist terms these are the middle strata of the working class. See Rickowski 2006, and for a more extended discussion, Kelsh and Hill 2006.
16 Socialist resistance to capitalism and to capitalist education is not new. There is an impression that there was little radical education, little socialist, communist, Marxist schooling, or teaching, before the critical pedagogy in the USA that started in the 1970s and 1980s with the impact of Freire on such North American radical educators such as Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren and Ira Shor. But there have been hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of such teachers and pedagogues within and outside official education systems, throughout Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, Latin America, India, for example, since The Communist Manifesto (see Neary 2005). Socialist/Marxist education has a long history. So does communist education (e.g. see Morgan 2005).
17 Because of the particularly virulent anti-communism and anti-Marxism of the US government and state apparatuses – from the times of HUAC (the House UnAmerican Activities Committee) of the 1930s to the Patriot Act of George W. Bush, and the radicals in the USA (other than small groups, parties and sects) preferred to call themselves ‘radical’ or critical, sometimes a euphemism for Marxist.
18 See also McLaren 2005; McLaren and Farahmandpur 2005; McLaren and Jaramillo 2007; McLaren and Rikowski 2006. For a commentary on McLaren and Revolutionary Critical Pedagogy, see Martin 2006. Peter McLaren’s website is an excellent

The key task, for Marxist educators — indeed Marxist — is class and class consciousness. In The Poverty of Philosophy (1847) Marx distinguishes a ‘class-in-itself’ (class position) and a ‘class-for-itself’ (class consciousness). The Communist Manifesto (Marx and Engels 1848) explicitly identifies the ‘formation of the proletariat into a class’ as the key political task facing the communists.

This is a summary of Hill and Bocely 2007; see also Hill 2005b.

I have carried out some sample policy analyses, addressing various of these questions, in the following: Hill 1997a, which analysed Conservative education policy 1977–1979; Hill 2006a, which analysed New Labour’s education policy 1987–2008; Hill 1989, 1990, 2004, 2006a, b, 2007b and Hill, Cole and Williams 1997, which analysed the restructuring of teacher education into teacher training by the Conservatives in 1990 and the maintenance of that techniquising and decontextualisation by New Labour; and Hill 2006b, for the ILO, analysing global neoliberalism and its impacts on education and on education workers. Lewis, Hill and Fawcett 2009 does the same for England and Wales.

References


