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Teaching, activism, and the purposes of education: Toward an integrated vision of teachers' work

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TEACHING, ACTIVISM, AND THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION:

TOWARD AN INTEGRATED VISION OF TEACHERS' WORK

BY

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DISSERTATION

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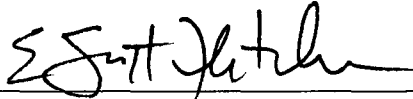
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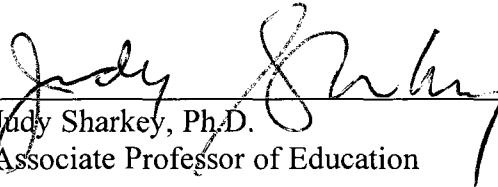
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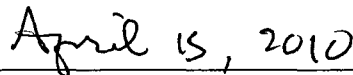
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DEDICATION

To Beverly Ann Shadley and Sofie Jean Shadley Self,

my joys and my inspirations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Sofie, I hope you know that every minute this work took me away from your early years was painful, but necessary. To my wife Bev, there is no way to express the gratitude in my heart not only for the support you provided to me and to our family during the writing of this book, but also for staying honest and loving throughout the last dozen years.

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING, ACTIVISM, AND THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION:

TOWARD AN INTEGRATED VISION OF TEACHERS' WORK

by

Carina E. Self

University of New Hampshire, May, 2010

The purpose of this study was to consider the political dimensions of teachers' work through a conceptual comparison to the work of social activists. The author developed a four-part analysis of the work of activists through a reading of the social movement literature and compared that analysis to the work of teachers according to four contemporary approaches to teachers' work (neo-conservative, caring, contemporary liberal, and critical theory). The result was an integrated vision of teachers' work that brings together teachers' daily practices and their educational commitments around four dimensions of teachers work: social critique, identity formation/negotiation, affiliation, and institutional change. The author also identifies and integrates the voices of teachers at the grassroots level into this holistic model of teachers' work as part of a discussion of its strengths and possible uses for educators and teacher educators.

This study demonstrates that, regardless of their educational approach, the work of teachers forms an inevitable political grounding for teaching and learning. An understanding of the work of social critique helps focus the work of teachers and schools on issues of broad social importance. Identity work connects curriculum, pedagogy, and

school structures to the self-understanding of individual teachers and to students' experience in the various social groupings that shape their schooling. Affiliation helps educators focus on the complex connections and relationships that enable groups within schools to raise questions and challenge commonly held assumptions. Institutional change work, guided by this understanding of activism, becomes a dynamic series of actions that allocates social and material resources within the school setting. Taken together, these forms of work encompass nearly every activity in which teachers and school administrators engage. Clarity about the purposes and intersections of these dimensions of work can serve to focus human, material, and conceptual resources on the most critical aspects of schooling.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: IS THE WORK OF TEACHERS POLITICAL?

For nine semesters between 1998 and 2004, as I was beginning a PhD program in

Education (Curriculum and Instruction track), I taught several courses to pre-service

teachers. One, titled *Educational Structure and Change*, was, according to the college

catalog about the "organization, structure, and function of American schools; historical,

political, social and cross-cultural perspectives; nature and processes of change in

education." The other, titled *Alternative Perspectives on the Nature of Education* was

designed to allow students to "formulate, develop, and evaluate their own educational

principles, standards, and priorities" and to present "alternative philosophies of

education" and address "contemporary issues." (See www.unh.edu/undergrad-

catalog/9010/ug-educ-0910.htm. Accessed 11/13/09.) Despite what still appears to me,

from these short catalog entries, as a clear commitment to address the larger cultural,

social, and institutional contexts impacting the work of teachers, I almost always

experienced resistance from students regarding what they perceived as "irrelevant" or

"peripheral" issues addressed in the courses. Typical responses during mid-semester

evaluations might have read: "Some of what we talk about seems important to me as a

person and maybe as a voter, but not so much as a teacher. I'm planning to teach (math,

science, music, elementary kids, etc.), not high school social studies." Or "Some of the

course topics are hard for me to discuss because they are so political and I don't really

have an opinion one way or the other. I just want to learn how to be a good teacher."

I was particularly sensitive to the charge of "irrelevance" as I obtained this collegiate teaching experience without having worked as a certified K-12 classroom teacher. Because of this, I tried to use numerous examples in classroom exercises that I had obtained from teacher friends or read in books written by K-12 classroom instructors. I was constantly scouring the papers or practitioner-oriented magazines for stories that seemed illustrative of the struggles "real" teachers face. What I *did* bring to the discussion was years of work with youth, ranging in age from 11 to 22, through non-profit agencies, including a group home for teen girls and an organization that supported lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, as well as a summer designing and teaching in an alternative program for at-risk 8th grade graduates. In addition, I had spent six years in higher education working with students making the transition from high school to college. As I came to realize, what I knew about teachers and schools from listening to the stories of these young people, gave me a different perspective on what mattered for people who were preparing to be teachers.

Many, though not all, of these pre-service teachers were folks who had been relatively successful students. Perhaps not the academic "stars," but certainly the ones who had done well enough to be admitted to a flagship state university and had the personal or familial resources to stay there until at least their junior year (which was the earliest that could register for these particular classes). Most appeared white, able-bodied, middle-class, US-born, English-speaking, and heterosexual. The idea that educational institutions might systematically marginalize some groups of students challenged their sense of individual accomplishment in those same educational settings. That these processes of marginalization might be part of a larger social or cultural

dynamic was, to say the least, a relatively new idea. I had a sense that most of these pre-service teachers did not see the relevance of the ways power was institutionally granted, withheld, negotiated, and embodied, the relevance of politics to the work they planned to do in schools.

After a few years, when students were teaching in schools and came back to report on the experience, the relevance of politics seemed a bit clearer to them, although they still hesitated when asked to view themselves as political actors. When I would ask them about their students, they would mostly smile and talk about individual accomplishments or highly successful classroom exercises. But when I asked these new teachers about the institutions where they worked, the schools, their faces would often darken and they would begin a litany of complaints about the autocracy of administrators, the pressure to perform on standardized tests, or the lack of support (for them or their students) among the veteran teachers. When I asked them if they were able to use anything in our classes to make sense of all this, they usually furrowed their brows and said something like, "I guess, but I still don't know how to change any of it." What this response communicated to me, as their former teacher, was a need to scale our discussions of the politics of teaching down to the level of the day-to-day actions of teachers (something I thought I was doing, but clearly not well enough.) I began to search for a model of teaching that could offer that to me and to my students and my search was largely unsuccessful.

Finally, I turned my thinking in another direction: what if, instead of looking for a politically-sensitive framework for understanding the daily work of teachers, I compared what teachers are asked to do to another group of people who do political

work? What about legislators or other politicians? What about those who develop public policy? Civil servants? Government administrators?   The problem with any of these groups is that there is nothing about the nature of being a legislator, policy researcher, civil servant, or public administrator that mirrored the degree to which my former students (and many other teachers) feel left out of the processes that create their experiences as workers. While that sense of alienation from one's work may occur for any of the other kinds of workers named above, it is not central to an understanding of that work. In order to better understand what teachers do, while also taking into account the ways in which teachers' contributions and needs are often marginalized in educational systems, I turned to another group of workers: social activists.

The Justification of this Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between activists' work and teachers' work and, by doing so, generate an analysis of teachers' work that prioritizes the political dimensions of teachers' labor. This analysis has four parts. In the first part, I analyze the research on activism and social movements and, from this analysis, extrapolate four major types of activist work. Then, I identify practices activists employ to accomplish each type of work. In the second part, I use these practices to inquire about the nature of teachers' roles within four contemporary educational approaches. In the third part of this analysis, I identify some of the advantages of this political view of teachers' work within the context of contemporary K-12 educational institutions. In this, I draw from examples of these forms of teacher work found in teacher narratives and first-hand accounts of classroom and school practice. In the fourth part, I discuss implications of this analysis for educational theory and practice.

In contemporary discussions about public education, some may still ask, "Is teaching a political activity?" From one extreme perspective, a negative response to this question entails limiting teaching and learning to a recitation of politically neutral "facts" that seems untenable, especially given contemporary understandings of the political negotiations of what counts as a "fact" in a number of fields of inquiry. From another extreme, teaching is merely indoctrination into a particular political and social worldview, a perspective that most contemporary educators find morally reprehensible. Outside these two extremes, there is still much room for debate and discussion about the political dimensions of teaching and learning. Some would claim that particular political goals are worthwhile and should be pursued, although using methods that fall short of mere indoctrination. See for example, McLaren's (2003) arguments in *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*, particularly pp. 256-8. Others, like Amy Gutmann (1987), claim that teaching is distinguished as political by its role in establishing the means, rather than the ends, of political discourse.

In the broadest sense, education is political because educators and students are engaged in what Gutmann terms "conscious social reproduction" (p. 14). For Gutmann, the process of conscious social reproduction occurs when, among other things, a society's political character is re-inscribed and reconstituted in its social arrangements over time. Each generation purposefully engages the next in the reproduction or revision of social arrangements, and "values, attitudes and modes of behavior" are inculcated in individuals (p. 15). This may occur in simple, transmissive ways or in more complex ways, depending on the approach(es) a society takes to social reproduction. Although this process occurs broadly throughout society, one site this process explicitly occurs is

within formal educational institutions. On this account, the roles and practices of educators are consistently linked to politics in this broad sense.

Of course, most contemporary U.S. educational thinkers, across the political spectrum, are not referring to this broader sense of politics when they express dissatisfaction with current teaching practices or with the preparation of students for democratic citizenship. See, for example, Arnot and Dillabough (2000); Hirsh (1996), Ravitch & Vitteritti (2001), and Schlesinger (1991). The development of citizens could include any number of specific skills, dispositions, and/or attitudes, which are, in turn, connected to various forms of social change/reproduction. In fact, contemporary educational thinkers differ radically in their sense of which social and educational changes should be made and where the pressure for these changes should be brought to bear. These differences can be traced to differing understandings of teachers as political actors. This study asks what role teachers are expected to play with respect to this contested terrain, among the approaches considered. Specifically, I want to know what contemporary educational theorists expect educators to do with respect to social reproduction and transformation, and how these perspectives can be characterized with respect to the "political" dimensions of teaching.

In some ways, viewing teachers as engaged in social and political work fits with our common sense understandings of the role of teachers. Teachers are perceived as people pursuing their ideas of social improvement and as individuals working within institutions toward the common good. In a Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll (Rose & Gallup, 2001), the overwhelming majority of those surveyed thought that specific social issues should receive greater emphasis in public schools: 85% of those surveyed thought drug

and alcohol abuse should receive more emphasis; 76% would increase emphasis on racial and ethnic understanding and tolerance; and 64% thought environmental issues deserved more attention. Similarly, in a 1995 survey about schooling conducted by Public Agenda (Wadsworth,1997), Americans rated cooperative values, such as responsibility, honesty and tolerance, as more "essential" to teach than specific curricular areas like the sciences, history, or practical job skills.

The degree to which the public expresses respect for teachers also reflects a perception of teachers as people working for a better world. In 1998, 62% of people responding to a national survey thought that teachers provided "the most important benefit to society" (Lewis, 1999). Only medicine ranked higher as a career that respondents would recommend to a family member.

It is also common for the public (particularly in the United States) to see schools as places that contribute to a common political goal—democracy. In the same Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll cited above, those surveyed ranked "preparation for responsible citizenship" first among a list of seven possible goals for public education, above other goals like helping people to become economically self-sufficient and enhancing people's happiness. In the Public Agenda survey, two-thirds of those surveyed thought that "habits of good citizenship such as voting and caring about the nation" were "absolutely essential" to teach.

Despite these common sense understandings of the roles of educators, there are deep public and intellectual concerns over whether teachers' work is, or should be, political. One form of this concern is the worry over indoctrination, the fear that teachers will use the trust engendered in the teacher/student relationship to inculcate certain values

and beliefs that students would not otherwise embrace. Noddings (2002a) discusses this fear and the tendency on the part of educators to expose students to only one side of an issue or one interpretation of a moral story, even in those cases where "reasonable people differ" (p. 43). According to Noddings, indoctrination has been used to describe the tendency toward "psychological violence" that characterizes extreme forms of political and social conservatism. Others have raised the fear of "liberal indoctrination" with respect to subjects such as sex education (Blyfield, 6/26/95), the inclusion of religious and scientific world views in curricula (Nord, 1995), legal education (Hart, 8/7/93), and discussions of working class lives by university students (Stancill, 7/10/03).

As the concern about indoctrination illustrates, some worry that characterizing teaching as political will make schools into engines of a particular political agenda. This worry seems to become more visible during times of political strife or turmoil. For example, American teachers are frequently criticized or warned about their discussions of war and peace when the U.S. is involved in international conflict. Prior to World War I, many teachers advocated an anti-militarist position in their local communities, only to be silenced by their own more conservative national leaders when the United States entered the war (Zeiger, 2003). Educators, politicians and the public were similarly divided over the nature of teachers' role during the Vietnam era and during current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq (Dillon, 3/7/2003).

Besides international conflict, other circumstances generate public and intellectual worries over the social and political beliefs teachers bring into schools and classrooms. Individuals or groups of teachers are seen as doctrinaire, or even politically dangerous, when their social identities do not conform to the normative expectations of the local

community or society at large. Braukman's (2001) account of the Johns Committee in Florida – which, from 1956 to 1965, conducted an officially-sanctioned campaign of intimidation against gay men, lesbians, integrationists, and leftist intellectuals – offers examples of the ways teachers became particularly popular political targets. Even today, the political tone of many communities is such that queer teachers are strongly discouraged from disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity. Some decision-makers attempt to justify such silencing by asserting that knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity is political and, thus, outside the purview of education. They also assert that similar information about heterosexual or gender-conforming identities is not political and is, therefore, appropriate material for educational curricula.

As the examples above demonstrate, the work of teachers can be controversial, particularly when political disputes bring into question the appropriate goals and practices of teachers. Thus, the need to understand teachers and their roles with respect to social change/reproduction Currently, teachers are expected not only to embody practices that transmit social forms and values, but also impelled to develop and implement practices that engage in and lead to "improved" social and political arrangements. Many educators and teacher educators, however, do not explicitly incorporate this understanding into the preparation and practice of teaching. Nor do they often focus on analyzing the range of political assumptions that undergird contemporary approaches to teaching and learning. To do so requires a more careful examination of the implicit or explicit political dimensions of teacher practice and the educational theories that seek to guide it.

In contemporary debates, teachers have been understood, among other things, as: transmitters of cultural knowledge and heritage, inculcators of moral character, preparers of the future work force, basic literacy and numeracy instructors, advocates of social justice, nurturers of child/adolescent development, and preparers of democratic citizens. We have also conceived of teachers as those who address specific social needs, such as learning to drive vehicles safely or cook nutritious food.

Various attempts have been made to parse this list and to focus or restrict the activities of teachers to one or another of these descriptions. One especially important argument of this kind (historically and currently) attempts to divide these understandings along the following lines: public/private, school/family, educational/political, etc. Many of those who have addressed this question stress the need for teachers' work to fall within the first half of these dichotomies. The response by critics of this view is that we cannot adequately understand the role of teachers without addressing the private, familial, and explicitly political dimension of educators' work. This study examines the roots of this conflict by starting with a careful analysis of what it means to be engaged in political work in the first place, and uses this characterization to better understand the role and practice of public school teachers within four current perspectives.

One way to develop a framework for understanding political work is to consider research that aims to understand groups explicitly engaged in social or political activism. For the purposes of this study, I will begin by looking at research on the roles and practices of people collectively known as "activists." Throughout this study, I will define activists as people who seek to affect social change or improvement of social institutions (broadly defined) through individual and collective action. I claim that looking at

activists' work will offer us a new perspective on important aspects of teaching as a political and politically-charged endeavor.

I begin with activists because, as discussed above, teachers often experience themselves as "outside" the systems that determine the scope and limits of their daily work lives. However, unlike teachers, activists are a group whose role in social and political change is acknowledged and explicit. Regardless of whether we agree with the particular goals of an activist, few would argue with the idea that activists' work centers on making changes in social arrangements and/or the way social institutions impact particular groups. By contrast, teachers' role in social and political change is often unacknowledged and, sometimes, actively suppressed. Therefore, comparing teachers' work to that of activists will foreground those aspects of teachers' roles and pedagogical practices. Through this, we will be able to develop a clearer understanding of how current educational theories address the political dimensions of teaching and the possibilities teachers are to be given to create change in their work world.

Approaching the problem in this way offers a different entry point into some of the most contentious debates in education. In an inductive process of analysis, I start with a type of work (activism) that is already understood to be political and concerned with individual and group interests and create a template against which the aims and practices of teachers can be compared. I characterize four dimensions of activist work with empirical examples of activists' practices throughout the analysis. In addition to providing depth and texture to my analysis, these examples serve as an invitation to readers to compare my characterization of activism with their own experiences with activist and teacher work.

<u>Summary of Chapters</u>

In Chapter 2, I develop an analysis of four dimensions of activist work and identify a number of practices activists employ within each type of work. Within each dimension of work, I describe specific practices activists use to address their political and social concerns and some of the reasons these practices may vary among activists. I pay particular attention to the ways certain activist practices are mutually reinforcing and to the cultural and structural conditions that facilitate and constrain activists' work.

In Chapter 3, I apply my conclusions about the four dimensions of activist work to teachers' work, as described in four contemporary educational approaches: caring, neo-conservative, contemporary liberal, and critical theory. Using the framework for understanding activist work developed in Chapter 2, I ask whether advocates of each educational approach prescribe or promote similar kinds of teaching practices. I ask how the practices that help activists achieve political and social goals are similar to, or different from, the pedagogical practices recommended for teachers by each educational approach.

In Chapter 4, I identify some of the advantages of my analysis for teachers and teacher educators in contemporary U.S. schools, particularly in those situations in which the concerns of teachers are not adequately considered by those leading educational institutions. I illustrate this analysis with examples drawn from teacher narratives and direct accounts of teacher work in classrooms and schools. As with the analysis of activists' work, I attend to the ways in which types of teacher labor are mutually reinforcing and to the cultural and structural conditions that facilitate teachers working in ways similar to activists.

In Chapter 5, I describe some pedagogical, curricular and theoretical implications of this analysis of the roles and practices of teachers. To the degree that this analysis offers insights into the appropriate goals and practices of teachers, it has implications for teacher preparation. In this chapter, I also state advantages and disadvantages, for educational research and practice, of further pursuing the comparison between the work of activists and that of teachers.

CHAPTER 2

AN ANALYSIS OF ACTIVISTS' WORK

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe major dimensions of activist work, as gleaned from academic studies and activist narratives. Although I draw liberally from a number of studies of collective action and social movement participation, I have not structured this chapter to reflect any particular theoretical perspective on these phenomena. For overviews of some major theoretical approaches to activism and social movements, see Buechler (1993), Emirbayer and Goodwin (1986), Eyerman and Jamison (1991), particularly Chapter 1; Gurney and Tierney (1982); Jasper (1997), particularly Chapter 2; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001), Polletta 1(1999), Teske and Tetreault (2000), and Whittier (2002). Instead, my approach incorporates those forms of work seen as relevant in all of the major contemporary schools of thought within the social movement literature, with different levels of emphasis according to their approach to the study of social movements. In particular, those theorists (see McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001) focused on material and structural conditions of activist work would find some of their observations relevant to some of my descriptions of social critique and organizational action. Those theorists interested in the cultural and normative conditions necessary to and created by activism (see in particular Jasper, 1997; Mansbridge & Morris, 2001, and Polletta, 1999), would find much in common with my characterization of organizational

action as changing cultural understandings and in my descriptions of identity formation and negotiation. Feminist theorists of social movements might find their work of relevance to my characterization of social critique, identity negotiation, and affiliation work. (See in particular Mansbridge &Morris, 2001; Rowbotham, 1992; Teske & Treteault, 2000; and Tretault & Teske 2003). The social movement literature in general is characterized by a commitment to incorporating observational data into research, which makes this a particularly rich field of study from which to generate an analysis of political work.

The organization of this chapter follows what I have come to see as four major dimensions of activists' work: social critique; identity development and negotiation; affiliation; and organizational action and protest. Activist work does not always divide neatly into categories, but these dimensions distinguish between meaningful sets of practices and guide the daily work of activists in unique ways. Also, I do not expect all activist activities to fall cleanly into any one of these categories. Often, a particular incident in the life of an activist or the history of a social movement organization will exhibit some combination or even all elements of this work. Throughout the chapter, I will discuss ways activist work is interdependent and mutually reinforcing, the ways specific activist practices address individual and group concerns, and the material conditions and cultural dynamics associated with specific practices.

In this chapter, I describe four dimensions of activist work (social critique; identity development and negotiation; affiliation; and organizational action and protest) as exemplified in specific studies and narratives of activists' lives. These studies include Meg Allen's (2001) study of women in striking British mining communities in the 1980s;

Javier Auyero's (2003) sociological biographies of two Argentinian woman activists in the 1990's; Mary Bernstein's (1997a, 1997b, 2002) accounts of lesbian and gay legislative activism in the United States; Judith Ezekiel's (2002) history of feminist organizing in 1970's Dayton, Ohio; and Carol Maxwell's (2002) study of U.S. activists engaged in anti-abortion direct actions. I have chosen studies that I believe offer descriptive depth and narrative texture; these studies offer relevant examples of activists engaged in practices that fall within four significant dimensions of activist work. In addition, I have intentionally included one example (Maxwell) from what would be considered in the U.S. to be a politically conservative perspective; one that specifically focuses on feminist organizing (Ezekiel); one that addresses activism within a democratic legislative context (Bernstein); and two that incorporate non-U.S. socialist organizing. Each study offers the possibility of resonance with any of the educational approaches I will address in Chapter 3, but I intentionally included examples in which the activists studied share a political perspective similar to each of the four educational approaches I will include in Chapter 3. So, for example, the Maxwell's anti-abortion activists might share some political assumptions with the neo-conservative approach to education. Ezekiel's account of feminist organizing might resonate with advocates of the caring approach and Bernstein's account of legislative activism might share some assumptions with the contemporary liberals. The two accounts of activism associated with socialist perspectives (Allen and Auyero) would have the most in common with the critical approach to education. Again, my intent here is not to directly associate a particular set of activists with any one approach to U.S. K-12 education, but rather to generate a description of activist work and illustrate this with the activist accounts. I do, however,

want to anticipate any objections to my analysis that might be associated with "loading" my activist examples in one type of political perspective. In describing each dimension of activist work, I identify the practices employed by activists that support that dimension of work. In the following chapter, I compare my description of activists' work to the work of public school teachers as characterized by advocates of four contemporary educational approaches. This comparison will serve as a means to enter the discussion about teachers' roles in schooling and to evaluate different ways of defining those roles.

The Work of Social Critique

According to Kathleen Blee (1998), activists are distinguishable from other social actors by their goals. Activists are "those who envision fundamentally new social arrangements or who fervently guard existing social arrangements against forces of change" (p. 3). Activists are people who do not see their concerns being taken up, or sufficiently advanced, by relevant decision-makers and who have decided to do something about that situation. This definition is similar to that advanced by Teske and Treteault (2000) who define social movements as "organized efforts at the grass roots to represent interests excluded from or poorly represented in formal arenas of authoritative negotiation and value allocation" (p. 9) Taken as a whole, their actions differ in some politically or rhetorically significant way from actions of insider groups, those whose concerns *are* being advanced by relevant decision-makers. By this definition, even those who are protecting elements of the status quo can be activists if they perceive their cause to be inadequately addressed by those who have the power to affect their issues.

Whether activists see themselves challenging the status quo or protecting it, they are engaged at some level in the work of critique. Although not all activists want change (as

Blee notes, some activists are working to protect current arrangements), activists differ from other social and political actors in their attention to a particular kind of social critique. In its fullest form, this dimension of activist work involves a critical assessment of current social arrangements, a critique of structural inequalities and ideological assumptions, and the identification of possible sources of resistance. In this section, I describe these practices and the difficulties that arise for activists as they attempt to engage in the work of social critique.

Assessing the Status Quo

Although a thorough critique does not always temporally precede other elements of activist work, somewhere in the self-understandings and justifications of activists is usually the sense that "something is not right here." To move from this existential disquiet to a thorough social critique requires using the intellectual, cultural, and material resources available to activists to identify social phenomena that support and sustain such feelings. For activists, this identification of the relevant social phenomena has happened in some of the following ways: by comparing the current state of affairs to their own idealistic vision; by determining basic needs that are not being addressed; and by incorporating the form and content of prior social critiques into contemporary analyses of the problem. Below, I provide examples of activists engaged in these practices.

Comparing Experience to Idealistic Vision. One practice that enables activists to develop a critical assessment of the status quo is the practice of comparing one's experiences to an ideal. These ideal visions consist of the activists' ideas about how the social world should be organized and how they should interact with that world. Activists' idealistic visions can be used as points of comparison to current social

arrangements and/or psychological attitudes. These comparative critiques appear, for example, in the tendency for activists to discuss their moral and social visions in terms of "social emancipation" and "self-emancipation" (Rowbotham, 2001). Popular accounts of social history tend to associate these two forms of emancipation with distinct and often conflicting critical arguments. According to Morone (2003), in the U.S., *self*-emancipation tends to be associated with the Puritan idea that God rewards the righteous and, therefore, emancipation is contingent on achieving one's ideal personal morality. In contrast, a vision of *social* emancipation is associated with the "social gospel" that locates human freedom in the realized "beloved community," as it was described by Martin Luther King, Jr. (*Advice for Living*, 1957, MLK Jr. Papers Project at Stanford University). Despite this tendency to separate self- and social emancipation, most activists justify their work in ways inclusive of both perspectives.

Javier Auyero (2003) provides an example of an activist who brings together self- and social emancipation by comparing her activist experience to both her ideal self and to an ideal vision of society. Auyero recounts the following experience of Nana, a participant in the December 1993 protest riots in Santiago del Estero, Argentina:

> When I started participating in the union struggle a little bit more, when I start being with the workers more and more, I feel more complete, more whole. Maybe because for all those years I was looking for my true destiny...the other side of the truth...the other history. ...[T]he dictatorship hid the desaparecidos, the repression. I was a part of something that I didn't realize until later... (p. 159).

Nana describes her experiences with mobilization and union activism and compares those experiences with finding her "true destiny." This comparison helps her come to a clearer understanding of the place of her individual experience in the context of particular social arrangements (the working of a repressive dictatorship). The conclusions she draws are

critical in that they identify the social phenomena that have caused her to feel a sustained sense of injustice with regard to her situation. The "other history" she uncovers includes a critique of the status quo that develops in the interplay of her idealized visions (of her "destiny" and "truth") and actual concrete experiences (with repression, with mobilizing, and with union organizing). This analysis also helps her develop and maintain a sense of her ideal role as a participant in pro-union activism.

Determining Unmet Material Needs and Expectations. Another strategy activists use to assess current social arrangements is to determine unaddressed material needs and expectations. Many protests are directly linked to the mal-distribution of resources and/or economic exploitation. To the degree that this is the case, perceptions about the distribution of resources serve as a means to assess current social arrangements. Auyero's (2003) account of the 1996 road blockades in Cutral-co and Plaza Huincul, Argentina, reveals this kind of assessment in the words of participating protesters:

> We want jobs. We provide the gasoline, the oil, the electricity and...is this the pay we get? (P. 61)...The people in my picket ...are there because they are hungry; they are mothers with their kids who can get diapers and milk for free (p. 65).

The protests in Cutral-co and Plaza Huincul drew people from a range of class backgrounds and life experiences. Not everyone was destitute, but due to the privatization of a local petroleum company and other government "austerity measures," all protesters were experiencing a lowered standard of living. For some protesters, this lowered standard of living did not result in hunger or homelessness, but for many others it did. However, almost all residents of these towns eventually experienced a diminished standard of living over the course of only a few years. Their ability to use this as a source of critique was due, in part, to the speed with which this impoverishment took place.

Many of the protesters had previously been employed by the government-run petroleum company or in associated service industries and could remember times of greater prosperity. The fact that almost everyone in the town lost jobs and economic opportunities made a materialist critique easier to launch.

Using unmet material needs as a source of social critique often happens in conjunction with other strategies. For example, in Maxwell's (2002) study, anti-abortion activists developed one critique of abortion based on the observation that some poor women reported getting abortions because they could not provide for the material needs of a child. Alongside this materialist critique was the idealization of motherhood as a special or "blessed" role for women. This concurrence of critical strategies is not surprising if one accepts the premise that cultural and historical location shapes both the content of idealistic visions and perceptions about what constitutes an unmet material need.

Incorporating Elements of Prior Critiques. In addition to comparisons to ideal types and assessments of unmet material needs, many activists use other movements' critiques in developing their assessment of the status quo. Criticism arising from one aggrieved group can influence the form and content of other groups' critiques (Rowbotham, 2001, p. 15 ff). Maxwell (2002) describes this in her account of the way one anti-abortion activist linked his criticism of abortion to the logic of the civil rights and anti-war movements (see Maxwell, pp. 28-31). Others have described specific links between the anti-slavery and women's suffrage movements (DuBois, 1978), the civil rights movement and the feminist movement (McAdam, 1988), and the radical women's movement and the peace movement (Meyer & Whittier, 1994). McAdam and Sewell (2001) describe in

a general way what many activists acknowledge: a critique of current social arrangements is easier to launch when it borrows from the rhetorical and theoretical language of previous social actors. The degree to which critical content and logical forms are shared across movements is a subject for debate, but as Maxwell's ethnography demonstrates, at least some activists identify particular instances of critical cross-pollination.

In another example, Ezekiel (2002) traces the ways women in the Dayton Women's Liberation group built on the logic of other New Left and counterculture movements of the 1960's and 1970's in developing their assessment of women's oppression. In particular, Ezekiel notes the ways the logic of "discursive liberated zones" created by minority and third world people influenced the creation of consciousness-raising groups among feminists. Both groups justified periodic separatism by an assessment of the aims of current power-holders (white people or men). Both groups also concluded that these aims conflicted with the needs of oppressed people (minorities or women). Both groups saw power-holders as incapable of creating discursive spaces where oppression could be effectively analyzed and resisted.

According to McAdam and Sewell (2001), new critiques emerge in the context of specific historical events, such as the storming of the Bastille or the Greensboro Sit-in. By their account, "these events embolden other challengers to map their claims onto their own variants" of the critique by "demonstrating the vulnerability of the regime" (p. 120). This connection between critical content and demonstrations of regime vulnerability is evident in Auyero's account of Argentinian activists. According to his account, various groups of discontented people in Santiago learned by watching one another that the way to attract attention to their concerns was by participating in increasingly violent protests

in the streets of the city. Their shared critique became focused on unpaid salaries for public workers and government officials' corruption. Protests became so large and pervasive that even violent repression from the police could not end them, eventually coming to a head on December 16, 1993, when protesters burned and ransacked many officials' homes and government buildings. According to Auyero, contemporary activists in Santiago frequently recall the events of that time and compare them to current issues and grievances against elite power-holders. In doing so, activists gain recognition for their claims by associating themselves with a time when the government was particularly vulnerable.

As I have looked here at the ways activists work to construct a critical assessment of the status quo, there are at least three primary sources for the critique: (1) an incongruence between idealistic visions, such as those related to self- and social emancipation, and activists' perceptions of current social arrangements; (2) an assessment of unmet material needs and expectations; and/or (3) the arguments of activists in other social movements. In the next section, I will describe the practices activists use to move from an assessment of the current situation to a critique of structural inequalities and socio-political ideologies.

Apprehending Institutional Inequalities and Ideological Assumptions

Along with offering a critique of the status quo, most activists also acknowledge a systemic dimension to social problems. Although the difficulties faced by particular individuals may change, many activists believe that the problems experienced by members of a particular group or class are perpetuated in the maintenance and reproduction of particular patterns of power and authority. These patterns shape the ways

material goods and political rights are distributed in a society and they place limits and constraints on the ways individuals and groups construct their identities. These patterns incorporate not only the social arrangements themselves, but also the concepts, value systems, and cultural associations used to legitimate the current social and political order. Ideology, understood as a mutually reinforcing system of assumptions that works to justify and recreate structural inequalities, interpenetrates language, thought, and action on numerous levels. For more on the role of ideology in social movements, see Mansbridge and Morris (2001), Jasper (1997),and Teske and Tetrault (2000).

Auyero (2003) recounts this kind of approach in a document released by *Memoria y Participación*, a political party founded in the aftermath of the December 16, 1993 uprising in Santiago, Argentina. This document states:

> December 16 signals a before and an after in the history of Santiago, it is a starting point for a new foundation. The burning of the three branches of government is a burning of a formal democracy that served as an instrument of oppression rather than of liberation…This is the clear message of December 16: nobody tried to destroy democracy but to purify it so that it is more authentic and participatory. (MYP document from May 28, 1994, cited in Auyero, p. 186)

In this statement, the authors indicate that the idea of democracy was used to legitimate a state that was not "authentic" or "participatory" in the way the authors believe democracies should be. Instead, the political order prior to their protests was a "formal democracy" that operated in oppressive ways. While the official version of the events of December 16 limited the claims of the rioter/protesters to discontent over wages, many of those who participated emphasized their desires for justice, participation and recognition, as well as fair wages. Protesters recognized the systemic and ideological dimensions of

an inequitable system that denied them material well being, political rights and social
respect.

For activists, everyday life experience is essential to the process of understanding
structural inequalities and ideological assumptions. This is apparent in Ezekiel's (2002)
account of feminist activism in Dayton, Ohio in the 1970's. She concluded that
consciousness-raising groups were important to feminist activism because they linked the
specifics of women's lives with critiques of social inequities. As a leaflet distributed by
Dayton Women's Liberation at a 1970 conference on the status of women read:

> Every woman, if you scratch the surface a little, is an expert about the status
> of women. Every woman can tell you about a broad range of things in her
> daily life that points to the need for the liberation of women – problems in
> marriage, birth control, abortion, sterilization, childcare, boredom, lack of
> self-image. (DWL leaflet, cited in Ezekiel, p. 40)

The kinds of issues named in this leaflet were the substance of many discussions in
Dayton's consciousness-raising groups. Groups formed with the intent of giving women
the opportunity to recount these experiences and develop critical links between their daily
lives and the movement for women's liberation. The key to this link was using women's
difficult life experiences to form and test emerging critiques of sexism and misogyny in
society.

Identifying Sites of Resistance

For activists, social critique tends to move from an identification of the problem
to the generation of a social response. This response takes the form of resistance to the
degree that it provides a countervailing force to the conceptual and social "weight" of the
ideological assumptions used to justify current inequities. The sites where these forces
coalesce can be particular physical spaces, such as churches or communal buildings,

endowed with meanings that contrast with the dominant culture in some significant way. More often, sites of resistance are predominantly or entirely conceptual, such as shared history or mythology, and offer sets of ideas and images that can off-set the logic of the dominant ideology.

For example, the common stories women shared in Dayton's consciousness-raising groups served as sites of resistance to the assumptions that (1) women's lives only had meaning in relation to men and (2) women's difficulties were idiosyncratic, never the result of sexist social arrangements. In this case, the work of identifying sites of resistance involved affiliative work, specifically the work of creating settings where women were willing and able to talk intimately with each other. Identifying sites of resistance required looking at those aspects of their lives that did not align with the dominant ideology and considering whether those experiences, taken together, indicated the need for new patterns of meaning and value.

In a similar way, Nana, one of Auyero's Argentinian women activists, recounts the way she and other picketers came together outside the prevailing culture of established political power:

> I was able to share my thoughts with the rest of the picketers. We all had a common feeling: they, the politicians, were using us, they ignored us at the Torre Uno [a meeting organized by established politicians]. We knew that blockading the road was a crime, but we also knew that people would not leave the road: people had food there. At the meeting, we agreed on the following things: protect the women and children in the pickets, take care of the food, demand jobs, protect youngsters and drunkards, and have another meeting the following day. We first organized around those simple things, because plain people with no political or economic interests among them can easily agree on simple things. (p. 69)

Nana's account illustrates how a separate conversation among picketers identified different goals for the protest (at the Torro Uno, the expressed goal had been resignation

of the governor). Perhaps even more significantly, they identified a common site of meaning and resistance, which Nana calls "simple things...plain people...can easily agree on." Although she claims that the picketers at the meeting had "no political or economic interests," it seems that, in fact, it was that their interests *differed* from that of the established politicians who led the earlier meeting. The value of these "simple things" for the picketers served as a more powerful site of resistance than the values espoused by traditional politicians.

It is not always the case that activists develop an alternative set of values and assumptions to use as a site of resistance. In fact, many activists resist the decisions of those in power by appealing to the values and assumptions of the status quo. Because no ideology is without its internal contradictions and tensions, this is often a very effective source of resistance. For example, in Bernstein's account of lesbian and gay activism in Vermont in the 1980's, activists drew on an internal contradiction in the anti-gay culture to justify their call for hate crimes legislation that included sexual orientation. Two assumptions that worked to maintain a hostile climate for gay and lesbian people in Vermont were: (1) they did not really exist and (2) they were despicable and worthy of hatred. However, people in Vermont who worked to maintain a commitment to the second assumption had to deny the first. So, the anti-gay campaigns of the early 1980's and the increase in hate crimes that followed, worked to undermine the status quo assumption that gay and lesbian people did not exist (or did not live in Vermont). Lesbian and gay activists used this increase in visibility as a resource in their campaign for greater legal protection against violence.

In this section, I discussed three major practices activists use to further the work of critique. Using examples drawn from studies of activists, I illustrated these practices: assessing the status quo; apprehending structural inequalities and ideological assumptions; and identifying sources of resistance. In this chapter, I also illustrated some of the ways these practices address individual and group concerns, such as the concern for emancipation. Examples of activist practice are also associated with a convergence of cultural and material factors, as when the cultural understandings of rapid impoverishment among Argentinean activists facilitated a materialist critique.

One significant theme that emerges in this section is the tendency for activists to draw on a range of intellectual practices in doing the work of critique. For example, activists engaged in assessing the status quo might draw on their own idealistic visions, a determination of unmet needs or elements of prior critiques. Similarly, in critiquing structural inequalities, activists may consider both the ways dominant ideologies shape the practices of decision-makers and the ways those ideologies constrain activists' emergent identities. Also, activists working to identify sites of resistance may develop alternative value systems and perspectives and/or look for internal contradictions in the prevailing culture. In subsequent sections of this chapter, examples of activist practices will illustrate the ways practices of social critique can support and reinforce other dimensions of activist work. In the next section, I will consider one such dimension of activist work, the formation and negotiation of identities, and discuss the practices involved in doing this kind of work.

Formation and Negotiation of Identities

Some researchers (Jasper, 1997; Klatch, 2001) have made a distinction between the collective identities of activist groups and the identities of individual activists. While this distinction might be useful for certain analytic purposes, Teske and Tetrault (2000) warn against such dichotomous conceptions of individual and group identity. For the purposes of exploring the specific practices involved in the work of identity development, it seems useful to explore individual and group identities concurrently.

Identity formation and negotiation serve as another important dimension of activist work, often supporting and reinforcing the work of social critique. According to Bernstein (1997), identity is a significant dimension of activist work because "some sort of identity is necessary to translate individual to group interest and individual to collective action" (p. 536). For this reason, identity work is always necessary for activism, but it is especially important when a movement constituency lacks visibility. Identity work requires that individuals understand the collective identity of the group and agree that this identity provides potential means to address individual and group concerns. Whittier (2002) identifies the elements of collective identity as including shared (or similar) interpretations of "who members of the group are, what their attributes are, what they have in common, how they are different from other groups, and what the political significance of all this is" (p. 302). In this section, I will discuss three practices activists employ to form and negotiate identities: reclaiming subordinate identities, generating new identities, and negotiating their identities with other activists.

Reclaiming Subordinated Identities

Morris and Braine (2001) contend that the work of reclaiming subordinated identities is typical of "liberation movements," movements "whose carriers have a

historically subordinate position within an ongoing system of social stratification" (p. 34). The practice of positive reclamation of a subordinated identity through a liberation movement often requires creating opportunities for subordinated people to come together outside the purview of their oppressors to recognize their common interests and revalue their common identity. This does not suggest that a "common identity" in a liberation movement is an uncontested matter, but that this activity revolves around a shared goal.

Ezekiel's study of the women's movement in 1970's Dayton, Ohio, includes a number of examples of women engaged in this practice, reclaiming their previously subordinated identities as women. This reclaiming often happened in the context of feminist consciousness-raising groups, where women learned to question their subordination to men and to value their identities as women in new ways. As participants in Dayton's consciousness-raising groups stated:

> The effect of those initial consciousness-raising groups was to learn to trust
> our own experience...There was a gut reaction that there was validity to
> [our experience] that we had never before allowed ourselves to give...We
> had all been taught not to trust women, that women were not
> interesting...[but] women [are] gems! (p. 13)

These women began to see beyond the roles and expectations of their upbringing and current situation to view themselves as part of a "sisterhood" of other women who were also questioning their subordination. According to Morris and Braine (2001), the practice of re-orienting identity in this way is most likely to occur in settings like Dayton's consciousness-raising groups, where members of a particular subordinated group are segregated from representatives of the dominant culture. In these situations, segregation allows members of subordinated groups to question the distribution of power and privilege by lessening the fear of negative reprisal.

Some of the more affluent members of Dayton's nascent feminist community

described their prior identities as victims of the *"Better Homes and Gardens*

housekeeping syndrome of the fifties" (p. 14). However, even the traditional tasks of

housekeeping could be transformed in the context of a sisterhood retreat. As one woman

described it:

> A good time was had by all…Wild, free dancing Friday night by candlelite;
> fire in the fireplace giving everything a golden glow; lots of spaghetti being
> passed from the kitchen to eager hands; sitting in your bag watching the
> sister 3 inches away drifting into sleep; the clang of pots and pans from the
> kitchen in the early morning, and then rising for a cup of steaming
> coffee…and finally Sharon Kalkis' car stuck in the mud until about 10
> sisters come to her aid and by sheer cooperation with each other free her and
> the indescribably delicious feeling of accomplishment and POWER. (DWL
> News, 29 October 1972, p. 1 cited in Ezekiel, p. 63, emphasis in original)

This short description illustrates the degree to which an empowering reclamation of

identity may lead to changes in the particular behaviors of activists and in the meanings

they ascribe to their everyday actions. While some behaviors may have diverged from

their pre-feminist patterns (helping move a car or dancing freely with other women),

women at the retreat were still engaged in certain forms of care taking (cooking or

making the morning coffee). However, the meaning women gave to all of these actions

changed. As a result of claiming their identity as women as an empowering force, they

were able to cooperate, "come to [the] aid" of another sister, "free her," and experience

feelings of "accomplishment and POWER." In doing this, activists in Ezekiel's study

also developed and expanded their ideal visions of human relationship. In such a context,

women could engage in the process by which "the meaning that individuals give to a

social situation becomes a shared definition implying collective action" and a different

social position (Gamson, 1992, p. 55).

Forming New Identities for Some Activist Groups

While some activists predominantly work to re-claim previously subordinated identities, others form new identities that place them in conflict with the dominant culture and/or political structure. According to Morris and Braine (2001), this kind of work (identity formation) is characteristic of "social responsibility movements," those movements whose members have chosen to participate in the struggle to "make individuals, corporations, and governments act in ways that are socially responsible" around a particular issue, such as nuclear disarmament or drunk driving. As compared to liberation movements, the work of identity formation differs significantly for such activists.

Activists in social responsibility movements may not have a history of experiencing subordination and may not have an on-going conflict with systems of domination. As a result, claiming a positive identity may require more than assigning a positive value to elements of a subordinated identity. For these groups, claiming a positive identity may require working to define key elements of identity for activist groups or members of these groups. In such a situation, the sources of identity may be more divergent and activists may borrow more frequently from the familiar cultural resources of subordinated groups or groups in the dominant culture. For example, Maxwell's account of the early years of anti-abortion direct action concludes that individual activists sought grounding for their work in identities as diverse as conservative Catholicism, fundamentalist Protestantism, and civil rights activism. As this example suggests, the sources of activists' identities may remain diverse throughout the life of such movements.

Some special issue groups draw liberally on the identity work of liberation movements in constructing their own identities. Morris and Braine call these groups "equality-based special issue movements" and, for such groups, the work of claiming a positive identity is complex. The examples they give for such movements are the pro-choice movement, the environmental racism movement and the grassroots AIDS movement. Activists draw on the identity work of broader liberation movements (like women's liberation, civil rights, and lesbian/gay liberation) to define themselves and their interests. However, maintaining such an identity requires on-going attention to the connections (and potential disconnections) between the issue movement and the grievances and systems of meaning within the larger liberation movement. (For more discussion of the work necessary to do this, see Snow, et al. (1986), or examples in Ezekiel (2002).

Negotiating Identities Collectively

As the discussion of identity formation indicates, the work of maintaining activist identities requires collective action on the part of activists and social movement organizations. According to Whittier (2002), this includes engaging in discourse about what is "thinkable, possible, comprehensible," "telling new stories about the operation of institutions," and "challenging...the dominant discourse" (p. 303). However, in most social movements, identities are maintained by renegotiating elements of existing cultural understandings. According to Polletta (1994), maintaining identities requires attention to both activist goals and the social context within which those goals are pursued.

Based on her study of the women in striking mining communities, Allen (2001) claims that construction of a political identity for women entailed both expanding the

traditional identities of women to allow for direct public action and maintaining their

distinctness in contrast to "outsiders" who had taken up their cause. Women in these

communities justified their work as an extension of their traditional care-taking role,

while at the same time, expanding the types of actions that were seen as consistent with

that role. Women began their involvement by using existing social networks to provide

for practical needs of individuals and families until the strike ended. This involvement

expanded over time to include public speaking, picketing, and participation in marches

and rallies. For some women, this involvement led them to question traditional gender

roles and a few left the mining communities altogether. Others, according to Allen,

"managed to contain the tensions that their activism brought about" and maintain their

identity as members of their local communities.

Bernstein (1997) and Klatch (2002), like Allen, discuss the ways in which

processes internal to a movement affect the work required to maintain activists'

identities. Something internal to a movement, such as the degree to which movement

members share significant life experiences, can impact the time and resources needed to

maintain a shared sense of identity. This may be true of groups who have a shared

history of subordination (as mentioned above) and also of groups who have other kinds of

experiences in common. Individual identities continue to be influenced by events prior to

movement participation and by an activist's retrospective interpretation of those events.

However, once someone is involved in a social movement organization, movement peers

and organizational size may influence individuals to maintain some aspects of identity

while de-emphasizing or relinquishing other aspects. Activists, especially those who

understand the ways these factors enable activists to maintain empowering identities, may

make strategic decisions such as recruiting new members among groups with a shared history, encouraging members to interpret significant life events in relation to movement goals, or creating small semi-autonomous subgroups within which identity is more easily re-negotiated.

Herda-Rapp (2000) offers another example of activists negotiating between conceptions of the self/group evident prior to participation in a particular social movement and those developed as one engages in activism. She discusses this practice as it relates to women's gender identities and the changes those identities undergo as women participate in activist organizations. According to Herda-Rapp, these changes take place through a "messy, conflict-laden process" that draws on "social movement experiences, personal relationships, class background, and pre-activism gender identity" (pp. 439-430). Herda-Rapp also presents another way may negotiate this tension: through an extension and expansion of traditional gender roles to include new activities and dimensions. According to Herda-Rapp's observations of women activists, "some actors can stretch their identities to include new dimensions while building on the old" (p. 434).

Allen (2001) also discusses the way traditional identities are renegotiated to provide a springboard to activism and the use of "gender privileges" to assert rights. Kaplan (2001) uses this term in her discussion of women's environmental activism. Allen's work, like Herda-Rapp's, highlights gender identity as a point of tension with an activist identity. However, her discussion of women's involvement in mining strikes also highlights the tensions between multiple sources of identity. Women define themselves not merely as activists, but also as workers, mothers, spouses, daughters, religious people, members of particular racial or ethic groups, etc. Regardless of which aspect of identity

is given analytic prominence, the lived experience of activists requires a constant and on-going series of decisions about which identities or aspects of identity matter and in which situations.

In this section, I have explored some of the ways individual and group identities are formed and utilized in social movements. I have noted ways individual and group identities are created and modified to address activists' concerns. Some examples have addressed the material and cultural resources activists employ for identity formation. Others have demonstrated that certain practices support and reinforce the work of social critique. These and other influences on identity formation create tensions activists must negotiate. One of the ways activists work through (or perhaps just ride out) these tensions is by forming emotional connections with other activists. In the next section, I will explore the work activists do to build and maintain such bonds.

Affiliation Work among Activists

As discussed in the previous two sections, critique and identity work involve practices that occur in deeply social contexts. Both of these dimensions of activist work involve peers with whom individual activists expand their assessment of the status quo, critique structural inequalities and ideological assumptions, identify sources of resistance, and develop or maintain identities. This section will discuss the practices of activists engaged in affiliation work. I will also explore the idea that affiliation, as an emotional affinity for and commitment to particular individuals or groups, may be or become a primary outcome goal for some activists.

Some might argue that affiliation is merely a byproduct of other forms of activist labor, such as cultural critique or identity work. Clearly, the work of affiliation often

overlaps, intersects, and reinforces the work of cultural critique, identity formation, and, as I will discuss later, organizational action. However, as researchers on social movements have discovered, group affiliation does not automatically result from a shared critique or common view of social inequities (Lofland, 1977). As I have defined it here, affiliation involves an emotional affinity on the part of activists for others involved in their cause. A number of factors are involved in the creation and maintenance of emotional affinity. It is beyond the limits of this particular study to try to capture all of the many ways emotional affinity develops out of complex interactions between individual, structural and socio-cultural factors. (For discussions of some of these interactions, see Barbalet (1997), Hochschild (1997, 1983), Lutz (1986), Lutz and White (1986), and Rosaldo (1984).) However, a reading of the literature on activism reveals how some social practices are more likely to present the opportunity for individuals and groups to engage in the complex dance of creating and maintaining emotional bonds with others. In this section, I discuss and illustrate three such practices and their connection to affiliation among activists. These practices including creating continuity with prior social affiliations, engaging individuals with new social affiliations, and maintaining commitment to activist affiliations over time.

Creating Continuity with Prior Social Affiliations

Some activist organizers operate on a simplistic model of mobilization. This model presumes that if the organizer brings together previously unassociated people with common concerns, those individuals will recognize their common interests and mobilize for change. According to this model, affiliative work has as its main goal the affirmation of pre-existing collective interests for members of unrepresented groups and, therefore,

collective interests are sufficient to constitute an identity that brings groups together (Polletta, 1994). One problem with this model is that it assumes that affiliations and identities prior to mobilization are not, in themselves, a collective interest. Allen's (2001) work with the women in British mining communities demonstrates an alternative interpretation of the relationship between affiliation, identity, and interests.

In the case of the miner's strikes studied by Allen, the ostensible goal of greater access to economic and political resources (collective interests) was secondary. At least for the women involved, the primary goals were maintaining particular relationships and encouraging particular kinds of social bonds. Women who came together to address practical issues, such as maintaining access to food for their families, reported that their work was grounded in a sense of community or shared identity. Over the months of the strike, this sense of collective identity was shaped and reshaped by particular events (such as voluntary service) and by the interpretations individual women and groups of women gave to those events. In short, the desire to maintain particular affiliative connections, and the identities facilitating these connections, emerges as the main source of collective interests for these women.

Once constituted by a specific affiliative experience, abstract concepts such as "community" are animated and play a role in further motivating activists' work. As Allen stated with regard to British mining towns, "Community became increasingly an ideological rather than a geographical phenomenon and the women's sense of political affiliation grew stronger during the dispute. In the process, the idea of 'community' was to become encompassing; its emotional meaning and wider ideological force enabled them to act cohesively despite difference and conflict on a local level" (Allen, 2001, p.

68). Allen indicated that these activists, through a concrete experience with affiliation, developed a sense of community that offered them ideas beyond what they saw reflected in their local environment. This indicates that experiences with affiliation can expand activists' ideas about their collective interests and identities and may motivate further critical, affiliative, and organizational work.

"Community" is only one of many concepts that may animate the affiliative work of activists. Affiliative work often relies on local understandings of the relationships between particular feelings and behaviors. For example, social expectations about what it meant to be a "good woman" in a British mining community (providing supportive work in the family, caring for the vulnerable) were appropriated to mobilize some women to speak, picket, and work at creating alternative social services (Allen, 2001). Women were also used to shame strikebreakers. According to the rules of that social context, it was more humiliating for working-class British mining men to be shouted down and sneered at by a woman. Also, women involved in the strike used ostracism to alienate other women whose husbands returned to work before the strike was over.

Here, I've used Allen's study to illustrate the affiliative practice of creating continuity with prior social relationships. I will discuss the relationship between the fear of losing important affiliative connections and the maintenance of activist commitment later in this section. At this point, it is important to note the reciprocal relationship between this affiliative practice and the work of identity maintenance and cultural critique. Similar themes will emerge in the following discussion of the practices that help to engage activists in new social affiliations.

Engaging Activists with New Social Affiliations

The importance of new affiliative connections to activist work emerges as a theme in Maxwell's study of anti-abortion direct action participants ("rescuers"). As in Allen's mining communities, immediate and daily experiences of emotional affinity and commitment contributed to the development of collective interests and shared identity. However, in the case of the anti-abortion movement, some of the social affiliations did not pre-date the activists' participation, but rather formed out of a shared experience of protest. Often, new affiliations built on some sense of shared identity. One of Maxwell's respondents recounted the experience of meeting another veteran at a rally before a Veteran's Rescue:

> As the meeting progressed, he and I were both weeping...two old military officers...God had captured both of us and here we are standing together in a different battle, but still in the battle, in a more important battle – perhaps the last battle that God's got in his scheme for us – to restore us into completeness. Just the bonding, this guy, we just hugged each other. That's the kind of bonding, whether it's in a jail cell or on the street. (p. 232)

For this veteran, the sense of a *common* experience of military service coupled with *shared* experiences (of weeping, of attending the rally against abortion), led him to feel an emotional affinity for a stranger. This affinity was further supported by the idea that both men were "captured" by God to engage in direct action at health clinic where abortions were performed. According to Maxwell, it was not uncommon for anti-abortion activists to appeal to religious ideology to unite supporters around broad, uncontested themes.

Whereas the above example may lead us to the conclusion that new affiliations develop out of shared or common experiences, an incident from Auyero's description of Argentinean picketers illustrates the role of affiliation in expanding individuals' willingness to engage in difficult or unusual experiences. In this example, protest leaders

developed an affiliative connection to a specific group of youth protesters and a concern for their safety during the protest. Their concern led some of the adults to advocate a drug- and alcohol-free protest, an action that was eventually taken up by the entire group, including the young people themselves. Because members of the group had come to trust and care about each other, the "sacrifice" of giving up alcohol was seen as less important than their shared commitment to maintaining a unified and safe space for protest activity.

Shared or common experiences, particularly those reflecting shared culture or identity, can also lead activists to develop particular affiliations. Such affiliations can be structured so that other individuals or groups are excluded. For example, Ezekiel's study of feminists in Dayton, Ohio, indicates the white cultural bias of most local consciousness-raising groups (which were the main contexts for developing new affiliations with the feminist movement in Dayton in the 1970's). African-American women in Dayton at the time also recognized the ways sex and gender discrimination affected their lives, but feminist groups formed by white women tended to try to recruit black women after a core "white" identity had been established. It was difficult for black women to develop and maintain new affiliations within the local feminist community because of a lack of shared or common experiences between black and white women. The tendency of white experiences to dominate in the consciousness-raising groups made it even harder to identify commonalities.

The process of developing new affiliations among activists is a complex one and raises many questions. One of these questions is: To what degree are activists drawn to new affiliations because of their common interests and to what degree are common interests constructed out of experiences with affiliation? While it is not the purpose of

this study to engage this question, it is important to acknowledge that common interests and concerns (or, at least, the perception of such) play a key role in affiliative work. Above, I argued that common interests are not sufficient to explain why most activists engage in the process of developing affinities and commitments to other activists. However, some form or perception of common interest is often involved in developing new emotional affiliations. As Maxwell concludes in her study of anti-abortion activists, a shared sense of threat to one's worldview, identity, and moral sensibilities is often key to the development and maintenance of new affiliations. In Maxwell's study, the nature of the threat differed between various participants (especially with respect to the gender of the participant), but the idea that something (or some group) posed a serious threat to their deepest beliefs was almost universal among participants. The sense that these commitments were shared caused some activists to feel especially close to others involved in direct action. As one woman stated in her interview, "Some of the closest relationships I've made lately were in jail because I knew these were committed people, they were honest, they loved the important things of life that I loved" (p. 219). This statement indicates a strong affiliation with people who shared this woman's values. In the next section, I will discuss how such commitments are maintained over time.

Maintaining Commitment to the Activist Group

One goal of most social movements is the maintenance of activists' commitment over time, a goal for which affiliative work may be especially well-suited. Often, the task of maintaining commitment remains primarily affiliative in nature, even when it is linked to the provision of basic needs. In addition, affiliative work helps provide effective responses to attempts to "divide and conquer" by opposition groups. Finally, the

affective ties found at the level of personal networks "usually prove far less vulnerable to external conditions...than those linking formal, bureaucratic organizations (Diani & Eyerman, 1992)."

In her investigation of women's involvement in the British mining strikes of 1984-85, Allen (2001) discovered that women had established a vast alternative social services network to meet the practical needs of striking miners and their families. As she reports:

> Nearly all the women I have interviewed were involved at some level with the provision of food, through the soup kitchens...or by distributing parcels or food vouchers...At the height of the dispute huge amounts of food and relief were being distributed through networks that were set up within weeks of the start of the strike...Jean Miller would receive calls from union officials asking if Barnsley WAPC [Women Against Pit Closures] could supply things such as prams, nappies, or children's clothing...In all the groups, women collected and distributed children's clothes and shoes, tampons, soap – anything that was needed. (p. 54)

Similar to the practical needs that drew Auyero's Argentinian activists to the road blockades in Cutral-co and Plaza Huincul, women in British mining communities came together around ways to provide necessities for their children and families. Perceiving their responsibility as inclusive of the families of all striking workers, women activists engaged in what Feldman (1998) calls "sociability work." Sociability work involves the provision of voluntary service in such a way that emotional bonds and commitments to the group are strengthened.

While a main focus of sociability work may be providing for material needs, providing food, clothing, and diapers does not, in itself, maintain affiliative commitments. For example, in Cutral-co and Plaza Huincul, most participants understood that rival politicians supplied the picketers with provisions in the early days

of the road blockade, with the hope that the protests would ultimately unseat the current political office-holders. However, when the picketers attended a rally sponsored by these same rival politicians, they found the experience alienating. In Laura's words:

> When we get there, surprise! Those holding the microphone are reading their speeches, they are not improvising, they are using foul language, they are asking for the resignation of the governor. The people in my picket are not like that, they are there because they are hungry…they are in the picket not because they want the governor to resign. Those holding the microphone never call upon us, the representatives of the pickets. They don't even say that we are there, they ignore us. (p. 65)

In this case, the fact that politicians bought supplies and had them delivered to the road picketers was not true sociability work because it did not lead to stronger affiliative bonds between the politicians and the protesters. The ideas that picketers brought to the protests about politicians, combined with the meanings that developed because of their experiences at the rally, led the picketers to feel less of an affiliation with those providing basic supplies. In addition, the protesters felt their motives and long-term material needs were misunderstood or ignored. As this case demonstrates, the connection between provision of material needs and long-term affiliation is mediated by the perceptions and interpretations of participants.

As might be expected, affiliative commitments are easier to maintain in some contexts than in others. Structural elements, such as group size, may have important implications for activists doing affiliative work. Over time, shared visions of community are much harder to maintain when groups are larger and individuals do not have opportunities to engage emotionally in the lives of others in the group. In smaller groups, especially those in which members feel ostracized by the broader society, may "intensify their sense of mission" and their sense of commitment to each other (Klatch, 2002, p.

191). Maxwell noted this phenomena among the smaller groups involved in the early years of anti-abortion direct action, who felt ostracized by the broader society, the Democratic party, and their more staid pro-life counterparts and who were increasingly committed to their small cohorts of clinic-based activists. As in the cases discussed above, the provision of material needs and understandings of group identity also played a role in maintaining pro-life activists' commitment.

In this section, I have described the role of affiliation in building and maintaining commitment to social movements. Using examples from Ezekiel's study of feminists and Maxwell's study of anti-abortion protesters, I have introduced some of the ways cultural expectations and common interests may shape the tendency toward affiliation. I have also made the point that affiliation, understood as feelings of affinity with and commitment to particular people, plays more than an instrumental role in social activism. As Allen's study of women in mining communities demonstrates, a desire to build or maintain specific relationships is often one of the main reasons individuals engage in activism. (Ayers (2001), Bell (1971), Jasper l(1997), Goodwin (1997), and Passerini (1996) also support this assertion.) And, as seen in Allen's and Auyero's accounts, common interests and cultural critiques often develop and expand as a result of affiliative work. Finally, I illustrated several factors that support or threaten affiliative relationships and illustrated those using examples from Allen's and Auyero's studies. When affiliation serves as a support for other dimensions of activist work, these kinds of practices might enhance or limit organizational action and protest, a topic I will discuss in the next section.

Organizational Action and Protest

To some degree, the affiliative, identity-forming, and critical work of activists would remain invisible or known only to a few people without the more obvious work of organizational action and externally-directed political protest. Some of the most obvious answers to the question, "What do activists do?" might fall into this category. However, the public forms of protest activity that typify recent social movements in the U.S. are only part of the picture. In looking more broadly and deeply at activists' organizational and political action, we see that practices involved in this type of work are aimed primarily at two things: (1) changing political structures and opportunities and (2) creating new cultural understandings. It should be noted here that some movements see prefigurative politics (Polletta, 1994), the creation of reformed organizations or forms of consciousness, as a kind of political action and as the preeminent goal of activist struggle. As I understand it, both political structures and cultural understandings could be considered "prefigurative" in the sense implied to Polletta. Practices involved in changing political structures and opportunities include engaging political allies, mobilizing material resources, and developing and using protest tactics. To create new cultural understandings, activists engage in practices such as deploying identities strategically, using rhetorical strategies for public persuasion, and changing cultural norms around activism and protest. As was demonstrated in the other sections, one form of activist work often relies on another. As this section will illustrate, activists often rely on the work of critique, identity development and affiliation to give purpose and meaning to specific organizational actions and political protests.

Changing Political Opportunities and Processes

In the study of activism over the last several decades, much theoretical and empirical work has attempted to create and validate models of social movement activity that explain why some movements are successful in achieving their primary goals and others are not. Much of this work has been focused around macro-level analyses of two factors: the social structures within which effective activist practices occur (such previously organized social networks) or the political opportunities that facilitate successful activism (such as contention between political elites). Over the years, researchers working in this tradition have moved from developing static models of the relationships between these factors to a discussion of the context-specific social processes and mechanisms by which material and social resources are brought together to effect change (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001). For the purposes of this discussion of activist practices, I consider practices that appear frequently in the narratives of activists, albeit in differing ways and with varying meanings for those involved.

Engaging political allies. One of the ways activists attempt to change political opportunities and processes is by engaging political allies in the activist organization and/or its work. By developing alliances with people in positions of relative political, social, or material privilege, activists gain access to useful resources. These resources may be material, rhetorical, or social, and would be unavailable to activists without the involvement of such allies. Activists find that it helps to have people who are personally invested, but not particularly disempowered in the circumstances at hand. (For other examples of this, see Kaplan's [2001] account of the role of university scientists at Love Canal or Bernstein [2002] for the role of political party insiders in support of queer

activism in Vermont.) For activists, development of such alliances requires a combination of important critical and affiliative work, as well as the formation and deployment of particular kinds of activist identities.

The following example illustrates some of the ways affiliative, identity, and critical work is required in the engagement of political allies. Kaplan (2001) describes the protests led by activist Dollie Burwell in Warren County, North Carolina, in the 1980's. Burwell organized demonstrations against a toxic waste facility being built in her rural community. Through her personal connections to local black church communities and to civil rights organizations, she was able to organize hundreds of protesters to block the roads to the facility and to convince Congressman Walter Fauntroy to join their non-violent action. As a result of participating in a protest action with the rural black protesters, the Reverend Fauntroy was arrested by the local police and imprisoned in a metal building for most of a hot September day. This experience engaged Fauntroy in exploring the critical connections between communities of color and toxic waste disposal (what has come to be called "environmental racism"). Subsequently, a survey Fauntroy ordered from the General Accounting Office showed that African-Americans, Latino/as, and Native Americans were disproportionately likely to live near a toxic waste dump.

In fact, after examining such examples, it appears impossible to draw a distinct line between activists and people with access to political and institutional resources. As Goldstone (2003) notes, "state institutions and parties are interpenetrated by social movements, often developing out of movements, in response to movements, or in close association with movements" (p. 2). The above example illustrates this well, as the Reverend Walter Fauntroy was elected to Congress, in part, because of his earlier

involvement in the civil rights movement. When activists gain access to certain social and political privileges, they may then employ those resources to achieve activist goals. As the above example demonstrates, these kinds of activists may continue to employ their identities and privileges strategically to address the concerns of other activists with less access to institutional resources.

In other cases, the involvement of political, economic, or social elites in popular protests can actually work to sideline progress. For example, Cadena-Roa's (2003) study of Mexican politics challenges the long-accepted model of democratic transition that claims that democratization is driven by "pacts among elites" (p. 107). Auyero (2003) recounts the degree to which distance from elite political factions contributed to the successful resolution of a popular protest in Argentina in 1996 and the ways associations, or even claims of associations, with elites were used to discredit grassroots leaders. Involving social or political elites in popular movements may even result in removing the connection between a particular issue and the activist groups trying to bring it to light.

Activists may also choose to disassociate themselves from political, social, and economic elites as a temporary or intermittent strategy within a larger effort to engage decision-makers. Goldstone (2003) makes this point in his discussion of the "overlap and interpenetration" of social movements and institutional politics. Just as social movement actors may make strategic decisions about the deployment of identity (as discussed further below), so activists might move in and out of alliances with elites. We would expect the relationships with particular elite allies to vary according to factors such as the internal dynamics of activist groups and their general level of access to political and social representation.

Mobilizing material resources. I would distinguish my use of the term "resources" from those who take a conceptual approach to social movements called "resource mobilization." According to this approach, social movements succeed or fail in direct relation to the movement's ability to obtain and strategically use organizational and material resources. However, as McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) point out, this approach has been largely superceded by theoretical approaches that place more emphasis on "contingency, emotionality, plasticity and [the] interactive character of movement politics" (p. 15). For the purposes of this discussion, I am using resources in a more limited sense to mean financial or direct material support for the movement.

There is great variation among activists as to the amount of time and energy spent mobilizing material resources on behalf of social movements. Even within a particular protest group, some individuals may dedicate themselves almost exclusively to procuring financial or in-kind donations to support the work of other activists, while other individuals spend little or no time in such pursuits. As noted above, interpersonal networks can sometimes act in place of more structured forms of organization.

For activists, mobilizing requires not only identifying and pursuing material resources, but also ensuring that those resources do not come with too many "strings attached." Sometimes, raising money can be perceived as counter to the political goals of an organization. Feminist activists in Dayton, OH, chose to keep organizational budgets small in order not to feel obligated to any particular funding source. Activists also perceived those who came later into the movement (such as the women who worked at women's health clinics) as attracted to the work because of its remunerative value, not because they believed in women's liberation. Naples (1998) noted a similar dynamic in

the professionalization of community-based anti-poverty organizations. According to her:

> When a community-based group becomes reliant on outside funding for economic survival, the goals of the funding source frequently determine program design. In addition, the process of researching and applying for funds often consumes a great deal of organizational time and resources. Funding requirements inhibit program flexibility and undermine an organization's ability to meet new community problems as they arise. (p. 243)

Creating and using protest tactics. Activists may operate both "inside" and "outside" the dominant political and social system for reasons of strategy, practicality, or identity. During times when activists occupy a more oppositional position, they are likely to use one or more protest tactics designed to generate a response to their demands. McAdam (1983) characterizes these moments as times when activists must "bypass routine decision-making channels and seek, through use of noninstitutional tactics, to force their opponents to deal with them outside the established arenas" (p. 736). McAdam goes on to discuss a process by which activists develop and use protest to achieve social movement goals.

According to McAdam's study of the U.S. civil rights movement, social movement activity generally increases whenever a protest strategy or "tactical innovation" is introduced. Gradually, activity diminishes as movement opponents develop ways to undermine the new protest strategy. However, when a new protest strategy is introduced, activity increases again, not only because activists use the new strategy, but also because activists increase their concurrent use of previous tactical innovations. Often, these strategies fall within, or are extensions of, a particular set of actions that are linked historically and conceptually, what McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) call a "repertoire of contention." For example, boycotts, marches and sit-ins might fall into the "civil

rights movement" repertoire, whereas kidnapping, armed occupation of government buildings, and the establishment of new governmental institutions may fall into the "revolution" repertoire. For activists, this means that movement insiders, potential audiences, and opponents may expect coherence to a particular repertoire. Deviations from that set of actions may require further rhetorical work or may offer a needed element of tactical surprise.

As we have noticed with other forms of organizational and political action, protest involves the work of critique, identity formation, and affiliation. According to Barker and Lavalette (2002), strategy among activists requires that actors "define themselves, the situation, and relevant purposes as well as the means to achieve them" (p. 142). Activists' sense of the extent and nature of the problems with current social arrangements will affect decisions about protest strategies. The ways that activists view themselves and their potential for efficacy will influence the types of protest strategies deemed necessary and congruent with their identity. The maintenance of particular affiliative bonds may lead protestors to engage in more or less violent action, depending on how the threat to those relationships is perceived. Of course, these are just a few of the possible ways critique, identity and affiliation may impinge on protest tactics and innovations. In the next section, I discuss the ways other dimensions of activist work influence and shape the cultural aims of organizational action and protest.

Creating New Cultural Understandings

In this chapter, I have shown that every dimension of activist work has a cultural or meaning-making component. However, some activist practices are *specifically* aimed at creating new cultural understandings, either as an end goal of activist work or for the

purposes of furthering other activist goals. In this section, I discuss and illustrate some of the practices activists employ to influence and generate new cultural understandings. These practices include deploying activist identities in strategic ways, using rhetorical strategies for public persuasion, altering social expectations in non-activist institutions, and changing cultural norms around activism and protest.

Using identities as political strategy. Using identity as a political strategy has less to do with identity formation (as discussed above) and more to do with the ways identity is expressed in particular social settings (Bernstein, 1997). Those who vary identity expression aim to influence the ways a particular audience or the general public views a group (i.e. cultural understandings of what it means to be a member of that group). When engaged in this practice, activists choose to emphasize certain aspects of their individual identities in certain contexts, such that "the values, categories, and practices of individuals become subject to debate" (1997a, p. 537) among relevant decision-makers. According to Bernstein, this use of identity can take at least two forms: *identity for education* challenges dominant cultural perceptions of the minority group, and *identity for critique* confronts the "values, categories, and practices of the dominant culture" (p. 537-38). One example of the difference between these two strategic uses of identity is the conservative way queer activists in Vermont chose to dress for a legislative hearing (identity for education) versus the counter-cultural ways some chose to adorn themselves for a pride parade (identity for critique). A range of factors can shape strategic decisions about identity practices. Economic or political changes may influence the ways activists construct their identities, as might cultural shifts or significant local, regional or world events (Linkogle, 2001). With an awareness of characteristics of their audience, activists

may decide to emphasize certain aspects of individual or collective identity at different times or in different settings (Jasper, 1997). Bernstein focuses on organizational infrastructure, the degree of inclusiveness of activist organizations, and activists' level of access to the polity.

Organizational infrastructure, the degree to which a group has unencumbered access to their supporters and the capacity to conduct collective actions, shapes strategic identity practices in several ways. A group with a weak organizational infrastructure relies more heavily on a few activists who have relatively more access to decision-makers. Gaining and maintaining such access often requires those activists to present themselves as similar to decision-makers in relevant ways (identity for education). The challenge in such situations is maintaining the trust of decision-makers without alienating members of the movement who do not share these characteristics. Bernstein uses pro-gay activism in Vermont in the 1990's as an example of activists who negotiated this tension effectively, in part by acknowledging to movement insiders that their presentations were, to some degree, strategic, and also by including the diversity of the community in non-legislative activities and events. In contrast, activists in New York City and Oregon developed strong organizational infrastructures and moderate access to decision-makers, but their exclusivity led other gay and lesbian activists to develop alternative organizations that challenged both the status quo and the narrow conception of gay and lesbian identity promoted by more exclusive organizations. These alternative groups of activists tended to use strategies that emphasized the diversity of identities for the purpose of critique.

As the preceding examples suggest, the inclusiveness of activist organizations interacts with the strength of organizational infrastructure, shaping decisions about

identity strategies when activists have access to decision-makers and when they do not.

In Bernstein's example, this access is operationalized as access to the executive,

legislative or judicial branches of state governments in the United States. However, I

believe her logic could be extended to include other relevant decision-makers outside the

formal political structure, such as news media, the voting public, religious institutions,

etc.

Activists with a high or moderate level of access to relevant decision-makers tend

to use identity strategically as a form of education and emphasize their similarities to

decision-makers. Activists without such access will often emphasize identity as critique,

a limited form of identity for education, or a mixture of both strategic forms.

Using rhetorical strategies for public persuasion. Like other practices within

organizational and protest work, effective rhetorical practices rely on effective critical,

identity, and affiliative work. In turn, effective rhetorical work is necessary for activists'

public expressions of movement goals and identities, as well as practices such as working

with elite allies and engaging in public protest activities. Depending on the activists'

situation and goals, they may only need to persuade a few people, or millions. The

reasons for persuasion may also vary widely, including to obtain financial support, to

influence voters, to ensure greater safety for movement actors, to recruit new members,

etc. Regardless of the extent of or reasons for persuasion, attention to the speakers,

messages, and audiences is required.

Jasper (1997) has explored the way rhetorical practices play out in specific activist

situations. In the examples he studied, he notes the tendency of activists to try to

persuade others that they, too, are affected by some condition, what he call "grievance

extension." The way this occurs depends on the audience and the goals protestors have for their audience. For example, local groups protesting for jobs and recognition in Cutral-co and Plaza Huincul, Argentina, gained the support of a broader public by presenting their situation as a local example of a national problem with privatization. Had they presented their concerns as *merely* local, they might have been accused of a selfish, not-in-my-backyard perspective. Instead, their concerns were taken seriously because they could persuade others that what was happening in their cities could happen anywhere. Jasper calls this type of grievance extension an example of a "universalistic rhetoric" and cites its effectiveness for appealing to a variety of audiences.

Jasper describes another particularly effective form of rhetoric that he calls a "procedural rhetoric." Activists who use this rhetorical approach try to persuade others that they are being ignored because of "abuses of power, lack of official accountability, or cozy relations between business and the state" (p. 276). Groups use this rhetoric if they already have, or should have, the right to appeal their grievance via official channels. Groups lacking citizenship rights must procure such rights before a procedural rhetoric can be effective. For either kind of appeal, some of the possible audiences include swayable opponents, state agencies, courts, news media, professional groups, the bystander public, other protest groups, or movement participants (p. 274).

Any discussion of rhetoric would be remiss without mentioning the role of media in framing our collective understandings of particular issues and protest in general. Although such a discussion is beyond the scope of this study, it is important to indicate that activist's work, to varying degrees, uses the media to generate awareness of issues and to shape public understandings of movement goals and strategies. However, the

media may also, in some cases, change the ways activists view themselves and/or accomplish their goals. For example, Klatch (2002) claims that some SDS members became more militant, in part, to attract further media attention to their cause. Maxwell (2002) also mentions the use of "media martyrs" in her study of pro-life activism.

Changing cultural norms regarding activism and protest. Activists also engage in practices that serve to alter social norms about activism and protest. Such practices may be designed to make the public more amenable to activism, but, more often, they are developed as a response to the repression of activist work by authorities. The change in cultural norms may be limited to individual activists or groups of activists, or it may be more pervasive. The types of repression and the responses of activists offer opportunities to persuade decision-makers of the value of their cause.

McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) define repression as "efforts to suppress either contentious acts or groups and organizations responsible for them" (p. 69). According to these authors, repression has "relatively predictable effects" such as "generally stiffening resistance on the part of threatened communities, encouraging evasion of surveillance and shifts of tactics by well organized actors, and discouraging mobilization or action by other parties" (p. 69). Maxwell (2002), for example, notes that experience with repressive state response led some anti-abortion activists to develop further their political critiques and self-identity, resulting in a more radical stance. Also, these activists tended to become more militant in their use of tactics and strategies and more dogmatic in their cultural critiques. Their approach to outsiders became more suspicious and they were less open to new people and ideas. Also, repression led to a drop-off in activist numbers, but confirmed the stance of particular, committed activists.

McAdam, Tilly, and Tarrow (2001) argue that *selective repression* on the part of the state often isolates radical factions and limits their opportunities for coalition-building with moderates while *generalized repression* may encourage moderates to defect and oppose the state in radical ways. Auyero (2003) notes the role of generalized repression in his account of escalating violence among protesters in Santiago del Estero, Argentina. According to Auyero, previously moderate social factions, such as members of the Catholic clergy, joined the protesters in direct response to the state's repressive tactics. According to one protester:

> There were demonstrations in front of the Government House every day. The last two were strongly suppressed. One of them had a strong police response, and the other one – I went to see them both – was very peculiar because it represented the new thing in politics. I saw a cordon of nuns and priests separating the police from the unions. They were making a cordon to prevent the police from reacting. (p. 132)

According to Auyero, members of the Catholic clergy had been involved in supporting non-violent protesters before this point, but the generalized state repression radicalized a number of nuns and priests and brought them into open conflict with government authorities. In what was, arguably, a more extreme change in political alliances, Klatch (2002), in her study of 1960s protesters, found evidence that harsh and broadly-aimed government violence against leftist student protestors led more moderate factions of the student right to question their allegiances and sometimes, to defect. As one former member of the student right in her study recalled:

> There was a lot of suppression—you know, the flag burning and draft card burning—the government responded to those in a fascist way. . . when you see the way the administration responded to opposition to the war and tahe things that were going on—domestic surveillance and the efforts to control personal behavior...It was objectionable (p. 195).

Boudreau (2002) offers a similar account of the interactions between repressive state actors and movement participants. In his study of the Philippines, Burma, and Indonesia, he explores about how repression and state violence shaped, and were shaped by, democracy movements. He contends that material factors, such as access to jobs and means of communication, influence the patterns and processes of repression, along with what he calls "an ideational story line" (collective understandings of the ways state and movement actors will behave). According to Boudreau, an interaction of material resources and social understandings within episodes of repression creates and restrains opportunities for both the state and democracy movements. If Boudreau is correct, activist response requires a mobilization of material resources *and* the construction and/or articulation of a believable protest narrative. Such a narrative may serve multiple purposes, including such functions as linking the current struggle to past protest movements, inspiring moral outrage among potential supporters, and justifying more radical tactics on the part of protestors. For a sustained discussion of the ways narrative and cultural forms operate I specific activist situations, see Jasper (1997), particularly his discussion of the role of persuasion in mobilizing resources within social movements.

In this section, I have reviewed some of the major forms of activists' organizational and political work. Although public protest is the activity most often associated with activism, my analysis of the social movement literature indicates that other forms of organizational and political work are also important to achieving activist goals. Rhetorical strategies, development of elite allies, mobilization of material resources, changing non-activist institutions, and responding to repression engage the time and

energy of activists. These forms of work often serve as public expressions of the on-going work of critique, identity negotiation, and affiliation.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the literature on social movements and political activism in relation to four major dimensions of activist work: social critique, identity formation, affiliation work, and organizational action/protest. Within each category, I have elaborated practices of activists engaging in that dimension of work. In the work of social critique, activists engage in practices of assessing the status quo, critiquing ideological assumptions and structural inequalities, and identifying possible sources of resistance. The work of identity formation includes the practices of reclaiming subordinated identities, forming new activist identities, and collective identity negotiation. Activists engaged in affiliation create continuity with prior social affiliations, engage individuals with new social affiliations, and maintain commitment to the activist group over time. The work of organizational action and protest includes a number of practices that, together, function to change political opportunities and processes and/or create new cultural understandings.

Throughout this chapter, I have tried to remain sensitive to the large and fruitful body of research on political and social movements without committing to a particular perspective or theorist. In doing this, my goal has been to develop a conceptualization of four broad dimensions of activists' work and practices employed to accomplish activists' goals. In the next chapter, I use these concepts as a means to explore four contemporary

approaches to teachers' work and the pedagogical practices embedded in these four

approaches.

CHAPTER 3

THE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION AND TEACHERS' WORK:

FOUR CONTEMPORARY THEORIES

In this chapter, I apply my framework for analysis regarding the four dimensions

of activist work to teachers' work, as described in four contemporary educational

approaches: caring, neo-conservative, contemporary liberal, and critical theory. These

approaches have been selected because they represent, in broad terms, approaches to

teaching practice in widespread use within contemporary U.S. primary and secondary

education. Unlike other comparisons of these approaches (Beyer & Liston, 1996;

Fletcher, 2000; Howe 1997), which have attempted to engage the differences and

conflicts between the theories, my analysis is distinct in its focus on teachers' work in

particular, as reflected in the recommendations and activities of advocates of each

approach. I also recognize that these four approaches do not encompass all philosophical

perspective on contemporary U.S. education nor do the representative theorists I have

chosen exhaust all of the significant thinking within these approaches. However, for this

study, the range of perspectives offered by these four approaches offers a reasonable

place to start in considering the relevance of activist work to the work of teachers. The

theorists I have chosen to represent each approach are some of those closely associated

with the approach and its application to U.S. K-12 schools and are recognizable to a

general audience within contemporary educational discourse, with respect to both theory

and the application of theory to practice.

Using the framework for understanding activist work developed in Chapter 2, I ask whether advocates of each educational approach prescribe or promote similar kinds of teaching practices. I ask how the practices that help activists achieve political and social goals are similar to, or different from, the pedagogical practices recommended for teachers by each educational approach. Each section below addresses one of the four educational perspectives and begins with a brief characterization of its central tenants.

Part 1: The Neo-conservative Perspective on Teachers' Work

Primary Commitments of the Neo-conservative Approach to Education

In this section, I use the framework of social activist labor developed in Chapter 2 to describe aspects of the Neo-conservative approach to teachers' work. As in Chapter 2, I use the four broad categories of social activist work: critique; formation and negotiation of identities; affiliation; and organizational action and protest. I develop an argument for certain similarities and differences between the work of social activists and the work neo-conservative educational thinkers expect teachers to perform, with particular attention to the work of K-12 classroom teachers in the United States.

I have chosen to use the label "neo-conservative" to describe the contemporary educational perspective articulated by such thinkers as Diane Ravitch (1991a, 1991b, 1995 [with Vinovskis], 2000 [with Vitteritti], 2000, 2001, 2003), Chester Finn (1991), and E. D. Hirsch (1987, 1996). While my overview of the neo-conservative view of education will focus primarily on these three writers, I also draw on the work of other thinkers and educators to the extent that their perspectives add clarity and depth to the basic commitments articulated by Ravitch, Finn, and Hirsch.

The primary commitments of Ravitch, Hirsch, Finn and other neo-conservatives are three-fold. First, neo-conservatives are committed to the primacy of content over process in education. For example, most neo-conservatives advocate some form of core curriculum that encompasses specific information and discrete skills, the mastery of which can be quantified. See, for example, Ravitch's (2000) discussion of educational reform in the 20th century, particularly comments on pages 174, 243-4, 288, 319, and 321. Also, see her defense of a national curriculum in *National Standards in American Education: A Citizen Guide* (1995). Also, see Hirsch's (1996) proposals for curricula and assessment, particularly pages 176-214 and 226-231. Placing priority on content results in greater levels of teacher authority, as teachers are expected to be experts in the core curriculum, or, at least, to adhere closely to highly structured curricula designed by subject-matter experts. According to Hirsch (1996), this requires a movement away from "integrated project-learning" and toward "focused instruction leading to well-practiced operational skills in reading and mathematics, and well-stocked minds conversant with individual subject matters like history and biology" (p. 216).

Second, neo-conservatives are committed to a shared sense of U.S. cultural identity that overrides or supersedes other sources of identity. According to neo-conservatives, the role of schools as sources of socialization is focused on helping students adopt this shared sense of identity. Hirsch (1996) calls this our "cosmopolitan, ecumenical, hybrid public culture" (p. 235) and claims that this culture should become the "lingua franca" of contemporary U.S. schooling. In most neo-conservative writing, there is a focus on U.S. and Western cultures as the ascendant survivors of historical cultural conflict, with contributions of other cultures and sub-cultures acknowledged to

the degree that they contribute significantly to a shared sense of American identity. See, for example, Hirsch (1996) pp. 102-103, 235; Ravitch and Viteritti (2001), p. 28; and Schlesinger (1991).

The third major commitment of the neo-conservative approach to education is represented in their efforts to promote greater alignment between schooling and a free-market economic model. This commitment results in support for such reforms as voucher and school choice programs, policies which place parents in the role of consumers with choices between providers of products (schools). School reform is thus accomplished, at least in part, through competition between public (and often private) schools for student attendance (and tuition dollars). Finn (1991) states this goal clearly:

> Competition among providers [of education] is desirable, and schools could be organized and operated by teacher partnerships, universities, museums, a state or federal agency, a neighborhood association, even a corporation or a church. Nor need they be restricted as to the territory from which their students may come. They can compete for clients on the same turf (p. 247).

Also in line with an economic model of schooling is the neo-conservative focus on student achievement as gauged by students' preparation for participation in the paid workforce. (See , for example, Finn, 1991, pp. 253-254.)

With these three major commitments of the neo-conservative approach to education in mind, I will to turn to a discussion of the four elements of social activist work. In the following four sections, I describe how these elements help us understand the neo-conservative educational literature as it relates to the political dimensions of the work expected of teachers.

Critique within the Neo-conservative Approach

As I discussed in Chapter 2, one important dimension of social activists' work is that of social critique. Critique of the status quo is necessary because activists, by definition, are people who do not see their concerns being addressed or sufficiently advanced by relevant decision-makers. Critique, as a dimension of social activist work, involves a critical assessment of current social arrangements, attention to institutional inequalities and ideological assumptions, and the identification of possible sources of resistance. Recall that some of the ways social activists accomplish the goal of critical assessment include comparing the current state of affairs to their own idealistic vision, determining basic needs that are not being addressed, and incorporating the form and content of prior social critiques into contemporary analyses of the problem. In conceptualizing the role of teachers, neo-conservatives advocate all of these elements of social activist work in ways appropriate to the content of their critique.

In presenting the content of their critique, neo-conservative educational thinkers often begin by making a series of claims about progressive education, which they take to be the antithesis of their ideal vision of American education. First, the neo-conservatives claim that, as a result of progressive educational practices, students in the United States are less prepared than prior generations to assume their responsibilities as workers and citizens. By this, they generally mean that students' performance has decreased over time in "operational skills" and knowledge of "individual subject matters," which, together, constitute what Hirsch (1996) calls "core knowledge." Hirsch (1997) demonstrates this decline by referring to performance on standardized tests such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Scholastic Aptitude Test

(SAT), and by referencing specific studies comparing students in the United States to students in other industrialized countries. Neo-conservatives link this decline in skills and subject knowledge to progressive education by correlating the time period of the decline with the time period during which progressive instructional practices became more pervasive throughout school systems in the United States.

A second claim neo-conservatives make about progressive education is that the practices of progressive educators and schools, particularly practices related to multi-cultural education, have caused U.S. society to become more divisive. According to Schlesinger (1991), "A struggle to redefine the national identity is taking place...and in no arena more crucial than our system of public education" (p. 2). D'Souza (1995), offering a more explicitly critical view of progressive education, states, "[M]ulticulturalism becomes an obstacle to true cultural understanding, and implants in students an unjustified hatred of the liberal institutions of their society. Both truth and justice suffer as a consequence" (p. 360).

Third, neo-conservatives claim that inequality is increasing in the United States and contend that this trend is related to the increasingly pervasive influence of progressive instructional practices. Neo-conservative thinkers like Ravitch (2000) and Hirsch (1996) claim that changes in curriculum and teaching methods over the last century have created steeper barriers to social advancement for large numbers of poor and working class students. Ravitch (2000) offers a detailed argument linking the spread of progressive teaching methods to diminished social and economic opportunities. In the first part of the 20th century, according to Ravitch, progressives advocated eliminating some traditional subjects like Latin and decreasing the amount of time spent

with others such as grammar, literature, algebra, geometry, and foreign languages. Large, comprehensive high schools replaced more community-based schools and began to differentiate the curriculum according to the perceived ability of students. College-bound students (or those perceived to be capable of attending college or university after graduation) received a variation of the traditional subject-matter curriculum, while others received "watered-down" academic subjects and vocational preparation. Ravitch argues that these changes resulted from the spread of progressive ideas in schools and that they served to re-create and/or increase class and racial divisions in society. Hirsch (1996) claims that black-white income inequality can be explained primarily by a discrepancy in what he calls "actual educational attainment," as measured by standardized tests of basic skills and content knowledge and links lowered performance on these tests to progressive pedagogy.

Neo-conservatives present this view of the outcomes of progressive instructional practices and contrast it with their own vision of how teachers should shape future citizens. In this view, individual citizens of the United States should be exposed to particular canonical works in western literature and culture, as well as possess well-developed literacy and numeracy skills. They should also acquire a generally positive view of democracy as practiced in the U.S. and participate in existing democratic institutions. According to the neo-conservatives, this kind of education of the individual would cause the country as a whole to be more unified and egalitarian. Hutchins (1951), describes the well-educated student as someone who knows how to "read, write and figure," and is knowledgeable of "the ideas that have animated mankind" and of the "tradition in which he lives" (cited in Ravitch, 2000). Ravitch goes on to say that

students should be able to "think and discuss, to debate and reflect" (p. 26). According to

Finn (1991), students should be prepared as "autonomous, self-controlled, and virtuous

beings – as citizens, voters, parents, community members, participants in the good life of

our society and culture" (p. 254). According to Schlesinger (1991), the educational

system should contribute to an assimilation process for newcomers leading to "an

acceptance of the language, the institutions, and the political ideals that hold the nation

together" (p. 71).

Because they claim progressive instructional practices as a source of the social

problems noted above, neo-conservatives identify schools and teacher education

programs as important sites of resistance to progressivism in general and educational

progressivism in particular. Neo-conservatives think teacher education programs, school

leaders, and teachers' unions have indoctrinated most teachers into what Hirsch (1996)

calls a progressive "educational Thoughtworld" (p. 2, 69-125). Resistance to pressures

to conform to this "doctrinal dependency" (p. 70) must be encouraged among the

minority of teachers who retain the ability to think independently and sparked among the

majority of teachers who are unwitting participants. In addition to encouraging active

resistance to corrupt or misguided "educrats," neo-conservatives also want to reinforce

the identification of teachers with their subject matter areas and with the promotion of

traditional values and institutions.

Identity Formation and Negotiation within the Neo-conservative Approach

Another important dimension of social activists' work is that of identity formation

and negotiation. According to my analysis of the social activist literature, there are at

least three practices social activists employ to form and negotiate identities: reclaiming

subordinate identities, generating new identities, and negotiating their identities with other social activists. As noted above, neo-conservative educational thinkers often view teachers as subject to constraints placed on them by administrators and unions. Because of this, neo-conservatives claim that teachers need to be reoriented to their primary (and correct) sources of identity as experts in particular subject matter and as conservators of traditional values. In order to do this, neo-conservatives also expect that at least some teachers will need to identify themselves as defenders of these identities against the pressures brought to bear by progressive educational leaders and institutions.

According to Finn, Ravitch, and Hirsch, teachers' most important source of identity as subject matter experts has been subsumed by the progressive tendency to view teachers as agents of socialization. Neo-conservatives frequently emphasize the need for teachers to be knowledgeable about particular subject matter areas, such as mathematics, science, history, and literature. They emphasize the importance of subject-matter proficiency over competence in other areas, such as teaching methods or support for students' psychological development. Some neo-conservatives want to create a new identity for teachers by defining "well-educated" as having studied one of a narrow range of academic fields when they were undergraduates or graduate students. (See the National Center for Education Statistics report, Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teachers (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1999), pp. 11-12, for a definition of what counts as an "academic field of study.")

E. D. Hirsch (1996), for example, ties teachers' identities as subject-matter specialists to their knowledge of and proficiency in teaching a specific curriculum.

Hirsch offers his "core knowledge" curriculum as one example. Because neo-conservatives encourage the use of such highly-specified and standardized curricula, teachers are able to maintain their identities as subject-matter "experts" more easily than if the same teachers were expected to be involved in making difficult choices about the content of a course of study or about the range of ways student can be engaged in learning.

Maintaining a sense of themselves as subject matter specialists also requires teachers to view the identities of students in particular ways. In order to maintain a sense of their identity as experts, teachers must, to some degree, maintain a sense of students as blank slates waiting to be inscribed with the knowledge held in the hands of teacher-experts. In this way, the view of students as relatively unencumbered by their backgrounds, cultures, or experiential realities reinforces the identity of teachers as subject matter experts, people who can teach all students the same material in approximately the same way.

In addition to fostering a view of teachers as subject matter experts, neo-conservative educational thinkers encourage teachers to see themselves as conservators of western European and U.S. culture. According to Finn (1991), "Young people are graduating from high school unfamiliar with the rudiments of American history and unacquainted with concepts fundamental to the common heritage of Western man" (p. 11). Instead, Finn insists that teachers should be sharing with students "what Matthew Arnold termed the 'best which has been thought and said' " (p. 253). According to Ravitch (2000), it is the job of teachers to "transmit the social heritage" (p. 243).

Neo-conservative educational thinkers claim that if teachers are unwilling to embody and transmit this Western view of individual identity, they will allow or even encourage students to place individual (primarily ethnic) identity before a distinctly American sense of citizenship. According to Hirsch (1996), the biggest dangers to our "ecumenical, cosmopolitan public culture" are religious and ethnic sectarianism, which can only lead to "angry separatism and mutual hostility" (p. 234-5). Hirsch follows this point almost immediately with a call for a common curricular core, rooted in "step-by-step mastery of procedural knowledge in language arts and mathematics...(and) content knowledge in civics, science, the arts, and the humanities" (p. 236). According to this argument, Hirsch asserts that the only alternative to teacher identities based on a common or uniform curriculum are identities based in the most contentious of cultural differences. In their writings, neo-conservatives frequently use examples of teachers like Jaime Escalante, who "overcame" the low expectations typically directed at his students, most of whom were from low-income, Latino families, to teach them advanced math and calculus. Here, it is Escalante's dogged pursuit of subject-matter proficiency that is praised, not his ability to generate trust and an appreciation of shared cultural identity (See Finn, 1991, pp, 23, 109, 286, 290-292).

According to neo-conservative educational thinkers, teachers' identities can be altered by interactions with professional organizations (such as teachers' unions), by schools of education, or by typical school administrators. It is in resisting the influence of these "educrats" that teachers are encouraged to find a central source of identity. Hirsch (1996) suggests that one solution to this problem would be to insist on "more intellectual diversity" in schools of education and claims that "a rather small cadre of

maverick professors in every education school" could inspire the next generation of classroom teachers to challenge the progressive status quo (p. 231).

Neo-conservatives encourage a view of most subordinate groups within an educational setting as constructions of a progressive educational and academic establishment, an establishment that seeks to institutionalize low standards and cultural relativism. Neo-conservatives encourage teachers to understand differences of race, class, gender and other social categories primarily in relation to the opportunity each group has to acquire the relevant content knowledge and ask teachers to resist attempts by educational organizations or authorities to identify teachers with any of these social categories. In fact, neo-conservative educational thinkers emphasize the relative importance of content knowledge at the expense of any practice that might weaken teacher commitment to their primary identities as subject matter experts and conservators of western culture. As I will discuss in the next section, neo-conservatives also eschew most attempts at developing affiliation among teachers, choosing instead to focus on developing affiliation among other groups who could have an influence on the daily practices of teachers.

Affiliation within the Neo-conservative Approach

As I discussed in the last chapter, affiliation is an emotional affinity for and commitment to particular individuals or groups. Among activists, practices that encourage affiliation include creating continuity with prior social affiliations, engaging individuals with new social affiliations, and maintaining commitment to activist affiliations over time. In this section, I will discuss some of the ways affiliation is

encouraged (or discouraged) as an educational practice by those advocating a neo-conservative approach to teachers' work.

Neo-conservative educational thinkers often assume that teachers will not develop affiliations around a shared interest in the core tenants of the neo-conservative approach to education. According to Finn, and others, teachers' self-interest often prevails over the needs of their students, and they use as evidence of this teacher participation in labor unions, which they view as an affiliation motivated purely by self-interest. (See, for example, Finn, 1999, pp. 91, 192-194.) Because they believe that only a few teachers will eschew self-interest and join a movement that meets the needs of students and parents, neo-conservatives often focus on the task of building a constituency outside of schools among people who may hold shared grievances against the current forms and structure of U.S. public schools. In particular, neo-conservatives have focused on building a constituency among anti-union advocates, business leaders, politicians, religious conservatives, disaffected parents, and university professors (in and outside of the field of education). As I will discuss later, this assumes that the interests of teachers and the interests of students/parents are necessarily opposed. Also, this assumes that the needs of students, parents, and teachers are consistent and not subjects of contestation and democratic debate.

In some cases, neo-conservatives seem to discourage teachers from affiliating with one another if that affiliation reinforces teacher support for progressive methods or ideas. In one example, Ravitch (2000) accuses progressive educators of using teacher trainings around progressive pedagogy as a form of social manipulation. Any affiliation formed around progressive ideas and pedagogy serves to squelch individualism and

produce "group think" with respect to progressive ideas and practices (p. 336). She holds up as positive examples those teachers who close their classroom doors and do whatever they (individually) determine to be right, even if doing so makes them unpopular among progressive-minded peers or administrators.

In contrast to their approach to affiliation among teachers, neo-conservative educational thinkers advocate building affiliations among those local and state elected officials who could, by virtue of a public mandate for educational change, challenge the educational establishment. According to neo-conservatives such as Finn and Rebarber (1992), these "lay leaders" should have influence over "the terms for conferring licenses and diplomas, the pay scales and norms of school employees, the requirements for promotion in school and entry into college, the gauges of institutional performance and pupil progress, and so forth" (p. 178-9). Political leaders are encouraged to act "heroically" and with "courage" in the face of opposition from professional organizations (unions), schools of education, and the courts and to move forward on radical school restructuring (p. 183). Teachers and administrators (with the exception of those few who also advocate neo-conservative reforms) are perceived as those people who will most actively resist meaningful educational reform in favor of comfort and self-interest.

Organizational Action within the Neo-conservative Approach

Organizational action and protest is the final form of activist work to which I will compare approaches to teachers' work. As discussed in the last chapter, practices involved in this type of work are aimed primarily at two things: (1) changing political structures and opportunities and (2) creating new cultural understandings. Practices involved in changing political structures and opportunities include engaging political

allies, mobilizing material resources, and developing and using protest tactics. To create new cultural understandings, activists engage in practices such as deploying identities strategically, using rhetorical strategies for public persuasion, and changing cultural norms around activism and protest. Many of these practices are evident in the neo-conservative approach to educational change, although not necessarily encouraged among teachers and other educational professionals within the schools.

As with affiliation, the neo-conservative approach is more likely to engage people outside schools in the work of organizational action and protest. In this regard, they have been particularly effective in changing political opportunities and structures with respect to their view of teaching and learning. Over the last 25 years, the neo-conservatives have managed to engage educational and political allies and mobilize educational resources at the state and federal level. These efforts culminated in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as "No Child Left Behind") in January of 2002. The primary elements of this act included: expansion of standardized assessments of students in mathematics, reading, and, ultimately, science; reporting of educational outcomes in the form of "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) at the school, district, and state level; sanctioning of schools and districts that fail to demonstrate improvement on state AYP standards over time; and increased requirements for teacher qualifications, including qualifications for paraprofessionals with teaching duties. NCLB marked a major change in the basic relationship between local schools, school districts, states, and the federal government, along with providing a temporary redistribution of federal education funds (in the form of

"technical assistance") to schools and districts where students perform below determined levels of adequacy.

Hirsch in particular (with the support of Ravitch and others in the neo-conservative educational movement) has mobilized allies and funding through the Core Knowledge Foundation. Through this Foundation, and through Hirsch's connections and access to elites in the educational and philanthropic establishment, he has promoted the use of his cultural literacy framework in hundreds of schools and by home-schooling advocates. Buras (2008) demonstrates the ways Hirsch and his allies have offered a complex rhetoric in support of this program that appeals to both the ideals of the civil rights movement and the anxieties of white suburban elites. Here, it is important to note that some of Hirsch's rhetoric appeals to teachers as a form of empowerment (in apparent contrast to what has been stated above), although his approach remains one that requires that teachers and schools give up a large amount of control over the focus and pace of student learning. In Chapter 4, I will discuss this movement further as a major example of the neo-conservative approach to teachers' work in schools.

In addition to their attention to changing political opportunities and structures, neo-conservative educational thinkers have also worked to create new cultural understandings with respect to teachers' work. In particular, they have engaged in a number of rhetorical strategies that, taken together, work to shape teacher practices and focus them to the forms most closely aligned with the overall neo-conservative approach to education. One way this has occurred is through linking teachers' qualifications more closely to subject-matter preparation. Leaving aside the question of whether greater subject matter preparation by teachers positively impacts student learning, the rhetoric of

accountability and quantifiable outcomes tends to reinforce understandings of teachers as responsible for the degree to which students can demonstrate information retention and perform discrete academic skills.

Part 2: The Caring Approach to Teachers' Work
Primary Commitments of the Caring Approach to Education

Similar to my analysis of neo-conservative educational thinking about teaching, in this section, I use the framework of social activist labor to describe aspects of the caring approach to teachers' work. Again, I use the four broad categories of social activist work (critique, formation and negotiation of identities, affiliation, and organizational action and protest) as a framework to help explicate the caring approach. I develop an argument for certain similarities and differences between the work of social activists and the work educational thinkers who espouse this approach expect teachers to perform, with particular attention to the work of K-12 classroom teachers in the United States.

As I did with neo-conservative educational thinkers, I have selected a small sample of the major contributors to this area of educational theory. Specifically, my description of the caring approach to education will draw heavily on Nel Noddings (1984, 1992, 2002a, 2002b, 2003) and Jane Roland Martin (1992, 2000, 2002). While Noddings, Martin, and others who advocate a caring approach to education would not, I think, object to categorizing this approach as "feminist," it does not follow that all feminist educational thinkers agree with the tenants of this approach. For that reason, I have tried to stay focused on several thinkers most closely aligned with this approach to educational thought.

There are four primary commitments of Noddings, Martin, and other advocates of a caring approach to education: this approach is relational, reciprocal, attentive to students' needs and interests, and focused on educating the student as a social and moral being. As a relational approach, caring is committed to the idea that the interactions and interconnections between people are central to social life. As Noddings (1984) describes this, "encounter and affective response" are a "basic fact of human existence" that can be described through the dyad of "one-caring" and the "cared-for" (p. 4). One of the ways this relationship gets articulated by Noddings and Martin is by comparing it to the parent (mother)-child dyad and by using the best physical, social, and moral qualities of the home environment as a model for moral and educational practice. As in the best homes, the adult ("one-caring") in the educational relationship is attentive and receptive to the needs and desires of the child and the child (the "cared-for") is energized by this response and moves ahead on life-enhancing projects. Martin (1992) uses Montessori's Casa dei Bambini as an example of this kind of schooling and quotes an early observer of Montessori's Roman schools who described them as places "arranged specially for [children's] comfort and convenience" and places where students felt "that steadying sense of responsibility which is one of the greatest moral advantages of a home" (Fisher, quoted in Martin, p. 13). This approach to education emphasizes attributes of nurturance, both as a means of educational practice and as an appropriate guide for student success.

Caring, as an approach to education, requires reciprocity. Teachers must maintain an open and attentive stance toward students and be prepared to meet students as on-caring, i.e. be prepared to practice engrossment and motivational displacement. Noddings (1992) describes engrossment as "an open, nonselective receptivity to the

cared-for" (p. 15) and describes it as a case in which the cared-for's "eyes and mine have combined to look at the scene he describes" (1984, p. 31). Teachers, as "ones-caring," work to promote the well-being of the student, while continuing to attend carefully to the students' "point of view, his objective needs, and what he expects of us" (Noddings, 1984, p. 24). This does not preclude "thinking objectively and well in caring situations." Noddings is clear to make the point that rationality is an important element of making good decisions about what to do on behalf of the cared-for (if anything), but insists that the "rational-objective mode…be continually re-established and redirected from a fresh base of commitment to the daring relationship (Noddings, 1984, p. 16). For the students' part, they may acknowledge the educator's efforts as embodying caring, and/or simply revel in its effects, by responding with "personal delight" or "happy growth." It is this authentic response that Noddings terms "reciprocity" (p. 74). Caring advocates would say that if students do not respond in this way, then caring, as an educational endeavor, has not taken place. This commitment of the caring approach requires that teachers focus not on uni-directional communication from teacher/expert to student/novice, but rather, focus on engrossment in the chosen projects of students and their authentic response to caring. Teachers' work, therefore, involves maintaining a receptive, engaged stance toward students and offering multiple and varied opportunities for students to engage educators and other students in dialogue. Students' perceptions, even those of very young children, must be included in discussions and decisions about what is educationally appropriate. (See, for example, Noddings', 1984, discussion of Buber's concept of inclusion, pp. 63-65.)

Within the context of caring relations, teachers' motivation and commitment is directed toward the student and her interests. Motivational displacement is a shift in consciousness that Noddings illustrates with the example of an adult whose fingers move sympathetically when watching a small child trying to tie her shoes. It is "the sense that our motive energy is flowing toward others and their projects" (1992, p. 16). For the teacher, or "one-caring," motivational displacement is followed by what Noddings terms an "act of commitment," in which the one-caring either commits herself to "overt action on behalf of the cared-for" or to "thinking about what [she] might do" (1984, p. 81). In daily practice, according to advocates of a caring approach, teachers and schools should use a deep understanding of each individual to vary responses to students' concerns and to design curricula that address students' interests and capacities, while, at the same time, influencing students to appreciate the broader world where their projects are realized. According to Noddings, teachers accomplish this by "stretch[ing] the students' world by presenting an effective selection of that world within which she [the teacher] is in contact, and…work[ing] cooperatively with the student in his struggle toward competence in that world" (1984, p. 178). Ultimately, the most important role of teachers is as someone who "nurture[s] the student's ethical ideal" within this ever-widening world (1984, p. 178). In their broader lives and in schools, it is this ethical ideal to which students will turn when responding to others as ones-caring.

As an educational approach that prioritizes moral and social concerns, caring emphasizes the educational aim of happiness and well-being for individuals within social groups. According to Noddings, happiness "depends, perhaps most importantly, on loving connections with others – intimate relations with a few and cordial, cooperative

relations with most of those we meet regularly" (2003, p. 73). Practices associated with learning to establish and maintain these relations include modeling caring interactions, dialogue about meaningful topics and the work of caring itself, practice in completing the caring relation with others, and confirmation of the student's best possible self. Caring advocates would want students to learn *in relationship with* others, in what Diller (1996) calls an atmosphere of "co-enjoyment" and to learn to use positive experiences of caring and being cared for as the source of commitment to future caring relationships.

Critique within the Caring Approach to Education

Like activists, caring advocates offer a critical assessment of current social arrangements, attend to institutional inequalities and ideological assumptions, and identify possible sources of resistance to caring approaches to education. Educational thinkers who advocate this approach also encourage teachers to compare the current state of education to the caring approach, to determine unaddressed needs of students, and to incorporate prior educational thinking into their analyses of the value of the caring approach.

Both Noddings and Martin take issue with what they perceive as a lack of warm, meaningful relationships between young people and adults. Acknowledging the social and economic factors that force parents to work outside the home, Martin (1992) notes the ways this can leave children alone and isolated, often without significant connections to the adults in their lives. Schools do little to fill the gap. As Noddings (1992) characterizes students who attend large American secondary schools: "They feel alienated from their schoolwork, separated from the adults who try to teach them, and adrift in a world perceived as baffling and hostile" (p. 2). Noddings and Martin both

argue that educators and schools should be involved in addressing this lack of personal warmth and relationship in students' lives. For teachers engaged in a caring approach, educational structures are assessed according to whether they facilitate a process of identifying and responding to individuals' needs, especially the need to be known, heard, and responded to and the need to be protected from harm.

Besides being characterized as places that discourage personal warmth and connection, schools are also critiqued for their role in privileging one set of knowledge, skills and experiences over other ways of experiencing the world. Both Noddings and Martin claim that this curricular imbalance toward traditional subject matter and linguistic/mathematic ways of learning can alienate students whose life experiences are not reflected in the curriculum or whose interests lie outside the purely verbal or mathematical world of ideas. Furthermore, because of their explicit absence in the curriculum, Martin's "three C's" of care, concern, and connection fail to receive adequate attention in schools and all students are deprived of opportunities to learn in ways necessary to being good family members, friends, neighbors, and citizens. According to educators engaged in the caring approach, these capacities must be taught in schools today because they are less apt to be adequately inculcated at home.

Teachers engaged in a caring approach to education critique the current state of social and educational relations by comparing it to a vision of schools and classrooms that facilitate caring relations. And caring relations, according to Noddings (1992), rely on the willingness and ability of teachers to attend carefully to the "pressing cares and interests" (p. 7) of students. This, along with a genuine commitment to the well-being of all students, helps to create classrooms and schools that serve as the "moral equivalent"

(Martin, 1992) of homes, by tying the curriculum closely with the development of the capacity to care. Martin envisions schooling that embodies the best aspects of a good home, education that is inclusive of the range of interests, capacities, and cultures of its students and curricula that foster communication, social intercourse, and community. Noddings describes this ideal curriculum in terms of "domains" of caring, specifying caring for self; caring for intimate others; caring for distant others and strangers; caring for animals, caring for plants and the earth; caring for the human-made world; and caring for ideas.

Within such a curriculum, content remains important, but its organization and pedagogical import flow out of a commitment to relations of care. Noddings (2003) makes this point clearly when discussing the Dewey's commitment to providing students with reasonable choices within the curriculum: "No choice made with the consent of a school should deprive a student of an education rich in the material and skills required for a flourishing adult life. There should be no junk courses" (p. 205). Martin (1992), in her discussion of curriculum, draws attention to the ways that a traditional curriculum fails to be self-critical and calls for a "wide range of voices" to be included in order to equip students with "different cultural lenses," which they can use to better address existential questions, such as "life and death, good and evil, self and other, nature and culture" (p. 56). Martin and Noddings both argue that a curriculum differentiated by student interests can meet the needs of a range of students, as long as all strands of that curriculum are equally valued and supported in the school. Further, they argue that such a curriculum can be socially unifying if it is rich in meaning and serious thought and if there is some common core content (related to caring) shared by all students.

Within the caring approach, success with students is gauged on a broad vision of promoting student happiness. Happiness, according to Noddings (2003), is a multi-dimensional concept, but she asserts that it depends most significantly on the quality of the intimate relationships in students' lives and on students' abilities to pleasantly co-exist with less-intimate acquaintances. This vision of student happiness guides the educational endeavor from the formation of educational aims to the climate of individual classrooms. According to Noddings,

> The atmosphere of classrooms should reflect the universal desire for happiness. There should be a minimum of pain (and none deliberately inflicted), many opportunities for pleasure, and overt recognition of the connection between the development of desirable dispositions and happiness (p. 246).

According to Martin (1992), children can be happy when engaged in solitary pursuits, but such pursuits should result in children becoming more loving toward others and the physical world. Noddings and Martin assert that many current educational practices do not appeal to students' interests nor further their "opportunities for pleasure" and, as such, should receive less emphasis than activities more likely to conjoin students' interests and provide enjoyment, such as producing a school newspaper or rehearsing and performing a play.

Care theorists recognize that unmet material needs can diminish the opportunity to respond to students and decrease happiness directly or indirectly by making it impossible for teachers "to vary their responses in ways that might benefit their charges" (Noddings, 2002, p. 5). Besides acknowledging the limitations placed on ones-caring by unmet material needs, Noddings (2003) complicates the concept of "needs" and asserts that what a student "needs" may vary according to that student's situation. In

concordance with the basic premise of caring, the educator, as one-caring, must be receptive to the unique desires and projects of the student and assess "needs" accordingly.

When it comes to assessing students' needs, advocates of caring would critique the current state of education for failing to provide the continuity necessary for this aspect of teacher work. In discussing continuity within the caring approach, Noddings (1992) draws on the prior educational thought of John Dewey (1963). In particular, Noddings notes that Dewey's focus on continuity of experience for students can be "analyzed more closely and extended" (p. 64) to include an emphasis on continuity of purpose, place, people, and curriculum in schools. Continuity of purpose requires re-evaluating the use of time in schools to ensure that caring for students and teaching them to care for others receives adequate attention and priority throughout the school day. Continuity of place would entail keeping students in one physical location as long as possible in order to allow children to "settle in, to become responsible for their physical surroundings, [and] to take part in maintaining a caring community" (p. 66). Continuity of people would match students and teachers (or teams of teachers) for multiple years in order to deepen caring connections and allow teachers and students to experience positive growth together over time. Finally, continuity of curriculum, at the secondary level, would offer students "equally prestigious programs of specialization, each embedded in a universal curriculum organized around themes of caring" (p. 73).

Because of their emphasis on the caring relationship, advocates of a caring approach would encourage teachers to resist those elements of the status quo in schools that inhibit the kinds of continuity mentioned above. In particular, Noddings and Martin would encourage teachers to resist (at least) the following tendencies in contemporary

American education: equating highly qualified teachers merely with subject matter knowledge; standardizing curriculum and evaluation; and teaching subjects in isolation from their relevance to students' lives. In order to do this effectively, caring advocates would have teachers develop strong personal and ethical identities embedded in and nurtured by caring communities. In the next section, I will discuss these practices as they relate to the formation and negotiation of identities from the perspective of a caring approach to education.

Identity Formation and Negotiation within the Caring Approach

According to advocates of a caring approach to education, adopting and implementing a caring approach to education would require critically reclaiming certain subordinate social identities. In particular, to engage in the educational practices associated with caring, requires teachers to re-evaluate certain aspects of femininity and domesticity. Martin (1992) discusses the way such aspects of identity were extolled in the work of Maria Montessori and all but ignored in the educational theory of Dewey, Kilpatrick, and others. Martin would have us revalue in particular the "intimacy and affection of family relationships and…the shared day-to-day living that constitutes domesticity" (p. 126) in healthy and high-functioning homes. Noddings (1984) is careful to note that both male and female persons can participate in both roles within caring relations, but acknowledges that women, by virtue of their life experiences, are more likely to "define themselves in terms of caring and work their way through moral problems from the position of one-caring" (p. 8) and to be "better equipped for caring than men" (p. 97). Noddings and Martin both acknowledge that the association with the feminine and domestic will be seen, by some, as a weakness. For some, any appeal to an

ethic historically associated with women runs the risk of re-inscribing women's second class standing and engaging in relations of care places teachers (many of whom are women) in a purely traditional role of care-taking with respect to men and children. (For more on these critiques see Diller, Houston, Morgan & Ayim, 1996, *The Gender Question in Education: Theory, pedadogy and politics*.)

If the critics of care are correct, any teacher identity that requires teachers to respond as "one-caring" would, by its very nature, demean and diminish teachers and their role in schools. Noddings, however, is careful to point out the ways that her conception of ethical caring differs from views of care-givers as subservient or self-abnegating. According to her, developing one's ethical ideal or identity as one-caring requires an attention to self that is lacking in relations characterized by dominance and submission. Noddings (1984) traces this back to the relational dimension of caring: "Since I am defined in relation, I do not sacrifice myself when I move toward the other as one-caring. Caring is, thus, both self-serving and other-serving" (p. 99).

Noddings' (1984) concept of an internalized ethical "ideal" may offer teachers within a caring approach a means by which to establish and negotiate identity, yet still maintain the personal respect and dignity associated with the best feminist visions. The ethical ideal, according to Noddings, is unique to each person and is grounded in "the longing to maintain, recapture, or enhance our most caring and tender moments" (p. 104). Such an aspect of identity is especially important in those situations in which the one-caring is unable to respond with "natural sympathy," such as in the case of a person (a cared-for) unable to respond due to illness or injury. Maintaining such an identity requires the one-caring to be honest, to "look clearly and receptively" (p. 108) on her

history of caring and being cared for. It also requires that the one-caring avoid making moral decisions in abstraction from this concrete personal history of successes and failures. Finally, attaining this ethical ideal must be something that can be done in "actual relations with actual persons" (p. 109). A caring approach to education requires generating, in the context of each caring encounter, the possibility of this enhanced ethical component of identity.

To maintain her ethical ideal, the one-caring (the teacher) must maintain herself as someone capable of giving and receiving care. According to Noddings, an attitude of bitter, grudging self-sacrifice is not congruent with true caring and the one-caring must "give herself rest," "seek congenial companionship," and "find joy in personal work" (p. 105). These kinds of opportunities for personal renewal and growth have long been a central component of a feminist vision for women's lives. Similarly, many feminists have argued, as Martin (1992) does in *The Schoolhome*, that men and boys must be willing and able to participate equally with women in building homes and tranquil family and community relationships. Therefore, it is both through enhancing women's opportunities for self-care and encouraging men's care-giving that Noddings and Martin propose identities that are both nurturing and egalitarian with respect to gender.

In looking at the work of activists, I noted that the work of identity formation and negotiation is accomplished through particular kinds of affiliative practices. In this way, the work of identity formation and affiliation was closely linked in some of the studies of activist work, particularly when the majority of activists were women. Similarly, in the caring approach to education, the identity work of teachers is extended and enhanced by

those affiliative practices associated with being engaged in caring relationships. It is to a deeper discussion of these practices that I will now turn.

Affiliation within the Caring Approach

Affiliation, defined as an emotional affinity for and commitment to particular individuals or groups, helps activists create continuity with prior social groups, form new relationships, and maintain connections to people within the activist movement over time. As discussed above, a type of affiliation (the caring relationship) is at the center of a caring approach to education and the relationship most frequently discussed in the work of Noddings and Martin is the teacher-student dyad. Clearly, advocates of a caring approach would want teachers to engage in the affiliative practices described above with respect to students. However, there are other relationships that caring advocates believe would help teachers build a commitment to the caring approach. In this section, I will focus on affiliative work as it has bearing on relations between colleagues, teachers and administrators, and teachers and parents or community members.

From the standpoint of a caring approach to education, effective affiliative work requires providing teachers with the time needed to maintain cordial relations with most colleagues and to engage in fuller dialogue with some. Noddings and Martin claim that schools need to provide teachers with the structures necessary to promote caring relationships between colleagues. As Noddings (1992) states:

> Time should be provided for teachers who are working with a particular group of students to talk with one another...Real educational leadership should address itself to bringing out the best in teachers and teacher collegiality, just as we want teachers to bring out the best in students. (p. 170)

Noddings and Martin also advocate school reforms such as team teaching, looping (keeping students and teachers together for more than one year), and curriculum development at the local level that would enhance opportunities for teachers to establish relationships of trust and care with colleagues, administrators, and community members. As with other aspects of the caring approach, the focus is on providing teachers with opportunities to become more capable moral agents, just as teachers want to provide those opportunities for students. (See *Educating Moral People*, Chapters 11/12 for a discussion of the role dialogue plays in Noddings' conception of the moral education of students. There is no reason to think that she would not want to apply some of the same ideas to the in-service experience of teachers.)

According to Noddings (1992), when engaged in the work of caring, teachers' affiliative practices include engrossment, motivational displacement, and commitment to act on behalf of the cared-for, as described above with respect to students. All of these practices may also take place within the context of short- or long-term encounters between adults in schools. According to the advocates of a caring approach to education, teachers must be given the opportunity to engage with others in this way, both in the position of one-caring and as the cared-for. This could happen in the context of collegial peer relationships, between students' caregivers and teachers, and/or with educational leaders in the school or community. Certainly, at least some of these practices could be the focus of a well-conceived peer mentoring program for teachers.

Noddings discusses the role of caring in equal relationships, such as those between teachers, or perhaps between teachers, parents, and community members, and acknowledges that these relationships may operate at differing level of intimacy. For

teachers who work together closely, Noddings suggests that they offer one another

"moral support, intellectual/academic help, and solid friendship" (1992, p. 177). In less

intimate relationships, such as between teachers who are not also close friends, she

continues to focus on the ways that one person "meets" the other, especially in cases of

conflict. She notes:

> The biggest part of moral life is living together nonviolently and
> supportively even in the face of disagreement. This means that we have to
> ask continually what must be done after crucial decisions have been made.
> How do we convey our decisions with the least pain? What support do we
> offer those who need it? How do we go on living and working together?
> (p. 101)

As this passage demonstrates, it is not always the content of a decision that characterizes

caring collegial relationships, but, rather, the ways those decisions are negotiated and

implemented. Viewing colleagues, administrators, and other adults in schools as full

human beings is essential to a caring approach.

In discussing team teaching, Noddings emphasizes the need to continue to "work

cooperatively as whole beings." She claims that when teachers perform differentiated

jobs, they run the risk of becoming pieces of "pedagogical machinery" (p. 156). It is this

focus on meeting colleagues and students as "whole beings" that characterizes affiliative

work within the caring approach. Noddings' suggestions about the need for teachers to

identify first as teachers, and only secondarily as people proficient in a particular subject

matter, might also have implications for teachers viewing one another more holistically.

(See *The Challenge to Care in Schools*, p. 178, for more full discussion of Noddings'

perspective on teachers' subject matter specialization and identification.)

In sum, Noddings and Martin place emphasis on the role of the learning

environment in developing and maintaining affiliations. Schools must be places where

engrossment, motivational displacement, and committed action can occur, even if some of these occur in brief interactions. Teachers must be able to maintain and enhance their own ethical ideal: this requires that teachers occasionally be on the receiving end of mutual or asymmetrical relations of care. Structural characteristics of schools that may enhance opportunities to care include: looping; team teaching; reduced reliance on testing and increased use of self-evaluation; providing "rich, desirable, and rigorous" programs for all children (Noddings, 1994, p. 174); and giving teachers the freedom and resources to develop curricula based on students' expressed interests. Finally, decision-making processes in schools can enhance the opportunities for affiliation with the caring approach. According to Noddings and Martin, such changes in schooling will require changing both cultural norms about teaching and particular organizational structures within contemporary education. In the next section, I will turn to a discussion of the changes they advocate in these areas.

Organizational Action within the Caring Approach

There are a number of comparisons worth noting between the caring approach to teacher's work and the organizational action and protest practices of activists. As you will recall, activists engage in organizational action and protest in a number of ways, including attempts to create new cultural understandings and efforts to change political structures/opportunities. Advocates of a caring approach to education would encourage teacher practices that fall into both of these broad categories. In both cases, caring advocates would encourage teachers to ground their action in their lived experience of caring and being cared for.

For teachers engaged in practices to change cultural norms and to alter structures/opportunities, Noddings (1984) emphasizes the importance of grounding the solutions to educational problems in caring for both individuals and ideas. Noddings addresses both aspects of caring in the following example:

> If I care about students who are having difficulty with mathematics, I must do two things: I must make the problem my own, receive it intellectually, immerse myself in it; I must also bring the student having difficulty into proximity, receive such students personally. These two facets of my concentration will inform each other, but the second will impose special problems on me. For this second area of concentration is a person. I cannot bring him into proximity merely for the sake of the problem...he is my proximate other and must be met as cared-for by me, one-caring. (p. 113)

Here, Noddings insists that students must be met as "cared-fors," not just as examples of a problem, while also emphasizing the intellectual rigor and investment needed to solve educational problems. Both of these points are significant for understanding organizational action and protest within a caring approach to education.

Given this grounded approach, Noddings and other advocates of caring want teachers to create new cultural understandings using an approach that emphasizes and values relationships, and the cultural meanings that would make caring relationships the central focus of schooling. For those advocating a caring approach to education, new cultural norms would focus on enhancing opportunities to express attentive love. In particular, Noddings and Martin advocate changing cultural norms that tend to devalue the contributions made by loving homes and families to the social and moral growth of children. They also promote those cultural norms that make educating moral and happy students the primary business of schooling. This position entails opposition to the tendency to prioritize rational thought over relational modes of being in schools. Finally, those who envision caring as the focus of education also expose and oppose cultural

norms that stereotype gender roles. These include, but are not limited to, the devaluing of the capacity to care, the denigration of women who have often been primary caregivers, and the bias against men who are engaged in caring endeavors.

In the early chapters of *Schoolhome* (1992), Martin addresses the ways society devalues the contributions of homes and families to the education and socialization of loving and happy children: "Like the housewife's labors that are at once counted on my her husband and discounted by him and his culture, home's continuing contributions to a child's development are both relied on by school and society and refused public recognition" (p. 6). However, unlike social critics who advocate two-parent families with one wage-earner and one full-time caregiver, Martin proposes a different way of recognizing the important contributions of home to children's growth and education. She argues for acknowledgement of the important attributes of a loving home and incorporation of those attributes into the business of schooling.

Incorporating the attributes of a loving home into schooling would, according to the advocates of a caring approach, entail prioritizing the aims of schooling differently. According to Noddings and Martin, the American educational system prepares students primarily for the world of work and economic competition. While both theorists acknowledge the importance of work as an aspect of leading a fulfilled life, both would want students' chosen work to have meaning and for the highest priority of schools to be educating students to be "competent, caring, loving, and lovable people" (Noddings, 1992, p. xiv). According to Noddings and Martin, changing the emphasis of schools in this way would require both a shift in the way we conceptualize learning and require that we place greater emphasis on those capacities traditionally associated with women.

From the perspective of care advocates, teachers must work to change cultural norms around the goals of learning. A good education, according to Noddings (1992), entails competence in caring in a number of domains. (See *The Challenge to Care in Schools*, pp. 47-61, for a brief summary of these domains.) This is in contrast to a view of learning wedded only to disciplinary knowledge or to the ability to reason logically to a conclusion. Competence in caring requires the ability to think critically and broad disciplinary knowledge, so that these competencies can be used effectively in the service of caring and other educational goals. For example, in order to care effectively for oneself, a student would need to know basic information about diseases and how they are prevented, spread, and treated. She would also need to be able to reason from this information to make decisions about how to avoid exposure and maintain health. However, information and the ability to reason is not enough, according to Noddings, if the student is unable to use them to avoid harm to oneself or others. One way Noddings suggests schools and teachers could shift the emphasis of the curriculum at the secondary level is by creating a common core of instructional time that is focused on learning to care through discussion of existential questions, units that address the particular needs and/or interests of students, and give attention to the challenges inherent in learning to care for themselves, others, and the world around them.

Noddings and Martin both acknowledge that particular cultural norms around gender could limit the capacity of teachers to engage fully in a caring approach to education. Martin (1985) interrogates the history of educational thought in ways that support changing these cultural norms. Specifically, she discusses the ways that educational thought and practice has, over the centuries, focused primarily on educating

students to participate in society's "productive processes," which she defines as "preparation for citizenship and the workplace." School practices, she argues, have failed to acknowledge or value discussions of "reproductive processes." Reproductive processes are defined "broadly to include not simply conception and birth but the rearing of children to more or less maturity and associated activities such as tending the sick, taking care of family needs and running a household" (p. 6). Martin encourages teachers to "challenge the productive/reproductive dichotomy" and thereby calls for a "basic rethinking of education" (p. 193). Martin calls for a "gender-sensitive educational ideal" which both acknowledges and values all human capacities, but recognizes that sex and gender are "deeply-rooted features of our society" that will (for some time) continue to impact teachers' ability to teach students to participate in both reproductive and productive processes (p. 195). Changing such cultural norms over the long run will, according to Martin, require teachers to remain attentive to gender-related differences in instruction, curriculum, and school structure and to be vigilant in addressing instances of gender bias when they occur.

In addition to changing cultural norms, organizational action and protest involves changing opportunities for political action and social structures to support desired goals. For proponents of a caring approach to education, teachers' practices are guided by ongoing experiences of caring and being cared for. Political opportunities and social processes require change to the degree that caring relations are more likely to result. This might mean advocating for the kinds of structural changes in schools mentioned above: looping, greater teacher autonomy, team teaching, and flexibility in curriculum development. Sometimes this requires engaging allies, mobilizing resources and

creating/using protest in classrooms and schools, but always within the context of particular, on-going relationships. Teachers engaging in protest around a particular issue would try, at all costs, to avoid hurting particular cared-fors and would act with the goal of enhancing the happiness of those involved. Noddings would also insist that teachers communicate with those colleagues and students most likely to be affected by the changes, in order to provide them with opportunities to directly express their needs and to provide opportunities to maintain good relations, even across differences of opinion.

Martin (2000) offers several examples of the way advocates of a caring approach might encourage teachers to engage in organizational action and protest. One example is modeled after the Swedish *fika*, a time when individuals in a workplace come together to "swap ideas, share troubles, and generally engage in talk both small and large about work, home, and world" (p. 163). Martin goes on to elaborate on the ways that unstructured time among women in higher education might result in decisions to take action on issues such as sexual harassment, discriminatory hiring practices, and chilly classroom climates for women. In another example, Martin talks about a project that brought together mothers of small children living in rural poverty to share experiences, analyze problems, and work to change their lives and the lives of their families. In both cases, the common attributes of the situation were an open agenda, a willingness on the part of all individuals to listen carefully to one another, a lack of preconceived notions of the "correct" response to any problems that arise, and a willingness to work together toward positive solutions, both within and outside of established hierarchies.

Martin's discussion of organizational action in the two examples mentioned above indicates that the creation of communicative spaces such as the *fika* would be a priority

for educators engaged in the caring approach. Such spaces might be the positive alternative to what Noddings (1992) identifies as the "pernicious gossip that corrupts so many discussions in teachers' rooms" (p. 177). In fact, the example of the *fika* illuminates the value of less structured communicative spaces across the organizational hierarchies of typical American schools. For example, opportunities in schools for teachers, students, administrators, parents and community members to participate together in conversation are often the unintended consequence of sporting events, extracurricular clubs, and service activities. Advocates of a caring approach might want schools to attend more carefully to the dialogue occurring in these settings and the impact they could have in enhancing opportunities to care.

Part 3: The Contemporary Liberal Approach to Teachers' Work
Primary Commitments of the Contemporary Liberal Approach to Education

As with my analysis of neo-conservative and caring approaches to educational thinking, in this section, I use the framework of social activist labor to describe aspects of a contemporary liberal approach to teachers' work. Using four broad categories of social activist work, I elaborate relevant aspects of contemporary liberal thinking about education and teaching in particular. I focus on two major contributors to this area of educational theory: Amy Gutmann (1987) and Kenneth Howe (1997).

Contemporary liberal thinking about education and teachers' work reflects three primary commitments. First, advocates of a contemporary liberal approach want to ensure that all individuals are maximally free to pursue diverse conceptions of "the good life," including diverse conceptions of "good education." Second, advocates of a contemporary liberal approach believe that the best way to pursue this aim is to engage

those involved in schools in deliberation about educational goals, structures, and practices in the context of broader democratic principles. Finally, advocates of a contemporary liberal approach offer theoretical tools to gauge whether particular educational settings enhance egalitarian participation in deliberation and decision-making among teachers, administrators, students, families, and community members. Although Howe builds upon many of Gutmann's ideas, his approach differs enough in its basic tenants to justify distinguishing between these two perspectives as they relate to the above commitments.

Advocates of a contemporary liberal approach to education want to protect the diversity of what Gutmann (1987) calls the "moral ideals of education" (p. 11). Classical liberal thinking on this point focuses on protecting the ability of rational individuals to make choices about their lives, as long as those choices do not impinge on the capacity for other individuals to make similar kinds of choices. Contemporary liberal egalitarian approaches recognize the value in "permitting communities to use education to predispose children toward some ways of life" (Gutmann, p. 43), because being a part of a community or sub-community (such as one's family) is a social good in that it "impart[s] identity to the lives of its citizens" (p. 42). This commitment must, however, be balanced against commitments to other social goods, particularly with respect to developing students' ability to participate in social decision-making (what Gutmann terms "conscious social reproduction") and their ability "to evaluate competing conceptions of the good life and the good society" (p. 44). For Gutmann, maintaining a relatively harmonious balance among these potentially conflicting social goods requires distributing educational authority among families, the democratic state, and educational

professionals. In such a framework, it is the role of families to predispose children to particular conceptions of the good life. The democratic state, at the federal, state, and local level, is charged with creating and maintaining educational structures where children can learn a common civic culture. Educational professionals, largely teachers, are responsible for teaching students to reflect critically on the common civic culture and for helping students become aware of and able to choose among ways of life different from those advocated by their parents, families, and local communities.

Like Gutmann, Howe wants to allow for diverse conceptions of "the good life" by protecting the integrity of those communities and sub-communities whose ways of life give meaning to the choices individuals make. (Howe draws on Kymlicka [1989, 1995] for this point.) He also shares Gutmann's concern about the process of conscious social reproduction and her interest in preparing students to participate effectively in democratic decision-making. However, while Gutmann is interested in the distribution of democratic authority, Howe is particularly focused on the opportunities provided to students and their families to participate in decision-making about education and the outcomes of those opportunities. For Howe, opportunities in education not only need to exist, they need to be "worth wanting" for those to whom they are provided. The only way to ensure this, according to Howe, is to embrace what he calls a "participatory educational ideal," one that affords individuals and families a "real opportunity" to engage in deliberation about educational goals, outcomes, and processes. What Howe wants to limit is the possibility that students will be offered a "bare opportunity" to make choices about their educational lives. (Howe borrows this term from Dennett [1984].) For Howe, a bare educational opportunity is an opportunity in name only, because the individuals involved

do not have the material resources, deliberative capacities, educational preparation, or information to make use of the opportunity.

The second major commitment of advocates of a contemporary liberal approach to education is the commitment to conducting deliberation about education in adherence with democratic educational principles. For Gutmann, this requires a commitment to the principles of "nonrepression" and "nondiscrimination." Nonrepression "prevents the state, and any group within it, from using education to restrict rational deliberation of competing conceptions of the good life and the good society" (p. 44). A second principle, which flows out of nonrepression, is that of non-discrimination, which demands that "no educable child may be excluded from an education adequate to participating in the political processes that structure choice among good lives" (p. 45) and "prevents states and other groups in society from denying anyone an educational good on grounds irrelevant to the legitimate social purpose of that good" (p. 127). Commitment to these principles is a perpetual aspect of conscious social reproduction: those individuals deliberating today cannot use their "present deliberative freedom to undermine the future deliberative freedom of children" (Gutmann, p. 45). Long-term commitment to these principles, according to Gutmann, requires inculcating a particular kind of moral virtue in democratic citizens, the virtue of tolerance. The virtue of tolerance supports the principles of nonrepression and nondiscrimination because individuals who embrace tolerance as a personal ethic will be less inclined to silence or exclude those with whom they disagree.

While in agreement with the basic logic of Gutmann's approach, Howe believes that true educational equality requires a different set of democratic principles and virtues.

Instead of nonrepression, Howe would have deliberation about education circumscribed by the principle of "nonoppression." Nonoppression would require that in negotiations over conceptions of the "good life" or "good education," groups that qualify as oppressed be identified and provided with protection (either formally or informally) from the tendency to devalue or dismiss their contributions. Instead of tolerance, Howe wants democratic citizens to embody the virtue of "recognition." Recognition, according to Howe, involves acknowledging the equal worth of cultural groups to which individuals belong and from which individuals (at least in part) form their sense of identity. Just as the virtue of tolerance supports the principle of non-repression, recognition would support the principle of nonoppression in Howe's participatory ideal.

The third primary commitment of the contemporary liberal approach to education is a focus on educational goals that enable all citizens to participate effectively as citizens. This commitment is related to the first two; in order to (1) protect individuals' capacity to choose among diverse conceptions of "the good life" and to (2) engage all citizens in the deliberation about what counts as a good life and good preparation for such lives, education must focus on (3) preparing all citizens to participate effectively in democratic deliberation and decision-making. Gutmann calls this level of preparation the "democratic threshold" and argues that schools, communities, and states have an obligation to educate all students to this level. In addition to inculcating the virtue of tolerance, as mentioned above, full participation in democratic life requires, according to Gutmann (1987), "cultivating participatory virtues – a sense of social commitment, political efficacy, a desire to participate in politics, respect for opposing points of view, critical distance from authority, and so on" (p. 91). Democratic citizens must also

possess disciplinary virtues such as "knowledge and…emotional along with intellectual discipline" (p. 91). Once the democratic educational threshold is met, Gutmann believes that communities and individuals should be able to make a range of other decisions about educational goals and the distribution of educational resources.

Howe's idea of a "participatory educational ideal" builds on Gutmann's educational threshold and extends it in several ways. First, as mentioned above, Howe argues that democratic deliberation should be guided by the more stringent requirement of nonoppression and he would have citizens educated to embody the virtue of recognition, rather than mere tolerance. In addition, Howe would want to eliminate "any group differences in educational attainment that are systematically linked to goods such as employment, income, and health" (p. 66). Finally, Howe argues that we should take into account the "context of choice" within which students and families make decisions about education. Howe, borrowing the term from Kymlicka (1991), defines a favorable context of choice as one in which "the thwarting of the desired results of individuals' choices is reduced as far as possible to the kind of uncertainty that gives *deliberation* and *choice* their meaning" (Howe, p. 19, emphasis in original). In other words, a favorable context of choice entails that students' choices are not limited by factors such as income, lack of knowledge, lack of skill in deliberation, or a lack of adequate or appropriate role models. Taking Howe's treatment of gender as an example, he argues that when girls do not see themselves in the curriculum or women among those people teaching math and science, they tend to make choices that move them in the direction of other career fields. Howe argues that this "choice" is made within an unfavorable context of choice, one in which "the opportunities open to girls and women are conditioned by the gendered social

meanings associated with them" (Fletcher, 2000). (See Howe [1997], pp. 34-52, and Fletcher's [2000, pp. 48-56] discussion of Howe's approach.)

Gutmann and Howe, as advocates of a contemporary liberal approach to education, perceive differences in goals, strategies and value systems as not only inevitable, but also desirable, aspects of life in a democratic society. Because of this, discussion and debate about educational priorities are seen as venues for locating common values and priorities among the many diverse conceptions of good education that exist in contemporary societies. Advocates of a contemporary liberal approach to education want to ensure that all members of the society have a real chance to participate in this conversation and that their contributions will be taken seriously. For both Howe and Gutmann, the social conditions of schooling must be organized so that teachers, students, and community members have meaningful opportunities for participation in the educational arena. These social conditions include traditional liberal egalitarian concerns about the just distribution of tangible resources, but extend to include elements of the "hidden curriculum," such as the gender of adults students observe exercising authority in schools (Guttman) or the narrow range of cultural groups that receive formal or informal recognition (Howe). For educators committed to a contemporary liberal approach to education, these concerns are central to their critique of current American educational policy and practice.

Social Critique within the Contemporary Liberal Approach to Education

Advocates of the contemporary liberal approach encourage teachers to engage in the practice of social critique. Specifically, they advocate a critique focused on the social conditions of schooling and encourage teachers to look at whether schools are organized

to provide meaningful preparation for democratic deliberation. The democratic vision of contemporary liberal thinkers like Gutmann and Howe includes the expectation that teachers also engage students in the practice of social critique as an element of what Guttman calls "conscious social reproduction" (p. 39). In order to be *conscious*, social reproduction must include a critical assessment of the current social conditions. Because of this, teachers must be engaged in the practice of critique as citizens of a democracy, as well as part of the professional obligation they hold to students. The critique advanced by contemporary liberal educators involves a critical assessment of those social arrangements in schools that enable or inhibit conscious social reproduction. This is accomplished, in part, by comparing the current state of affairs to this democratic vision and by identifying possible sources of resistance to problematic elements of contemporary schooling.

According to Gutmann and Howe, current conditions in schools prevent teachers from performing their role in educating students for conscious social reproduction in at least three ways. First, professional educators often have little latitude in developing curriculum and pedagogy that focus on the deliberative democratic aims of schooling. Second, schools are often structured in ways that keep large groups of students from being sufficiently prepared for participation in conscious social reproduction (i.e., for meeting Gutmann's democratic threshold or Howe's participatory ideal). Finally, the organization of many contemporary U.S. schools denies teachers the level of professional autonomy necessary to reach contemporary liberal educational goals. Because of the differences in their approaches to contemporary liberal education, I will consider

Gutmann's and Howe's approaches separately with respect to each of these contemporary educational conditions.

For Gutmann, teachers play a critical role in the preparation of students for conscious social reproduction, both in terms of the content of their lessons and the ways that those lessons are delivered. According to Gutmann, the key role of teachers in this regard is to encourage students to "live up to the routine demands of democratic life," while at the same time instilling the capacity to question "those demands whenever they appear to threaten the foundational ideals of democratic sovereignty" (p. 52). By teaching students to engage in democratic life and critical deliberation about politics and culture, teachers work to "uphold the principle of nonrepression" (p. 76). Schools limit teachers' ability to perform this role with respect to the content of their teaching when they restrict the intellectual resources available to teachers and students, or exclude a range of reasonable perspectives on issues within the curriculum. One example of this offered by Gutmann is the case of biased textbook selection processes. Gutmann claims that such processes are biased and undemocratic when they are used to "protect contestable political perspectives against intellectual challenge" (p. 100). Gutmann uses a few examples here, taken largely from Frances FitzGerald's *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the 20th Century* (1980). Examples include decisions by state-wide textbook approval boards in Mississippi and Texas that resulted in the selection of racially prejudiced texts. The Texas committee also pressured publishers to drop references to Langston Hughes and Pete Seeger and to delete passages that said that World War II could have been avoided b y U.S. participation in the League of Nations.

Instead, Gutmann would have educators critique such processes according to two standards: "their openness to citizen participation" and "their potential to open citizens to the merits of unpopular points of view" (p. 101). She also notes that such undertakings within educational institutions can have implications for the democratic nature of schooling both in terms of their outcomes (the texts selected) and their process (the type of democratic deliberation they encourage or repress).

Gutmann (1987) also argues that schools fail students (in a democratic sense) by restricting the aims of students' moral education. Gutmann claims that democratic participation requires that schools instill two broad categories of virtue: disciplinary virtues (such as intellectual self-discipline and mastery of information) and participatory virtues (such as commitment to social groups, the ability to criticize authority figures, respect for different opinions, a desire to participate in the political system, and political efficacy). (See Gutmann, pp. 91-94 for a full elaboration of these virtues.) According to Gutmann, the social conditions of schooling encourage educators' attempts to foster disciplinary virtues at the expense of participatory ones, resulting in an over-emphasis on the cognitive domain when compared to the affective. This produces a tendency to see the teacher as the sole source of expertise and insight, diminishing students' motivation toward independent thinking and capacity for deliberation. Gutmann claims that educators who perpetuate this either/or dichotomy of democratic virtues may be operating according to a false set of assumptions, because teachers who use more participatory methods frequently engender greater focus on tasks that require self-discipline and mastery of information. In her discussion of this point Guttman draws heavily on Mary Metz's (1978) work, Classrooms and Corridors: The Crisis of Authority

in Desegregated Secondary Schools and Philip Jackson's (1968) text, Life in Classrooms.

Since the publication of Democratic Education, numerous studies have affirmed links

between participatory methods and aspects of self-discipline and content mastery, along

with complicating the affective/cognitive dichotomy in learning. For some recent

examples, see Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004); Turner, Meyer, and Schweinle

(2003); and Kaplan, Middleton, and Midgley (2002).

With respect to curriculum and pedagogy, Howe critiques schools for failing to

include diverse groups of students and parents in the conversation about what learning

opportunities schools should provide. In one example, Howe criticizes the movement to

provide all students with access to curricular content such as that proposed in Hirsch's

cultural literacy approach (see Howe, pp. 55-59). The irony of such approaches, Howe

argues, are their claims to democratic inclusiveness, while leaving the processes that

determine curriculum content and pedagogy predominantly in the hands of "experts"

outside schools and the communities they serve. According to Howe, schools fail when

they do not recognize the "ways of life" of their students and proceed as if students'

families and community contexts are irrelevant. In doing so, schools fail to give all

students equal access to the social good of respect and place a particular burden on

historically marginalized groups to assimilate. Instead, Howe would have schools

maintain openness in both the content and process of education. This openness entails

offering "genuine recognition to the particular cultural groups" served by that school (see

Howe, pp. 68-70). Educators who aim toward this goal should include the history and

perspectives of those cultural groups and teach students to consider cultural differences as

a source of strength. For Howe, the way to democratize schools is not by providing all

students with the same standardized material but, rather, by involving them in the process through which curriculum itself is identified and framed: "Equal educational opportunity can be achieved for historically disadvantaged groups only by suspending judgment on cultural literacy and providing them with equal voice in negotiating what it should be" (p. 3)

The second major critique of contemporary U.S. schooling offered by Gutmann focuses on the way school structures inhibit the democratic preparation of large groups of students. She offers several examples of this in terms of the racial/ethnic composition of many U.S. schools and the gender stratification of teachers and staff. According to Gutmann, teachers uphold the principle of nondiscrimination by maintaining a commitment to teach "all students according to their educational needs and abilities, rather than according to their class, race, or religion" (p. 76, note 6). With respect to school integration and heterogeneous classrooms, Gutmann argues that racial and ethnic diversity in schools is in the best interests of democracy. In short, Gutmann contends that students who are educated in a thoroughly integrated environment become less prejudiced as adults and, as a result, schools organized in this way create fewer social, political, and economic barriers for non-white students. (See her discussion of this issue in *Democratic Education*, pp. 169-170). In a similar vein, Gutmann argues that women should be equitably represented in all levels of leadership in schools because when they are not, girls and boys learn that it is women's role to be under the direction of men. Both in the case of integration and in the case of gender equity, Gutmann contends that U.S. schools are not inclusive enough because many do not provide enough diversity to

adequately educate students to participate effectively in a diversely constituted democracy.

Howe also critiques schools for failing to provide equal educational opportunities to large groups of students. However, as with the discussion of curriculum and pedagogy, Howe argues that we must go beyond Gutmann's standard to determine what constitutes equality of educational opportunity. While Gutmann argues that the balancing of educational goods with other social goods must be conducted in a democratic manner (what she calls the "democratic authorization principle"), Howe focuses on the social contingencies that are brought to bear in determining what educational opportunities are "worth wanting" in schools. With respect to the practice of tracking students according to their perceived academic abilities, Howe argues that many U.S. schools fail to consider the ways that narrow definitions of ability and achievement can exclude large groups of students from the opportunity to learn from one another. This is particularly important when educational goals focus on democratic participation and mutual recognition. In addition, Howe encourages schools to attend to the ways that practices such as tracking tend to unfairly privilege certain groups of students with respect to race, class, and gender. (For a full discussion of these issues, see *Understanding Equal Educational Opportunity*, pp. 78-90).

The third major critique of contemporary schooling offered by advocates of the contemporary liberal approach focuses on the ways that schools limit the professional autonomy of teachers. For Gutmann, this tendency is best exemplified in the "ossification of office" that occurs in the teaching profession. Ossification of office occurs when teachers are denied the degree of professional autonomy necessary to teach

students to reflect critically on democratic culture. According to Gutmann, structural factors are largely to blame, factors such as "heavy teaching schedules, crowded classrooms, low salaries, little time for collegial consultation, threats to their intellectual independence in the classroom, and/or rigid rules governing what and how to teach" (p. 79). Under such conditions, teachers are drawn to organizations, such as teachers' unions, that can help protect their professional autonomy. The role of teachers' unions, in these circumstances, is "to pressure democratic communities to create the conditions under which teachers can cultivate the capacity among students for critical reflection on democratic culture" (p. 79). Gutmann offers several examples of the kinds of professional behaviors that might be threatened when teachers are denied autonomy: biology teachers who "resist communal pressures to teach creationism instead of evolution" and social-studies teachers who "develop their students' capacities to criticize popular policies from the perspective of mutually shared principles" (p. 76).

Although Howe is less explicit in his defense of teachers' autonomy, his approach to democratic education would seem to require even more autonomy and professional flexibility than Gutmann's. In addition to the kinds of demands that Gutmann's approach places on teachers to avoid repression or discrimination in schools and classrooms, teachers under Howe's approach would also be responsible for adjusting their teaching and organizing their schools in ways that would create a context in which teachers and students could work together to explicitly recognize historically marginalized groups. Teachers need the flexibility to respond effectively to students who are placed in "double-binds," i. e., facing the choice between being a "good student" and continuing to identify and be identified with some core aspect of their identity. For

example, teachers who work with African-American students might need the flexibility to alter their curriculum and pedagogy to address the tendency to see academic engagement as "acting white." (See Fordham (1996); Fordham & Ogbu (1986); Ogbu (2003); and Ogbu & Simons (1998). Recent scholarship has challenged the assumptions linking academic (dis)engagement to cultural beliefs (Akom, 2003; Cokley, 2003; and Horvat & Lewis , 2003). Despite this, such an example is appropriate to the framework offered by contemporary liberal approaches to education. Similarly, teachers might need to find ways to encourage girls who are interested in math and science if this interest is perceived among their peers or community as "unfeminine." (See Breakwell, Vignoles & Robertson (2003); Gilbert & Calvert (2003); and Jones & Howe (2000) for some recent scholarship in this area.) This particular critique comes into even sharper relief when one considers the types of identity work expected of teachers by the advocates of the contemporary liberal approach. It is to a discussion of this type of work that I will now turn.

Identity Formation and Negotiation within the Contemporary Liberal Approach

Educators like Gutmann and Howe recognize that teachers and schools are engaged in the work of identity formation and negotiation. In addition to the work teachers do to facilitate the identity work of their students (such as cultivating democratic virtues), teachers themselves are involved in forming and negotiating identities in at least two ways. First, according to advocates of a contemporary liberal approach, teachers reclaim and enact their own cultural and sub-cultural identities in schools and those processes have an impact on the context within which students, colleagues, and community members make choices about their own lives. Second, teachers provide

important perspectives on the work of schools by incorporating a critical dimension into their professional identity as educators.

According to advocates of the contemporary liberal approach to education such as Howe and Gutmann, the reclamation of unique, culturally-specific identities should not only be allowed, but in many cases encouraged. Gutmann is careful to distinguish her approach to democratic education from approaches that would claim neutrality with respect to particular cultural ways of life or those that would infringe completely on "communal self-determination" (p. 46). According to Gutmann, "a democratic state is therefore committed to allocating educational authority in such a way as to provide its members with an education adequate...to sharing in the several sub-communities, such as families, that impart identity to the lives of its citizens" (p. 42). Although she expects teachers to be "sufficiently detached" from their communities so as to help their students develop "critical distance," Gutmann also expects that teachers be "sufficiently connected" to communities so as to "understand the commitments that their students bring to school" (p. 77).

With respect to the negotiation and enactment of identity among teachers, Howe argues that teachers' identities can be crucial to the provision of equal opportunities, particularly with respect to students from diverse backgrounds. According to Howe, the social locations of teachers in a school have an impact on the "context of choice" for students and their families. Howe contends that although some schools succeed in fostering the achievement of students from a range of backgrounds, these schools do not necessarily provide equal educational opportunities if that achievement exacts an "opportunity cost" such as alienation from identities nurtured in their communities of

origin. One might easily extend Howe's logic to any number of social identities that teachers could inhabit including, but not limited to, identities associated with race/ethnicity, social class, religious affiliation, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. When teachers who inhabit non-majority or marginalized social identities are not present or visible in schools, students and families who inhabit those identities may operate within an unfavorable context of choice. In addition, new teachers may fail to find role models or mentors who can appreciate their particular struggles to negotiate and claim their identities as (non-majority or marginalized) educators. Thus, according to advocates of a contemporary liberal approach, some teachers may also face unfavorable contexts of choice.

A second way that advocates of a contemporary liberal approach to education conceive of teachers' identity work is related to the special role that teachers play in a democratic society. Gutmann insists that teachers identify themselves professionally with their role in "supporting the intellectual and emotional preconditions for democratic deliberation among future generations of citizens" (p. 76). According to Gutmann, one of the most important roles of teachers in a democracy is as the people who "shed light on a democratically created culture" (p. 76). In this context, Gutmann discusses the need for teachers to have some critical distance, both from their own cultures of origin and from the communities where they teach. Teachers also need a certain degree of autonomy in developing their professional identities because teachers represent the interests of the broader society in developing the ability of future citizens to question the actions of the state in a democratic system.

Unlike Gutmann, Howe does not explicitly address the professional identity of teachers in relation to his vision of democratic education. However, his participatory educational ideal places the virtue of recognition in a central role with respect to determining the appropriate actions of teachers. Given this, it is probable that an extensive capacity for recognition would be required to enact Howe's participatory ideal. According to Howe, such an approach "entails much closer relationships and much greater give-and-take among teachers and students than now characterizes public education" (p. 107). Embracing the virtue of recognition requires that teachers develop their capacity for "accepting the culture and language of students and their families as legitimate and embracing them as valid vehicles for learning" (Neito, 2004, p. 385). Howe's vision of teachers' identity might have much in common with what Beyer (1996) calls an "integrated person." Beyer describes an integrated person (or teacher) in the following way:

> To become an integrated person is not only to understand the worlds in which we live and work, but to become the kind of person who will take part in shaping and reshaping those worlds. This emphasis on critique of current realities, and on participating in the re-creation of our worlds, is a central part of democratic life. (p. 17)

Affiliation within the Contemporary Liberal Approach

Contemporary liberal approaches to education, such as those advocated by Howe and Gutmann, hold that teachers should be involved in the work of forming and maintaining social affiliations. They also recognize that many types of social affiliations support the goal of creating an increasingly effective democratic culture, in and out of the classroom. For Gutmann, the quality of affiliation within the school or classroom helps ensure the effectiveness of democratic education, while affiliations with organizations,

such as unions, help maintain teachers' capacity to teach democratically. For Howe, affiliations across the school/community divide help to generate the kind of trust necessary to maintain his participatory educational ideal.

Gutmann's conception of democratic education relies on positive social affiliations to establish and maintain tolerance and mutual respect in schools and classrooms. These affiliations are circumscribed by what Gutmann calls the "morality of association," a cooperative morality based on "empathy, trust, benevolence, and fairness" (p. 61). In addition, Gutmann's conception of deliberative democracy requires relatively small size and frequent interaction, conditions that are more likely to result in the formation of new and enhanced social affiliations. Because she believes that schools should, whenever possible, allow students to participate in democratic decision-making, Gutmann's vision of schools would likely incorporate conditions that support new and enhanced social affiliations.

In addition to these school-based affiliations, Gutmann emphasizes the need for teachers to develop and maintain a strong affiliation within teachers' unions, particularly as unions play a role in helping to enhance the professional status and treatment of teachers. For Gutmann, part of the power of this affiliation lies historically in the capacity of unions to raise the professional regard for teachers in their communities by negotiating better salaries, protecting teachers from unwarranted personnel decisions, and taking other actions to enhance the professionalism of teaching. Specifically, Gutmann thinks that democratic education is best served by teachers who have "a substantial degree of control over what happens in classrooms" (p. 82) and over the ways teachers implement established curricula. Teachers should be affiliated with unions for the role

they play in negotiating standards of professional accomplishment including, but not limited to, helping to negotiate the terms under which poor teachers are dismissed and helping to define the conditions under which merit pay is awarded. In short, unions should be working to foster a local and communal sense of "respectful regard" for teachers. This term comes from Lightfoot (1983) and was quoted by Gutmann (p. 83).

Like Gutmann, Howe is concerned about the affiliative work of teachers and would, arguably, advocate teacher affiliations with individuals and groups within students' communities of origin. However, Howe might suggest that teachers go outside established entities such as teachers' unions in their efforts to provide and protect the democratic goal of recognition. As a guiding democratic virtue, recognition requires a broader sense of affiliation than would be required by Gutmann's principle of non-repression. Non-repression requires that teachers prevent exclusion of students from participation in the common democratic curriculum, whereas recognition implies a more active attempt to incorporate students' affiliations and identities, particularly those that might cause students to be excluded in other social settings, into the educational endeavor. This broader sense of affiliation requires that the "distinctive voices and perspectives" of diverse groups be acknowledged and valued equally. One would imagine that schools where the virtue of recognition is upheld would also be schools where meaningful and trusting relationships exist between educators and people within students' communities. Howe recognizes the value of multiple and varying affiliative contexts, both as an individual interest that makes democratic choices "worth wanting," and as a means of generating new opportunities through community relationships. Beyer and his teacher co-authors (1996) and Nieto (2004) offer a number of examples of these

kinds of teacher-community member affiliations (some of which I will discuss at greater length in Chapter 4) and Beyer calls on teachers to continue to work to build relationships with "the poor and disenfranchised, people of color, single parents, and members of other marginalized groups" (p. 153).

Organizational Action within the Contemporary Liberal Approach

In the work of activists, organizational action and protest involve changing opportunities for political action and social structures to support desired goals, as well as changing cultural norms to support the work of activism. For advocates of a contemporary liberal approach to education, organizational action and protest consist of changing political opportunities and cultural understandings through processes that uphold democratic norms. Gutmann and Howe, as two key contemporary proponents of this approach, focus on democratic processes that support particular kinds of social reform: Gutmann describes democratic education as a process that supports deliberative politics and Howe argues for the establishment of equal educational opportunity so as to better realize social justice.

Political reform and deliberative democratic education. According to Gutmann, "Democratic education is best viewed as a shared trust, of parents, citizens, teachers, and public officials, the precise terms of which are to be democratically decided within the bounds of the principles of nondiscrimination and nonrepression" (p. 288). In negotiating this "shared trust," Gutmann argues that there is a reciprocal relationship between democratic politics and educational institutions. According to her, "Democratic politics is one way—probably the most effective and certainly the fairest way – in which the educational needs of all citizens…can be recognized and their educational preferences

heard" (p. 287). However, political processes cannot function in democratic ways unless citizens are educated in the "virtues, knowledge, and skills necessary for political participation" (ibid). As a result of this reciprocal relationship, Gutmann recommends educational reforms that will, in her estimation, result in more deliberative democratic political processes and political reforms that will result in greater commitment to democratic educational institutions. With respect to teachers' work, the focus remains primarily on engagement *within* educational institutions, for Gutmann argues that teachers, in their role as educators, should participate in politics *indirectly* by adequately preparing future citizens for democratic deliberation and by participating in school leadership.

Gutmann outlines a number of practices that educators should use to prepare students for democratic citizenship. One category of practices are what Gutmann terms "participatory methods" and includes giving students opportunities to have some choices within the established curriculum, input on methods of instruction, and opportunities to exhibit leadership in co-curricular activities (pp. 88-94). Another category of practices are those which enhance the professional authority of teachers. In Gutmann's contemporary liberal approach, as I have discussed, teachers' professional authority is grounded in their responsibility to maintain schools' commitments to non-repression and non-discrimination and is supported by a focus on this kind of professionalism among teachers' unions and other professional organizations. A final category of practices involves teachers' roles in the governance of schools. Because I have previously discussed the first two categories of practice, I will now turn to a discussion of the third: teacher leadership of schools.

According to Gutmann, the guiding principle of teacher leadership is that it elevates the quality of interaction between educators and other members of democratic communities. By her account, greater teacher involvement in the governance of schools will enhance opportunities for "creative tension between communal and professional authority" and help open the decisions of democratic communities to the "potentially critical perspective of teachers" (p. 87). Gutmann believes that this "creative tension" is often muted in schools by the administrative bureaucracy that stands between teachers and other members of the communities where they work. In Gutmann's framework, the local democratic community is authorized to guide key decisions about the aims of schooling and the curricular content that will best achieve those aims. This authority is itself limited by the aims of "cultivating a common culture" and teaching "essential democratic values" (p. 74). (See Gutmann, pp. 95-126 for more on the limits of democratic authority.) When the boundaries are permeable between teachers and other community decision-makers, teachers can offer other community members critical insights into the common cultural assumptions underlying decisions about educational policy and practice. Also, as people closely involved in cultivating democratic values in children, teachers can engage others in conversations about potential conflicts between those values and policy decisions. Members of democratic communities can offer teachers greater insight into their justifications for particular policy options and can help ground decision-making in the priorities of local communities. Deborah Meier (1995) offers one example of this kind of teacher leadership in her account of school reform in Harlem, which I will discuss in greater length in Chapter 4.

Just as Gutmann recommends institutional changes to promote a particular kind of teacher leadership and community engagement, she also advocates cultural practices that would promote democratic norms. In particular, Gutmann advocates a shift in cultural practices with respect to the ways communities make democratic decisions. She makes the following argument and several others with respect to democratic cultural practices in *Why Deliberative Democracy* (2004) written with Dennis Thompson. Here, I am going to focus on one set of cultural practices, deliberative practices, as they are most closely related to my discussion of Gutmann's vision for democratic education. According to Gutmann, deliberative processes should be used whenever possible in democratic decision-making. Deliberative processes that give priority to the justifications for policy proposals, are contrasted with approaches that take the preferences of citizens as a given and focus on the process of aggregation in determining which perspective should prevail. Aggregative methods of decision-making include most voting procedures and decision-making based on economic models like cost-benefit analyses. Aggregative approaches, according to Gutmann, are often used because they are efficient, produce determinant outcomes, and are considered morally neutral. The major drawback to such approaches, from Gutmann's perspective, is that they leave existing power distributions in society unquestioned and unexamined, and thus fail to achieve her goal of "conscious social reproduction."

Gutmann argues that a shift in cultural norms toward deliberative practices would result in decisions that citizens consider more legitimate, in part, because they would help citizens consider issues in a more public-spirited, respectful, and knowledgeable way. Existing social inequities are examined and challenged in the course of open and

respectful dialogue. In addition, she argues that the outcomes of deliberative processes should always be viewed as provisional and open to further critique and revision. Although not every decision made after substantive deliberation needs to be revisited, the opportunity always exists to question prior decisions in the light of new information or shifting social priorities. The deliberative approach, because it does not focus simply on the aggregation of individual preferences, can accommodate a broader range of procedures and allows for deliberation about the procedures themselves. According to Gutmann, such cultural changes both enable and are enabled by democratic school reforms.

Social justice and equal educational opportunity. For Howe, individuals and groups help create a just society by pursuing a robust version of equal educational opportunity. As described earlier, Howe's approach to equal educational opportunity entails providing "opportunities worth wanting," opportunities that respond to differing views about what constitutes "worthwhile educational needs, interests, and capabilites" (p. 32). Because such opportunities are "defined in terms of the interaction between individuals and educational institutions" (p. 28), these opportunities are expanded when teachers create environments that encourage meaningful dialogue with families and students. In addition, like Gutmann, Howe sees teachers' practices as fundamental to helping students reach a certain threshold capacity for democratic participation. In both cases, teachers' practices should align with the three requirements of Howe's participatory approach to equal educational opportunity: opposing systemic social inequities, promoting the virtue of recognition, and upholding the principle of nonoppression. Although teachers are not precluded from political action in other social

contexts, schools are a key place where educational opportunities are negotiated. Teachers are, by Howe's account, arbiters in these important sites of political contestation over what counts as a "real opportunity" to deliberate over educational curriculum, assessment, and policy.

With respect to deliberations about curriculum, Howe's participatory ideal requires institutional and cultural action on the part of educators to promote the virtue of recognition. As an aspect of democratic character, the virtue of recognition is an individual trait, the embodiment of which allows citizens to see the contributions of different cultural groups as being of equal worth. According to Howe, one way this virtue has translated into action on the part of educators is through the revision of the traditional cannon. (See Howe, p. 68-69. Here, he draws particularly on Taylor (1994, 1995), although Howe is clear that revision of the traditional Western cannon is not the only way to demonstrate a commitment to the virtue of recognition.) Howe suggests that such revision should be open-ended so that schools and other educational institutions can provide genuine recognition to the individuals and cultural groups represented in their local context. Given this focus on the local, recognition might also be developed among students through programs that emphasize local history and culture, particularly programs that provide students with the depth of exposure, analytical tools, and emotive opportunities to translate knowledge into understanding and appreciation.

Regarding assessment, Howe would have educators intervene in the institutional and cultural practices that result in hierarchies or biased rankings among students. As part of their commitment to the participatory ideal, Howe argues that educators must intervene in educational systems when marginalized social groups are systematically

disadvantaged by such practices. This approach is especially clear in Howe's discussion

of testing and assessment (See Understanding Equal Educational Opportunity, pp. 91-

108 for the extended version of this argument. His argument on this point seems even

more relevant today, as the stakes for standardized testing have only risen in the interim.)

According to Howe, the demands of justice are not met by most of the ways that testing

proponents have attempted to prove that they have eliminated bias. Even tests which are

technically sound, correlate with valid external criteria, and consider the immediate

consequences of testing-taking on students, may help perpetuate an unjust system when

they measure success in a system that is itself biased (p. 96). From Howe's perspective,

it is not sufficient for educators to simply improve their methods of measuring students'

performance using criteria that have historically advantaged some social groups over

others. The criteria themselves and the institutional arrangements that give rise to these

benchmarks must be subjected to scrutiny. By contrast, Howe claims that many current

reform efforts

> ...uncritically assume a universal ideal of education that embodies the
> historical dominance of White males. In the context of the standards/testing
> rhetoric, the point is that a plan for compensating children, readying them,
> and providing them with opportunities to learn is misguided and ineffective
> if the ideal in terms of which they are compensated, readied, and provided
> opportunities to learn is irrelevant or threatening (p. 105).

With respect to educational policy, institutional and cultural action is required on

the part of teachers in order to uphold Howe's principle of nonoppression. As the

procedural embodiment of the virtue of tolerance, nonoppression places a limit on the

ways educational choices are decided so that "legitimate claims have real authority"

(p. 7) regardless of the background of the people making those claims. One area where

Howe argues this principle needs to be invoked is in deliberations about policies

regarding school choice. As Howe notes in his discussion of school choice, "lack of information, lack of time, lack of transportation, lack of childcare, and lack of trust are among the reasons to worry that the poor have a compromised context of choice in comparison to the nonpoor" (p. 119), when it comes to selecting a school in a highly market-driven school choice system. A genuine commitment to the principle of nonoppression would give equal weight to the claims of all and mitigate those factors (information, time, transportation, etc.) that diminish real opportunities for the poor in any school choice plan. Howe suggests that even public school choice experiments can result in a "zero-sum game" where "students in the lowest strata are virtually abandoned" (p. 119). Because of this, Howe endorses only limited school choice plans, specifically designed to mitigate the worst school failures. Even here, he encourages educators to attend to the ways these plans could "erode" the general commitment to public education and thereby violate the principle of nonoppression and the requirements of equal educational opportunity more broadly.

Part 4: The Critical Approach to Teachers' Work

Primary Commitments of the Critical Approach to Education

My description of the critical approach to education draws heavily on Michael Apple (2004[1979], 1982, 1986, 1995 [with James Beane], 1996, 2006a, 2006b [with Kristen Buras]) and Henry Giroux (1988, 1991 [with Stanley Aronowitz], 2005[1992]). Both of these theorists offer a thorough analysis of contemporary schooling, along with writing that examines specific examples of practice among teachers in U.S. K-12 schools. Apple and Giroux draw on slightly different historical traditions within critical theory, which also provides a greater range of theoretical perspectives. I supplement these

sources with selections from other writing over the last several decades, including works by Landon Beyer (1996), Michelle Fine & Lois Weis (2003), Peter McLaren (2003), Ira Shor (1986, 1996), Weis (1988), and Kathleen Weiler (1988).

Here, I describe three primary commitments of Apple, Giroux, and others to characterize a critical approach to education. First, advocates of a critical approach to education are committed to analyzing structural patterns of oppression and social control. In particular, advocates of a critical approach to education argue that knowledge is a reflection of dominant class interests and settings where forms of knowledge are negotiated and legitimated play a vital role in the distribution of power and privilege. Second, advocates of a critical approach draw attention to the role educational institutions play in sustaining privilege, particularly through the preservation and promulgation of high-status knowledge. Third, advocates of this approach are also committed to developing schools and other educational settings as possible sites of resistance to oppressive practices and potential sites of social transformation. In this, they highlight the value of emancipatory pedagogies as forms of critically-engaged collective action.

With respect to their historical roots in Marxist political and economic analysis, critical educational thinkers argue that all societies are characterized by patterns of unequal power and status and that these patterns are sustained and reproduced in ways that benefit the powerful through the exploitation of the less powerful. Historically, critical theorists working in a Marxist tradition have located the roots of these differences in economic relationships. According to this analysis, social systems are structured in ways that maintain the interests of the dominant class, the class whose members control wealth and wealth-producing resources. The "ideas, beliefs, fundamental commitments,

or values about social reality" that rationalize or justify a particular way of structuring social relations form an ideology (Apple, 2004, p. 18). Inequitable distributions of material and social resources are maintained, in part, by maintaining the hegemonic ideology of the dominant class, i.e., by shaping the general patterns of thought and common social practices in society so that questioning the dominant ideology fails to occur to most people nor makes "sense" in the context of their understanding of the world. According to Apple (2004), this "organized assemblage of meanings and practices...acts to 'saturate' our very consciousness so that the educational, economic, and social world we see and interact with, and the commonsense interpretations we put on it, becomes... the only world" (p. 4).

Contemporary critical thinkers argue that ideology shapes and provides limits to what makes sense to all social groups, including those differentiated by characteristics such as gender, race, physical ability, national origin, age, and sexual orientation. By this account, power and status within these social categories is differentially distributed based on ideologies of power and social control. Individuals in a particular society internalize the dominant hegemonic ideology of that society and this helps sustain hierarchies of power and status. Occasionally, the influence of the dominant ideology weakens and hierarchies must be maintained by violent repression. Together, these modes of social control constitute a range of forms of oppression. (Giroux [1988] terms such groups "subordinate cultures.") Contemporary critical theorists argue that, at least to some degree, dominating ideologies can be made explicit, and, if made explicit, oppressed individuals or subordinate groups can resist hegemonic constructions of reality.

Critical theorists argue that examining the relationship between ideology and power is especially important in settings where knowledge claims are justified and internalized and where the connections between class interests and processes of knowledge production are obfuscated or mystified. Apple (2004) credits Gramsci with the idea that "control of the knowledge preserving and producing sectors of a society is a critical factor in enhancing the ideological dominance of one group of people or one class over less powerful groups of people or classes" (p. 54). Apple argues that institutions that preserve and produce knowledge also preserve and produce unequal social relations. Knowledge, here, is broadly construed to include traditional disciplinary knowledge, linguistic and cultural competencies, values, norms, and dispositions. Within this range, certain kinds of knowledge have more status within the dominant culture, reinforcing inequality both by treating high-status knowledge as a scarce commodity and by using it as a means to sort students in preparation for the economic marketplace. Although these processes have their roots in current economic and social structures, they are not automatic because they require that educators and students participate in the internalization and re-articulation of such knowledge. According to advocates of a critical approach to education, schools are places where such negotiations can occur and where the use of critical pedagogies can help demystify the connections between class interests and particular knowledge regimes.

So, in addition to their commitment to a structural analysis of power and status in society, advocates of a critical approach to education are interested in schools as important sites where patterns of power and oppression are sustained, perpetuated, and reproduced. According to Apple (2004), "Any analysis of the ways in which unequal

power is reproduced and contested in society must deal with education. Educational institutions provide one of the major mechanisms through which power is maintained and challenged" (p. vii). Critical theorists have analyzed this claim by considering the role schools play in supporting "the existing class structure by preparing students to be workers at various levels and in various relationships of production" (Weiler, 1988, p. 9). Such an approach tends to emphasize the way experiences in schools are "structurally generated, created out of the real and unequal relations of economic, political, and cultural resources and power that organize [U.S.] society" (Apple, 1996, p. 90). Other critical educators have emphasized the role of schools as "knowledge preserving and producing institutions [that] may be linked to the ideological dominance of powerful groups in a social collectivity" (Apple, 2004, p. 26). This approach, embraced by Apple, Giroux, and others, takes into account the complex interactions between daily practices in schools, concepts of individual agency and structural forces, and the potential for collective action. It also foregrounds the central role of schools in adjudicating the legitimacy of various forms of knowledge.

Finally, advocates of a critical approach to education view schools as possible sites of resistance against oppressive practices and as places where social processes can be reconstituted in more emancipatory ways. Advocates of a critical approach to education, particularly those theorists concerned with the role of knowledge production as it relates to power and status in society, argue that education is a key place where such struggles occur. Critical educators are concerned with at least two major tasks with respect to schools as sites of resistance: interrupting the external social processes that reproduce oppression and developing empowering pedagogies that support social justice

and individual autonomy. As Giroux (2005) describes it, "Such an education would create the pedagogical conditions in which individuals would function as autonomous subjects capable of refusing to participate in unspeakable injustices while actively working to eliminate the conditions that make such injustices possible" (p. 236). Critical educational thinkers want to empower and embolden teachers, students, and others involved in schools to utilize critical reflection and social action to recognize and resist illegitimate forms of social control. They also want those involved in schools to develop new social forms that involve the "sharing of real power" (Apple, 2004, p. xiii). Below, I will consider this commitment, along with critical educators' commitments to understanding oppression and the role of schools in society, as these commitments are reflected in four areas of teachers' work.

Social Critique within the Critical Approach to Education

According to Weiler (1988), "critical educational theory...rests on a critical view of the existing society, arguing that society is both exploitive and oppressive, but also capable of being changed" (p. 5). As Weiler and others have noted, critique of existing social relations and educational practices is a primary aim of a critical approach to education. According to advocates of this approach, both curriculum and pedagogy reflect and reinforce unequal power relations in society. Advocates of a critical approach to education propose an alternative vision for education, emphasizing educators' work to demystify and transform oppressive social structures.

In addition, critical theorists encourage teachers and others in schools to actively resist the oppressive tendencies inherent in the status quo. According to critical theorists, resistance to the dominant culture is difficult, however, because people in schools tend to

prioritize social control over individual autonomy. According to Giroux (2005), this is because "authoritarian tendencies in capitalism" work to form "individuals who make a cult out of efficiency, suffer from emotional callousness, [and] have a tendency to treat other human beings as things" (p. 241). Apple (2004) describes the contemporary form of social control in schools as the "new managerialism" and states that it "relies on the massiveness of the resurgent regime of 'measuring anything that moves in classrooms'" (p. xii). According to advocates of a critical approach, these forms of social control not only inhibit resistance today, but they are also reproduced in schools in ways that obfuscate or mystify the fact that the current forms are an outcome of a process of (re)production and not an ahistorical or common sense "given."

Advocates of this approach engage teachers in a critique of schools on at least three dimensions: the ways students are sorted hierarchically through practices such as high-stakes testing and tracking; the construction of culturally biased curricula; and the emphasis on control in transmission-oriented pedagogies. In contrast, critical educators envision schooling that is structured in egalitarian ways, incorporates and values the cultures of non-dominant groups, and promotes collaborative and empowering pedagogical practices.

The "emphasis on schooling as a stratifying mechanism" links the practices in schools to the critical theorists' views about the roles schools play in the economic and cultural "restratification" of society (Apple, 2006, p. 48-9). Because a highly class-stratified society is inimical to their views of human equality, critical educators work to critique practices such as high-stakes testing and tracking. This critique seeks to uncover the ways that such practices reflect and reinforce structural patterns of oppression and

social control, and legitimate an ideology that makes such practices seem like "the right thing to do." It also seeks to engage teachers in an analysis of the ways their interests become linked to the interests of the dominant class and move them toward a purposeful alignment with the interests of students who are disadvantaged.

Advocates of a critical approach to education often ground their critiques in the effects of school practices on students with comparatively less social status or privilege. For example, Lipman (2003) critiques the reforms instituted in Chicago public schools, many of which are consistent with the educational policies enacted in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, commonly known as "No Child Left Behind" or NCLB. These reforms instituted accountability systems focused around standardized testing, cross-school comparisons, and potential for loss of administrative and community control in schools where students were judged (on the basis of test scores) to be failing to make "adequate yearly progress," or AYP. In Lipman's study, students of color were particularly at risk in such a system, as they were more likely to attend a school that was not making adequate yearly progress and more likely to be held back academically or tracked into the stratified system of vocational and military high schools. Similarly, Apple's (2006) critique of NCLB centers on contradictions between the rhetoric of opportunity used to promote such legislation and race- and class-based effects on poor children and children of color. According to Apple, high-stakes testing aimed at the goal of adequate yearly progress creates pressure on schools to focus almost exclusively on students whose test performance is moderate to moderately good and to ignore or punish students who are perceived as less able to improve. Apple argues that the bias toward punitive feedback inscribed in NCLB and similar reforms is passed on to students and

families in a way that further reduces the life chances of students who are already most vulnerable in schools and society.

Although critical educators note that NCLB has encouraged school systems to pursue new methods of stratifying students, tracking students, or placing them into classrooms or programs with differentiated curricula according to perceived ability, has long been a focus of critique among critical educational theorists. The last two decades of conversation about tracking have been informed by the empirical research and policy recommendations of Jeannie Oakes and her research collaborators. Oakes' (2001 [1985]) *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality* is the best-known summary of her work in this area, but she is also author or co-author of numerous books, book chapters, articles, expert testimony for legal proceedings, and research reports on the topic of tracking and the way tracking helps structure social equity.

What Oakes' research makes clear are ways in which tracking produces different effects for students from different racial and socio-economic groups and, thereby, reproduces social inequities. In addition, as Giroux (1988) notes, the conversation about tracking also offers critical educators opportunities to examine "how power and knowledge work through institutional arrangements and sociocultural formations" and to act in ways that challenge the dominant culture (p. 195). (Oakes, Wells, Jones, & Datnow (1997) offer some insights on this in their analysis of detracking in secondary schools.)

Alongside their critique of practices such as high-stakes testing and tracking, critical theorists urge teachers to engage in an on-going critique of the cultural biases in curricula. Critical educators argue that a central object of educational critique is culture

itself, broadly understood as "a form of production whose processes are intimately connected with the structuring of different social formations, particularly those that are gender, age, racial, and class related" (Giroux, 1988, p. 116). Culture, in this sense, is "closely related to the dynamics of power and produces asymmetries in the ability of individuals and groups to define and achieve their goals" (Giroux, 1988, p. 117). Because of this, critical educators argue, when educational institutions "succeed" according to the generally accepted standards of society, they also "succeed" in recreating unequal power relations, both within schools and in society more broadly. However, the reproduction of these "asymmetries," according to critical theorists, is not perfect and requires the active participation of individuals who, at times, can resist or choose to act in ways contrary to the "effective dominant culture" (Apple, 2004, p. 5).

Schools, according to critical theorists, reproduce forms of class- and race-based privilege in many ways, including by focusing curricula on what Apple (2004) calls the "selective tradition" (p. 5). Apple argues that this version of reality is "always passed off as 'the tradition,' *the* significant past" (p. 5, emphasis in original). Critical educational theorists argue that through a process of selective inclusion and exclusion, non-dominant perspectives on events and experiences are suppressed and devalued. Cornbleth and Waugh (1995) document struggles over such processes with respect to social studies curricula in New York and California in the late 1980's and early 1990's. In these controversial and highly politicized cases, the concerns of non-dominant groups were ignored, minimized, and actively opposed by individuals and groups wedded to the dominant, neo-nativist ideology. Critical educators argue that such struggles illustrate both the power of conservative elites to shape educational policy, along with public

sentiment and the value of resistance to such attempts. In some cases, it is teachers who launch the most compelling critique of such curricula, and the transmission pedagogy that accompanies it. See, for example, Apple's (2006) account of British teachers who resisted the implementation of one iteration of a national curriculum and national tests.

The pressure to institutionalize transmission-oriented pedagogical forms is a third major arena of critique for critical educators. Shor (1992), describing Freire's banking metaphor for such forms of pedagogy, states that educators who use transmission-oriented pedagogies "treat students' minds as empty accounts into which they make deposits of information, through didactic lectures and from commercial texts" (p. 31). Shor claims that such an approach to pedagogy "denies the students' indigenous culture and their potential for critical thought, subordinating them to the knowledge, values, and language of the status quo" (p. 33). According to critical educators, these pedagogies promote passivity on the part of the student and authoritarianism on the part of teachers. Critical theorists would have teachers initiate and sustain conversations that help students make connections between transmission-oriented pedagogical forms and traditional canons of knowledge on the one hand, and institutionalized power and privilege on the other.

Alongside their criticism of modes of social control and the socialization of students and teachers into a selective tradition, advocates of this approach offer alternatives to the educational status quo, often appealing to examples from outside the dominant culture. Critical theorists argue that teachers play an important role in developing alternatives to the status quo in education. In contrast to the teacher-expert of Freire's banking model of education, Giroux and Aronowitz (1991) argue that teachers

should act as "public" or "transformative" intellectuals by working to "expand oppositional spaces" where teachers and students can "challenge the ideological representations and relations of power that undermine democratic public life" (p. 89). Although this work is titled *Postmodern Education: Politics, Culture, & Social Criticism*, I read it as a post-modernist inflected work of critical theory, a designation which is appropriately marked in the way Aronowitz and Giroux describe their view as "critical postmodernism" (see especially p. 185-194).Although critical theorists insist that there is not and should not be one "best way" of creating such spaces, the general characteristics of such a "project of possibility" would be similar to what Giroux and Aronowitz recommend for an English curriculum that "opens up texts to a wider range of meanings and subject positions while simultaneously organizing and constructing student experience as part of the broader discourse of critical citizenship and democracy" (p. 95). When applied to education more broadly, this vision entails creating opportunities for all students to enter into a critical dialogue about the nature and meaning of knowledge and knowledge-producing processes such as teaching and learning. Rather than viewing students as containers to be filled with extant forms of knowledge, all those engaged in the educational enterprise would begin to understand and critique the selective tradition and transmission-oriented pedagogy and move toward "a more socially critical and democratic education that is connected to the principles of thick democracy and social justice" (Apple, 2005, p. xii). Such a move would require, critical educators argue, a reorientation of the identity, affiliation, and social change practices of teachers and it is to those practices that I now turn.

Identity Formation and Negotiation within the Critical Approach

Critical educational thinkers argue that possibilities for resistance and social change in schools are constrained, in part, because individual consciousness is formed in ways that bring dominating ideologies into the "very texture of our need structures and personalities" (Giroux, 1988, p. 203). According to advocates of this approach, teachers' work must include an analysis of how this happens with respect to their own identities as well as those of their students. Teachers are also expected to engage students in an interrogation of the ways "ideologies and practices...enable and limit students around issues of class, race, and gender," as well as other ideologically structured social categories (Giroux, 1988, p. 106). Finally, according to critical educators, identity negotiations in schools must generate new sources of identity that are critical of hegemonic practices and ideologies.

With respect to an analysis of identity formation and negotiation, critical educational thinkers argue that identities are shaped within a particular dominant political and economic ideology. Teachers, by this account, are charged with recognizing these kinds of influences on their identity and motivation, and articulating the ways that "identities, given the [current] social arrangements...confer boundaries as well as possibilities in various relations" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991, p. 161). One of the key propositions of the critical tradition is the idea that the psychological needs, wants, and desires of the individual are distorted by the social and economic hierarchies in which they participate. (For a sampling of key writings from the Frankfort School on this topic, see Stephen Eric Bronner & Douglas MacKay Kellner (eds.), *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader* (1989), pp. 213-252.) Because of these asymmetrical power

relationships, critical theorists argue, most people cooperate unreflectively in their own oppression and collude with or actively participate in the oppression of others. However, just as with other forms of knowledge, self-knowledge is always being reconstituted and re-articulated and, therefore, offers some possibility for more emancipatory self-understandings. For teachers, this entails recognizing the ways that their own identities have been formed in relation to their positions in various social hierarchies and acknowledging the oppressive or self-denigrating tendencies that might have formed as a result. According to Shor, the "culture of schooling" socializes teachers "in the dominant discourse and practices" which serve as "disempowering forces" for both teachers and students (p. 203). Critical self-evaluations, according to critical theorists, open up the possibility of more intentional and non-oppressive constructions of identity.

Along with a critical investigation of teachers' identities, Shor calls for an analysis of the ways that educational practices work to socialize students into the dominant culture and how this influences the process of identity formation and negotiation. (Although Shor writes primarily about higher education, the analysis and examples I use from his writing are applicable to primary and secondary classrooms.) This effort entails an investigation into "how the very processes of learning constitute the political mechanisms through which identities–both individual and collective–are shaped, desired, mobilized, and experienced" (Giroux, 2005, p. 237). Such investigations, according to critical theorists, offer insights into the kinds of teaching practices that would be required to assist students in developing and negotiating more emancipatory forms of identity. According to Giroux (1988), teachers must engage students in ways that confirm "the experiences of those students who are often silenced by the dominant

culture of schooling," but also require students to ask difficult questions about how "power, dependence, and social inequality" operate in their understandings of themselves and others.

Buras and Motter (2006) suggest one form this new process of identity formation might take, in the movement toward what they call a "subaltern cosmopolitan multiculturalism." Subaltern cosmopolitan multiculturalism entails maintaining access to a range of sources of identity, including, but not limited to: anti-colonial and radically democratic nationalisms; critical multiculturalisms; transnational counter-globalization networks; and non-dominant and anti-dominant historical and contemporary movements. Some of the teaching practices that might encourage identity formation and negotiation of this kind include: developing affiliations with specific subaltern or oppressed groups and communities across national borders that address issues of justice and power; attending to the ways "official knowledge" validates dominant groups' accounts of historical and current events and strategically includes or excludes the perspectives of non-dominant groups; and investigating with students the ways their own consciousness forms and reforms as they engage in these kinds of educational experiences.

Shor's proposal to resist the effects of the culture of schooling - for critical educators who view themselves and their students in more empowering ways - is the creation of a "zone of transformation where the cultures of students and teachers meet," where all participants in the educational process can work to "desocialize from the dominant influences on their development" (p. 203). According to Shor, specific practices such as problem-posing, community and classroom-based participatory research, and thematic study can assist teachers in seeing themselves and their students

differently. By Shor's account, such practices enable teachers to enact a new identity – that of a "co-investigator" – which allows students and teachers to critically analyze the sources of their identity and bring more of their unique cultural influences and affiliative commitments to the classroom setting. According to critical educators, such critical dialogue can both affirm the significance of subordinate identities and also generate new possibilities for identity negotiation in educational settings. (For a series of essays that both complicate and illustrate the value of such dialogue, see Megan Boler [Ed.], *Democratic Dialogue in Education: Troubling Speech, Disturbing Silence*, 2004.)

Affiliation within the Critical Approach

In addition to attending to the ways that educators' identities are enabled and constrained by social structures, advocates of a critical approach to education argue that teachers need to attend to the effect social structures have on social relations among and between marginalized groups. Critical theorists argue that contemporary educators act within institutional contexts that severely limit the ways they can join in collaborative resistance and, as a result, experience various forms of alienation. According to Apple (1982, 1986, 2000, 2006), the commodification of schooling creates a pattern of deskilling and intensification that isolates and alienates teachers. In contrast, critical theorists have a vision of teacher affiliation based on giving teachers greater control over the conception, development, and execution of the curriculum. According to critical theorists, giving teachers greater control over curriculum and pedagogy would decrease teachers' isolation and alienation, while giving them new opportunities to develop affective ties and personal empowerment.

According to Apple (2006), education is increasingly becoming "a marketable commodity like bread and cars in which the values, procedures, and metaphors of business dominate" (p. 63). By Apple's account, this process creates conditions which make social relationships difficult for teachers in at least two ways. First, the use of business models in education brings with it a demand for standardized means of assessing performance, which promotes forms of learning that are easily standardized or assessed. Less curriculum development work is required of teachers because content and delivery becomes increasingly standardized and often produced by others in response to market pressures. The kinds of social interactions that need to occur between teachers under such systems are minimal (Apple, 1982, p. 147). For example, teachers may no longer need to meet in teams to develop a coherent curriculum plan because the curriculum is pre-determined. According to critical educators, such diminished professional dialogue minimizes debate over the values and commitments reflected in the curriculum. Further, this decreases the likelihood that the commodification of teachers' work will be challenged by those who are subject to it.

Another example of the problems with social affiliation, as discussed by Apple, relates to the way teachers are "re-skilled" in the methods and techniques of the "evaluative state" (Apple, 2006, p. 63) and the ways the pace and quantity of teachers' work intensifies as a result. According to Apple (1982), this re-skilling of teachers focuses on "technical and control skills" (p. 140) such as "behavior modification techniques and classroom management strategies" (p. 146-7), which seem more necessary to teachers when they are responsible for covering more standardized content with greater numbers of students. By this account, teachers are placed in the role of

"middle managers" supervising the uptake of discrete bits of information and the development of atomistic skills by students. Apple notes that this system meets some real needs of teachers for practical activities in the classroom and for clear indicators of "progress" among students and, as a result, may lead to some feelings of greater competency. However, it also contributes to an isolated approach to teaching. Because teachers are no longer involved in the development of curriculum and their pedagogical approaches are constrained by standardized curricular content, there is less need for collaboration and substantive feedback from other educators, students, families, or community members. Thus, the process of de-skilling results in further isolation and social alienation among teachers. Although I will not explore it here, the terms "alienation" and "social alienation" have been used with some frequency by critical theorists and refer to the ways social institutions can constrain the process of self-realization and/or diminish individuals' capacity to interact and collaborate in meaningful ways with others. The terms are used less frequently in the educational literature, but Fletcher (2000) has analyzed some of the ways in which this term accurately reflects certain phenomena described by critical educational theorists.

Given the limits on affiliation described above, critical theorists propose that teachers affiliate by creating meaningful opportunities for professional collaboration. Specifically, critical theorists propose that teachers resist commodification and social isolation by engaging in curriculum development in ways that take into account the specific circumstances of students and communities and in ways that welcome ongoing critique. In Weiler's (1988) ground-breaking study of feminist teachers, she notes the

importance of professional collaboration and personal support, particularly among teachers who occupy a critical stance with respect to patriarchal relations in schools.

According to critical educational theorists, maintaining social relations with individuals from a range of social locations helps develop critical consciousness and guide emotional commitments in empowering directions. Apple and Buras (2006) discuss the value of multiple affiliations across oppressed groups, both within and outside of one's local and national context. For them, these affiliations offer a corrective to possible cooptation by existing patterns of domination. According to Shor (1992), positive and authentic social relations are generated in empowering, participatory school educational environments and should be viewed as important ends of critical education.

Organizational Action within the Critical Approach

Critical educators see organizational action and social change as central to the work of all teachers. Because of this, the objectives of organizational action have been outlined, in large part, in the preceding discussion of the critical approach. To summarize, they include: creating more egalitarian structures of schooling; developing curricula that oppose dominance and value the experiences of non-dominant groups; promoting collaborative pedagogical practices; and creating settings where empowering identities and affiliations can be negotiated. My discussion here will focus on a few brief examples of practices within educational institutions that reflect the social change goals of critical educators.

One of the major social change goals of critical educators is the goal of disrupting experiences in schools that reinforce social injustice in the broader society. According to advocates of a critical approach to education, such experiences have been structurally

integrated into schooling in the U.S. in a number of ways, most recently through implementation of NCLB and similar reforms. According to advocates of a critical approach, teachers should engage in practices designed to resist these tendencies. This work may involve what Apple and Buras (2006) call "resisting, rearticulating, and reinventing conservative modernization," as well as the creation of alternate forms of social engagement.

Another goal for critical educators is changing the ways schools view the status of various forms of knowledge. In particular, advocates of a critical approach want teachers to be engaged in revising curricular form and content in ways that open the curriculum to disadvantaged groups in society. Collective action on the part of teachers, students, and community members is required for changes to the curriculum and other acts of resistance to be enacted. In order to pursue the re-imagining of schools as sites of resistance to oppression, critical educators argue that teachers also need to experience critical and empowering identities and affiliations. In the next chapter, examples of this work, along with the work of teachers from the other three educational perspectives, will be discussed in an integrated way.

CHAPTER 4

AN INTEGRATED VISION OF TEACHERS' WORK

Introduction

In the preceding three chapters, I have developed a framework for understanding the political work of teachers in relation to four contemporary approaches to educational policy and practice. In Chapter 1, I developed an argument for investigating the work expected of teachers through the lens of scholars who have studied the work of activists. In Chapter 2, I offered a four-part descriptive analysis of the work of activists, as gleaned from studies of activism and social movements. In Chapter 3, I compared my analysis of the work of activists to work expected of teachers by major thinkers in the neo-conservative, caring, contemporary liberal, and critical approaches to education, noting that advocates of each approach prescribe particular roles for teachers in the four dimensions of work, that the forms of work reflect the values and priorities of each approach, and that the dimensions of political work are often mutually reinforcing.

In this chapter, I would like to return to a consideration of those young educators who, after a few years of teaching, came to me, one of their teacher educators, to discuss their role in schools, particularly their role in changing schools for the better. Here, I will argue that the four elements of activist labor provide them, and all of us, the foundation for a more integrated vision of teachers' work. The vision of teachers' work that I propose here provides a qualitative integration of elements of teachers' work that have traditionally been acknowledged (such as some forms of pedagogy and instruction) with

other elements that have been occluded but which are necessary for achieving any political aims of schooling.

For my former students, I might describe this integration as both "horizontal" and "vertical." From a "horizontal" perspective, I hope this framework helps teachers see more of what they do in classrooms and schools (and even outside of them) as significant political work, as well as understand various dimensions of work as interactive and mutually reinforcing. From a "vertical" perspective, I hope this vision helps my former students connect their daily struggles and successes to the democratic educational aims to which they have committed themselves. I also hope that this vision of teachers' work helps them further develop, question, and conceptualize those commitments in light of their experiences in schools.

In particular, this integrated vision of teachers' work does the following:

(1) It helps us understand a broad range of teachers' work as political work, a much broader range than we might otherwise have thought. In particular, my treatment of identity formation/negotiation and affiliation as essential components of teacher work demonstrates that these dimensions cannot be (dis)regarded as distinctively (or objectionably) political in contrast to a narrower vision of teaching that focuses on tasks that appear more directly connected to curriculum and instruction. For my former students, now teachers engaged in a range of educational activities, this provides a more holistic way of conceptualizing their work and identifying the ways their daily activities, particularly with respect to identity work and affiliation, contribute to the educational goals of particular educational movements.

(2) The analysis in this chapter also demonstrates the power of this more integrated vision of teacher work in relation to the process of school change. My analysis shows how various leverage points (and challenges) for school change emerge with much greater clarity when we consider the nature of teacher work in relation to the four elements of activism. This level of clarity enables educators to: (a) identify the kinds of school change work happening; (b) link specific actions to school change ambitions; (c) see the ways in which the forms of work reinforce one another; and finally, (d) perceive occluded elements of school change work, work that is being done, but not always seen as important to school change efforts. Perhaps for my young teacher colleagues, this will help them see some of their daily activities as already contributing to a changed culture in their particular school or school district and help them consider the ways their actions could be linked to the actions of other like-minded educators.

(3) This analysis offers a framework for identifying the *dis*integrating tensions or conflicts that emerge in the conception of teachers' work offered in some educational theories. Viewing teachers' work through the four-part lens of activist labor can reveal significant contradictions between the expressed goals of various approaches to schooling and the "ends-in-view" as those become understood by educators at the grassroots level, i.e. by the teachers who are charged with bringing about the goals. These tensions are of particular import when the contradictions between the goals of an approach and the labor intended to bring them about are likely to ensure that the goals *cannot* be realized. For my young colleagues and other teachers, this realization may help them better understand some of the frustration they experience when trying to implement many contemporary educational mandates.

In this chapter, I intend to connect these three points to teacher narratives from all four educational approaches in order to illustrate the advantages of this understanding of teachers' work and to ground my argument more explicitly in the daily lives of teachers.

Affiliation and Identity: Key Dimensions of an Integrated Vision of Teacher Work

This comparison of activist work to the work of teachers, particularly in naming and highlighting identity work and affiliation, provides greater insight into the range of ways teachers contribute to the democratic purposes of schools. Similarly, one of the ways contemporary feminist and multicultural approaches to activism differ from earlier studies of activist work is in the emphasis on the dimensions of activist affiliation and identity work and the contributions of those forms of labor to the overall success of social change movements.

Although other forms of teacher work, including social critique and institutional action, can be under-appreciated in any specific school context or school change movement, affiliation and identity work can be particularly undervalued or even actively suppressed, particularly if they are viewed as merely political in a partisan way, rather than as broadly political in terms of their democratic educational aims. This happens, in some cases, because these forms of work, as we saw in the activist literature, tend to be taken up with intentionality by individuals with non-dominant social identities and in contexts with high populations of people from marginalized social identities. In other cases, particularly for teachers with majority identities and with students with non-marginalized social identities, teachers may see this work in particular as apolitical, as work one simply "does" rather than as work that has social and institutional effects with respect to the granting, withholding, negotiation and embodiment of power (see

definition of politics in Chapter I.) For example, white, middle-class teachers teaching

white, middle-class children how to act in ways that work well in white, middle-class

cultural contexts may see that work as simply "teaching manners," rather than as a form

of identity work or women teachers may view informal mentoring of new teachers as

"being helpful" rather than as important institutionalized (and often unrecognized)

affiliation work. One of the ways my conceptualization of teacher work is different is in

giving emphasis to these two dimensions of teachers' political work and in giving them

status as work that is involved in achieving the broad political aims of education.

The significance of identity work and affiliation as essential components of and

integrated vision of teacher work is demonstrated by their presence in all four approaches

to contemporary education. As I demonstrated in Chapter 3, major thinkers from all four

approaches expect teachers to engage in identity negotiation and affiliation work. Even

the neo-conservatives, who write about identity negotiation and affiliation largely in

terms of what teachers should *not* do, rely on these forms of teacher work at the

grassroots level to achieve the goals of their school change initiatives. As Buras (2008)

carefully documents, one of the ways Hirsch's Core Knowledge schools have gained a

wide national following and support from a number of high-profile foundations, is by

touting the success of their curricular reforms in schools serving poor and racially diverse

communities. However, when one looks carefully at narratives from the very teachers

who carry out the reforms, it is clear that the on-going work in the areas of identity

negotiation and affiliation are critical to the support these reforms receive from other

teachers, students, and community members. For example, at Coral Way Elementary

School (which has recently been expanded to a K-8 school), teachers, school leaders, and

parents claim that students are not made to feel inadequate because they are not yet fluent in English. In fact, they claim that a solid background in the subject matter of the Core Knowledge curriculum enables students, approximately 90% of whom are Hispanic, to become "biliterate" in both English and Spanish (Pellerano, Fradd, Rovira, February 1998; http://coralwayelementary.dadeschools.net/Index2.html). Similarly, at the American Horse School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Core is taught, as is a Lakota studies and language program (Buras, 2008). Both of these examples seem to indicate a capacity, on the part of some teachers and communities, to negotiate the identities of historically marginalized groups even when they are in tension with the common "American" identity that Hirsch proposes to instill in all schoolchildren through the Core Knowledge curriculum (Hirsch, 2009). Without the negotiation of identities with respect to the expressed goals of Core Knowledge, it is highly unlikely such goals can be confidently realized.

With respect to affiliation, again, the neo-conservative approach, based on the writings of key proponents such as Ravitch and Finn, denies the degree to which this dimension of work is involved in achieving their political goals in educational contexts. (see Chapter 3, pp. 76-78). However, as with identity work, the implementation of neo-conservative initiatives, such as instituting Hirsch's Core Knowledge curriculum, relies heavily on the affiliation work of teachers and administrators. Mentzer and Shaughnessy (1996, 2005), both teachers at an early Core Knowledge school, stress the importance of teacher affiliation to the successful implementation of a Core Knowledge curriculum. For years prior to the decision to implement Core Knowledge, members of the teaching staff at Hawthorne Elementary had been meeting in after school "coffee klatches" to

discuss their values regarding teaching and their students. Later, when they decided to implement Core Knowledge, twenty-six teachers from the school attended the first Core Knowledge conference and according to Mentzer and Schaughnessy, "perhaps most significant was the bonding that occurred among our staff members" around the topic of "how to educate the children of Hawthorne" (1996, p. 21). Members of the teaching staff and administrators also engaged in "sociability work" (see Chapter 2, p. 43) by providing meals and dialogue at community meetings where families came to discuss the changes that were occurring at Hawthorne. Teachers from Hawthorne described the affiliation between colleagues this way:

> Cohesiveness and collaboration now mark Hawthorne. We feel a sense of unity and purpose and a commonality of language. Grade level teams now know what other teams are doing. Now we are risk-takers and feel that we are an integral part of our school's success. We discuss real issues that affect us, our children, and our school community. Many of us have tried new instructional methods. With the support of one another, we are not perceived as failures if what we try is not immediately successful. Perhaps a primary grade teacher best summed up the attitude in saying, 'Alone, I do a pretty good job of planning and teaching, but when I work with this group, I am outstanding.' (Mentzer and Shaughnessy, 1996, p. 21)

As this quote and other examples from the neo-conservative "frontlines" indicate, identity work and affiliation are crucial to the success of neo-conservative reforms, whether or not that work is acknowledged by neo-conservative theorists. These examples demonstrate the degree to which neo-conservative curricular and instructional changes rely on a broad range of teacher labor. They also contradict any assertion by neo-conservatives or others that identity work and affiliation by teachers are only the reflection of leftist or progressive ideologies.

That said, identity work and affiliation is more explicitly integrated with other forms of teachers' work in contemporary liberal, caring, and critical approaches to

education and this is reflected in the experiences of teachers who operate out of these frameworks. In fact, teachers are involved in identity and affiliation work that extends beyond the school to include parents and other caregivers, as well as the communities within which schools operate. For example, in articles from the Coalition for Essential School journal, Horace, teachers emphasize the importance of establishing democratic and equitable processes for communicating with parents and other caregivers about their children's needs (see J. Davidson [2002] and K. Cushman [1998] for instance). Attempts to ameliorate the white, middle-class, English-only biases of schools include providing school announcements and notes in multiple languages, holding demonstrations of student work in neighborhood venues, engaging parents in dialogues about student outcomes and assessment strategies, and identifying a range of ways for parents to contribute to the success of the school community and their child(ren)'s education.

In contrast to the unacknowledged reliance on teachers doing identity work and affiliation in the Core Knowledge schools, one small school in Oakland, California, explicitly recognizes the importance of educators engaging families and communities in identity and affiliation work. This school, one of a network of small schools founded as a result of a collaboration between community/parent activist organizations, the school district, and the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, operates according to principles of the contemporary democratic approach. According to the principal,

> The biggest mistake that schools make is believing that they can do it all. What they end up doing is burning out their teachers. Here, it's been an amazing year for me in terms of the power of family partnerships. We have some powerful parent leaders who go the mile for someone else and their kids, and that kind of culture has enabled teachers to really focus on teaching. (Davidson, 2002)

This particular school also invests in identity work and affiliation with respect to families by hiring a Family Coordinator and two Community Relations Assistants who speak two of the primary languages in the schools' community. In another small school founded by this same coalition, a sixth grade student speaks of the affiliation work occurring in his school:

> The teachers, they are really nice and they treat us like we're a big whole family. You can come to the teachers with anything and get feedback. Everyone knows each other and comes to each other with stuff. Parents, students and teachers are all involved; they're available to you after school. (Davidson, 2002)

In these examples, we see that affiliation and identity work are not limited to the identity categories and affiliations of teachers but that the work of teachers with respect to the formal curriculum is integrated with the efforts of families, students, and community members to form and negotiate identities and strengthen affiliations.

Teacher narratives from the contemporary democratic, caring, and critical approaches also illustrate the ways in which identity negotiation and affiliation are dimensions of political work that often support each another, as well as serve as primary components of curriculum and instruction. In Nieto's (2005) collection of teacher narratives, middle-school teacher Beth Wohlleb Adel aspires to develop "critical thinking" and "in-depth historical knowledge" in order to help her students be better able to "make informed decisions as active players in a democracy" (p. 145). To do this, according to Adel, requires that she role model courage and openness about her identities – particularly as a lesbian and as the white mother of an African-American child - and her personal connections to the subject matter they are investigating. According to Adel,

> When I honestly describe my family to my classes, I demonstrate the respect and trust I have in my students. They understand that it's a risk for me to be open with them about my life, and they begin to take similar risks with me. One student revealed to the rest of the class her frustration with people ignoring her just because she was in a wheelchair. Another student wrote in a journal about how her brother's violent anger was taking over the whole family. After each of these moments, students are more connected, more open to being alive and to engaged learning. (Adel, 2005, p. 145)

Adel also focuses on the attentiveness she uses with her students, encouraging them to create "communities of learning that engage the heart" (p. 149). Here, and throughout her narrative, Adel integrates the work of identity negotiation (being "open with them about my life") and affiliation ("respect and trust" and "engage[ing] the heart") to each other and to the content and delivery of her curriculum.

Affiliative work across cultures is particularly poignant, as it helps teachers see the underlying motivation of teachers' choices, regardless of their cultural expression. For example, in Zurawel's (2003) cross-cultural study of teachers at a school in the United States and a sister school in Japan, teachers benefitted from comparing their ideas about teaching and learning across the two cultural contexts. Teachers found common ground in their commitment to caring engagement with students, parents, and colleagues, while acknowledging that the forms and qualities of those interactions differed in culturally specific ways. For example, Zurawel found that although both groups of teachers valued attending carefully to the affiliation needs of students, her Japanese study participants tended to rely more on non-verbal expressions of need from students whereas their U.S. counterparts expected students to express their needs verbally or through written work.

Looking at teacher work through the four-part lens of activist labor helps teachers and teacher educators notice how work that may have been seen as "apolitical" is

implicated in the success of teachers' work to make political/institutional change. This is particularly evident in those cases in which identity negotiation and affiliation work are required to accomplish the work of social critique and educational change. In order to imagine schools as sites of resistance to oppression, critical educators argue that teachers need to experience empowering identities and affiliations. Gitlan, et al. (1992) discuss the importance of this task with respect to a dialogic model of teacher development. In this case, teachers met regularly and developed trusting social connections with each other while discussing educational topics of concern in their particular school setting. Over the course of several years, this group developed an analysis of administrative power and mobilized to confront those in power over issues of mutual concern. According to this account, the teachers' "growing sense of empowerment to address and change structures through dialogue and a growth in trust is in direct contrast to the traditional isolation and acceptance of the hierarchy" (p. 110). According to one teacher who initiated a dialogue group in her school,

> Time constraints and district mandates in particular seemed to be the walls within which I had to make myself comfortable. I can now see they have doors, and some are made only of paper. As dialogue continues within our school, we see more structures crumble as we ask questions and seek answers. I am learning to accept less on face value, as I dialogue with my peers. (p. 113)

By constructing part of her professional identity around the concept of dialogue and by developing trusting affiliations with other teachers, this educator was empowered to oppose administrative actions on the basis of a critical analysis of the situation. Without identity work and affiliative bonds with other teachers, this stance would have been difficult or even impossible. Similarly, Westheimer (1999) observes that teachers in a school with a more explicit commitment to social collectivity and social justice pedagogy

also tend to experience a greater sense of continuity between their personal and professional affiliations, often attending similar (non-school-sponsored) political or social events or forming social networks outside their purely instrumental professional interactions.

Classroom-based examples also illustrate the ways in which identity negotiation and affiliation are required for the explicit political work of social critique and institutional action. Nieto (2003) describes the ways in which teachers, identified specifically for their skill in teaching racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse students, negotiate their own identities with respect to the curriculum. Reflecting carefully on their own identities in relation to their students' subordinated identities, provided these teachers with insights into what their students needed to feel successful and empowered in classrooms. For Junia Yearwood, a participant in Nieto's study and a veteran teacher in Boston's public schools, a critical analysis of her own cultural identity honed her critique of the social context of schooling and informed her understanding of good teaching as a site of resistance to racism. According to Yearwood,

> I was born on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and was raised and nurtured by my paternal grandmother and aunts on the island of Barbados. My environment instilled in me a strong identity as a woman and as a person of African descent. The value of education and the importance of being able to read and write became clear and urgent when I became fully aware of the history of my ancestors. The story of the enslavement of Africans and the horrors they were forced to endure repulsed and angered me, but the aspect of slavery that most intrigued me was the systematic denial of literacy to my ancestors. As a child of 10 or so, I reasoned that if reading and writing were not extremely important, then there would be no need to withhold those skills from the supposed 'savage and inferior' African. I concluded that teaching was the most important profession on earth and that the teacher was the Moses of people of African descent. Teachers imparted knowledge

and exposed young minds to old and new ideas that were the keys to unlocking the enslaved mind and forging the way out of the wilderness of ignorance and subjugation into positions of equality and leadership. (Nieto, 2003, p. 27)

For Yearwood, her identity as a teacher was built, in part, around reclaiming those aspects of competence long denied to her ancestors and imagining herself as a participant in "the most important profession on earth" and as a biblically-inspired "Moses of people of African descent."

In addition to identity work, in particular the reclamation of a subordinated identity, Yearwood's affiliation with her own teachers contributed to her ability to formulate a critique of the status quo in schools and act in light of that critique. According to Yearwood,

My resolve to someday become a teacher was strengthened by my experiences with teachers who had significant and lasting positive effects on my personal and academic growth....[T]he teachers whose classes I was eager to get to and in whose classes I excelled were the ones who...pushed, challenged, and cajoled me to study and perform to my full ability....They encouraged me to think, question, and enter the 'conversation' on an equal intellectual footing. They respected my thoughts and opinions and they showed me that they cared. In addition, and just as important, they looked like me. They all shared my ancestry, my culture, and my history. They were my role models. (Ibid, p. 28)

For Yearwood, entering the "conversation" with the teachers of her youth allowed her to see herself as a member of a community of people engaged in intellectual labor. The close connection between identity work and the capacity to affiliate with a group (teachers) is evident in Yearwood's assertion that her teachers' common ancestry, culture, and history, was "just as important" as their capacity to challenge her and attend to her as an individual.

Yearwood's integration of her own identity as a "person of African descent" and her affiliation with teacher role models, allowed her to see that her students needed to do more than learn about historical instances of resistance, but also needed to perceive themselves as active and effective participants in a broader movement for social justice. In a class on African American history, for example, some of Yearwood's students, with the guidance of a student teacher, wrote a letter to the editor of the local city paper in response to a headline they thought was racist. But what is significant here is that Yearwood then returned them all - the student teacher and the students in the class - to the process of claiming their identities as African Americans by emphasizing the similarities between their action and the actions of civil rights activists. According to Yearwood, "It took action. It took brave people. It was people like you responsible for the civil rights movement." She went on to charge them with further responsibility for positive social change in the city of Boston, stating "You have the power in your hands" (p. 23-4). Although Yearwood's focus on literacy and historical knowledge might appear, to some, to align with elements of the neo-conservative approach, a more integrated understanding of her work as a teacher reveals an entirely different set of values and commitments. (See Buras [2008] for a discussion of some of the range of commitments that motivate African-American teachers and other educators of color to support particular neo-conservative reforms.) For this teacher, reclaiming subordinated identities in the classroom entailed an understanding of the importance of her identity as a teacher of color who also teaches her students to effectively engage in and challenge what Delpit (1995) calls the "culture of power" and develop their own social critiques and forms of institutional action.

Another way of illustrating the critical importance of identity work and affiliation

to an integrated vision of teachers' work is by exploring examples of well-intentioned

teachers who attempt to act on their critical analysis of the problems in schools through

changed curriculum and, in the process, confront barriers related to identity negotiation

and/or affiliation. For example, Michie's (1999) memoir reflecting on his work as a

white, middle-class teacher of African-American and Latino/a students in Chicago public

schools, offers some concrete examples of these kinds of challenges and how teachers

can work to address them. This is reflected in Michie's comments after implementing a

year-long language arts curriculum focused on Mexican-American identity with eighth

grade students. According to Michie:

> One of our broad goals for the year had been to challenge our students to
> face some of their biases, to rethink some of their preconceived notions
> about themselves and others. A big part of accomplishing this, we
> believed, was overcoming ignorance, and it didn't take long for me to
> realize that I was one of the most ignorant of all. I had learned a great deal
> about my students...but to say I respected them – which I often did – was
> a somewhat empty phrase. To begin to have a true respect for my kids, I
> had to get to know them not only as individuals, but also as people in a
> particular context: children of Mexican immigrants, living in a working-
> class neighborhood, on the South Side of Chicago, within an increasingly
> xenophobic larger society, in the 1990's....The kids educated and
> enlightened me. The stories they told, while often quite personal, allowed
> me to see more clearly the larger picture, the struggles and triumphs that
> had shaped their lives and those of their families. They also forced me to
> take a fresh look at how I fit into that bigger picture – to step back and
> look at my own hands. It was a reawakening for me... (p. 84-85).

Michie's narrative illustrates the mutually-reinforcing connections between the social

critique he was developing of the "xenophobic larger society" and his on-going process

of developing a professional identity that is reflective of his own position as a white

teacher who can learn from his students and "step back and look at [his] own hands," i.e.,

his own complicities within a racist and classist school system. In other parts of his

book-length narrative, he connects the successes of his teaching practice to the work of affiliation, to forming bonds with other teachers who identify with his students' experiences and to his attempts to develop and maintain trusting connections with students during and after their time in his classroom.

Michie's account of the early years of his teaching career also illustrates another point with respect to the power of identity work and affiliation as aspects of teachers' political work. Despite his growing awareness of the cultural and class biases inherent in the schools and the larger society and in contrast to his attempts to act in ways contrary to these biases, Michie recounts a number of incidents in which he embodies the very racist and classist biases he is attempting to undermine in his curriculum. These incidents seem to indicate an on-going struggle on the part of this teacher to operate outside his own set of what Stitzlein (2008), extrapolating from John Dewey, calls "bad habits" of privilege that adhere to his white, middle-class identity. I contend that attempts to change such habits can only succeed if they account for the important role that identity negotiation and affiliation play in forming a teacher's capacity to act in accordance with her critiques of the status quo.

It is important to note that seeing teachers' work through the lens of activist work helps us notice the importance of affiliation and identity work *whether or not* teachers themselves are aware of the salience or impact of those forms of work on their daily experiences in schools. However, I argue that making these forms of work more explicit to teachers will enhance their capacity to engage in any of the major approaches to contemporary education and can play a critical role in the capacity of teachers to engage in work to create school change.

Integrating Teachers' Political Work and School Change

Although I argue that all teachers, to some degree, are engaged in political work (social critique, identity work, affiliation, and institutional action), I believe that this integrated vision of teachers' political work could be of particular use to those teachers and school leaders engaged in school change. Because my definition of activist labor in Chapter 2 included those activists working in defense of the status quo, my analysis of activist labor will be valuable not only to those teachers who are working to change the status quo but also to those resisting externally-imposed changes that run contrary to teachers' assessment of the needs in their particular educational setting. Thus, I argue, my analysis of teachers' work provides a way to: (a) identify the kinds of school change work happening; (b) link specific actions to school change ambitions; (c) see the ways in which the forms of work reinforce one another; and finally, (d) perceive occluded elements of school change work, work that is being done, but not always seen as important to school change efforts. (Of course, just because teachers are engaged in some of these forms of work, does not necessarily mean that they are engaged in school change. Rather, it is an indicator that the capacity exists for teachers to be engaged in school change.)

Here, an extended example might be helpful. Deborah Meier (1995) describes a number of practices of institutional change in her account of school reform in Harlem. Viewing these practices through the four integrated dimensions of political work (social critique, identity negotiation, affiliation, and institutional change) allows us to engage in the following processes: (a) identify some of the kinds of school change work happening and (b) link specific actions to school change ambitions. The Central Park East

Secondary School (CPESS) was formed in the fall of 1985 as a small, public school of choice. Teachers were involved directly in the process of creating the curriculum within broad guidelines established by the New York City Board of Education. According to Meier, teachers were frustrated with "having to waste so much time and energy negotiating with school officials over what seemed like commonsense requests, worrying about myriad rules and regulations, being forced to compromise on so many of our beliefs" (p. 23). Instead, teachers wanted to spend time "discussing those issues that concern us most: how children learn, how our classes really work, what changes we ought to be making and on what basis" (p. 26).

With respect to (a), the identification of the kinds of school change work occurring, in the founding of CPESS, we see the operation of at least three forms of political work: social critique, identity negotiation, and social/institutional change. It seems from Meier's description of the process, that teachers were, in part, motivated to develop a critique of the status quo by comparing the status quo to an ideal of student learning (social critique) and by a feeling that their professional identity was under attack by "school officials" (identity negotiation). The founders of CPESS went on to use this critique as the foundation for their restructuring of elements of the school (scheduling, curriculum, assessment, etc.) and as a means to resist traditional understandings of what schools should be (social/institutional change). And, as is the case for many social change movements, the process of change initiated new thinking about the social critique the founders' had initially developed.

With respect to (b), linking specific actions to school change ambitions, at CPESS, deliberation about major teaching and learning issues reflects a commitment to

process-oriented democratic decision-making, an element central to the contemporary liberal approach to school reform. These deliberations took place primarily in twice-weekly school-wide staff meetings and within curricular teams of teachers who worked with the same group of students. In these settings, staff members discussed curricular and graduation standards; developed assessment and accountability systems; determined priorities for recruitment, hiring, and evaluation of colleagues; and worked through other school-related problems and concerns. Because decision-making processes were public and open to all members of the school community, students had the opportunity to see staff members making meaningful decisions through a deliberative process. Outside formal decision-making settings, the relatively small size of CPESS allowed the staff to make quick changes to the curriculum or daily routine in response to events impacting the lives of students and their families.

In the development and daily functioning of CPESS, teachers collaborated closely with major allies: community members, families, and students. According to Meier, the commitment of these groups was grounded in the ability of the small, teacher-led school to make students and families feel as if their concerns "mattered" (pp. 23-9). Students and families felt more comfortable approaching teachers with their concerns and teachers often felt empowered to engage students and families in discussions about the rationale for their methods and goals (pp. 130-2). Other allies necessary to this process of school reform included the school district administration and the teachers' union, both of which needed to provide greater flexibility in order to allow teachers to lead in substantive ways.

Again, this example can be unpacked using the dimensions of political work. Meier and her colleagues at CPESS created a system of on-going deliberation among educators about the purposes of schooling (social critique) and constant contact with small numbers of students and their families (affiliation and identity work). These forms of work enabled and were enabled by the kinds of changes being implemented in the school itself, both in terms of the new institutional and pedagogical processes available to realize their vision and in terms of the new understandings they were creating of what teaching and learning could be (both forms of social/institutional change work). This work was achieved by working with allies, such as parents, the district administration, and the teachers' union (again, a form of social/institutional work). The specific ways these forms of work were implemented reflect the key change goals of the contemporary liberal approach in that they were focused on deliberative democratic processes and the appropriate distribution of authority between teachers, parents, administrators, and other members of the community (see Chapter 3, pp. 103-110).

Along with identifying which dimensions of political work are advancing school change goals and how those forms of reflect specific school change ambitions, my analysis can also help teachers and school leaders recognize the value of (c) these forms of work reinforcing and being consistent with one another. For example, my framework for understanding teachers' work could help educators explore the consistency between their apprehension of institutional inequalities (a form of social critique) and their attempts to change decision-making processes (organizational action). The following passage (Davidson, 2002) describes a case where there appears to be consistency between these two forms of work among teachers and community leaders at a school run

according to the contemporary liberal principals of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES):

> Staff and parents run their school collaboratively through participation on a Governance Council, which decides the overall direction of the school, focusing on matters such as the school's instructional priorities. [The principal] remains aware of how [this school]'s decision-making process affects how the school community views her leadership role. 'I remember sitting at governance council meetings and people looked at me, wanting quick resolutions. I ran those meetings with my head down, literally.' [The principal] didn't want to be perceived as having more power than others on the Governance Council 'by dint of title—since we were trying to operate by consensus and dialogue, I found that if they couldn't make eye contact with me, they (and I) were less apt to fall into the old patterns. After a while people got the hang of talking to each other without my mediating or commenting on every remark—and so did I.'

Similarly, the following comment from a CES teacher-leader (quoted in Davidson, 2002) describes a structured negotiation that reflects a contemporary liberal approach in which social critique and institutional change efforts appear consistent: "For the first few years we spent a lot of time focused on who makes what decision. We talked explicitly about teacher responsibility, parent responsibility, and administrative responsibility."

Reflecting on these dimensions of political work can also lead teachers to recognize (d) occluded elements of school change work and the degree to which teachers rely on resources outside the immediate school environment to accomplish various dimensions of work. For example, Dixson and Dingus (2008) discuss the ways familial and community-based affiliations support the socially conscious work of African-American women teachers. One teacher, the daughter and granddaughter of teachers, describes it as an effort to "get where Grandma and mom are." The continuity between past, present, and future affiliations is evident in her words: "But if I can be blessed enough to have those kinds of experiences [like those of her mother and grandmother],

those children will come back a little bit down the road and say that something that I did and said, or something that we experienced together made such an impact. My grandmother and mother can reflect on that. So I am trying to get there" (p. 7). Understanding this cross-generational support network as a form of political work (affiliation and identity work) should help educators see and value the work that teachers do outside the formal school setting in order to continue to advance their educational visions, a recognition that has particular import for educators from groups historically under-represented in teaching generally or in particular fields (men teaching in early childhood settings or women school superintendents, for example).

These examples, taken together, begin to outline a few of the points of leverage for school change efforts. Specifically, teachers and other school leaders interested in school change should engage in a process of identifying what kinds of work teachers already do that is related to specific school change goals. Also, school change could be leveraged by asking which change goals can be linked to existing capacities for political work. Teachers and other school leaders should also attend to the ways in which various forms of teachers' change work reinforce one another and to the forms of work that are frequently ignored, but are often critical, to school change success. I will discuss these recommendations in more detail in Chapter 5, but summarize them here to indicate the ways in which they emerge from a more integrated vision of teachers' political work.

Disintegrating Tensions in Teachers' Political Work

In addition to broadening the perception of teachers' political work and providing a means by which to understand the capacity for school change work, this integrated vision of teachers' work also has the virtue of allowing us to see educational movements

from the perspective of teachers. In particular, the quality and degree of teacher engagement with the dimensions of activist labor can reveal contradictions between the expressed goals of various educational approaches and the "ends-in-view" as those become understood by educators at the grassroots level. I will focus particularly on the neo-conservative approach in this discussion, as this approach offers some clear examples of contradictions between broad movement goals and teacher work. However, it is important to note that in some cases, teachers are drawn to neo-conservative reforms because their initial exposure to this approach offered them something they had not previously experienced (or experienced to a sufficient degree) as teachers: a context within which they could engage in meaningful work, including the kinds of political work I discuss in my analysis. This is evident in Johnson, Janisch, & Morgan-Fleming's (2001) study of teachers implementing Hirsch's Core Knowledge curriculum. According to this study, "The teachers did not agree that the Hirsch program was the definitive answer [to questions about elementary school curriculum content]. Instead they assumed that the questions Hirsch raised were worthy of discussion and that their participation in the conversation was important" (p. 272).

As outlined in Chapter 3, the neo-conservative critique of the educational status quo was formulated around two major assumptions: first, that progressive educational practices, as of the 1980's and 1990's, were pervasive in most U.S. schools and teacher preparation programs; and, second, that those practices undermined a cohesive sense of national identity, failed to provide equal opportunities for poor students and racial minorities, decreased the capacity of teachers to impart subject-matter expertise to students, and failed to instill the skills and dispositions required of good citizens and

workers. One of the major arguments of the neo-conservative approach is that teachers and schools should promote a particular kind of democratic culture (one that emphasizes what progressive educational approaches had undermined) and encourage participation in that culture. However, in many instances, the implementation of neo-conservative policies in the United States over the last 20 years has substantially diminished opportunities for teachers to act as democratic agents. As I will argue throughout the rest of this section, this has decreased the likelihood that the goals of equal opportunity for marginalized groups will be achieved, even as those goals are articulated by neo-conservatives themselves. Investigating the role of teachers in relation to political work helps us better understand this tension between the goals of democratic regeneration within the neo-conservative approach and the undemocratic ways in which this form of school change has been pursued. Using my integrated vision of teachers' political work, here I offer several reasons why this tension will, ultimately, undermine the success of the neoconservative approach, as it is presently conceived. Anyone interested in these goals (regardless of our stance on the means chosen to pursue them), should be interested in the (in)effectiveness of these means.

One of the ways in which teachers' democratic agency is diminished in the implementation of neo-conservative reforms is by limiting the degree to which teachers are empowered to offer critiques of the status quo in schools. While some teachers may agree with the critique offered by neo-conservative educational thinkers, and others have actively worked to implement neo-conservative reforms in their schools, many teachers have experienced diminished opportunities to participate in a meaningful way in critiques of the educational status quo. With respect to literacy and mathematics in particular,

educators' contextualized assessments of appropriate educational aims and pedagogical methods for the students they teach have been eclipsed by standardized curricula and nationally-referenced tests. Because of the top-down ways in which these reforms have been pursued, the terms of the critique are built into the accountability systems and standardized forms of assessment used to rank order and reward or punish schools. Teachers are often expected to enact the consequences of the neo-conservative critique, whether or not they experience it as effective in encouraging their students to participate in democratic culture (of a neo-conservative or any other variety). This creates a tension between the view of teachers as agents of democratic culture and their actual role as technicians, delivering curriculum that is increasingly pre-determined by the content of high-stakes tests.

Continuing to use my analysis of teachers' work as comparable to that of activists, another way to view this contrast between the democratic aims of the neo-conservative approach and the lack of democratic agency on the part of teachers is as limiting teachers' organizational change work with respect to social equity. With respect to social equity, there are several contradictions between the social critique offered by the neo-conservative architects of this approach and the social and educational reforms pursued by its adherents. As discussed in Chapter 3, a significant element of the neo-conservative critique is aimed at the failure of progressive educational methods to substantially alter the life prospects of poor children or children of color. The implication of this critique is that neo-conservative schooling would do more to improve the life prospects of these children and enable them to participate to a greater degree in democratic civic life. However, assessments of school reform based on neo-conservative principles indicate

that, in the broad majority of cases, these are the students *least* likely to benefit from such reforms (Ambrosio, 2004; Gayles, 2007; Haney, 2008). In some cases, substantial educational achievement has been documented for educationally disadvantaged students, but only in situations where significant levels of social support and community engagement (high levels of what I call affiliation and identity work) accompany a rigorous and culturally-relevant academic curriculum (Lee, 2006). In fact, reforms like those initiated by the 2002 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as "No Child Left Behind" or NCLB) often create punitive scenarios for schools with disproportionate numbers of poor students and students of color and, thereby, increase the numbers of students and schools perceived as failing and decrease the resources available (ultimately) to support these schools and the students in them (Balfanz, Legters, West, & Weber, 2007).

Christensen (2003) describes this kind of situation as it occurred to her as a teacher at Jefferson High School in Portland, Oregon. In late May, all the employees of the school were fired and asked to vacate their classrooms by June 11 as "part of a 'get tough' reform strategy for schools that received the lowest numbers on state tests" (p. 266). The low relative scores on state tests were themselves a result, in part, of a district-wide magnate program that allowed families with the most resources to send their children to other public schools in the city. After the "reconstitution" of which Christensen wrote, even more families fled the school and Jefferson rated "unacceptable" on the state report card and a "failing school" according to NCLB. In addition to the financial resources that followed these students out of Jefferson, the loss of experienced

teachers and administrators placed all attempts at positive reform at a loss. One young

teacher described the year after the mass firing this way:

> There was no institutional memory. There were no systems in place for
> attendance, to check out books, to write referrals on students who
> misbehaved. Students were scheduled haphazardly into classes. Special
> Education and ELL students who had previously been in pull-out programs
> were placed in our classes without notifying us about their conditions or
> modifications. We didn't know which books to teach at which grade level
> in language arts. We had no curriculum. And there was no one to ask for
> help from within the school because there were no veteran teachers on staff
> in most of the subject areas. (p. 269)

Although the new teachers at Jefferson worked hard to rebuild the structures that had

been destroyed, it would be many years before the working class, largely African-

American students at Jefferson would experience anything like the level of instruction

and continuity of affiliation they experienced prior to the reconstitution.

A third way to view the disintegrating tensions of the neo-conservative approach

is as a contrast between the professional identity to which teachers should (according to

advocates of the neo-conservative approach) aspire, and the degree to which teachers are

afforded opportunities to enact that identity. With respect to subject matter engagement,

the implementation of NCLB has highlighted a contradiction between the democratic

ideals of the neo-conservative approach (the social critique they expect teachers to adopt)

and the capacity of teachers to enact aspects of their identity as agents of democratic

cultural regeneration (their capacity to engage in identity formation and negotiation). One

of the major critiques of the neo-conservative approach is that pre-service teachers are

poorly prepared in their subject matter areas, and schools are mandated by law to work

toward placement of "highly qualified teachers" in every classroom. As discussed in

Chapter 3, advocates of the neo-conservative approach want teachers to identify more

strongly with their field of expertise and less with social and developmental aspects of teacher work. These standards of professional preparation (and expectations for teacher professional identity) stand in tension with the fact that the programs put in place when schools are designated as under-performing under-utilize the subject-matter expertise of teachers. In some instances, the programs that are approved for use in reading and math are so regimented so as to allow teachers little opportunity to enact their identities as experts in some aspect of democratic culture. (See Au [2007] for a broader analysis of how high-stakes testing generally narrows curriculum and encourages teachers to fragment subject-matter knowledge.)

Assef (2008) offers an example of this disintegrating tension in her ethnographic case study of a reading teacher under pressure to get her students, predominantly English Language Learners, to perform well on high-stakes tests. Marsha, the teacher featured in the study, was chosen because of her "excellent reputation" as a reading specialist. With 37 years teaching experience, she earned a masters' degree in literacy instruction and was certified as a reading specialist and English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor. Marsha's work focused on getting 35 reluctant or struggling readers in the upper elementary grades to become "successful and competent" readers who are engaged and confident in their reading abilities. For Marsha, this entailed giving students appropriate reading materials that would "help them successfully manage texts and develop positive reading habits" (p. 243). For this teacher, access to democratic institutions and social goods required successful literacy experiences. According to Assef,

> Marsha believed it was important for her students to be able to talk about the
> titles and authors of books they read in order to see themselves as readers.
> She knew if her students could walk into her classroom or the library and
> ask for a specific book title or a specific author, they would be more

> empowered to see themselves as successful readers instead of struggling readers. Marsha explained, 'It is really empowering and they feel like they can talk like you and me and the other students.... To be able to talk about the books and authors they have read gives them ammunition to be members of the literacy club." (p. 243)

This example stands in stark contrast to the kinds of experiences Marsha introduced as a result of the pressure from high-stakes tests. On the day following a rich discussion of a text the class was reading,

> Marsha attended a district meeting on test scores and testing strategies. She came back to school, instructed the students to put away their Amber Brown books and began reading a test passage...Reading the test passage required the students to be silent and search for the correct answer independently. (p. 246)

Marsha explained her instructional choices this way: "I feel my students have become all fragmented when all they do are these passages, but I am having to turn a blind eye to that stuff, knowing that they just need to pass the [high stakes test] now" (p. 247). Marsha's 37 years of teaching experience and expertise in developing English Language Learners into confident readers (aspects of her identity as a teacher), were quickly subsumed beneath the pressures of raising her students' test scores. Marsha was asked to bracket her concerns about the identities of her students as readers, her attempts to build affiliations between students, and the ways those commitments constituted her sense of her own professional identity and focus exclusively on student scores on a high-stakes test.

In such hierarchical systems of curriculum delivery, teachers are also prevented from collectively negotiating their identities as subject-matter experts (who might have legitimate disagreements about what content matters with respect to their subject). In many other cases, time spent preparing students to take tests (instruction in test-taking

skills and strategies) and conducting standardized tests, takes time away from instruction that would make greater use of teacher's subject matter knowledge and related pedagogical expertise. For many students and teachers, standardized testing interrupts their engagement with the curriculum, rather than enhancing it (Kornhaber, 2008). Finally, many areas of teacher expertise become unrecognized subordinate identities, including, but not limited to, expertise in fine arts, history, social sciences, and physical education. These areas of expertise, and the teachers who identify with them, receive less emphasis under current standardized assessment programs and, as a result, receive diminished attention and resources in schools (Au, 2007; Kornhaber, 2008; and Salinas, 2006).

In short, the school reforms initiated by NCLB and other neo-conservative reforms have created tensions that diminish teachers' capacity to pursue neo-conservative aims with respect to social equity and subject-matter engagement. The ways in which these tensions appear in teachers' work is clarified by looking at the dimensions of political work provided by my analysis. Because of the structure of this critique and the ways in which it has been implemented in schools, teachers have very little opportunity to contribute to or revise the content of the critique or the process by which it is generated and deployed and are, therefore, prohibited from acting as democratic agents in the very democratic culture they are trying to help create. In terms of social equity, the accountability systems associated with reforms like NCLB fail to increase, and often diminish, the long-term social and economic resources available to teachers who work with poor students and students of color, and fail to recognize the substantial degree of affiliation and identity work that is required to implement these curricula with any degree

of success among non-dominant social groups. In the case of subject-matter engagement, the tension arises when teachers knowledgeable about subject matter (teachers who have subject matter expertise as a major component of their professional identity) are expected to narrow the scope of their teaching to those areas represented on standardized tests and curricula. As even Ravitch has now realized (see Dillon, March 2, 2010), these attempts to implement the neo-conservative approach contradict even the expressed aims of neo-conservative educational thinkers, who contended that all students should benefit from the kind of broad and deep subject matter knowledge which would enable sophisticated democratic deliberation.

Resolving this tension between the democratic regeneration aims of the neo-conservative approach and the lack of democratic agency afforded to teachers could follow a range of trajectories. I would like to suggest, based on my analysis, that teachers' self-conscious engagement with all four dimensions of political work would provide one path toward re-conceptualizing the neo-conservative approach in particular. Although I am focusing specifically on the neo-conservative approach here (Lin part because it is currently driving much of U.S. state and national policy regarding K-12 education),I contend that there would be benefits to all of the approaches if they consciously engaged teachers in all four dimensions of political work. Each of the other three approaches evinces certain strengths and weaknesses in this regard, which I will discuss further in Chapter 5.

Of course, this would entail some significant shifts in the current articulations of this approach. Engaging teachers explicitly in the work of social critique with respect to the neo-conservative approach, for example, would be a fruitless exercise unless current

educational policy-makers are also willing to cede control over a unitary definition of democratic citizenship (as embodied in a test-driven national curriculum). If teachers' affiliation and identity work is made explicit and its critical role in school change acknowledged, advocates of the neo-conservative approach would need to identify and support teachers in performing these important forms of labor, particularly in those schools and communities where identities and contexts for affiliation differ from those assumed by the neo-conservative focus on discrete skills and assimilation to a common culture. Self-conscious engagement of teachers in these dimensions of political work might also require that advocates of the neo-conservative approach reject elements of their own individualist social critique and advocate placing more resources toward affiliation and identity work in educational settings, such as those present in high-quality social supports (community-school partnerships, after-school programs, social service interventions, etc.) They could also give higher priority to other aspects of teachers' (and students') identities by encouraging culturally-relevant curriculum (which might also entail a less unity and hierarchical view of democratic citizenship).

Finally, acknowledging the importance of teachers' political work and more explicitly engaging teachers in the development of neo-conservative reforms could result in a change in the kinds and levels of resources brought to bear on achieving their desired aims, offering schools even greater incentives (or disincentives) to achieve the goals of NCLB. If these incentives are offered in ways that allow teachers to develop curriculum and services that respect teachers' identities as democratic change agents, it is possible that many of the goals of NCLB, as well as certain aims of other contemporary educational approaches could be advanced in schools (Bandalos, 2004; Darling-

Hammond, 2008; Kornhaber, 2008). In short, employing the analysis of teachers' work I have developed, we can see that the advocates of the contemporary neo-conservative approach need to either modify their argument that better assessment and more controlled curriculum create better life opportunities for all citizens (especially poor students and students of color) or give schools and teachers a greater role in determining the kinds of social and educational resources that make schools a real means to advance social equity and encourage democratic engagement. The integrated vision of teachers work as embodied in the four dimensions of social critique, affiliation, identity negotiation, and institutional change, could serve as an organizing frame for such changes.

Summary

In this chapter, I have indicated some of the ways my integrated vision of teachers' political work would be helpful to teachers, school leaders, and teacher educators. In particular, I have shown how the four dimensions of teachers' political work help to broaden the sense of what "counts" as legitimate work for teachers. This analysis also identifies some of the ways in which various dimensions of teachers' political work rely on one another for their meaning and efficacy. I have also shown ways in which this integrated vision of teachers' work might be of use in identifying the capacities for school change in any particular educational setting. Finally, using the example of the neo-conservative approach, I have demonstrated how assuming teachers self-conscious engagement in the four dimensions of political work can highlight disintegrating tensions within an approach. Further, as I will discuss in Chapter 5, I have shown how this kind of analysis offers productive ways to think about grassroots educational activism on the part of teachers.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Implications for Understanding Grassroots Educational Work

In this study, I have asked: How is our understanding of teaching informed by looking at the work of teachers through the lens of activism? I find this question has been useful in developing a broad, integrated understanding of teaching and activism, both theoretically and practically. Most significantly, for good teachers, as for effective activists, there is a close connection between *what* someone does and *why* they do it: my integrated vision of teachers' work, which has developed out of comparing teachers' work to that of activists, provides a way for teachers to make connections between their daily teaching practices and their professed educational commitments.

Despite efforts to divorce concepts of good teaching from the context in which they are practiced and even any particular curricular content, some still believe that good teaching requires a sense of well-considered purpose, including social critique. (See, for example, the description of Lemov's Taxonomy in Green, March 7, 2010). One implication of my study is that teachers and schools benefit from having teachers consider the mechanics of good teaching within a framework that includes the political purposes of their practice. Calls for reflective practice are not new in education, but the time required to engage in such practice is often short-changed, especially when teachers themselves cannot see the value in such work. This integrated vision of teachers' work, because of the ways it connects the aims of schooling with more grassroots conceptions

of what teachers do, helps teachers better appreciate and value such experiences. Providing teachers with opportunities to reflect on this integrated vision of teacher work should be an important priority of teacher education and on-going professional development.

Implications for Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

This integrated vision of teachers' work provides a re-conceptualization of teachers' work across theoretical approaches. As I demonstrated in Chapter 3, each of the four major contemporary approaches requires something of teachers with respect to every dimension of activist work. Because of this, my vision of teachers' work provides a foundation for conversations between teachers across these approaches and a means to identify common purposes and/or discuss possible areas of tension. Developing the capacity to have such conversations is something that should begin in teacher education programs and continue across the professional lifespan.

For pre-service teachers, my integrated vision of teachers' work provides a way to begin thinking about the range of activities that engage teachers in schools and the ways in which those activities are guided by political commitments and/or have political implications. Individuals can begin to discuss their perspectives on these dimensions of work with other pre-service teachers, with the shared understanding that these elements are essential to reflective practice. They can also seek the perspectives of more experienced educators on the ways particular activities have helped them develop and pursue their educational goals. In addition to understanding broad social and political patterns, pre-service teachers should also be introduced to the nuanced political contexts of particular schools and communities in order to better understand the specific ways

social critique, affiliation, identity work, and institutional change vary across settings. Such experiences would help provide pre-service and new teachers with the kind of perspective required to understand daily classroom activities and administrative responsibilities – major areas of professional growth and learning for the first few years of teaching – as useful political work. In addition, a sense of their own commitments in relation to broad areas of educational/political concern would help pre-service teachers make thoughtful choices about the schools in which they are initially employed and their efforts to grow as teacher leaders.

With respect to new teacher mentoring and induction into the professional setting, schools should encourage mentoring relationships that help new teachers continue to explore the connections between the tasks they are learning to perform and the educational purposes such tasks are designed to achieve. Evaluation of new teachers should take into account not only the capacity to perform concrete tasks related to curriculum delivery and classroom management but should also assess new teachers' growing ability to reflect on their priorities and goals and articulate their educational vision in relation to specific actions and activities. Mentors for new teachers should be supported in these forms of engagement by preparation for such conversations to happen spontaneously as well as by providing more structured opportunities to engage with their mentees in group and one-on-one settings. Mentorship should also involve a challenge to the mentors and to new teachers to think strategically about the resources for affiliation and identity development available to teachers outside formal professional development contexts, for example, through appropriate types of involvement in community groups or activist organizations.

For early- to mid-career teachers, my integrated vision can promote reflection about how their instructional practices have developed over time and encourage teachers to consider the dimensions of their work that are consistent with their educational/political commitments. They can also begin to identify the ways some dimensions of teachers' work are rewarded and others occluded or even punished within particular educational settings and develop ways to resist such pressures. They can continue to establish affiliations with other educators who share their commitment to reflection regarding the political implications of their work. Schools should also develop ways for teachers to build or expand affiliations and identities that offer teachers access to perspectives outside the immediate educational setting. This might include more traditional groups, such as professional associations, but teachers could also benefit from involvement with organizations and individuals that engage communities in dialogue and praxis with respect to a range of community concerns. For example, schools might consider awarding professional development credits to teachers who are involved in democratic dialogue projects or who offer leadership in local forms of anti-poverty work. School leaders could also support teachers in reflecting on such experiences and sharing the conclusions they form with colleagues, as well as creating forums where community leaders can engage with teachers around common concerns and proposed social change actions. For some teachers, these actions, reflections, and new or renewed affiliations will inspire teachers to press for changes in curriculum, pedagogy, school structures, community connections, and cultural understandings of the roles of teachers in schools.

Finally, for more experienced teachers, an integrated vision of teachers' work can support deeper and more critical conversations about the nature and purposes of their

work. These conversations can help teachers and other school leaders identify specific leverage points for school improvement and community change. In some cases, these reflections may provide the motivation for teachers to focus on particular school change initiatives in their schools or classrooms. It may also inspire teachers to spend time as administrators in schools, as instructors in teacher education, or as leaders in organizations that support specific school or community change initiatives. Such initiatives might approach change from a different position with respect to the granting, withholding, negotiation and embodiment of power.

Many current teacher education programs have in place structures that could make use of this conception of teachers' work in ways that would enhance their current program goals. For example, at the University of New Hampshire, the teacher education program aspires to create "teacher leaders" and one of the major program outcomes is that graduates of the program learn to be "informed decision-makers and agents of change" and to "think systematically about their practice and learn from experience." The program also expects teachers to understand "the teacher's role in the change process" and "learn to assess the relative merits of educational reform efforts" (http://www.unh.edu/education, accessed on 4/2/10). As a program with an introductory class with on-site observations and a full-year graduate level teaching internship, students have the opportunity to observe the political contexts of several particular schools and communities, as well as opportunities to reflect on these observations with experienced educators and teacher educators. As a program that develops long-term relationships between particular internship sites, cooperating teachers, and teacher education faculty, the UNH program allows for cross-institutional affiliations and professional development

experiences for more experienced teachers, as well as a full-year teacher-in-residence program.

These are just a few examples of structures in one program which could allow new and experienced teachers to thoughtfully consider her or his role as an educational professional and agent of change. Despite this, and despite the serious efforts of all involved, many new graduates of even the best teacher education programs find it difficult to connect the daily activities within their school and classroom to broader political aims of schooling and, in particular, to their own critiques of society and schooling. Opportunities to practice such an analysis exist in the undergraduate and graduate school experience and can be explored by teacher educators as a means to encourage future teachers to develop thoughtful critiques and corresponding social action. For example, requiring pre-service teachers to develop "action projects" that *focus on some element of campus or community life that needs to be changed or* reformed and asking students to analyze their motivations and responses to such work would give students valuable practice in the work of social and school change. Using the forms of activist/teacher work described here could be one way to help students recognize the various forms of work that are involved in making effective interventions with respect to complex social issues. There could also be opportunities to connect pre-service teachers' action projects to longer-term community change efforts and the community activists/reformers who are engaged in such work. Community change agents could, therefore, serve as models to students of people working over time to make and institutionalize change.

Teacher educators could facilitate these kinds of experiences by helping new and experienced educators build conceptual bridges between their community involvements, their anticipated classroom practices, and their educational commitments and critiques of schooling. When well-constructed, within a spirit of open and continuous inquiry, such bridges could continue to serve and be reconstructed as teachers encounter new experiences across the professional lifespan. For some students, my integrated vision of teachers' work could serve as a guide for building these bridges.

Implications for Educational Research

Educational research that frames teachers' daily work in direct comparison to activism could illuminate current educational initiatives in new ways and offer new avenues for research into teaching and school change. This framework could bring additional tools to educational research by providing insight into very specific school and classroom practices, including the ways those practices relate to the political purposes of schooling. My analysis makes the case for looking more carefully at the ways particular groups of teachers develop new rationales or identity strategies to achieve their ends. For example, I could envision using this frame to better understand the ways in which a group of educators modify their critiques of schooling in light of an educational initiative that offers them ample opportunities to develop their sense of professional expertise, as appeared to happen in some schools that implemented Hirsch's Core Knowledge curriculum. Further research might illuminate the relationships between professional identity and critiques of schooling with respect to this and other contemporary approaches to schooling.

This study also points to the need for more research on less visible aspects of teachers' work, including identity formation/negotiation, affiliation, and any aspect of work done outside the "regular" school day. With respect to teachers' identity formation and negotiation, the sensitive portraits of teachers presented by Sonia Nieto (2003, 2005) stand out as particularly insightful accounts of the relationship of teachers' identity work as it contributes to and is reinforced by other dimensions of teachers' work. Book-length narratives from teachers themselves are also illustrative of the many factors that impinge on teachers' identity work and connect that work to broader political/educational commitments. In particular here, I consider Barbieri (1995), Gutstein (2006), Meier (1995), and Michie (1999) to be good examples of teacher narratives that attend to the complexities of this dimension of teachers' work. More studies done with this level of attention to the integration of identity work into the daily lives of teachers and schools would offer new insights into the range of ways teachers work to reclaim subordinated identities (their own and those of their students), form integrated professional identities as teachers, and negotiate their identities throughout their professional lives.

Another dimension of occluded work for teachers concerns the forms of affiliation they experience (or could) and more research is needed here as well. A number of good studies exist that document the value of professional learning communities for teachers, and more studies should consider the ways effective school leaders help facilitate the exploration of new affiliations and identities among teachers and how this shapes the experience of students in their classroom (see, for example, Ancess , 2003, Lieberman & Miller, 1999, and McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001.) Education researchers often appear to assume that common interests alone are sufficient for forming

and sustaining teacher affiliations. More research needs to account for the socio-emotional elements of affiliation, such as the degree to which teacher affiliations are contiguous with prior life affiliations and affiliation networks outside of school settings.

Research should begin to give greater consideration to alternative forms of affiliation among teachers, such as teachers who affiliate by virtue of their identification with non-dominant communities, such as communities of color, immigrant communities, linguistic communities or communities formed on the basis of other social identities (such as sexual orientation, (dis)ability, gender identity, etc.) Not only do such affiliations support teachers who may find themselves marginalized within the social structure of their school, they may also provide teachers with a receptive context within which to develop important critiques of the status quo in schools. This could be of particular import in recruiting and retaining teachers from historically marginalized ethnic and/or linguistic groups. Dixson & Dingus (2008) in their writing about black women's "other mothering" work in schools is one new place to start such investigations.

Studies of less visible elements of teachers' work would also be important to those teachers and schools with a commitment to building strong affiliations with students' families and communities. As more schools and school systems hire individuals to serve as liaisons between teachers and families, it seems important to recognize that teachers continue to play an important role in the (dis)connections students experience between their homes and communities and their school experience. Studying those teachers and schools where individuals serving in the roles of "family coordinator" and "family liaison officer" work particularly well with classroom teachers might be one

place to begin such investigations and the conceptualizations of affiliation and identity work provided in this study could serve as a frame for such research.

Implications for School Leadership and Governance

Comparing teachers to activists is valuable because both are groups whose concerns are often ignored or even actively suppressed by relevant decision-makers. One of the benefits of making this comparison explicit is that this experience of alienation on the part of teachers can be identified and its consequences explored. School administrators equipped with the more integrated vision of teachers' work that I present might be led to consider a range of new approaches to engaging teachers in meaningful dialogue about the goals of education and how teachers might be more effective advocates for the kind of educational priorities they support. This kind of research could assist in those efforts in at least a few ways:

- By providing teachers a way to conceptualize their role in social critique, my integrated vision of teachers' work gives them grounds and possible means to resist top-down initiatives that do not fit with teachers' critical assessment of current social arrangements. School leaders who see this vision of teaching as a necessary component of teachers' work would provide teachers with meaningful opportunities to lead in the school through democratic processes such as transparent and well-communicated decision-making structures and frequent opportunities for teachers to consult with administrators on issues ranging from disciplinary systems to hiring to curricular changes.

- By acknowledging teachers' role in institutional change, my vision of teachers' work can empower teachers to take advantage of political opportunities that would help to

change institutional structures, as well as amplify their voice in changing cultural understandings of traditional teacher roles. For example, teachers, more than almost any other community member, recognize the implications for student learning of the determinations a community makes with respect to the delineation of school districts or the decision to implement some form of school choice. Yet, teachers often feel they must participate in such discussions in a way that leaves much of their professional expertise and classroom observation "at the door" of the public venues where such decisions are made. If such institutional choices are viewed as intrinsically linked to the work teachers do, then such bifurcations of valuable perspectives will be more fully considered in community decision-making.

- By helping teachers see the similarities between teaching and activism, this vision of teachers' work can provide specific insights that help teachers resist systems of power, particularly when those systems operate in ways that silence teachers. For example, teachers who are engaging in resistance with respect to the movement to pay teachers based on students' standardized test scores might look specifically at the rhetorical and other activist practices of groups outside teaching (such as labor unions in other fields) who have launched effective forms of resistance to similarly narrow systems for allocating worker compensation.

Implications for School Change Work

I discussed earlier how this study offers a new context for identifying successful change strategies by looking at teachers' work through the lens of activism. However, this integrated vision of teachers' work also offers a way to more effectively identify and assess the capacity for school change in any particular educational environment. For

good teachers, as for effective activists, historical and social context matters because: (a) knowing what has been effective in that particular setting in the past informs what one chooses to do in the present and (b) changing social conditions can justify changing strategies. Attention to these insights might help teachers avoid and resist what Karp (2003) calls "drive-by school reform," reform that is characterized by the imposition of "external agendas…without developing any shared assessment of a school's problems or the common priorities needed to make reform credible" (p. 260). Successful social change movements build on the successful rhetorical and protest strategies of the past while also modifying or reworking strategies in the light of changed conditions. Similarly, effective teachers consider historical and social context when developing curriculum and pedagogy, as well as when they are considering involvement in school change initiatives.

In addition to guiding teachers in their involvements in school reform initiatives, this integrated vision of teachers' work could form the structure for a qualitative analysis of school change efforts. Some of the questions such an analysis might raise include:

- What kind of school change work is underway (social critique, affiliation, identity work, institutional change or some combination)?

- Is the school change work distributed equitably among teachers and between teachers, administrators, and other school leaders?

- Are all elements of school change work being performed efficiently and effectively? If not, what other approaches might improve performance?

- What are teachers' different capacities for various dimensions of school change work? How can those capacities be effectively engaged in pursuit of shared goals?

- To what extent is teachers' work valued as a part of this school change initiative? Are different types of work (social critique, identity formation/negotiation, affiliation, and institutional/cultural change) valued differently?

- In what ways is the importance of various forms of school change work communicated to teachers and other community members?

- Does this change initiative use as a point of leverage those capacities (with respect to the four dimensions of teachers' work) already being exercised by teachers or other community members?

- Does this change initiative involve teachers in the four dimensions of work in ways that create contradictions or tensions between two or more dimensions of work?

- Does this change initiative involve teachers in the four dimensions of work in ways that allow/encourage the forms of work to be mutually reinforcing?

In addition to raising these kinds of questions with respect to school change, I contend that looking at teachers' work in the more integrated way I have proposed here might help schools function in a more concerted and coherent way toward the goals of student flourishing and positive social change. With respect to student flourishing, teachers have a range of ways of articulating the goals that develop as a result of such work:

> Students need to know that positive change can occur and that it is usually the result of mass struggle. (Gutstein, 2006, p. 93)

> I began to seek a way that the passion in the children's play could be transferred to a passion for school, that connections could be made between their play and their learning...These tiny incidents are what sometimes influence children for the rest of their lives. (Vivian Paley, quoted in Hatton, 2005, p. 50)

> An important component...is our commitment to a two-way bilingual program in which native Spanish and English speakers are in the same classrooms, with children receiving half their instruction in English and half in Spanish. This arrangement avoids separating children by language dominance and gives meaning and purpose to the acquisition of two languages. (Peterson, 1995, p. 65-66)

> Children from every ethnic and economic background should have access to a shared core of knowledge that is necessary to reading, understanding, and communication. (Storm, May 1993, p. 27)

The four classroom teachers quoted above represent a range of educational perspectives and school settings. What they all share is a sense that their work has long-term consequences for their students' ability to flourish in society. School leaders who can help teachers channel this insight on the part of teachers into a sense of shared commitment to particular school change goals, and who support the specific kinds of work required to achieve those goals, will have a much greater chance of creating real and lasting change in schools. School and community leaders who can make the connections between these goals, the resources required to pursue them, and the kinds of work individuals and groups can and should engage in, can connect school improvement to broader movements toward positive social change.

Implications for My Professional Contexts

As someone who has taught pre-service teachers, engaged in community change work, and who currently teaches some of the most politicized students on campus (in Women's Studies and Queer Studies), I have a unique perspective on the ways pre-service teachers can and should be prepared for schools and classrooms. This research has emboldened me to find additional connections between the disparate elements of my own professional identity. In particular, I am committed to encouraging more students who have developed a somewhat sophisticated social critique, based on an analysis of the

intersection of gender with other forms of social identity, to consider schools as places where they can be engaged in social change work. Our students often engage in forms of community change work and activism that bring them into contact with grassroots change agents and human service professionals who model various forms of institutional change work. In addition, the experiences of some of our students as marginalized with respect to their gender, race, cultural background, sexual identity, and/or ability and the opportunities they have had to analyze their own experiences of marginalization provides them with more experience than a typical pre-service teacher with the work of social critique, affiliation, and identity negotiation.

Helping Women's Studies and Queer Studies students understand and appreciate the value of the many forms of activist work that can occur within more structured institutional contexts, such as schools, could result in a local cohort of future educators who are ready and willing to challenge the status quo in schools. I also recognize that this will require work on the part of teacher educators and school leaders to be prepared to support such teachers and to engage their energies in meaningful and productive ways. It is my hope that through alliances with teacher educators and school leaders, such placements will be possible and positive options.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that, regardless of educational approach, the work of teachers forms an inevitable political grounding for teaching and learning. An understanding of the work of social critique helps focus the work of teachers and schools on issues of broad social importance. Identity work connects curriculum, pedagogy, and school structures to the self-understanding of individual teachers and to students'

experience in the various social groupings that shape their schooling. Affiliation helps us focus on the complex connections and relationships that enable various groups within schools to raise questions and challenge commonly held assumptions. Institutional change work, guided by this understanding of activism, becomes a dynamic series of actions that allocates social and material resources within the school setting. Taken together, these forms of work encompass nearly every activity in which teachers and school administrators engage. Clarity about the purposes and intersections of these dimensions of work can serve to focus human, material, and conceptual resources on the most critical aspects of schooling.

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