

Whose Markets, Whose Knowledge?

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... We have entered a period of reaction in education. Our educational institutions are seen as total failures. High dropout rates, a decline in "functional literacy," a loss of standards and discipline, the failure to teach "real knowledge" and economically useful skills, poor scores on standardized tests, and more—all these are charges leveled at schools. And all of these, we are told, have led to declining economic productivity, unemployment, poverty, a loss of international competitiveness, and so on. Return to a "common culture," make schools more efficient, more responsive to the private sector. Do this and our problems will be solved.

Behind all of these charges is an attack on egalitarian norms and values. Although hidden in the rhetorical flourishes of the critics, in essence "too much democracy"—culturally and politically—is seen as one of the major causes of "our" declining economy and culture. Similar tendencies are quite visible in other countries as well. The extent of the reaction is captured in the words of Kenneth Baker, former British Secretary of Education and Science in the Thatcher government, who evaluated nearly a decade of rightist efforts in education by saying, "The age of egalitarianism is over."¹ He was speaking decidedly positively, not negatively.

The threat to egalitarian ideals that these attacks represent is not usually made quite this explicitly, as they are often couched in the discourse of "improving" competitiveness, jobs, standards, and quality in an educational system that is seen as in total crisis. This discourse is clearly present today in "New Labour" in the United Kingdom and in similar policies in the United States. In all too many ways, both nations' educational policies continue trends established under earlier conservative (and sometimes supposedly "liberal") governments.

It would be simplistic, however, to interpret what is happening as only the result of efforts by dominant economic elites to impose their will on education. Many of these attacks do represent attempts to reintegrate education into an economic agenda. Yet they cannot be fully reduced to that, nor can they be reduced to being only about the economy. Cultural struggles and struggles over race, gender, and sexuality coincide with class alliances and class power.

Education is a site of struggle and compromise. It serves as a proxy as well for larger battles over what our institutions should do, whom they should serve, and who should make these decisions. And, yet, by itself it is one of the major arenas in which resources, power, and ideology specific to policy, finance, curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation in education are worked through. Thus, education is both cause and effect, determining and determined. Because of this, no one article could hope to give a complete picture of this complexity. What I hope to do instead is to provide an outline of some of the major tensions surrounding education in the United States as it moves in conservative directions. A key word here is directions. The plural is crucial to my arguments, because, as I showed, there are multiple and at times contradictory tendencies within the rightist turn.

Although my focus in this article is largely internal, it is impossible to understand current educational policy in the United States without placing it in its international context. Thus, behind the stress

on higher standards, more rigorous testing, education for employment, and a much closer relationship between education and the economy in general, and so on, was the fear of losing in international competition and the loss of jobs and money to Japan, Mexico, and increasingly now the "Asian Tiger" economies such as China and elsewhere (although this has been mediated by the economic upheavals still being experienced in parts of Asia).² In the same way, the equally evident pressure in the United States to reinstall a (selective) vision of a common culture, to place more emphasis on the "Western tradition," on religion, on the English language, and similar emphases are deeply connected to cultural fears about Latin America, Africa, and Asia. This context provides a backdrop for my discussion.

The rightward turn has been the result of the successful struggle by the right to form a broad-based alliance. This new alliance has been so successful in part because it has been able to win the battle over common sense.³ That is, it has creatively stitched together different social tendencies and commitments and has organized them under its own general leadership in issues dealing with social welfare, culture, the economy, and as we shall see in this article, education. Its aim in educational and social policy is what I called "conservative modernization."⁴

This alliance contains four major elements. Each has its own relatively autonomous history and dynamics, but each has also been sutured into the more general conservative movement. These elements include neoliberals, neoconservatives, authoritarian populists, and a particular fraction of the upwardly mobile professional and managerial new middle class. I pay particular attention to the first two of these groups here since they—especially neoliberals—are currently in leadership in this alliance to "reform" education. However, in no way do I want to dismiss the power of the latter two groups, and I return to them in later chapters.

Neoliberalism: Schooling, Choice, and Democracy

Neoliberals are the most powerful element within the alliance supporting conservative modernization. They are guided by a vision of the weak state. Thus, what is private is necessarily good and what is public is necessarily bad. Public institutions such as schools are "black holes" into which money is poured—and then seemingly disappears—but which do not provide anywhere near adequate results. For neoliberals, one form of rationality is more powerful than any other—economic rationality. Efficiency and an "ethic" of cost-benefit analysis are the dominant norms. All people are to act in ways that maximize their own personal benefits. Indeed, behind this position is an empirical claim that this is how *all* rational actors act. Yet, rather than being a neutral description of the world of social motivation, this is actually a construction of the world around the valuative characteristics of an efficiently acquisitive class type.⁵

Underpinning this position is a vision of students as human capital. The world is intensely competitive economically, and students—as future workers—must be given the requisite skills and dispositions to compete efficiently and effectively.⁶ Furthermore, any money spent on schools that is not directly related to these economic goals is suspect. In fact, as "black holes," schools and other public services as they are currently organized and controlled waste economic resources that should go into private enterprise. Thus, for neoliberals, not only are public schools failing our children as future workers, but like nearly all public institutions they are sucking the financial life out of this society. Partly this is the result of "producer capture." Schools are built for teachers and state bureaucrats, not "consumers." They respond to the demands of professionals and other selfish state workers, not the consumers who rely on them. The increasingly virulent attacks on teachers unions and professional associations by the right is but the tip of the iceberg here.

The idea of the "consumer" is crucial here. For neoliberals, the world in essence is a vast supermarket. "Consumer choice" is the guarantor of democracy. In effect, education is seen as simply one more product like bread, cars, and television.⁷ By turning it over to the market through voucher and choice

plans, education will be largely self-regulating. Thus, democracy is turned into consumption practices. In these plans, the ideal of the citizen is that of the purchaser. The ideological effects of this position are momentous. Rather than democracy being a *political* concept, it is transformed into a wholly *economic* concept. The message of such policies is what might best be called "arithmetical particularism," in which the unattached individual—as a consumer—is deraced, declassed, and degendered.⁸

The metaphors of the consumer and the supermarket are actually quite apposite here. For just as in real life, there are individuals who indeed can go into supermarkets and choose among a vast array of similar or diverse products. And there are those who can only engage in what can best be called "postmodern" consumption. They stand outside the supermarket and can only consume the image.

The entire project of neoliberalism is connected to a larger process of exporting the blame from the decisions of dominant groups onto the state and onto poor people. After all, it was not the government that made the decisions to engage in capital flight and to move factories to those nations that have weak or no unions, fewer environmental regulations, and repressive governments. And it was not working-class and poor communities that chose to lose those jobs and factories, with the loss of hope and schools and communities in crisis that were among the results of these decisions. And it was neither of them who chose to lay off millions of workers—many of whom had done rather well in school—because of mergers and leveraged buyouts, trends that have again become more pronounced.

With their emphasis on the consumer rather than the producer, neoliberal policies need also to be seen as part of a more extensive attack on government employees. In education in particular, they constitute an offensive against teacher unions that are seen to be much too powerful and much too costly. Neoliberal policies, although they may not have been created as a conscious attack on women, need to be interpreted as part of a longer history of attacks on women's labor, as the vast majority of teachers in the United States—as in so many other nations—are women.⁹

Varied policy initiatives have emerged from the neoliberal segments of the new hegemonic alliance. Most have centered on either creating closer linkages between education and the economy or placing schools themselves into the market. The former is represented by widespread proposals for "school to work" and "education for employment" programs, and by vigorous cost-cutting attacks on the "bloated state." The latter initiative is no less widespread and is becoming increasingly powerful. It is represented by both national and state-by-state proposals for voucher and choice programs.¹⁰ These include providing public money for private and religious schools (although these are highly contested proposals). Behind this is a plan to subject schools to the discipline of market competition.¹¹ Such "quasi-market solutions" are among the most divisive and hotly debated policy issues in the entire nation, with important court cases concerning funding for private or religious schools through voucher mechanisms having been decided or now being closely watched.¹²

Some proponents of "choice" argue that only enhanced parental "voice" and choice will provide a chance for "educational salvation" for minority parents and children.¹³ Moe, for instance, claims that the best hope for the poor to gain the right "to leave bad schools and seek out good ones" is through an "unorthodox alliance."¹⁴ Only by allying themselves with Republicans and business—the most powerful groups supposedly willing to transform the system—can the poor succeed, a set of arguments I shall take up and critically analyze later.

...Growing empirical evidence indicates that the development of "quasi-markets" in education has led to the exacerbation of existing social divisions surrounding class and race.¹⁵ There are now increasingly convincing arguments that while the supposed overt goal of voucher and choice plans is to give poor people the right to exit public schools, among the ultimate long-term effects may be the increase of "white flight" from public schools into private and religious schools and the creation of the conditions where affluent white parents may refuse to pay taxes to support public schools that are more and more suffering from the debilitating effects of the fiscal crisis of the state. The result is even more educational apartheid, not less.¹⁶

In his own review of evidence from the U.S. experience, Whitty argues that although advocates of choice assume that competition will enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of schools, as well as give disadvantaged children opportunities that they currently do not have, this may be a false hope. These hopes are not now being realized and are unlikely to be realized in the future "in the context of broader policies that do nothing to challenge deeper social and cultural inequalities." As he goes on to say, "Atomized decision-making in a highly stratified society may appear to give everyone equal opportunities but transforming responsibility for decision-making from the public to the private sphere can actually reduce the scope for collective action to improve the quality of education for all."¹⁷

This position is ratified by Henig, who states that "the sad irony of the current education-reform movement is that, through overidentification with school choice proposals, the healthy impulse to consider radical reforms to address social problems may be channeled into initiatives that further erode the potential for collective deliberation and collective response."¹⁸ When this effect is coupled with the fact that such neoliberal policies in practice may reproduce traditional hierarchies of class, race, and gender, these proposals should give us serious pause.¹⁹

There is a second variant of neoliberalism. This one is willing to spend more state and/or private money on schools, if and only if schools meet the needs expressed by capital. Thus, resources are made available for "reforms" and policies that further connect the education system to the project of making our economy more competitive. Two examples can provide a glimpse of this position. In a number of states, legislation has been passed that directs schools and universities to make closer links between education and the business community. In the state of Wisconsin, for instance, all teacher education programs had to include identifiable experiences on "education for employment" for all of its future teachers; and all teaching in the public elementary, middle, and secondary schools of the state had to include elements of education for employment in its formal curricula.²⁰

The second example is seemingly less consequential, but in reality it is a powerful statement of the reintegration of educational policy and practice into the ideological agenda of neoliberalism. I am referring here to Channel One, a for-profit television network that is now being broadcast into schools enrolling over 40 percent of all middle and secondary school students in the nation (many of these schools are financially hard-pressed given the fiscal crisis, even though some states are currently experiencing slightly better budgets). In this "reform," schools are offered a "free" satellite dish, two VCRs, and television monitors for each of their classrooms by a private media corporation. They are also offered a free news broadcast for these students. In return for the equipment and the news, all participating schools must sign a three- to five-year contract guaranteeing that their students will watch Channel One every day.

This agreement sounds relatively benign. However, not only is the technology "hardwired" so that *only* Channel One can be received but also *mandatory advertisements* for major fast food, athletic wear, and other corporations are broadcast along with the news, which students—by contract—also must watch. Students, in essence, are sold as a captive audience to corporations. Because, by law, these students must be in schools, the United States is one of the first nations in the world to consciously allow its youth to be sold as commodities to those many corporations willing to pay the high price of advertising on Channel One to get a guaranteed (captive) audience.²¹ Thus, under a number of variants of neoliberalism not only are schools transformed into market commodities, but so too now are our children.²²

The attractiveness of conservative policies in education rests in large part on major shifts in our common sense—about what democracy is, about whether we see ourselves as possessive individuals ("consumers"), and ultimately about how we see the market working. Underlying neoliberal policies in education and their social policies in general is a faith in the essential fairness and justice of markets. Markets ultimately will distribute resources efficiently and fairly according to effort. They ultimately

will create jobs for all who want them. They are the best possible mechanism to ensure a better future for all citizens (consumers).

Because of this, we of course must ask what the economy that reigns supreme in neoliberal positions actually looks like. Far from the positive picture painted by neoliberals in which technologically advanced jobs will replace the drudgery and the under- and unemployment so many people now experience if we were to only set the market loose on our schools and children, the reality is something else again. Unfortunately, markets clearly are as powerfully destructive as they are productive in people's lives.²³

Let us take as a case in point the paid labor market to which neoliberals want us to attach so much of the education system. Even with the growth in proportion in high-tech-related jobs, the kinds of work that are and will be increasingly available to a large portion of the American population will not be highly skilled, technically elegant positions. Just the opposite will be the case. The paid labor market will increasingly be dominated by low-paying, repetitive work in the retail, trade, and service sectors. This is made strikingly clear by one fact. More cashier jobs will be created by the year 2005 than jobs for computer scientists, systems analysts, physical therapists, operations analysts, and radio-logic technicians *combined*. In fact, it is projected that 95 percent of all new positions will be found in the service sector. This sector broadly includes personal care, home health aides; social workers (many of whom are now losing or have lost their jobs because of cutbacks in social spending); hotel and lodging workers; restaurant employees; transportation workers; and business and clerical personnel. Furthermore, eight of the top ten individual occupations that will account for the most job growth in the next ten years include the following: retail salespersons, cashiers, office clerks, truck drivers, waitresses/waiters, nursing aides/orderlies, food preparation workers, and janitors. The majority of these positions obviously do not require high levels of education. Many of them are low-paid, non-unionized, temporary, and part-time, with low or no benefits. And many are dramatically linked to, and often exacerbate, the existing race, gender, and class divisions of labor. These trends are predicted to continue.²⁴ This is the emerging economy we face, not the overly romantic picture painted by neoliberals who urge us to trust the market.

Neoliberals argue that making the market the ultimate arbiter of social worthiness will eliminate politics and its accompanying irrationality from our educational and social decisions. Efficiency and cost-benefit analysis will be the engines of social and educational transformation. Yet among the ultimate effects of such "economizing" and "depoliticizing" strategies is actually to make it ever harder to interrupt the growing inequalities in resources and power that so deeply characterize this society. Nancy Fraser illuminates the process in the following way:

In male dominated capitalist societies, what is "political" is normally defined contrastively against what is "economic" and what is "domestic" or "personal." Here, then, we can identify two principal sets of institutions that depoliticize social discourses: they are, first, domestic institutions, especially the normative domestic form, namely the modern restricted male-headed nuclear family; and, second, official economic capitalist system institutions, especially paid workplaces, markets, credit mechanisms, and "private" enterprises and corporations. Domestic institutions depoliticize certain matters by personalizing and/or familializing them; they cast these as private-domestic or personal-familial matters in contradistinction to public, political matters. Official economic capitalist system institutions, on the other hand, depoliticize certain matters by economizing them; the issues in question here are cast as impersonal market imperatives, or as "private" ownership prerogatives, or as technical problems for managers and planners, all in contradistinction to political matters. In both cases, the result is a foreshortening of chains of in-order-to relations for interpreting people's needs; interpretive chains are truncated and

prevented from spilling across the boundaries separating the "domestic" and the "economic" from the political.²⁵

This very process of depoliticization makes it very difficult for the needs of those with less economic, political, and cultural power to be accurately heard and acted on in ways that deal with the true depth of the problem. For Fraser, this outcome occurs because of what happens when "needs discourses" get retranslated into both market talk and "privately" driven policies.

For our purposes here, we can talk about two major kinds of needs discourses: oppositional and reprivatization discourses. *Oppositional* forms of needs talk arise when needs are politicized from below and are part of the crystallization of new oppositional identities on the part of subordinated social groups. What was once seen as largely a "private" matter is now placed into the larger political arena. Sexual harassment, race and sex segregation in paid labor, and affirmative action policies in educational and economic institutions provide examples of "private" issues that have now spilled over and can no longer be confined to the "domestic" sphere.²⁶

Reprivatization discourses emerge as a response to the newly emergent oppositional forms and try to press these forms back into the "private" or the "domestic" arena. They are often aimed at dismantling or cutting back social services, deregulating "private" enterprise, or stopping what are seen as "runaway needs." Thus, reprivatizers may attempt to keep issues such as, say, domestic battery from spilling over into overt political discourse and will seek to define it as purely a family matter. Or they will argue that the closing of a factory is not a political question but instead is an "unimpeachable prerogative of private ownership or an unassailable imperative of an impersonal market mechanism."²⁷ In each of these cases, the task is to contest both the possible breakout of runaway needs and to depoliticize the issues.

In educational policy in the United States, there are a number of clear examples of these processes. The state of California provides a well-known instance. A binding referendum that prohibited the use of affirmative action policies in state government, in university admission policies, and so on was passed overwhelmingly as reprivatizers spent an exceptional amount of money on an advertising campaign that labeled such policies as "out of control" and as improper government intervention into decisions involving "individual merit." The California referendum has spawned similar, and quite controversial, initiatives in other states. Voucher plans in education—where contentious issues surrounding whose knowledge should be taught, who should control school policy and practice, and how schools should be financed are left to the market to decide—offer another prime example of such attempts at "depoliticizing" educational needs. Finally, giving primary responsibility over the definition of important "work skills" to the private sector—an act that evacuates the possibility of criticism of the ways work is actually constructed, controlled, and paid—enables a definition of work both as a "private" matter and as purely a technical choice to go unchallenged. All these examples show the emerging power of reprivatizing discourses.

A distinction that is useful here in understanding what is happening in these cases is that between "value" and "sense" legitimation.²⁸ Each signifies a different strategy by which powerful groups or states legitimate their authority. In the first (value) strategy, legitimation is accomplished by actually giving people what may have been promised. Thus, the social democratic state may provide social services for the population in return for continued support. That the state will do this is often the result of oppositional discourses gaining more power in the social arena and having more power to redefine the border between public and private.

In the second (sense) strategy, rather than providing people with policies that meet the needs they have expressed, states and/or dominant groups attempt to *change the very meaning* of the sense of social need into something that is very different. Thus, if less powerful people call for "more democracy" and for a more responsive state, the task is not to give "value" that meets this demand, especially

when it may lead to runaway needs. Rather, the task is to change what actually *counts* as democracy. In the case of neoliberal policies, democracy is now redefined as guaranteeing choice in an unfettered market. In essence, the state withdraws. The extent of acceptance of such transformations of needs and needs discourses shows the success of the reprivatizers in redefining the borders between public and private again and demonstrates how a people's common sense can be shifted in conservative directions during a time of economic and ideological crisis.

Neoconservatism: Teaching "Real" Knowledge

Although neoliberals largely are in leadership in the conservative alliance, I noted that the second major element within the new alliance is neoconservatism. Unlike the neoliberal emphasis on the weak state, neoconservatives are usually guided by a vision of the strong state. This is especially true surrounding issues of knowledge, values, and the body. Whereas neoliberalism may be seen as being based in what Raymond Williams would call an "emergent" ideological assemblage, neoconservatism is grounded in "residual" forms.²⁹ It is largely, though not totally, based in a romantic appraisal of the past, a past in which "real knowledge" and morality reigned supreme, in which people "knew their place," and where stable communities guided by a natural order protected us from the ravages of society.³⁰

Among the policies being proposed under this ideological position are mandatory national and statewide curricula, national and statewide testing, a "return" to higher standards, a revivification of the "Western tradition," patriotism, and conservative variants of character education. Yet underlying some of the neoconservative thrust in education and in social policy in general is not only a call for "return." Behind it as well—and this is essential—is a fear of the "Other," fears that have been exacerbated and often cynically employed for political purposes and used to drive wedges between religious traditions since the tragedy of September 11. This is expressed in its support for a standardized national curriculum, its attacks on bilingualism and multiculturalism, and its insistent call for "raising standards."³¹

That the neoconservative emphasis on a return to traditional values and "morality" has struck a responsive chord can be seen in the fact that among the best-selling books in the nation during the past decade was William Bennett's *The Book of Virtues*.³² Bennett, a former Secretary of Education in a conservative Republican administration, has argued that for too long a period of time, "We have stopped doing the right things [and] allowed an assault on intellectual and moral standards." In opposition to this, we need "a renewed commitment to excellence, character, and fundamentals."³³ Bennett's book aims at providing "moral tales" for children to "restore" a commitment to "traditional virtues" such as patriotism, honesty, moral character, and entrepreneurial spirit. Such positions not only have entered the common sense of society in quite influential ways but also have provided part of the driving force behind the movement toward charter schools. These schools have individual charters that allow them to opt out of most state requirements and develop curricula based on the wishes of their clientele. Although in theory there is much to commend in such policies, all too many charter schools have become ways through which conservative religious activists and others gain public funding for schools—and home schooling—that would otherwise be prohibited such support.³⁴

Behind much of the neoconservative position is a clear sense of loss—a loss of faith, of imagined communities, of a nearly pastoral vision of like-minded people who shared norms and values and in which the "Western tradition" reigned supreme. It is more than a little similar to Mary Douglas's discussion of purity and danger, in which what was imagined to exist is sacred and "pollution" is feared above all else.³⁵ We/they binary oppositions dominate this discourse and the culture of the "Other" is to be feared.

This sense of cultural pollution can be seen in the increasingly virulent attacks on multiculturalism (which is itself a very broad category that combines multiple political and cultural positions),³⁶ on the

offering of schooling or any other social benefits to the children of "illegal" immigrants and even in some cases to the children of legal immigrants, in the conservative English-only movement, and in the equally conservative attempts to reorient curricula and textbooks toward a particular construction of the Western tradition.

In this regard, neoconservatives lament the "decline" of the traditional curriculum and of the history, literature, and values it is said to have represented.³⁷ Behind this worry is a set of historical assumptions about "tradition," about the existence of a social consensus over what should count as legitimate knowledge, and about cultural superiority.³⁸ Yet it is crucial to remember that the "traditional" curriculum whose decline is lamented so fervently by neoconservative critics "ignored most of the groups that compose the American population whether they were from Africa, Europe, Asia, Central and South America, or from indigenous North American peoples."³⁹ Its primary and often exclusive focus was typically only on quite a narrow spectrum of those people who came from a small number of northern and Western European nations, in spite of the fact that the cultures and histories represented in the United States were "forged out of a much larger and more diverse complex of peoples and societies." The mores and cultures of this narrow spectrum were seen as archetypes of "tradition" for everyone. They were not simply taught, but taught as superior to every other set of mores and culture.⁴⁰

As Lawrence Levine reminds us, a selective and faulty sense of history fuels the nostalgic yearnings of neoconservatives. The canon and the curriculum have never been static. They have always been in a constant process of revision, "with irate defenders insisting, as they still do, that change would bring with it instant decline."⁴¹ Indeed, even the inclusion of such "classics" as Shakespeare within the curriculum of schools in the United States came about only after prolonged and intense battles, ones that were the equal of the divisive debates over whose knowledge should be taught today. Thus, Levine notes that when neoconservative cultural critics ask for a "return" to a "common culture" and "tradition," they are oversimplifying to the point of distortion. What is happening in terms of the expansion and alteration of official knowledge in schools and universities today "is by no means out of the ordinary; certainly it is not a radical departure from the patterns that have marked the history of [education]—constant and often controversial expansion and alteration of curricula and canons and incessant struggle over the nature of that expansion and alteration."⁴²

Of course, such conservative positions have been forced into a kind of compromise in order to maintain their cultural and ideological leadership as a movement to "reform" educational policy and practice. A prime example is the emerging discourse over the history curriculum—in particular the construction of the United States as a "nation of immigrants."⁴³ In this hegemonic discourse, everyone in the history of the nation was an immigrant, from the first Native American population who supposedly trekked across the Bering Strait and ultimately populated North, Central, and South America, to the later waves of populations who came from Africa, Mexico, Ireland, Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, Russia, Poland, and elsewhere, to finally the recent populations from Asia, Latin America, Africa, and other regions. Although it is true that the United States is constituted by people from all over the world—and that is one of the things that makes it so culturally rich and vital—such a perspective constitutes an erasure of historical memory. For some groups came *in chains*, with massive numbers of death in the Middle Passage, and were subjected to state-sanctioned slavery and apartheid for hundreds of years. Others suffered what can only be called bodily, linguistic, and cultural destruction.⁴⁴

This said, however, it does point to the fact that although the neoconservative goals of national curricula and national testing are pressed for, they are strongly mediated by the necessity of compromise. Because of this, even the strongest supporters of neoconservative educational programs and policies have had to also support the creation of curricula that at least partly recognize "the contributions of the Other."⁴⁵ This is partly because there is an absence of an overt and strong national department of education and a tradition of state and local control of schooling. The "solution" has been to have

national standards developed “voluntarily” in each subject area.⁴⁶ Indeed, the example I gave earlier about history is one of the results of such voluntary standards.

Because it is the national professional organizations in these subject areas—such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)—that are developing such national standards, the standards themselves are compromises and thus are often more flexible than those wished for by neo-conservatives. This very process does act to provide a check on conservative policies over knowledge. However, this should not lead to an overly romantic picture of the overall tendencies emerging in educational policy. Leadership in school “reform” is increasingly dominated by conservative discourses surrounding “standards,” “excellence,” “accountability,” and so on. Because the more flexible parts of the standards have proven to be too expensive to actually implement and have generated considerable conservative backlash,⁴⁷ standards talk ultimately functions to give more rhetorical weight to the neoconservative movement to enhance central control over “official knowledge” and to “raise the bar” for achievement. The social implications of this in terms of creating even more differential school results are increasingly worrisome.⁴⁸

Yet it is not only in such things as the control over legitimate knowledge where neoconservative impulses are seen. The idea of a strong state is also visible in the growth of the regulatory state as it concerns teachers. There has been a steadily growing change from “licensed autonomy” to “regulated autonomy” as teachers’ work is more highly standardized, rationalized, and “policed.”⁴⁹ Under conditions of licensed autonomy, once teachers are given the appropriate professional certification they are basically free—within limits—to act in their classrooms according to their judgment. Such a regime is based on trust in “professional discretion.” Under the growing conditions of regulated autonomy, teachers’ actions are now subject to much greater scrutiny in terms of process and outcomes.⁵⁰ Indeed, some states in the United States not only have specified the content that teachers are to teach but also have regulated the only appropriate methods of teaching. Not following these specified “appropriate” methods puts the teacher at risk of administrative sanctions. Such a regime of control is based not on trust, but on a deep suspicion of the motives and competence of teachers. For neoconservatives it is the equivalent of the notion of “producer capture” that is so powerful among neoliberals. For the former, however, it is not the market that will solve this problem, but a strong and interventionist state that will see to it that only “legitimate” content and methods are taught. And this will be policed by statewide and national tests of both students and teachers. The imprint of these kinds of commitments are thoroughly visible in such policies as No Child Left Behind.

I have claimed elsewhere that such policies lead to the “deskilling” of teachers, the “intensification” of their work, and the loss of autonomy and respect. This is not surprising, as behind much of this conservative impulse is a clear distrust of teachers and an attack both on teachers’ claims to competence and especially on teachers’ unions.⁵¹

The mistrust of teachers, the concern over a supposed loss of cultural control, and the sense of dangerous “pollution” are among the many cultural and social fears that drive neoconservative policies. However, as I noted earlier, underpinning these positions as well is often an ethnocentric, and even racialized, understanding of the world. Perhaps this can be best illuminated through the example of Herrnstein and Murray’s volume, *The Bell Curve*.⁵² In a book that sold hundreds of thousands of copies, the authors argue for a genetic determinism based on race (and to some extent gender). For them, it is romantic to assume that educational and social policies can ultimately lead to more equal results, since differences in intelligence and achievement are basically genetically driven. The wisest thing policy makers can do would be to accept this and plan for a society that recognizes these biological differences and does not provide “false hopes” to the poor and the less intelligent, most of whom will be black. Obviously, this book has reinforced racist stereotypes that have long played a considerable part in educational and social policies in the United States.⁵³

Rather than seeing race as it is—as a fully *social* category that is mobilized and used in different ways by different groups at different times⁵⁴—positions such as those argued by Herrnstein and Murray provide a veneer of seeming scientific legitimacy for policy discourses that have been discredited intellectually many times before. The sponsored mobility given to this book, in which it is reported that the authors received large sums of money from neoconservative foundations to write and publicize the volume, speaks clearly not only to the racial underpinnings of important parts of the neoconservative agenda but also to the power of conservative groups to bring their case before the public.

The consequences of such positions are not only found in educational policies, but in the intersection of such policies with broader social and economic policies, where they have been quite influential. Here too we can find claims that what the poor lack is not money, but both an “appropriate” biological inheritance and a decided lack of values regarding discipline, hard work, and morality.⁵⁵ Prime examples here include programs such as “Learnfare” and “Workfare” in which parents lose a portion of their welfare benefits if their children miss a significant number of school days or in which no benefits are paid if a person does not accept low-paid work, no matter how demeaning or even if child care or health care are not provided by the state. Such policies reinstall earlier “workhouse” policies that were so popular—and so utterly damaging—in the United States, Britain, and elsewhere.⁵⁶

I have spent much of my time in this section documenting the growing power of neoconservative positions in educational and social policy in the United States. Neoconservatives have forged a creative coalition with neoliberals, a coalition that—in concert with other groups—is effectively changing the landscape on which policies are argued out. Yet, even given the growing influence of neoliberal and neoconservative policies, they would be considerably less successful if they had not also brought authoritarian populist religious fundamentalists and conservative evangelicals under the umbrella of the conservative alliance. It is to this group that we now turn.

Authoritarian Populism: Schooling as God Wanted It

Perhaps more than in any other major industrialized nation, it is not possible to fully understand educational politics in the United States without paying a good deal of attention to the “Christian Right.” It is exceptionally powerful and influential, beyond its numbers, in debates over public policy in the media, education, social welfare, the politics of sexuality and the body, religion, and so on. Its influence comes from the immense commitment by activists within it, its large financial base, its populist rhetorical positions, and its aggressiveness in pursuing its agenda. “New Right” authoritarian populists ground their positions on education and social policy in general in particular visions of biblical authority, “Christian morality,” gender roles, and the family. The New Right sees gender and the family, for instance, as an organic and divine unity that resolves “male egoism and female selflessness.”

As Hunter puts it:

Since gender is divine and natural... there is [no] room for legitimate political conflict... Within the family women and men—stability and dynamism—are harmoniously fused when undisturbed by modernism, liberalism, feminism, and humanism which not only threaten masculinity and femininity directly, but also [do so] through their effects on children and youth... “Real women,” i.e., women who know themselves as wives *and* mothers, will not threaten the sanctity of the home by striving for self. When men or women challenge these gender roles they break with God and nature; when liberals, feminists, and secular humanists prevent them from fulfilling these roles they undermine the divine and natural supports upon which society rests.⁵⁷

In the minds of such groups, public schooling thus is *itself* a site of immense danger. In the words of the conservative activist Tim LaHaye, “Modern public education is the most dangerous force in a

child's life: religiously, sexually, economically, patriotically, and physically."⁵⁸ This is connected to the New Right's sense of loss surrounding schooling and the family.

Until recently, as the New Right sees it, schools were extensions of home and traditional morality. Parents could entrust their children to public schools because they were locally controlled and reflected Biblical and parental values. However, taken over by alien, elitist forces, schools now interpose themselves between parents and children. Many people experience fragmentation of the unity between family, church, and school as a loss of control of daily life, one's children, and America. Indeed, [the New Right] argues that parental control of education is Biblical, for in God's plan, the primary responsibility for educating the young lies in the home and directly in the father.⁵⁹

It is exactly this sense of "alien and elite control," the loss of biblical connections, and the destruction of "God-given" family and moral structures that drives the authoritarian populist agenda. It is an agenda that is increasingly powerful, not only rhetorically, but in terms of funding and in conflicts over what schools should do, how they should be financed, and who should control them. This agenda includes, but goes beyond, issues of gender, sexuality, and the family. It extends as well to a much larger array of questions about what is to count as "legitimate" knowledge in schools. And in this larger arena of concern about the entire corpus of school knowledge, conservative activists have had no small measure of success in pressuring textbook publishers to change what they include and in altering important aspects of state educational policy on teaching, curriculum, and evaluation. This is crucial, as in the absence of an overt national curriculum, the commercially produced *textbook*—regulated by individual state's purchases and authority—remains the dominant definition of the curriculum in the United States.⁶⁰

The power of these groups is visible, for example, in the "self-censorship" in which publishers engage. For instance, under conservative pressure a number of publishers of high school literature anthologies have chosen to include Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech, but *only* after all references to the intense racism of the United States have been removed.⁶¹ At the level of state curriculum policy, this is very visible in the textbook legislation in, say, Texas, which mandates texts that stress patriotism, obedience to authority, and the discouragement of "deviance."⁶² Because most textbook publishers aim the content and organization of their textbooks at what will be approved by a small number of populous states that in essence approve and purchase their textbooks *statewide*, this gives states such as Texas (and California) immense power in determining what will count as "official knowledge" throughout the entire country.⁶³

Thus, in concert with neoconservative elements within the conservative alliance, authoritarian populist religious activists have had a substantial influence on curriculum policy and practice. For them, only by recentering issues of authority, morality, family, church, and "decency" can schools overcome the "moral decay" so evident all around us.⁶⁴ Only by returning to inerrantist understandings of biblical teachings and fostering (or mandating) a climate in schools where such teachings are given renewed emphasis can our culture be saved.⁶⁵

Although a number of states and school systems have been able to create mechanisms that deflect some of these pressures, the bureaucratic nature of many school systems and of the local and regional state in general has actually produced the conditions where parents and other community members who might otherwise disagree with the New Right ideologically are convinced to join them in their attacks on the content and organization of schooling.⁶⁶

Although authoritarian populist struggles over curriculum and texts have been growing rapidly, this mistrust of public schools has also fueled considerable and intense support among them for neo-liberal policies such as voucher and choice plans. The New Right, as a largely populist assemblage, has

some very real mistrust of the motives and economic plans of capital. After all, such rightist populists have themselves experienced the effects of downsizing, layoffs, and economic restructuring. However, even given their partial insights into the differential effects of global competition and economic restructuring, they see in proposals for educational marketization and privatization a way in which they can use such "reforms" for their own purposes. Either through reduced school taxes, through tax credits, or through the allocation of public money to private and religious schools, they can create a set of schools organized around the more moral "imagined communities" they believe have been lost.⁶⁷ I take this up in more detail later on.

This search for the reconstitution of imagined communities points to one of the effects of reprivatization talk on the politics surrounding educational policy. In the process of denying the legitimacy of oppositional claims, reprivatization discourses may actually tend to politicize the issues even more. These issues become even more a part of public, not "domestic," contestation. This paradox—reprivatization talk may actually lead to further public discussion of breakaway needs—does not always lead to victories by oppositional groups such as feminists, racially subjected peoples, or other disempowered groups, however. Rather, such politicization can in fact lead to the growth of new social movements and new social identities whose fundamental aim is to push breakaway needs back into the economic, domestic, and private spheres. New, and quite conservative, coalitions can be formed.

This is exactly what has happened in the United States, where a set of reprivatizing discourses "in the accents of authoritarian populism" has made creative connections with the hopes and especially the fears of a range of disaffected constituencies and has united them into a tense but very effective alliance supporting positions behind reprivatization.⁶⁸ And this could not have been done if rightist groups had not succeeded in changing the very meaning of key concepts of democracy in such a way that the Christian Right could comfortably find a place under the larger umbrella of the conservative alliance.

The Professional and Managerial New Middle Class: More Testing, More Often

Although I speak somewhat more briefly about them here because of their relatively limited—but rapidly growing—power, there is a final group that provides some of the support for the policies of conservative modernization. This is a fraction of the professional new middle class that gains its own mobility within the state and within the economy based on the use of technical expertise. These are people with backgrounds in management and efficiency techniques who provide the technical and "professional" support for accountability, measurement, "product control," and assessment that is required by the proponents of neoliberal policies of marketization and neoconservative policies of tighter central control in education.

Members of this fraction of the upwardly mobile professional and managerial new middle class do not necessarily believe in the ideological positions that underpin the conservative alliance. In fact, in other aspects of their lives they may be considerably more moderate and even "liberal" politically. However, as experts in efficiency, management, testing, and accountability, they provide the technical expertise to put in place the policies of conservative modernization. Their own mobility *depends* on the expansion of both such expertise and the professional ideologies of control, measurement, and efficiency that accompany it. Thus, they often support such policies as "neutral instrumentalities," even when these policies may be used for purposes other than the supposedly neutral ends to which this class fraction is committed.⁶⁹

Because of this situation, it is important to realize that a good deal of the current emphasis in schools on high-stakes testing, on more rigorous forms of accountability, and on tighter control is not totally reducible to the needs of neoliberals and neoconservatives. Rather, part of the pressure for these policies comes from educational managers and bureaucratic offices who fully believe that such

control is warranted and "good." Not only do these forms of control have an extremely long history in education, but tighter control, high-stakes testing, and (reductive) accountability methods provide more dynamic roles for such managers, a point I noted earlier. These policies enable such actors to engage in a moral crusade and enhance the status of their own expertise.

Yet, in a time when competition for credentials and cultural capital is intense, the increasing power of mechanisms of restratification such as the return of high levels of mandatory standardization also provides mechanisms that enhance the chances that the children of the professional and managerial new middle class will have *less competition* from other children. Thus, the introduction of devices to restratify a population enhances the value of the credentials that the new middle class is more likely to accumulate, given the stock of cultural capital it already possesses.⁷⁰ I am not claiming that this is necessarily intentional, but creating such devices does *function* to increase the chances for mobility by middle-class children who depend not on economic capital but on cultural capital for advancement.

In such a situation, I believe that this group is not immune to ideological shifts to the right. Given the fear generated by the attacks on the state and on the public sphere by both neoliberals and neo-conservatives, this class fraction is decidedly worried about the future mobility of its children in an uncertain economic world. Thus, they may be drawn more overtly to parts of the conservative alliance's positions, especially those coming from the neoconservative elements that stress greater attention to traditional "high-status" content, greater attention to testing, and a greater emphasis on schooling as a stratifying mechanism. This can be seen in a number of states where parents of this class fraction are supporting charter schools that will stress academic achievement in traditional subjects and traditional teaching practices. Where the majority of members of this class grouping will align in the future in the debates over policy remains to be seen. Given their contradictory ideological tendencies, it is possible that the right will be able to mobilize them under conditions of fear for the future of their jobs and children.⁷¹

Conclusion

Because of the complexity of educational politics in the United States, I have devoted most of this article to an analysis of the conservative social movements that are having a powerful impact on debates over policy and practice in education and in the larger social arena. I have suggested that conservative modernization in education is guided by tense coalition forces, some of whose aims partly contradict others.

The very nature of this coalition is crucial. It is more than a little possible that the alliance underpinning conservative modernization can overcome its own internal contradictions and can succeed in radically transforming educational policy and practice. Thus, although neoliberals call for a weak state and neoconservatives demand a strong state, these very evident contradictory impulses can come together in creative ways. The emerging focus on centralized standards, content, and tighter control paradoxically can be the first and most essential step on the path to marketization through voucher and choice plans.

Once statewide or national curricula and tests are put in place, comparative school-by-school data will be available and will be published in a manner similar to the "league tables" on school achievement published in England. Only when there is standardized content and assessment can the market be set free, since the "consumer" can then have "objective" data on which schools are "succeeding" and which schools are not. Market rationality, based on "consumer choice," will ensure that the supposedly good schools will gain students and the bad schools will disappear. This assemblage is embodied in many of the impulses behind No Child Left Behind, for example.

... But let me say here that one of these effects is that when the poor "choose" to keep their children in under-funded and decaying schools in the inner cities or in rural areas (given the decline and expense of urban mass transportation, poor information, the absence of time, and their decaying economic conditions, to name but a few of the realities), *they* (the poor) will be blamed individually and collectively for making bad "consumer choices." Reprivatizing discourses and arithmetical particularism will justify the structural inequalities that will be (re)produced here. In this way, as odd as it may seem, neoliberal and neoconservative policies, ones ultimately supported by authoritarian populists and even by many members of the professional middle class, that are seemingly contradictory may mutually reinforce each other in the long run.⁷²

Yet, although I have argued that the overall leadership in educational policy is exercised by this alliance, I do not want to give the impression that these four elements under the hegemonic umbrella of this coalition are uncontested or are always victorious. This is simply not the case. As a number of people have demonstrated, scores of counterhegemonic programs and possibilities exist at the local level throughout the United States. Many institutions of higher education, schools, and even entire school districts have shown remarkable resiliency in the face of the concerted ideological attacks and pressures from conservative restorational groups. And many teachers, academics, community activists, and others have created and defended educational programs that are both pedagogically and politically emancipatory.⁷³

Indeed, we are beginning to see cracks in the alliance's power in unanticipated ways. For example, a growing number of students in elementary, middle, and secondary schools are actively refusing to take the mandatory tests that many states have introduced. This action has been supported by groups of teachers, administrators, parents, and activists.⁷⁴ Clearly, things are bubbling up from below the surface whose effects will be "interesting" to say the least.

Having said this, however, it is important to note the obstacles in creating the conditions for large-scale movements to defend and build progressive policies. We need to remember that there is no powerful central ministry of education in the United States. Teachers' unions are relatively weak at a national level (nor is there any guarantee that teachers' unions always act progressively). There is no consensus about an "appropriate" progressive agenda in educational policy here, as there is a vast multiplicity of compelling (and unfortunately at times competing) agendas involving race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, religion, "ability," and so on. Thus, it is structurally difficult to sustain long-term national movements for more progressive policies and practices.

Because of this, most counterhegemonic work is organized locally or regionally. However, there currently are growing attempts at building national coalitions around what might best be called a "decentered unity." Organizations such as the National Coalition of Educational Activists and those centered around "Rethinking Schools" are becoming more visible nationally.⁷⁵ None of these movements have the financial and organizational backing that stands behind the neoliberal, neoconservative, and authoritarian populist groups. None have the ability to bring their case before the "public" through the media and through foundations in the ways that conservative groups have been able to do. And none have the capacity or the resources to quickly mobilize a large base of nationally directed membership to challenge or promote specific policies in the ways that the members of the alliance can.

Yet, in the face of all of these structural, financial, and political dilemmas, the fact that so many groups of people have not been integrated under the alliance's hegemonic umbrella and have created scores of local examples of the very possibility of difference shows us in the most eloquent and lived ways that educational policies and practices do not go in any one unidimensional direction. Even more important, these multiple examples demonstrate that the success of conservative policies is never guaranteed. This is crucial in a time when it is easy to lose sight of what is necessary for an education worthy of its name.

Notes

1. Madeleine Arnot, "Schooling for Social Justice," unpublished paper, University of Cambridge, Department of Education, 1990.
2. William Greider, *One World, Ready or Not* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).
3. See Michael W. Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1996) and Michael W. Apple, *Official Knowledge*, 2d ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000).
4. I am drawing upon Roger Dale, "The Thatcherite Project in Education," *Critical Social Policy* 9 (winter 1989/1990): 4–19. Because of the size and complexity of the United States, I cannot focus on all the policy issues and initiatives now being debated or implemented. For further descriptions, see the chapters on policy research in William Pink and George Noblit, eds., *Continuity and Contradiction: The Futures of the Sociology of Education* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1995).
5. Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education* and Ted Honderich, *Conservatism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990).
6. Given the current emphasis on this by neoliberals, it may be the case that while Bowles and Gintis's book on the relationship between education and capitalism, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, was reductive, economistic, and essentializing when it first appeared in 1976, oddly it may be more accurate today. See Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America* (New York: Basic Books, 1976). For criticism of their position, see Michael W. Apple, *Teachers and Texts* (New York: Routledge, 1988); Michael W. Apple, *Education and Power*, 2d ed. (New York: Routledge, 1995); and Mike Cole, ed., *Bowles and Gintis Revisited* (New York: Falmer Press, 1988).
7. See Michael W. Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*, 3rd ed. (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004).
8. Stephen Ball, *Education Reform* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1994) and Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*.
9. Apple, *Teachers and Texts*, 31–78 and Sandra Acker, "Gender and Teachers' Work," in *Review of Research in Education*, Volume 21, ed. Michael W. Apple (Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, 1995), 99–162. A number of the larger gender implications of neoliberalism in education and the economy can be seen in Jacky Brine, *Under-Educating Woman; Globalizing Inequality* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1992) and Madeleine Arnot, Miriam David, and Gaby Weiner, *Closing the Gender Gap: Postwar Education and Social Change* (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1999).
10. John Chubb and Terry Moe, *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1990). See also, Ernest House, *Schools for Sale* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998).
11. See the discussion of these arguments in Kristen L. Buras and Michael W. Apple, "School Choice, Neoliberal Promises, and Unpromising Evidence," *Educational Policy* 19 (July 2005): 550–564.
12. See Amy Stuart Wells, *Time to Choose* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993); Jeffrey Henig, *Rethinking School Choice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Kevin Smith and Kenneth Meier, eds., *The Case Against School Choice* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995); Bruce Fuller, Elizabeth Burr, Luis Huerta, Susan Puryear, and Edward Wexler, *School Choice: Abundant Hopes, Scarce Evidence of Results* (Berkeley and Stanford: Policy Analysis for California Education, University of California at Berkeley and Stanford University, 1999); and John F. Witte, *The Market Approach to Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
13. Geoff Whitty, "Creating Quasi-Markets in Education," in *Review of Research in Education*, Volume 22, ed. Michael W. Apple (Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, 1997), 17. See also Chubb and Moe, *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* and Gary Rosen, "Are Schools Vouchers Un-American?" *Commentary* 109 (February 2000): 26–31.
14. Quoted in Whitty, "Creating Quasi-Markets in Education," 17.
15. See, for example, Geoff Whitty, Sally Power, and David Halpin, *Devolution and Choice in Education* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1998) and Hugh Lauder and David Hughes, *Trading in Futures: Why Markets in Education Don't Work* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1999).
16. See Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, especially Chapter 4, for a description of the ways in which many current social and educational policies often widen racial gaps.
17. Whitty, "Creating Quasi-Markets in Education," 58.
18. Henig, *Rethinking School Choice*, 22.
19. See Whitty, "Creating Quasi-Markets in Education," Lauder and Hughes, *Trading in Futures*, and Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*.
20. Many times, however, these initiatives are actually "unfunded mandates." That is, requirements such as these are made mandatory, but no additional funding is provided to accomplish them. The intensification of teachers' labor at all levels of the education system that results from this situation is very visible. On the history of education for employment, see Herbert Kliebard, *Schooled to Work: Vocationalism and the American Curriculum, 1876–1946* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999). For clear and thoughtful analyses of other effects on higher education, see Geoffrey White, ed., *Campus, Inc.* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000) and Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie, *Academic Capitalism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).
21. For further discussion of the powerful forces of commercialism in schools, see Alex Molnar, *School Commercialism* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
22. I have engaged in a much more detailed analysis of Channel One in Apple, *Official Knowledge*, 89–112. See also Alex Molnar, *Giving Kids the Business* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996). A good example as well is provided by financially troubled ZapMe!, which gives free computer equipment in return for demographic information on children in schools. Of course, there is a history of resistance to things such as Channel One. UNPLUG, a student-led group, has been in the forefront of contesting the commercialization of schools. Further, as I discuss in my final chapter, both conservative and progressive groups have joined forces to act against Channel One.
23. Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, 68–90 and Greider, *One World, Ready or Not*.

24. Ibid. See also, Christopher Cook, "Temps Demand a New Deal," *The Nation*, 27 March 2000, pp.13–19.
25. Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 168.
26. Ibid., 172. See also the discussion of how gains in one sphere of social life can be "transported" into another sphere in Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Democracy and Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1986) and Apple, *Teachers and Texts*. On the history of such positions in health care, see Sandra Opdycke, *No One Was Turned Away* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
27. Fraser, *Unruly Practices*, 172.
28. Roger Dale, *The State and Education Policy* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1989).
29. For further discussion of residual and emergent ideological forms, see Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).
30. See Allen Hunter, *Children in the Service of Conservatism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Legal Studies, 1988) and Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*.
31. See, for example, E. D. Hirsch Jr., *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them* (New York: Doubleday, 1996). For an insightful critique of Hirsch's position, see Kristen L. Buras, "Questioning Core Assumptions: A Critical Reading of E. D. Hirsch's *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them*," *Harvard Educational Review* 69 (spring 1999): 67–93. See also Susan Ohanian, *One Size Fits Few: The Folly of Educational Standards* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999).
32. William Bennett, *The Book of Virtues* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).
33. William Bennett, *Our Children and Our Country* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 8–10.
34. See Amy Stuart Wells, *Beyond the Rhetoric of Charter School Reform* (Los Angeles: University of California at Los Angeles, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, 1999).
35. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge, 1966).
36. See, for example, Cameron McCarthy and Warren Crichlow, eds., *Race, Identity, and Representation in Education* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
37. See, for example, Diane Ravitch, *Left Back* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000). See my response to Ravitch in Michael W. Apple, "Standards, Subject Matter, and a Romantic Past," *Educational Policy* 15 (May 2001):7–36.
38. This is treated in greater depth in Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*.
39. Lawrence Levine, *The Opening of the American Mind* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 20.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., 15. See also Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum* and Herbert Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum*, 2d ed. (New York: Routledge, 1995).
42. Levine, *The Opening of the American Mind*, 15.
43. Catherine Cornbleth and Dexter Waugh, *The Great Speckled Bird* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).
44. For a counternarrative on the history of the United States, see Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999). See also Howard Zinn, *The Howard Zinn Reader* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1997) and Howard Zinn, *The Future of History* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1999).
45. This is often done through a process of "mentioning" where texts and curricula include material on the contributions of women and "minority" groups but never allow the reader to see the world through the eyes of oppressed groups. Or as is the case in the discourse of "we are all immigrants," compromises are made so that the myth of historical similarity is constructed at the same time as economic divides among groups grow worse and worse. See Apple, *Official Knowledge*, 42–60.
46. Diane Ravitch, *National Standards in American Education* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).
47. In the face of concerted criticism, the NCTM recently has officially voted to return to more of an emphasis on traditional mathematical concerns and methods of teaching. See Anemona Hartocollis, "Math Teachers Back Return of Education to Basic Skills," *The New York Times*, 15 April 2000, p. A16.
48. This is discussed in more detail in Michael W. Apple, *Power, Meaning, and Identity* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999) and Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*. See also Ohanian, *One Size Fits Few*.
49. This distinction is developed in more depth in Dale, *The State and Education Policy*.
50. For a detailed critical discussion of the effects of this on curricula, teaching, and evaluation, see Linda McNeil, *Contradictions of School Reform* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
51. See Apple, *Education and Power*; Apple, *Teachers and Texts*; and Acker, "Gender and Teachers' Work." Clear gender and class antagonisms are at work here, ones that have a long history. Analyses of the ways in which race intersects with these dynamics and helps construct the history and labor process of teaching has been somewhat less developed. However, the ongoing work of Michelle Foster and Michael Fultz is quite helpful in this regard.
52. Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve* (New York: Free Press, 1994).
53. See Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 2d ed. (New York: Routledge, 1994) and Steven Selden, *Inheriting Shame* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999). Selden's book in particular demonstrates how very prevalent constructions of race were in a wide range of educational policies and practices, including many programs and individuals whose participation in, say, the popular eugenics movement is little known.
54. Ibid. See also Richard Dyer, *White* (New York: Routledge, 1997) and Cornel West, *Race Matters* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).
55. Rebecca Klatch, *Women of the New Right* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987). For criticism of some of these positions, and especially those espoused by Herrnstein and Murray, see Joe Kincheloe, Shirley Steinberg, and Aaron D. Gresson, eds., *Measured Lies* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).
56. For further discussion of this, see Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, 11–13.
57. Hunter, *Children in the Service of Conservatism*, 15.

59. Ibid.
60. The power of the text and its contradictory impulses have been detailed in Apple, *Teachers and Texts* and Apple, *Official Knowledge*. For more discussion of the ways in which struggles over the textbook help mobilize conservative activists, see Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, 42–67.
61. Delfattore, *What Johnny Shouldn't Read*, 123.
62. Ibid., 139.
63. The history and influence of the state's role in defining official knowledge and in textbooks is developed in much more depth in Apple, *Teachers and Texts* and Apple, *Official Knowledge*. See also Cornbleth and Waugh, *The Great Speckled Bird*.
64. See Alexandra S. Dimick and Michael W. Apple, "Texas and the Politics of Abstinence-Only Textbooks," *Teachers College Record*, May 02, 2005.
65. See Delfattore, *What Johnny Shouldn't Read*; Ralph Reed, *After the Revolution* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1996); and Fritz Detwiler, *Standing on the Premises of God* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).
66. Anita Oliver and I provide an analysis of a concrete instance of this in Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, 42–67.
67. Although he limits himself to a discussion of the nation as an "imagined community," I am extending Benedict Anderson's metaphor to include religious communities as well since many of the attributes are the same. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991).
68. Fraser, *Unruly Practices*, 172–73.
69. Basil Bernstein makes an important distinction between those fractions of the new middle class who work for the state and those who work in the private sector. They may have different ideological and educational commitments. See Basil Bernstein, *The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse* (New York: Routledge, 1990). For more on the ways "intermediate" classes and class fractions operate and interpret their worlds, see Erik Olin Wright, ed., *The Debate on Classes* (New York: Verso, 1998); Erik Olin Wright, *Classes* (New York: Verso, 1985); Erik Olin Wright, *Class Counts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).
70. See Bourdieu, *Distinction*; Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); and Pierre Bourdieu, *The State Nobility* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
71. A combination of the work of Bernstein, Wright, and Bourdieu would be useful in understanding this class. A satirical, but still interesting, analysis of a segment of this class can be found in the work of the conservative commentator David Brooks. See David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).
72. See Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, 22–41.
73. See especially Michael W. Apple and James A. Beane, eds., *Democratic Schools* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1995); Michael W. Apple and James A. Beane, eds., *Democratic Schools: Lessons from the Chalk Face* (Buckingham, England: Open University Press, 1999); and Gregory Smith, *Public Schools That Work* (New York: Routledge, 1993). Also of considerable interest here is the work on detracking and educational reform by Jeannie Oakes. See Jeannie Oakes, Karen H. Quartz, Steve Ryan, and Martin Lipton, *Becoming Good American Schools* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).
74. See Jacques Steinberg, "Blue Books Closed, Students Boycott Standardized Tests," *The New York Times*, 13 April 2000, pp. A1, A22. It remains to be seen whether this will grow. It is also unclear whether children of the poor and culturally and economically disenfranchised will participate widely in this. After all, affluent children *do* have options and can compensate for not having tests scores. This may not be the case for the children of those this society calls the "Other."
75. See, for example, the journal *Rethinking Schools*. It is one of the very best indicators of progressive struggles, policies, and practices in education. Information can be gotten from Rethinking Schools, 1001 E. Keefe Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53212, USA or via its Web site at <www.rethinkingschools.org>.