

1-1-1977

An interpretation of Paulo Freire's theory of education.

Ronald S. Goldman

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1

Recommended Citation

Goldman, Ronald S., "An interpretation of Paulo Freire's theory of education." (1977). *Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014*. 3401.

https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1/3401

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.

UMASS/AMHERST



312066013538095

100

AN INTERPRETATION OF
PAULO FREIRE'S THEORY OF EDUCATION

A Dissertation Presented

By

Ronald S. Goldman

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

October 11, 1977

School of Education

(c) Ronald S. Goldman 1977

All Rights Reserved

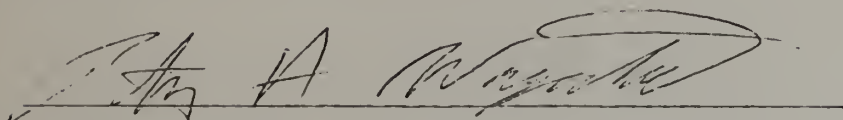
AN INTERPRETATION OF
PAULO FREIRE'S THEORY OF EDUCATION

A Dissertation Presented

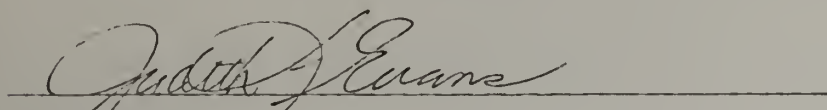
by

Ronald S. Goldman

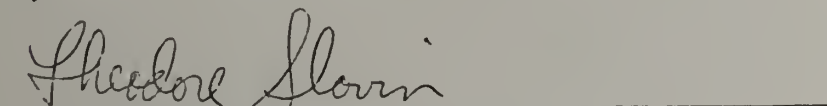
Approved as to style and content by:



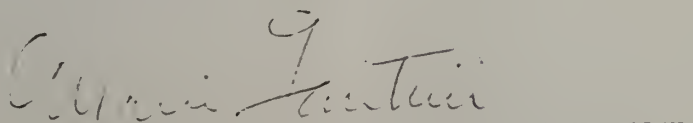
Professor Peter Wagschal, Chairperson of Committee



Professor Judith Evans, Member



Professor Theodor Slovin, Member



Dean Mario Fantini, Department Head

Dedicated to the memory of my late father
Kurt Goldman

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation could not have been written if it had not been for the help of the following people, to whom I am deeply grateful: Vivien Goldman, Jack Murphy, Bella Halstead, Leonard Suransky, Phil Chanin, Jean Elshtain, Bill DeMuth, Peter Wagschal, Judith Evans and Theodor Slovin.

ABSTRACT

An Interpretation of
Paulo Freire's Theory of Education

February 1978

Ronald S. Goldman, B.A., Hunter College, CCNY

M.A., Fordham University

Ed.D., University of Massachusetts

Directed by: Professor Peter Wagschal

This dissertation interprets Paulo Freire's theory of education in three closely related ways. (1) It argues that Freire's theory stands in the tradition of critical theory in general; this tradition stands in opposition to that which dominates, including the dominant theoretical mode of discourse--in this case referred to as traditional theory. (2) One form of traditional theory is empiricism. Freire's theory is examined by analyzing what he is not saying. Any effort to incorporate Freire into this tradition domesticates what is most cutting about Freire. (3) Freire's approach to literacy education is attempted within the context of a freshman Rhetoric Class. Significant changes in a number of students' writings is clearly noticeable. A full report of the three month long educational effort is provided in order to facilitate further understanding of the mode of thought which one must adopt.

Finally the dissertation attempts to understand why so many efforts to create 'innovative' educational approaches result in a further cementing of the status quo. It is argued that there exists little

'theoretical self-consciousness' amongst many such enterprises. This concept is fully explicated. The dissertation contains an extensive bibliography.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
Chapter	
I.....	1
II.....	9
Paradigms.....	11
Paradigms and Politics.....	13
Liberalism.....	14
Americanism.....	21
Traditional Theory Paradigm.....	25
Empiricist Paradigm.....	28
Critical Theory Paradigm.....	32
Wholes and Parts.....	34
Consciousness.....	34
Dialectics.....	36
Paulo Freire and Critical Theory.....	41
Summary.....	45
Conclusion.....	49
III.....	56
Making Sense of Social Reality.....	69
Empiricist Interpretation.....	82
Alschuler-Smith Coding System.....	84
Critique of Empiricist Epistemology.....	93
Intersubjective Reality.....	95
Social Literacy Project's efforts to Understand and Act Upon Reality.....	100
Summary and Conclusions.....	113
IV.....	122
Background.....	133
Preparation.....	138
The Project.....	141
The Real Beginning.....	145
Teaching About the Importance of Assumptions.....	147
Recognizing Student Assumptions and and Re-Presenting to Them.....	150

	Page
V.....	171
Introduction.....	171
Why a Need for Theoretical Self-Consciousness.....	172
The Meaning of 'Theoretical Self-Consciousness'.....	185
Psychoanalysis and Critical Theory.....	191
Developing an Educational Program based upon Freire's Principles.....	206
VI.....	228
APPENDIX I.....	242
APPENDIX II.....	246
APPENDIX III.....	251
APPENDIX IV (A).....	254
APPENDIX IV (B).....	256
APPENDIX IV (C).....	270
APPENDIX V.....	274
APPENDIX VI.....	296
APPENDIX VII.....	299
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	304

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation attempts to elucidate and explicate the works of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. The reader may well ask: Why bother to speculate upon and essentially recapitulate what has already been done? Why not let Freire's work stand for itself?

First of all Freire's theory has become more and more popular amongst educators in the United States. There exists a realization that education in America is in difficulty from a variety of points of view; it is the hope of many that Freire's radical pedagogy will be of help in revitalizing our thinking about education. But the problem is that Freire's work is difficult to understand and lends itself to considerable misinterpretation.

Recently Freire complained that one great disappointment for him has been the bureaucratization of his work.¹ How and why might this happen? Anyone reading Freire's work with verstand (with comprehension) would see how carefully he has attempted to prevent this from occurring. He has written a body of theory, not a set of methods. He wishes those who read his work to comprehend how one thinks within the framework of critical educational theory. To provide a set of techniques would only make it possible for the educator using Freire to use his concepts statically. The educator would not be able to generate insight into new problem areas based upon a deep understanding of the fundamental principles crucial to a critical educational theory.

It is the central theme of this dissertation that such an understanding

can only come as a result of prolonged immersion in the intellectual tradition of which Freire's work partakes. Unless this is done Freire's language will simply be unconsciously translated into an anglo/empiricist tradition in which most of us unconsciously and unreflectively participate. It is almost certain that those who have bureaucratized Freire are those who have never understood him in the sense I am describing here. They have seen words like: reflection, action, critical consciousness, dialectic, subject-object, and assumed that the meanings of these words can be obtained without extensive reference to Freire's intellectual tradition--that they can be operationally defined, if necessary. The fact is that these concepts are a part of a certain tradition of intellectual discourse--that of critical theory--and a simple translation of them to another mode of discourse--the anglo/empiricist--will rob them of the meaning intended by the author. The concepts could only come to be read with verstand if one had read widely and deeply within the tradition of critical theory; only then the context in which these concepts have gained their meaning will be known. One cannot hope to understand the concepts independently of this context. They have acquired their meaning from the context of debate and explanation which gave birth to them. ...The reader may well ask how I can speak with such certainty about what must surely be a set of debatable facts. This question provides me with the opportunity to explain the set of problems which provoked this dissertation.

Essentially the dissertation attempts two central, interrelated tasks. One is to examine how it is possible that extremely intelligent

educational professionals have taken Freire's theory and so radically altered it as to make it essentially and fundamentally different to anything he intended--to have in effect bureaucratized his work. They have packaged it, instrumentalized it, operationalized it.² They have done this in order to simplify, test and disseminate widely Freire's theories--as they refer to Freire's theory. They have worked with great care, intellectual honesty and commitment, and have at the same time unwittingly, but essentially, vitiated the meaning of Freire's work. This does not mean to say that what they are doing is useless; rather that the way they 'operationalize Freire' is counter to his theory.

Since my initial exposure to Freire's work was via these efforts, I have some understanding of them. For many months I attempted to learn coding system techniques, so that when it came time to do a dissertation I would be able to know for certain whether or not the students with whom I was working had become critically conscious. All along no matter how hard I fought myself I was unable to read Freire in this codified manner. I spent months attempting to understand what was in fact happening. In the process I began to read widely in the field of critical theory, and to talk to those who have for years been immersed in this tradition. This dissertation is essentially a report on what I have come to understand at an early stage of this investigation. It is an effort to describe my interpretation of Freire and indicate how and why others have so radically misinterpreted his work. The purpose of this specific critique is to show that critical social theory (Freire's intellectual tradition) stands in critical relationship to the empiricist

tradition and cannot simply be incorporated by it.

The dissertation then is meant to represent in style and content the meaning of critical theory, its relationship to traditional theory, and to argue that Freire stands clearly in the former tradition and that his work can only be adequately understood as such. It is an effort to address others, who, like me, come to be intrigued by Freire but have had no other exposure to critical theory. The dissertation is something I wish I had available to me at the School of Education when I was first exposed to Freire's theoretical formulations. The only interpretations available to students at the moment are the anglo/empiricist interpretations and this dissertation stands in critical relationship to them. It is in every sense meant to provide other students with a chance to get onto a correct footing with regard to Freire, rather than spending time and energy on what is essentially a domestication of his theory. It is not a question of saying that others have understood Freire incompletely, or that their interpretation is one 'opinion' and mine another--that I should not make such strong claims for the correctness of my interpretation. 'The truth is not tolerant' as Freud once said.³ It is my contention, and the argument is carefully developed in this dissertation, that the empiricist/operational efforts have effectively cut away the heart, the cutting edge of Freire's theory. Such approaches are not a partial misunderstanding; they are fundamental misunderstandings with severe results. Primarily the consequence of such misunderstanding is that such efforts lead to a fundamental deception--that systems are being changed. Empiricist researchers may well be doing valuable work, but it

is not in the nature of system change, nor can it be called an application of Paulo Freire's theory. This is not to impute either that the researchers are unintelligent people. On the contrary, the task of this dissertation is precisely to understand how such extremely intelligent individuals can come to be so deceived. I have attempted to argue that the core of the problem lies in a failure to comprehend the nature of theory, and its relationship to history and politics. This failure is not the fault of the researchers. The causes lie in the social/economic nexus which, for various reasons, militate against the development of theoretically self-conscious people. They and others in their tradition do have a responsibility though: will they or will they not make the effort to develop theoretical self-consciousness about their own theory. The points I have raised in this paragraph are argued in depth in chapters II, III and V.

As I have said earlier, this dissertation represents an early stage in my own exploration and investigation of critical social theory and its relationship to education. The fact that I am writing on the subject at such an early stage is in many ways a problem, in that I am not highly sophisticated in the uses of the theory, nor have I read widely enough. Yet my hope is that this problem can in fact be precisely what is the potential contribution of this work. That is, as a result of my recent awakening it is still easily possible to address myself as I was two years ago, so to speak, and in the process hopefully address others who may be at a similar point. So, with apologies to critical theorists in general and to those who have been responsible for teaching me specifically, I

nevertheless hope that my audacity in writing so lengthily and so early in my education will be of some consequence (other than of a negative sort).

The intention throughout is to make clearer the meaning underlying Freire's theory. Often people have overcome their complaints as to the 'difficulty' of Freire's work by suddenly saying that he is really very simple--that in fact he keeps repeating himself. It is quite possible that the reader who finishes this dissertation may say the same thing. I would argue that we are dealing with many difficult concepts, and that they need to be looked at and understood from a variety of slightly different angles. Only in this way can the meaning underlying a set of concepts which arise out of an intellectual tradition which is not familiar to most of us be made clearer. In a sense this dissertation can be said to be about interpreting and making sense of one single statement. 'Subject and Object are in dialectical relationship, and no critical theory of society can lose sight of either subject or object in its analyses.' Each of the four chapters which follow are in one sense an effort to uncover the meaning of this statement; each chapter does so from another angle. Chapter II does so from the broadest of possible angles. It attempts to understand the nature of theory and its relationship to history and points to two traditions of theory--traditional theory and critical theory. It briefly points out how Freire stands in the critical theory tradition. The third chapter begins by explicating various concepts at the heart of Freire's theory, particularly the ways a Freirian investigator would attempt to discover the nature of aspects of a

particular social reality. It then discusses in more detail the epistemological assumptions at the heart of the empiricist mode of knowing and shows how certain fundamental truths about the nature of social reality fall through the empiricist epistemological grid. Finally, this chapter shows how clearly the empiricist efforts to understand Freire fall into this mode and commit errors typical of this mode which would not be committed if they had remained loyal to Freire. My hope is that this critique will not be seen as castrating in intent or effect. It is an effort on the one hand to deepen understanding of what Freire is arguing by showing clearly what he is not saying. On the other hand it could serve to deepen understanding amongst others if they took it in the spirit intended--to provoke dialogue. Chapter IV explicates Freire in an entirely different fashion. I spent three months teaching a Rhetoric class to first semester freshmen at the University of Massachusetts. My intention here was not to produce a major piece of research but rather to show how one would think about a problem like 'how to teach Rhetoric?' within the framework of critical educational theory. The essential purpose of this chapter is to show a way of thinking rather than to offer a body of technique to be used by others. I was also interested to see whether Freire could be 'applied' to an American educational context at all. Chapter V attempts to zero in on and explain in considerable detail the notion of 'theoretical self-consciousness'. It is the lack of such theoretical self-consciousness which helps explain the empiricist efforts as well as other efforts to create alternatives which end up cementing the status quo rather than transcending it. The final chapter will be a brief discussion of critiques of Freire's theory.

FOOTNOTES

¹See the interview of Freire in Risk. Vol. II, No. 1., (1975)

²See for example the lengthy discussion of Alschuler's efforts in Chapter III of this dissertation.

³Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures to Psychoanalysis (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1965), p. 160.

CHAPTER I I

"True praxis is impossible in the anti-dialectic void into which all subject/object dichotimization leads us."

"...That is why subjectivism and mechanistic objectivism (or their equivalents idealism and mechanistic materialism) are always obstacles to an authentic revolutionary process, whatever concrete forms they take on in the praxis."

"...For Marx these relations are contradictory and dynamic. Subject and Object are not found dichotomized, nor are they in identity, but a dialectic unity. It is the same dialectic as theory and practice."

"The dialectical movement (between subject and object) is the fundamental preamble to understanding facts. This movement implies in the first place an acting subject possessed of theoretical instruments necessary to undertake the analyses of reality and that he grasp the necessity of continuously readapting these instruments according to the results obtained."¹

These remarks, found in the appendix to the French edition of Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, are an example of the source of much frustration to many who read Freire; many are intrigued by what he is saying, but often baffled and annoyed by his seeming abstract and difficult writing. "He is supposed to be writing to help people," said a friend in disgust, "why is he so obtuse?" My initial reaction to reading Freire was similar. Yet two years later it is my conviction that the few quotes above are not in the slightest sense abstract; they are, in fact, the very heart of Freire's thought. It is also now my conviction that until one has understood how I could make such a claim, one has not understood Freire. The following two chapters are in one sense intended to make sense of these quotes.

The reasons why many would initially classify these statements as abstract and confusing are multifaceted. The chances are, if one has received a fairly typical American university education, one has little

expertise in thinking philosophically about social reality; and that further, one has little reason to believe that philosophy has any role to play in understanding and acting upon social reality. In addition, one is likely to have little or no appreciation of the role theory plays in relation to the perspective of the world one holds; this applies as much to the sophisticated social scientist as it does to the majority of graduates. There is little likelihood that scholars have a 'theoretical self-consciousness'²--that is, clarity about the root assumptions which underlie a particular mode of social investigation. There is little awareness of the role paradigms play in determining what is considered problematical and what is 'normal'. The problem is that the root assumptions of the paradigm are often unknown, and there is no consciousness as to how these root assumptions play a large role in determining how the world looks. This is true for both the citizen who lives in the paradigm of a particular political structure (e.g., American democracy), and for the social scientist who works within a theoretical paradigm, which, of course, has some relationship to the larger paradigm--the political.

My purpose in the following sections is as follows: First I want to make clear what I mean by the notion "paradigm", a notion which is usually used only in connection with intellectual activities. Then, following Sheldon Wolin³, I will discuss paradigms as they relate to political society. Following this I will briefly show that we are all living in paradigms of differing dimensions. The two dimensions I refer to are the liberal paradigm and the American (the two are obviously interrelated, the second being a specific example of the former). I then return to the

world of intellectual activities and show how the paradigms which have dominated the world of knowledge for some time are closely connected to the dominant political paradigms--liberalism and Americanism. In other words, the ideas we have as to what constitutes theory or appropriate research are closely tied to history; they do not stand outside history or society. The particular elementary generalizations, modes of thought and concomitant intellectual activities which dominate this era create considerable problems for those of us who wish to understand Freire. The reason is that Freire speaks to us using categories of thought which stand outside the paradigm we inhabit. It's as if he is speaking a foreign language. His immersion in history and philosophy is particularly difficult for those of us who have grown up within the American paradigm. The final section of this chapter is devoted to showing what some of the elements of Freire's theory are. In order to make sense of, to grasp the meaning of what he is saying, I have found it necessary to refer to other scholars who clearly stand in his tradition--the scholars who speak the same language he does--who have made 'sense' of the world in similar ways.

Paradigms

The notion of paradigm and its relation to the work of the natural sciences has been developed by T.E. Kuhn.⁴ Scientific paradigms are "universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners."⁵ Wolin shows the dialectic between paradigm and its effect on the behavior of

'believers'..."a paradigm guides the community in its choice of problems; the community in turn has as its task the solution of the puzzles set by the paradigm."⁶ Even more basically, and this point is crucial to my argument, "Every paradigm has fundamental ontological categories."⁷ These categories are the most basic determinants as to how all activities will proceed. Kuhn gives as an example the continued acceptance of Newton's laws which, as long as they continued to be honored, helped set puzzles and limit acceptable solutions. "The quantity of matter was a fundamental ontological category for physical scientists, and the forces that act between bits of matter were a dominant topic for research."⁸ A scientific paradigm then, contains at basis, elementary theoretical generalizations which have direct implications for the kinds of research, methods and goals in which a scientist engages. Even more basically, the generalizations provide the scientist with a pair of spectacles (of which he is mostly unconscious) through which he views the world. The facts he is looking for are imbued with the theory which he holds, which in turn is modified in a never-ending effort to make theory and nature fit. The activity of working out (articulating) the paradigm according to its rules is called, by Kuhn, 'puzzle-solving'. When there are too many anomalies for the paradigm to handle, this usually sets off a crisis among scientists, and in the midst of great debate, a quantum leap takes place and a new paradigm emerges as acceptable to the scientific community; it often has at its base a different set of propositions which result in a different sort of activity in all dimensions of scientific work. During this period of crisis philosophy emerges as basic assumptions are questioned;

during the period of 'normal science' philosophy is rejected, since one cannot be constantly 're-tooling'.

Paradigms and Politics

In an article entitled "Paradigms and Political Theories", Sheldon Wolin takes Kuhn's discussion of paradigm a step further and suggests that a political society can be understood in much the same way: as a paradigm. His idea is worth quoting in full:

From this viewpoint society would be viewed as a coherent whole in the sense of its customary political practices, institutions, laws, structure of authority and citizenship, and operative beliefs being organized and interrelated. A politically organized society contains definite institutional arrangements, certain widely held beliefs regarding the location and use of political power, certain expectations about how authority ought to treat the members of society and about the claims that organized society can rightfully make upon its members. In saying that the practices and beliefs of society are organized and interrelated, that its members have certain expectations and share certain beliefs one is saying that the society believes itself to be one thing rather than another, a democracy rather than a dictatorship, a republic rather than a monarchy, a directed society rather than a free one. The ensemble of practices and beliefs may be said to form a paradigm in the sense that the society tries to carry on its political life in accordance with them.⁹

One can now grasp how anyone growing up in the context of a political culture (and everyone does) comes to acquire a set of elementary theoretical generalizations which are constitutive of how individuals in that culture act upon the world. The very fact that people in a culture understand each other at all, that everything is not 'blooming, buzzing confusion', as William James put it, is indicative of this. There is a world of meaning in which people interact without having to question each other at all times as to what the rules are. For now let me be

clear again that my argument is that all actions are 'theory imbued', and that the particular theory with which we are imbued depends on the particular political paradigm in which we have grown up. Thus, regardless of the level, quality or degree of theoretical sophistication, all of our actions are in one way or another informed by theory, probably unconsciously held. Freire makes the point clearly:

Human actions in the world are conditioned by their own results, by their own outcome. Thus there are different degrees of relations to the world, different degrees of actions and perception. Nevertheless whatever the degree of action on the world it implies a theory. Even those actions called magic are governed by theory (a system of principles which dictate the manner in which the act has to be formed in order to be effective).¹⁰

Liberalism

We live in an epochal paradigm. That is, there are certain principles and concomitant institutions and practices which set this epoch apart from the previous one. The present era is designated as the liberal epoch. It stands in relationships to the previous era (the Medieval) but can be clearly demarcated from it; it is also in relationship with all the smaller paradigms (specific cultures, specific communities) in existence at the moment.

An epoch is characterized by a complex of ideas, concepts, hopes, doubts, values, and challenges in dialectical interaction with their opposites, striving towards plenitude. The concrete representation of many of these ideas, values, concepts and hopes, as well as the obstacles which impede man's full humanization constitute the themes of that epoch. These themes imply others which are opposing or even antithetical.¹¹

When Freire posits that subject and object are in dialectical relationship, or more concretely, when he says "the starting point of the

analysis must be a critical comprehension of man as a being who exists in and with the world"¹²--he is, in fact, suggesting a theme which is antithetical to the theme which dominates in this, the liberal epoch. This dominant theme is that one can actually make a radical split between man and world, or more basically, subject and object. The categories we unconsciously think in are heavily imbued with these liberal notions. One way to come to know (i.e., to bring to consciousness) these categories is to become aware of how political philosophy does in fact underlie the social structures we participate in, the way we govern ourselves, how we interpret problems, the decisions we make about how to allocate resources. In order to become familiar with how liberal political doctrine rules the roost it is useful to study what some of the early architects of the liberal state said. The difficult task for each one of us above and beyond this is to see how we and others manifest this thinking in the actions and judgments we make day to day at work and at home. The same holds true for the social scientists who may be deluding themselves into thinking that they are creating instruments and processes which are free of bias or, even more basically, free of judgment and interpretation (i.e., objective). Only when we are aware of this dimension of our lives are we in a position to critically evaluate it.

Just as in the scientific paradigm a few ontological principles have implications for how all activity will proceed, so too in the political paradigm. "The premises of the liberal vision are few; they are tied together; and they are as powerful in the hold they have over the mind, as they are unacknowledged and forgotten."¹³

The most basic of these premises posited by liberal theory is the possibility of radically splitting subject and object. The early liberal philosophers insisted upon it, and it led to an entirely different vision of the relationship of the individual to society to that which was dominant in the medieval era (the epoch preceding the liberal era). During the medieval era the individual was subsumed by the group to which he belonged. The common good was to be determined by the fathers--priests, kings, and ultimately God. Individuals, all of whom knew their proper state on earth, awaited salvation in heaven and accepted the interpretation as to what constituted right action in the eyes of God by the representatives on earth. "The state is gathered into the presence of the king, and the society is bound together by each subject's personal duty to him."¹⁴ There was no concept of a private good in medieval philosophy. Recognizing the totalitarian tendencies in this position, recognizing the degree to which this social philosophy provided the means for domination, and confronted by a changing economy, the emerging of the industrial era, liberal philosophers posited the possibility of a private sphere radically separated from the public. The following is a short exposition on one liberal philosopher's way of defining this split.

J.S. Mill's treatise On Liberty is a good example of the liberal achievement: the conception of the abstract individual, abstracted from social action as well as community. Mill was motivated by a desire to develop 'the principle of non-interference in the lives of individuals by the state, from the moral axioms of utilitarianism'. A few quotes from Mill's work will provide concrete examples of what I am suggesting:

The only part of the conduct of anyone for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.¹⁵

So there are two separate spheres of existence posited by Mill: the subjective (feelings, thoughts, desires, life style) and the objective (the sphere in which the individual comes into contact with and impinges upon other individuals). Subject and object can be understood and spoken about as radically separate. Again let Mill speak and establish the separation:

...But there is a sphere of action in which society, as distinguished from the individual has, if any, only an indirect interest; comprehending all that portion of a person's life and conduct which affects only himself, or if it also affects others, only with their free, voluntary and undeceived consent and participation...This then is the appropriate region of human liberty. It comprises first the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty of conscience; liberty of thought and feeling...Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character, of doing as we like subject to such consequences as may follow.¹⁶

What I am hoping to point out is the sharpness of the line between private and public developed by Mill. When Mill combined his abstract individualistic notions with utilitarian notions of happiness, that is, actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness, he articulated one strong strand of thought that has pervaded many liberal democracies, although some more than others. Robert Paul Wolff captures the effect of combining the two positions (individualism and utilitarianism):

In its most primitive form--and it is thus that a philosophy often reveals itself best--liberalism views man as a rationally calculating maximizer of pleasure and minimizer of pain...Rationality thus reduces to a calculating prudence; its highest point is reached when we deliberately shun the present pleasure for fear of future pain.¹⁷

Arguing that this theory has implications for how men relate to each other, Wolff goes on to say:

If the simple psychological egoism of liberal theory is correct, then each individual must view others as mere instruments in the pursuit of his private ends. As I formulate my desire and weigh the most prudent ends for satisfying them, I discover that the actions of other persons bent upon similar lonely quests may effect the outcome of my enterprise. In some cases they threaten me; in others the possibility exists of a mutually beneficial cooperation. I adjust my plans accordingly, perhaps even entering into quite intricate and enduring alliances with other individuals. But always I seek my own pleasure (or happiness--the shift from one to the other is not of very great significance in liberal theory). For me other persons are obstacles to be overcome or resources to be exploited--always means, that is to say, and never ends in themselves. To speak fancifully, it is as though society were an enclosed space in which float a number of spherical balloons filled with an expanding gas. Each balloon increases in size until its surface meets the surface of other balloons; then it stops growing and adjusts to its surroundings. Justice in such a society could only mean the protection of each balloon's interior (Mill's private space) and the equal apportionment of space to all.¹⁸

I quote Wolff at length so that the connection between the philosophical position of Mill and a certain state of affairs which has developed since then is quite clear. There is, in other words, a relationship between liberal thought and practice which was taking place at the time it was being developed, and what has occurred since then. Thus one of the great difficulties for liberal thought was to somehow account for community, to explain why people stayed together at all. Indeed, today in the society which was born liberal (the United States) it seems to me that one of its greatest problems is the breakdown of community; the individual is literally in confrontation with the state; there are no mediating groups between the individual and the state which have any viability; this applies to that last vestige of protection from the outer world--the family--as it appears on the point of

dissolution. I do not want to launch here into the concrete manifestations of the liberal paradigm but rather show that one of its prime achievements was the creation of antinomies in various areas.

At the base is the radical split between subject and object. The manifestations of this splitting are to be found in the antinomies between public and private, inner and outer, reason and passion, fact and theory, fact and value, objectivity and subjectivity. Again the point is the sharpness of the splits; the fact is that they are separable and understood apart from each other according to liberal theory. As Wolff says, the kind of rationality which emerges from liberal theory is more concerned with means rather than ends, a fact which I will argue is particularly noticeable in the United States. If one cannot posit a public good then one cannot develop a vision, or a set of purposes by reason; purposes are to be established by the desires of individuals. Goals are established in any case not by reason but by what makes people feel good (pleasure); thus all thought about what constitutes a higher value gets reduced to 'opinion' or 'feeling'. Reasoning becomes a way of establishing a means to an end--instrumental, in other words. I mention this now because the nature of knowledge which is dominant in a particular society has implications for educators who are, after all, concerned about the same thing: knowledge. The kind of knowledge which dominates is intimately related to the political and social realities of any given society.

The dominance of instrumental rationality is a deeply imbedded aspect of liberalism (along with abstract individualism to which it is

closely tied). It involves a manipulative posture toward the world; it denies the immutability of nature and society. Everything is potentially transformable by man's work. The dominant kind of question that instrumental rationality is concerned with is: what can be done and how? What are the practical applications? This mode of consciousness is in radical contrast to the mode which dominated the medieval era, and the full implications can probably only be grasped in the light of the contrast to that era:

The belief in a stable organization of social ranks, estates or classes co-exists according to the principle of appositeness with the conception that many of the phenomena of nature are sacred and therefore must be respected by man.¹⁹

A different kind of thinking dominated in the medieval age. The respect we now show to nature is of a vastly different sort to that true of the medieval era. This era asks how to respect nature. Previously this was an inconceivable question. Thus a certain kind of thinking, a certain sort of knowledge, dominates in one era as opposed to another. "The subordination of reason to industry beginning in the eighteenth century (its transformation from metaphysics to instrumental rationality) was both a condition for social progress insofar as knowledge became a productive force and the means by which initial reason was suppressed."²⁰

This obviously has implications for educators. The kind of knowledge which dominates is intimately tied to the political and social and historical realities of any given society. How the liberal mentality has been translated into its American form is now briefly to be discussed, before returning in more detail to the world of knowledge.

Americanism

American practices are particularly strongly imbued with liberal notions. Only a strong tradition of philosophy and history could counter the absolute dominance of liberalism in this country. Instead of such a tradition we find a skepticism about the value of philosophy and a propensity for amnesia. Instrumental rationality has a particularly strong sway in this country. The reasons for this can only be found via a careful study of American history in contrast to European history, where unanimity does not reign supreme.

One effort at this has been Louis Hartz's Liberal Tradition in America.²¹ His book is an effort to understand precisely why American and European political societies have diverged to the extent they have. He is referring here to a divergence which is very striking to the newcomer to this country. One is immediately struck by the lack of any debate about fundamentals. Evidence for this is considerable. Two examples will suffice for the moment. Unlike in Europe, only two political parties, which fundamentally agree with each other, have any real power in this country. The debate which takes place between the Democrats and the Republicans is one about who can tinker with what aspect of social reality better than the other. There is no debate about the viability of the existing paradigm by any group that has any hope of gaining power. In France and Italy, in contrast, the Communist Party, which to a much greater extent than anything permissible here is arguing for fundamental change, can come very close to being elected. In other words, at the level of institutionalized politics debate about

fundamentals occurs. One sees similar evidence when comparing the three daily newspapers which can survive financially in New York City, to the proliferation of viewpoints available in newspapers on the streets of Paris. In a country where fundamentals are agreed upon by a vast majority there is no market for opinions which challenge these fundamentals. Similarly in a climate where lack of doubt is so prevalent, critical social theory which requires philosophical analysis and historical interpretation has little fertile soil in which to grow. Hartz attempts to explain this phenomenon.

His essential argument is that an understanding would be enhanced if we could grasp the significance of the fact that America has never had to cope with an entrenched feudal structure, and the consequent fact that it never had to endure a democratic revolution. As de Tocqueville put it, America was 'born free'. Its liberalism was a 'natural phenomena' as Santayana put it.²² Thus "one of the central characteristics of a non-feudal society is that it lacks a genuine revolutionary tradition-- the tradition which in Europe has been linked with the Puritan and French revolutions...and this being the case it also lacks the tradition of reaction."²³ For de Tocqueville the revolution of 1776 was not noticeable for the freedom to which it led but for the fact that it did not have to destroy established feudal structures. Hartz, following de Tocqueville, states that the particular way in which American democracy came to life produced a particularly strong underlying unity. The force of this has had an enormous sway ever since and is to be felt in every domain of life. Hartz speaks of this underlying unanimity as the American form of absolutism.

The basic ethical problem of this version of liberalism according to Hartz "is not the danger of the majority which has been its conscious fear, but the danger of unanimity which slumbered unconsciously behind it."²⁴ But ethical problems are not discussed on this level by a society that is so certain of the fundamentals upon which it rests. "It is only when you take your ethics for granted that all problems emerge as problems of technique."²⁵ Or as Horkheimer put it, "A society so imbued with technique, with 'how to' mentality has a particularly strong suspicion of philosophy which is typically seen as inconvenient, obstinate, and with all that of no immediate use."²⁶

The absence of an historical awareness that goes beyond reference to the constitution and to Jefferson is also particularly noticeable. The old is always to be quickly done away with and replaced by the new. Previous generations and their approaches to the world are best forgotten and replaced with new and progressive versions (e.g., the pressure on every succeeding generation of parents to use the ultra-progressive child-rearing mode currently in vogue). Similarly in the kind of social studies which are dominant one finds little reference to historical interpretation. In fact, one finds here a rejection of historical comparison and a sense of historical process stated with absolute certainty. Such an attitude could only be assumed by a people with a profound lack of any sense of history. They have grown up in a world which has a history of ahistoricity. And this is of course very true of the history of this country. The absolute rejection of 'motherland' required at birth, and the concomitant need to forget the roots has been fueled by the waves of

immigrants who duplicated this process. Immigrant families would place pressure on their children not to be like father, to reject the ways of the past, and to become Yankee. In addition American schools had as one of their prime functions the Americanization of immigrant children.²⁷ The press for amnesia has grown up in and contributed to a rejection of an historical consciousness.

Absolute conviction, social amnesia and the concomitant lack of philosophy and history are deeply embedded elements of the American paradigm. This in turn, when understood in relationship to liberalism in general, results in an instrumental rationality of a particularly strong sort. If the burden of history does not weigh, the outer world takes on particularly manipulatable possibilities. So indeed does the inner world. If man is an absolutely blank slate then it is easy to re-compute him. The love of technique grows alongside this, as does the image of man as a complex machine which can be appropriately programmed as long as we develop precise enough instruments. Without philosophy these deeply embedded notions are not exposed to the light of critical reason. Rather, they are the 'taken-for-granted' reality of American life that Hartz was referring to. They are seen as the background to social reality as such by American social scientists; thus they assume the same status as the natural world. They are truths much on the order of a natural law.

Mention of the world of social science introduces the next phase of this discussion and that is an explicit discussion of how the world of knowledge stands in relationship to these political paradigms. On a

general level I will discuss traditional theory and the paradigm within which it operates; specifically, I will show how empiricist thinking and practice closely resemble some aspects of the American liberal paradigm, thus helping explain why they have such a good reception in this country.

Traditional Theory Paradigm

First, theory like anything else is not independent of history. The kind of theory which dominates in any one epoch has very much to do with the 'complex of ideas, hopes, doubts, values and their concrete representations which dominate in any particular time.' Thus there exists a dialectical relationship between theory (the subject, in this case) and history (object). A good example of this is Philip Rieff's explanation of the theory of theory which dominated in the medieval era. Since I have very briefly explained what some of the dominant themes were in that era the following should make sense: The first and oldest theory of theory is where "theory is the way which ought to be establishes its hegemony over what is. Value and Truth are inseparable." The task of the time was not to discover truth via empirical investigation but rather to comprehend God's word and live by its demands. Rieff goes on saying that until the eighteenth century

the emotional task of life is to conform our actions to right order so that we too can be right. Theoretical knowledge is therefore of the good. The ideal is therefore the most real, the model from which the isness of things, in their splendid variety, derives. In this theory of theory knowledge finally emerges in its final form as faith; the best life is that of true obedience. God is the final object of all classical theorizing, to know God in his natural order (or moral commandments) is the highest good.²⁸

The assertion that theory is itself an historical development must come as a surprise to those imbued with the faith that in the scientific age we have somehow arrived, with respect to what constitutes theory (and therefore methods of research and evaluation). For science, which is supposed to have dispelled ideology, has established ground rules as to what constitutes theory--ground rules which by definition (because we are dealing with science which purports to be value-free) are universally true for all time--that is, ahistorical, not determined at all by a particular moment in history. Thus: "the conception of theory was absolutized as though it were grounded in the inner nature of knowledge as such or justified in some other ahistorical way, and thus it became a reified ideological category."²⁹

The rules as to what constitutes theory have been established very largely by the successes of the natural sciences. Since social scientists have attempted to model their endeavors on these 'more successful' activities, they have largely accepted the definitions of what constitutes theory. Very basically, theory is to consist of a set of general propositions about a subject, "the propositions being so linked with each other that a few are basic and the rest derive from these"³⁰ and "the smaller the number or primary principles in comparison with the derivations the more perfect the theory."³¹ Crucially the validity of the theory is dependent upon its capacity to be in accordance with the facts. If this accordance is lacking either the scientists' instruments need perfecting or else the theory needs adjustment or replacement. Whatever the improvement the same relationship between theory and fact will be maintained:

"on the one hand the conceptually formulated knowledge, and on the other, the facts to be subsumed under it."³² This relationship then, between what is perceptually verified and a set of conceptual formulations is known as theoretical knowledge.

It is on the basis of this approach to theory that the social sciences have advanced insisting their aim has been to articulate descriptive, value-free science. It follows that if the task set is to bring theory most closely in accordance with the fact, then the possibility exists of merely describing reality as opposed to making any normative judgments. That is, one has to accept the notion that it is possible to split off fact from value, description from evaluation. This tendency has appeared in the social sciences in two apparently different but essentially similar forms: the abstracted empiricists and the Grand Theorists.³³ The former make the claim that only that which can be empirically verifiable can be claimed to be the truth, and that anything else is chatter, no matter how interesting it may be. The latter claim that very general principles descriptive on high planes of generalization can be made, and that eventually it will be seen that the facts can come to fit in the appropriate boxes. Even though the kinds of intellectual works which emerge from these two schools appear very different, the basic assumptions which inform them are the same, i.e., they stand within the same paradigm. Even though in the following chapter the epistemological and ontological assumptions which inform the empiricists specifically will be taken up, it is necessary to briefly make clear within this context what some of the assumptions and concomitant activities of this school are.

Empiricist Paradigm

The empiricist approach has taken the upper hand, particularly in the United States; it has come to dominate the educational arena. Empiricists typically reject philosophy, or 'speculation' (as they would refer to it), insisting that all judgment and interpretation of a subjective nature must be eliminated in our effort to understand social reality. Only that information which is 'brute data' which can be empirically verified, usually through some sort of 'instrument', can be considered true knowledge. Thus the careful gathering of endless facts will gradually, when pieced together, form a total description of social reality, and one that is objectively and universally true. Thus the individual scientist is freed from any obligation to explain his theory of the 'whole' since there are no 'data' to back up what would be mere speculation.

We can already see that this position has consequences for the kinds of intellectual activities which are generated within the framework of this paradigm. Since the root assumption exists that man (in this case the disinterested scientist) and world (the particular aspect of social reality being investigated) can be radically separated, it is argued that one can produce, describe objectively, without judgment (and therefore free from political bias or ideology) what the facts are. The ahistoricizing and absolutizing of these basic assumptions which underlie empiricist social science creates the impression that these 'scientists' are really engaged in 'pure' science, that they, the scientists, are somehow able to divest themselves of their position in society and in

history, that the knowledge they develop is free from the taint of politics; i.e., that it has no political consequences, and that the activities of research, including the creation of 'instruments', 'experiments', and behavior modification techniques are all in and of themselves neutral, isolated and isolatable from history. In other words, these activities are not understood by the empiricists as within a specific culture, a specific kind of economic system, at a specific moment in history. They see no connection between their obsessive concern for 'operationalizing', their distaste for 'abstract and impractical' theorizing, and the kind of society which only rewards instrumental thinking, because it thrives on marketable, usable products. The very fact that their product is as well received on the market as it is is also seen as in no way influencing on the objective, universal nature of their research. The fact of the matter is that as a result of their lack of concern with philosophy, the empiricists have come to assume that they are somehow carrying out a 'natural law'. Without philosophy they are unable to recognize that at the base of their paradigm are a set of ontological and epistemological assumptions or principles which, when revealed, are obviously liberal principles, and at least open to debate (see Chapter II). Thus we are faced with a situation in which scientism has a hold as powerful and forgotten and unacknowledged as the liberal principles discussed earlier. "Scientism means science's belief in itself: that is the conviction that we can no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but must identify knowledge with science."³⁴ Even more basically than this, the following statement by Marcuse captures what

has been the thrust of my argument, that politics is all pervasive, even entering the halls of 'disinterested' science, in a very specific way: "...later positivism (empiricism is one form) which in fighting metaphysical ideas eliminates not only their metaphysical character, but their content as well. It thus links inevitably to the status quo."³⁵

Lest this seem outrageous to any 'disinterested' scientist reading this, perhaps the following quote from Horkheimer puts it more concretely: "In recent periods of contemporary society the so-called human studies have had but a fluctuating market value and must try to imitate the more prosperous natural sciences whose practical value is beyond question."³⁶ Horkheimer was writing in 1930 when he wrote this and lest he be accused of spouting ideas independent of fact, the following story, as told by David E. Easton and quoted by Sheldon Wolin, describes how the behavioral sciences came by that particular name. The United States Senate was holding hearings in the late 1940's with the intention of creating a national science foundation intended to 'stimulate' and provide funds for scholarly research. The 'representatives' of the social sciences were shocked to discover that the name the senators were using to describe their endeavors was 'socialistic sciences'. The term 'behavioral science' was coined in order to identify those aspects of the social sciences which resembled 'hard science'. The tactic proved successful and "when by virtue of another 'accidental' turn of events the Ford Foundation decided at about the same time to institute a 'Behavioral Sciences' division, the name was well on the way to becoming a movement."³⁷ The particular intellectual operations established by this paradigm have

indeed come to dominate the educational arena at all levels. We have here an excellent example of how one form of knowledge (empiricist, value free science) comes to be dominant as a result of the coincidence between knowledge, politics, and history. However, this observation can only be made from the perspective of another paradigm which, when understood, provokes an entirely different set of intellectual operations to that of empiricism. That paradigm is critical theory which will be discussed more fully below.

The early part of this chapter explained that at the heart of a paradigm lie a few elemental propositions which are linked together and which generate a particular set of activities, of intellectual operations which ultimately only make sense when one understands the seed propositions at the heart of the paradigm. In connection with scientific or intellectual activity the paradigm establishes the way the world is seen by the scientist. As Kuhn put it, "...the research problems of normal science are set by its paradigm: the problems are to the paradigm as pieces are to a puzzle...what may be an unsolved puzzle for one paradigm may not even exist for another."³⁸ When a paradigmatic revolution occurs the shift that takes place in perspective is a revolutionary shift. The world looks very different and the kinds of intellectual operations one performs are going to be equally different:

A new theory embodies a new way of looking at phenomena rather than the discovery of hitherto inaccessible data. It represents a break with the existing tradition of scientific practice and proclaims new standards of legitimate activity; it proposes somewhat different rules of inquiry, a different problem field, as well as different notions of significance and of what constitutes a solution. Neither the new paradigm nor the old can provide neutral procedures for deciding between their respective merits, because each paradigm has its own distinctive procedures. (emphasis mine)³⁹

Critical Theory Paradigm

It is the essence of my argument that Freire is difficult to comprehend because he is speaking to us using a set of categories and an intellectual style which live outside the intellectual processes with which we are familiar. The categories he uses have implications for the kinds of intellectual operations and activities in which one engages, and are very different to the kind that abstracted empiricists employ. Thus he stands inevitably in debate with this school of thought and practice and can only be properly understood as such. I intend to point out these specific points of debate in Chapter II, although some anticipation of that argument will be necessary here. The reason is that critical theory does what its name says it does: it criticizes. Indeed, its genesis can be best understood as a continuing dialogue with closed systems of intellectual thought. It was, of course, critical of these closed systems. In order to understand the basic elements of the critical theory paradigm it is necessary to understand the degree to which it stands in critical relationship to the dominant categories of liberal thought.

Marx, the first of the critical theorists, spoke for all collectivist thinkers when he said: "The image of the abstracted individual is as great an absurdity as the idea of the development of language without individuals living together and talking together."⁴⁰ The notion that at his essence man is a social being is at the heart of the theory. This is not meant in the same sense as gregariousness: monkeys are gregarious in the sense that they like each other's company. Rather, it is meant in the sense that the social is immediately and directly

implicated in the individual. One cannot speak of the individual on the one hand and the social sphere on the other, or the private world on the one hand and the public on the other, as if the two have nothing in any way to do with each other. "The social does not influence the private; it dwells within it."⁴¹ says Russell Jacoby, and then quoting Marx, "...The individual is the social being."⁴² Freud means the same thing when he says, "Individual psychology is at the same time social psychology as well."⁴³ (as viewed by the psychoanalytic model). These examples are not intended to indicate that the individual is to be collapsed into the social at the cost of any individuality on his part. It is the abstracted notion of individualism which is being critiqued here; it is the radical separation of subject and object and all that this implies that is false according to critical theory. Critical theory posits the continuing dialectical relationship between subject and object, and always is critical of any efforts at splitting apart or collapsing one into the other (as many positivist Marxists have done, and as B.F. Skinner does; the two have much in common in that the subject is eclipsed in their respective schemas.). The key to understanding critical theory, then, lies in understanding the ramifications of its most fundamental position, that the dialectic between subject and object must not be lost. In order to understand this more clearly it would be useful to explain the closely intertwining concepts of: the whole in relationship to the parts; the notion of consciousness, (a crucial one in Freire's schema); and dialectic logic without which one would fail to be engaged in intellectual operations which constitute this paradigm.

Before going on, however, I want to emphasize that it is crucial to the understanding of critical theory to understand that it has always been fighting a battle with what has been dominant, and that is one version of liberal theory or another. The result is that critical theorists require an acute theoretical self-consciousness, an understanding of how the very basic assumptions one holds have considerable implications, including political implications; critical theory argues that it is only being self-conscious about its inevitable political nature, when it sets certain value-laden aims for itself. This is opposed to many other doctrines which set aims as if they have no political ramifications, which pretend to be apolitical or 'value-free'.

Wholes and Parts

Before explaining how critical theorists conceive the notion of consciousness, it is important to understand an even larger category of critical thought: The whole has meaning over and above the separate parts added together to make up the whole. The empiricist view maintains that careful analysis of minute parts of the whole will eventually put someone in a position to put the whole puzzle together; the critical theorist argues that only via a comprehension of the whole can one come to understand the ways in which the parts reflect the whole.⁴⁴

Consciousness

The notion of consciousness can only be understood via the acceptance of the principle of totality; for consciousness in the sense used

here really means a seamless web of meaning running from mind to social institutions and back again in a continuing dialectical relationship. The categories of thinking which dominate the age are dominant in some form in our own thinking, in the thinking that informs most publically organized activities, e.g., much of mainstream social science and educational institutions, and in the social structures that are constituted by these categories of thought, which are in turn constitutive of the kind of thinking which dominates the age. There is a profound interplay between reflection and existence. Thus the following sentence from Freire can make sense: "A knowledge of reality is indispensable for the development of consciousness of self in the same way that a consciousness of self is indispensable for a knowledge of reality."⁴⁵ In the most radical sense then (i.e., at the roots) man is a social being. Consciousness is that point where biography and history intersect. The notion that: "liberalism is all of a piece, not just a set of doctrines about the disposition of power and wealth, but as a metaphysical conception of mind and society"⁴⁶--a notion which has informed much of the earlier analysis in this chapter, is clear. The social scientist, the educator, the layman are all imbued with categories of thinking and ways of being in the world that are liable at the deepest level to reflect liberal categories. This does not mean that one individual perfectly reflects the liberal mind nor that there is liable to be an absence of conflicting categories. It does mean that all educational activities in general are deeply embedded in their context, and hopefully elucidates one of the concepts central to Freire's argument: that all education

is political: it either helps to maintain the status quo or helps to develop alternatives. Only a theoretical self-consciousness will help somebody choose wisely. (See Chapter V for a full discussion of this concept).

Dialectics

It is crucial to my argument that it be clearly understood that the notion of consciousness cannot be reduced to either of its parts, that is, a set of ideas on the one hand, or social institutions on the other. If one does this, one obtains an abstract view of the nature of social reality. It is another way in which subject and object are abstracted from each other. For one to continue to be able to work within the subject and object relationship requires a different logic to that which is used in mainstream social science. Unger explains this point concisely:

The division of the world into an order of ideas and an order of events with their corresponding methods of logical analysis and causal explanation must not be accepted as an eternal fate of thought. Between the order of ideas and the order of events there is a third realm, the order of consciousness, mind, culture or social life for the understanding of which neither the logical nor the causal mode is adequate.⁴⁷

Jacoby puts the same idea in terms more familiar in this argument: "The alternatives of pure subjectivity and pure objectivity are the alternatives of positive thought itself. Marxist and Critical Thought must use another logic, dialectical logic."⁴⁸ In a nutshell dialectic logic constantly attempts to comprehend the ongoing tension between subject and object, the ways in which biography and history radically intersect. Dialectic logic attempts to be true to the contradictions inherent in

the individual's relationship to society, rather than attempting to smooth them away.

In addition to these reasons for the use of dialectic logic, critical theory has always called for a capacity to see beyond the given, beneath the surface, "to be able to penetrate the world of things, to show the underlying relationship of persons."⁴⁹ This requires a capacity to be continuously aware of the relationship of the part to the whole, the moment to history, the individual to society, the surface fact to the concrete meaning underlying the fact. This has, as I have already said, required that critical theorists be critical of those views which collapse any of these poles in their analysis. It is not sufficient, however, to merely maintain two poles in an argument. The critical edge can be easily lost if other factors are not taken into account.

Critical theory maintains its cutting edge by its insistence on the dialectic; the capacity to maintain this edge depended on the capacity to avoid absolutist universal truths, independent of concrete subjects in a concrete (i.e., material) society, within a specific period of history. All critical thinking has a materialist base. But the materialism is of a dialectic nature; it is an ongoing process between subject and object, not a methodological construct or a social scientific model beyond the control of men. "Dialectics probe the force field between consciousness and being, subject and object...remaining willing to operate in a permanent state of suspended judgment."⁵⁰ The concept of mediation plays a crucial role in dialectic logic then; it is crucial for the correct theory of society: "No facet of social reality could be understood

by the observer as final or complete in itself. There were no 'social facts' as the positivists believed. Instead there was a constant interplay of particular and universal."⁵¹ History is seen as in process; social phenomena of any kind cannot be described statically, but are in relationship to the whole, to the totality, and are part of the movement of that totality. 'Totality' here means grasping how epochal themes intersect with themes typical of various societies, and further, in sub-cultures within societies. Any analysis must show an awareness of how the totality is reflected in the part. Awareness of the dominant themes in any epoch must include awareness of those themes which are in dialectical relationship to much of what is dominant. Any analysis which fails to consider the totality is abstract. It offers a one-sided flat view of social reality and is unable to account for process; it contains no theory of history, and therefore explains very little. In contrast, all thinking which points to the multi-dimensional and complexly mediated nature of social reality is concrete. Critical theorists find the effort amongst empiricists to be absolutely certain of the truth via statistical analysis of certain social phenomena to be abstract, particularly because it usually stands in isolation from a theory of the whole society. It also finds the need for intellectual certainty a reflex of personal insecurity. As Adorno put it: "Freedom is never given, always threatened... the absolutely certain as such is always unfreedom...it is a mistaken conclusion that what endures is truer than what passes..."⁵²

The generating force behind all dialectic thinking is the 'power of negative thinking'. "Thinking is indeed essentially the negation of what

is before us."⁵³ Negative thinking searches for the truth by searching for what is latent. It assumes that what is on the surface is appearance. Reality and the greater truths lie beneath the surface, and the task of thought is to bring the negative, that which is opposed by the dominating order, to the surface. Negative thinking requires a critical thinking and a dialectical logic.

The truths which are hidden (antithesis) must be brought to the surface along with those elements of the truth which have already surfaced (thesis), and thereby form a new synthesis. Hegel called this synthesizing process aufhebung. Adorno explains this process of aufhebung, and at the same time displays critical theory's alliance with certain strands of conservative thought, over and against mindless radicalism. He argues that the true dialectic was not a search for the immutable (as in some strands of phenomenological thought) but was "the attempt to see the new in the old instead of simply the old in the new."⁵⁴

Only dialectic thinking can help the person emerge from a world of false consciousness into a slow unveiling of reality, and eventually into being able to 'say his own word', a notion which is crucial to Freire. However, this notion cannot be understood independently from the rest of the assumptions crucial to the dialectical process. Some of these have already been spelled out. Dialectic thought begins with a recognition of the whole; it also, in total contrast to positivist thought, makes an explicit value judgment to begin with, that "the world is unfree: that is to say, man and nature exist in conditions of alienation, exist other than they are." And thus the notion that, "the whole is true and the

whole is false" is central to dialectic thinking and places the dialectical thinker in a state of critical tension with all that is given, acceptable, accepted, because by definition as with 'facts' these are all acceptable to a power structure determined to maintain man's unfreedom.

The 'word' which one can only come to speak when one engages in critical, negative thinking, contains the potential for action as well as for reflection. One without the other is an abstraction; critical thinking rejects the radical divorcing of thought and action, so central to the traditional paradigm. It is therefore in total opposition to the paradigm which is dominant and to the intellectual processes which are reflective of the dominant paradigm. This has implications for the role of the intellectual, the intellectual processes which are undertaken within the paradigm: research, teaching and evaluation. C. Wright Mills gives a summary of how the two different paradigms generally referred to in this chapter approach their work.

The social scientists study the details of small scale milieux; Marx studied such details too, but always within the structure of total society. The social scientists knowing little history study at most short run trends; Marx using historical material...takes as the unit of study entire epochs. The values of the social scientists leads him to accept their society pretty much as it is; the values of Marx led him to condemn his society lock, stock and branch. The social scientists see their society as continuing in an evolutionary way without qualitative breaks in its structure; Marx sees the future in this society a qualitative break: a new form of society--in fact, a new epoch...is going to come about by means of a revolution.⁵⁵

Finally, but very essentially, critical theorists make a very strong assumption about the nature of man along with all philosophical positions; their position, however, is also very limited. They assume that man is potentially a rational, self-defining maker of culture and history. These

ideas are central to critical theory in general, and to Paulo Freire in particular. All educational activity which does not begin with the knowledge that man is denied (and is denying himself) becoming fully human, by a society structured in such a way that only a few benefit from it, is essentially preserving the status quo. Marcuse presents the same idea in discussing the obsession with discovering the facts so prevalent in mainstream social science: "The power of the facts is an oppressive power; it is the power of man over man, appearing as an objective rational condition. The unresolved contradictions of power by the few over the many, the continuous danger of atomic holocaust, mental impoverishment, inform the entire universe of discourse and action."⁵⁶ Only revolution, in the etymological sense of the word, that is a complete turn around, a new synthesis, can lead to freedom and an alternative mode of reasoning.

Paulo Freire and Critical Theory

Freire's argument too is that all educational activity is political and that the approach which dominates, 'banking education' as he calls it, has at its roots the same notions which we have seen inform other arenas of life in this liberal age. Freire puts it succinctly and at the same time displays his close relationship to critical theory in general: "Implicit in the banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between man and world: man is merely in the world, not with the world or with others; man is a spectator not a recreator."⁵⁷ Elsewhere Freire, referring to banking education, reflects the sentiments expressed in 'the whole is false': "Those truly committed to liberation must reject banking

education in its entirety, adopting instead a concept of men as conscious beings, and consciousness as consciousness intent upon the world."⁵⁸ In other words, all radical dichotomizing must be rejected wherever it is taking place, if one wants to be applying the Freire paradigm as opposed to the 'banking' paradigm to educational activity (research, teaching, evaluation). Presenting his model clearly Freire says, "the dialectical relationship of men with the world exists independently of how these relationships are perceived..." or "education as the practice of freedom denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world."⁵⁹ Thus the objective scientist, the objective verification or any form of neutral education is an impossibility for Freire. Education is either a process where men and women become aware of their semi-human condition in a world which militates against the development of full humanity, or education perpetuates the status quo. Recognizing the existence of both man and the world makes it an impossibility to talk only of an awareness and not of action on the world; it also recognizes the blindness of action without reflection.

For reflection to take place theory is called for, and for ongoing reflection on the theory, as action occurs. In the tradition of critical theory it has been argued that theory and action must remain in tension in a world which is fragmented; only when, and if, true freedom is attained can there be no tension between theory and practice; but given the tension, theory must always precede action: "The divorce of thought from action, of theory from practice, is itself part of the unfree world. No thought and no theory can undo it; but theory may help prepare

the ground for their possible reunion, and the ability of thought to develop a logic and language of contradiction is a prerequisite for this task."⁶⁰

Freire's books are a presentation of his theory; it is a theory that begins at the roots--understanding the nature of the man-world dialectic, and the implications this has for all other theorizing or action of any kind. It is obvious that Freire wants to be understood at the roots of what he is saying, and wants it understood why it is so important to understand him at the roots. He also wishes to be understood as rejecting at its roots the principles which govern the paradigm he calls banking education--the system which dichotomizes everything.

The evidence for this is manifest, but unless they are very careful those who read his books with eyes formed from another paradigm will not see or understand the significance of the following statements, taken from different texts:

World and men do not exist apart from each other, they exist in constant interaction. Marx does not espouse such a dichotomy nor does any other critical realistic thinker.⁶¹

As in other cases it is imperative to reflect philosophically. One cannot avoid this...it is sufficient that that form of knowledge be under consideration for philosophical reflection to be required.⁶²

Experience teaches us not to assume the obvious is clearly understood. So it is with the truism with which we begin: all educational practice implies a theoretical stance on the educator's part. The stance in turn implies--sometimes more, sometimes less implicitly--an interpretation of man and world.⁶³

I have chosen these quotes and others which precede them for their tone as well as their content. It seems crucial to me if we are to understand Freire that we understand the degree to which we are unused to

thinking in a fashion which is central to the dialectical, negative thinking of one who inhabits the critical theory paradigm. When Freire says, "experience teaches us not to assume the obvious is clearly understood" (see above), he is obviously aware that a notion that he has come to take for granted is not clearly understood by people who are not steeped in a certain philosophical tradition. Nor is it understood by those who have little awareness of the degree to which thought is constitutive of a particular kind of action in the world and vice versa; nor by those who fail to see how intimately politics is tied up with our private lives as well as our public ones.

The reason I have avoided simply summarizing the thought of Freire is that I have wanted to communicate one essential point: that Freire is speaking from another paradigm and that he has to be read with that awareness. To summarize: the crucial elements of the critical theory paradigm are as follows: The dialectical relationship between subject and objects; the crucial relevance of theory which has implications for action and vice versa; the importance of the dialectic mode of thinking, which in turn implies the capacity to think negatively--to negate what is before one because "the whole is true and the whole is false"; the importance of wholes over parts which implies that nothing exists in isolation from anything else, thus the need to be able to see the particular in the universal, the process of history in the present, and the fact that multi-determined, complexly mediated explanations of social reality are the only ones which can come close to the truth; the need to bring philosophy and history to bear on social analysis in order to be

able to speak about what is not immediately before one's eyes; the self-conscious commitment to be critical of what exists, which means an ever-growing commitment to the position that liberation is what must be striven for in every field of intellectual endeavor; the belief that man is potentially a self-defining being, capable of being a maker of culture as opposed to an object of history--that this characteristic sets him apart from other creatures in a fundamental way, and that he remains dehumanized until these potentialities are being fulfilled.

Summary

Instead of presenting the summary in such a way that it merely recapitulates what has already been said, I wish to put the critical theory paradigm to work, so to speak. As I have said elsewhere, a theoretical self-consciousness is crucial if we are to understand our own intellectual activities or anyone else's, including Freire's; this self-consciousness is equally necessary if we are to understand the political implications of the particular theory we are working with or reading about, or the educational alternative we may wish to put into practice.

There are many well-meaning people in the world; many recognize that there is indeed 'something wrong in the state of Denmark', and laudable efforts are made to improve matters, often by the creation of new and different technologies, or better educational methods. However, because many remain ignorant of the roots of the current problems, and the roots of their own theories, too often 'alternatives' do no more than mimic the

status quo. The counter culture is replete with examples of activities which were anything but alternatives to the status quo, but were rather the next logical step for the American culture as a whole to be taking; the speed and ease with which the media subsumed the counter-culture is excellent evidence of this. Again, only a deep knowledge of the roots of our difficulties and a theory of history and society as a whole--a theory which begins with an awareness of its roots will have any hope of guiding us toward paradigmatic change, as opposed to a 'coping' within the present under the guise of something substantially different. The following is one effort to create an alternative within the field of education. I intend to critique it, thereby following another tenet of critical theory: "The critical theorist exercises an aggressive critique not only against the conscious defenders of the status quo, but also against distracting, conformist or utopian tendencies within his own household."⁶⁴ Hopefully this will also serve to concretize for the reader what may so far appear to be abstract discussion with little relationship to current educational practices.

Confluent education is one branch of humanistic education and has been developed by George Brown and his associates in California as an alternative to the dry, emotionless classroom which dominates to such a large extent. The critique they make of what exists is considerable and strong: "Are all classrooms dead? No, not all. But too damned many are. And if nothing else, this is a pervasive, stupid waste of our most important resource--our children."⁶⁵ How they diagnose the problem and the solutions they offer is interesting.

When one reads gestalt theory as formulated in the original or as adapted by confluent educators, for whom gestalt serves as a backbone, one is immediately struck by the fact that they have a similar position on the whole-parts controversy to the one which has been stated above. At least so it appears: "According to the theory of holism, the part can be defined only in relation to the whole."⁶⁶ But the gestaltists' discussion of the whole does not include the wholeness of the relationship between mind and society; it postulates how the organism perceives the world in wholes: not the dialectic between man and world. So for instance the following: "I am proposing a Gestalt therapy as a necessity for our age. Western man needs a new awareness of his wholeness.", which again sounds interesting, but the author continues, "of his complex union of body, mind and emotions."⁶⁷ The world has disappeared. This allows us to understand how gestalt practice is focused on getting thinking and feeling together, not under the assumption that this is a piece of patchwork over a very bad tire, but rather a way to cure. Perls, one of the founders of this modern form of cure said it very explicitly: "Awareness--per se--by and in of itself can be curative."⁶⁸ The very basis, the theoretical basis upon which gestalt practice is founded is the clue that explains how all of these statements are possible. It is contained in the so-called gestalt prayer formulated by Perls: "I am I, and you are you; I am not in this world to live up to your expectations, and you are not here to live up to mine; If by chance we meet it's beautiful; if not, it can't be helped."⁶⁹ Compare this to the quote from John Stuart Mill on page seventeen, and it will be obvious how strongly

gestalt stands in the tradition of thought which has brought us many of the difficulties which we are now trying to combat. The lack of any analysis of what exists, the lack of any comprehension of the political implications of educational activity, no matter how hard it attempts to avoid the issue, leads to precisely the following educational praxis, which is informed by gestalt theory and is written up as an alternative to what exists.

The author, Sandra Newby, is hoping to combat consumer mentality in her classroom. She writes a letter to her ninth grade English class about responsibility: "At what point in your life will you take Total Responsibility for how you are living, and not blame teachers, parents, friends, or society in general?" (emphasis mine)⁷⁰ The important thing to note is that her position makes complete sense, given the ground assumption upon which gestalt theory is based--that the individual and the world can be understood apart from each other, and that in this case it is the individual which must be "fixed". In this particular example the students are learning that any grievances that they have must be directed at themselves, and any change efforts contemplated must be channeled at internal processes, rather than at social and structural processes. Thus the individual is kept isolated in his efforts to change the world; the only time he would be with a group is when he is looking for warmth and trust.

These are not isolated examples from the field of gestalt or humanistic psychology. Even though there are differences in approach amongst different authors and different schools, their root assumptions are similar

and these always lead them to make very similar statements when they take their theory out of the immediate realm in which they are thinking and speak on a larger scale. Two very brief examples will suffice: Roberto Assagioli, in the Act of Will is very explicit: "Only the development of his inner powers can offset the dangers inherent in man's losing control of the tremendous natural forces at his disposal and becoming the victim of his own achievements."⁷¹ Everett Shostrum even more explicitly reveals the political thinking that underlies 'humanistic psychology': "...The manipulator...is the able-bodied man accepting a \$62.50 unemployment check rather than working for the \$65.00 he could earn."⁷² It would be one thing if these commentators would keep what might be very successful therapeutic techniques clearly within that realm; it is another when they elevate these therapeutic techniques to the realm of a social theory which has implications for social action, and of which educational activity is one component.

Conclusion

It is my contention that Paulo Freire's works call for an educational theory which will result in education intended to cause critical thinking and action; but it is also critical of the paradigm in which educational theory is now imprisoned. This paradigm is part and parcel of a larger paradigm: the political paradigm which has been dominant for the past two hundred years, broadly known as liberalism. Only a deep understanding of the basic assumptions underlying liberalism, the degree to which current educational theory and practice match these assumptions can result

in a truly alternative theory and practice. Any effort at creating an alternative which is not aware of the basic assumptions of liberal theory and the concomitant concrete social actions, is liable to reproduce these assumptions under the guise of doing something different. The power of the dominant paradigm is, in other words, very great, and only a theoretical self-consciousness can save us from mimicking and helping perpetuate the existing order.

FOOTNOTES

¹Paulo Freire, Postscript to the French edition of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, translated by Sister Maryellen Harmon. Handwritten copy only.

²William Connolly, "Theoretical Self-Consciousness." Polity. Vol. VI, No. 1 (Fall, 1973), pp. 6-35. This concept is elucidated at length in Chapter V of this dissertation.

³Sheldon Wolin, "Paradigms & Political Theories." in Politics and Experience. ed. by P. King and R.C. Parekh. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 125-152.

⁴Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

⁵Ibid., p.x.

⁶Wolin, op. cit., p. 132.

⁷Kuhn, op. cit., p. 40.

⁸Ibid., p. 40.

⁹Wolin, op. cit., p. 149.

¹⁰Paulo Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness (N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1973), p. 112.

¹¹Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1971), p. 91.

¹²Paulo Freire, Cultural Action for Freedom (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 51.

¹³Roberto Unger, Knowledge and Politics (N.Y.: The Free Press, 1975), p. 2.

¹⁴Robert Paul Wolff, The Poverty of Liberalism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 123.

¹⁵Quoted by Wolff, p. 4n. For those who may be interested in the concrete ways in which such thoughts have taken root in our time compare Mills' idea to the gestalt prayer devised by Fritz Perls, quoted at the end of Chapter II of this dissertation.

¹⁶Quoted by Wolff, p. 22.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁹Unger, op. cit., p. 152.

²⁰Stanley Aronovitz, Introduction to Max Horkheimer's Critical Theory (N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1971), p. xiv.

²¹Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America (N.Y.: Harcourt Brace, 1955).

²²Ibid., p. 5.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., p. 11.

²⁵Ibid., p. 10.

²⁶Max Horkheimer, "The Social Function of Philosophy," in Horkheimer, Critical Theory (N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1971), p. 268.

²⁷For a fuller discussion see Geoffrey Gorer, The American People (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964), and Margaret Mead, Keep Your Powder Dry (N.Y.: William Morrow & Co., 1943).

²⁸From Philip Rieff's introduction to a collection of Freud's work Rieff edited. Sigmund Freud, The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement (N.Y.: Collier Books, 1963), p. 15.

²⁹Max Horkheimer, "Traditional Theory and Critical Theory," in Horkheimer, Critical Theory (N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1971), p. 194.

³⁰Ibid., p. 188.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., p. 193.

³³See C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), Chapters II and III.

³⁴Juergen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests (N.Y.: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 4.

³⁵Herbert Marcuse, "Affirmative Character of Culture," from Marcuse, Negations: Essays in Critical Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 99. my emphasis.

³⁶Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," op. cit., p. 191.

³⁷Wolin, op. cit., p. 147.

³⁸Kuhn, op. cit., p. 80.

³⁹Wolin, op. cit., p. 138.

⁴⁰Quoted in William Connolly and Glen Gordon, Social Structure and Political Theory (Lexington: D.C. Heath & Co., 1974), p. 11.

⁴¹Russell Jacoby, Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing (N.Y.: Beacon Press, 1974), p. 104.

⁴²Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴³Sigmund Freud, Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1959), p. 1. Freud enters the picture here intentionally. Psychoanalytic theory is the only psychological theory which comprehends the radical nature in which subject and object are implicated with each other. This argument is developed at greater length in the final chapter.

⁴⁴See Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1958), for a full discussion as applied to another context but very applicable here.

⁴⁵Paulo Freire, in Risk. Vol II, No. 1 (1975), p. 14.

⁴⁶Unger, op. cit., p. 6.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁴⁸Jacoby, op. cit., p. 106.

⁴⁹Stanley Aronovitz, in Horkheimer, op. cit., p. xiii.

⁵⁰Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1973), p. 54.

- 51 Ibid. Emphasis mine.
- 52 Ibid., p. 69.
- 53 Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. vii.
- 54 Quoted in Jay, op. cit., p. 6.
- 55 C. Wright Mills, The Marxists (N.Y.: Dell Publishing Co., 1962), p. 11.
- 56 Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. xiv.
- 57 Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 60.
- 58 Ibid., p. 66.
- 59 Ibid., p. 69.
- 60 Marcuse, op. cit., p. xii.
- 61 Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 60.
- 62 Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 61.
- 63 Freire, Cultural Action for Freedom, p. 21.
- 64 Horkheimer, op. cit., p. 217.
- 65 George Brown, (ed). The Live Classroom (N.Y.: Viking Press, 1975), p. 1.
- 66 D.N. McCarthy, "Gestalt as Learning Theory," in *ibid.*, p. 46.
- 67 Brown, op. cit., p. 20.
- 68 Fritz S. Perls, Gestalt Therapy Verbatim (Lafayette Calif: Real People's Press, 1969), p. 17.
- 69 Ibid., p. 4.
- 70 Sandra Newby, "Getting at Responsibility," in The Live Classroom, op. cit., p. 200. Emphasis mine.

⁷¹Roberto Assagioli, The Act of Will (N.Y.: Viking Press, 1973),
p. 6.

⁷²Everett Shostrum, Man, The Manipulator (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1968),
p. 11.

C H A P T E R I I I

I have so far attempted to interpret Freire's thought by showing the tradition, the paradigm, in which his work stands. The elementary principles at the heart of the paradigm have implications for the kind of intellectual operations one would conduct if one worked within the paradigm. This would be true for every area of intellectual endeavor: understanding the nature of social reality (research), teaching, evaluation, and writing. It is to be my argument in this chapter that the epistemological and ontological categories which inform the empiricist paradigm are profoundly at odds with Freire's thought. Not only are they at odds, but the two cannot be adjoined. The cost would be to cut away what is most radical in Freire's theory. It is to be my argument that the empiricist desire to create value-free instruments which will provide teachers or researchers with objective evidence of the nature of social reality must fail. I will argue, too, that we are inevitably left with the task of interpreting, of making judgments; given this inevitability we should make an effort to do what we can to make the wisest, best informed, most lucidly argued judgments we possibly can. In order to achieve this we should reestablish the primacy of theory for which a thorough grounding in social philosophy and history are essential. This would also be the correct translation of the Freire paradigm into American educational contexts. This interpretation of Freire stands in direct contrast to the empiricist interpretation. An example of such an interpretation and its failures will be discussed in the latter third of this chapter. In fact the first two thirds of this chapter should be understood as a

preparation for the argument that the empiricist interpretation fundamentally contradicts Freire.

Freire has written several texts and articles. These texts are sets of words or expressions which have a meaning. But the meaning one gives to the expressions depends upon how one interprets Freire's theory. The meaning of what Freire is saying and the expressions he uses are not in perfect mesh; if meaning and expression were in perfect mesh there would be no need for interpretation, because everyone would immediately understand the same thing when they read Freire. The fact is that there are different 'readings' of the meaning of what Freire is saying. For example, I am insisting in this dissertation that the only way to get inside to the meaning of Freire is to grasp the far-reaching implications of the notion that subject and object are in ongoing dialectical relationship; or, to put it slightly more concretely, 'man is in and with the world.' The problem inevitably is that you, the reader, either have begun to comprehend the far-reaching implications of this notion, or else you are only seeing the expression: "subject and object are in dialectical relationship" without grasping the meaning which I am trying to convey. My task is to convey what I mean when I say that there are far-reaching implications of this dialectical relationship.

My argument is that this way of interpreting the relationship between subject and object is at the very heart of the Freire paradigm. The evidence I can point to are the Freire texts; he is insisting at every step that we, the readers, comprehend the implications of interpreting the man-world relationship in this manner. Several other closely related

notions stand at the heart of the paradigm: one is that the human subject in Freire's system can only be understood as a whole; the human subject can and should only participate in educational activities as a whole; the subject can and should be viewed by other subjects (teachers, researchers) as a whole. The human subject must never be reduced to a part of the whole. This would be an act of objectifying the subject, and therefore immoral and oppressive, as well as a distortion of the human subject's reality. For Freire there is no compromise to this position: the human subject, whether individual or community, must never be reduced to an object. "In the revolutionary process the leaders cannot utilize the banking method as an interim measure, justified on grounds of expediency, with the intention of later behaving in a genuinely revolutionary fashion. They must be revolutionary--that is to say dialogical--from the outset."¹ Dialogical activity of this kind is the encounter between subjects who are mediated by the world; the subjects seek to make sense of, and transform, the world.

Subjects are whole in another sense. Whether one views them as individuals or communities, human subjects are in a context--in the context of history and culture. The framework these subjects live within is integrally related to history and culture. The social institutions and the way individuals or groups refer to, speak about, interact with these social institutions are in a complex dialectical relationship, making up a whole; the parts of this whole cannot be understood, cannot be made sense of, in abstraction from this whole. In order to clarify this consider the distinction I made earlier between expression, on the one hand,

and meaning, on the other. When a human subject is speaking he is expressing something; the meaning can only be grasped if the listener already shares the framework of the speaker. In other words, a whole background of shared meaning helps two individuals to communicate. When the framework in which a statement or action is expressed is not shared by the observing, listening subject, he is unable to grasp the meaning behind the expression. He only hears or sees the expression (words, actions). Thus any effort to deeply understand the expressions of another human subject comes either as a result of implicitly sharing the meaning framework which is usually unconsciously held, or by coming to know in detail the historical and cultural framework of the subject. If one is studying one's own society one has to make a special effort at interpreting the framework which a group inhabits; it means bringing to consciousness assumptions which have implications for oneself.

Freire is insisting that one way of objectifying subjects, of treating human beings as objects, is to isolate some part of them from the whole without reference to the whole, and treating 'it' accordingly--like an object. Freire maintains that the treatment of students as ahistorical beings who do not have an ongoing framework of thought and action in dialectical relationship, is one form of objectifying them; another is any effort to study individuals as if they were 'anatomical fragments'.² He insists that any part of the educational program--from preparation to evaluation--which objectifies the subject, is domesticating and supportive of the status quo. The critically conscious individual (the development of whom is the aim of Freire's pedagogy), on the other hand, is able

to think and act in terms of definite human subjects who are in and of a definite world, in a definite moment in history. "Critical thinking... discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and men and admits of no dichotomy between them."³ The critically conscious individual attempts, via careful reflection, to comprehend the implications of the relationship between man and the world; in his actions on the world, whether it be research in an effort to understand the nature of social reality, teaching or evaluating (to name a few possible kinds of actions), he attempts to display the effects of this reflection: never to reduce the human subject to an object by tearing him out of his personal, communal, and historical context. If the task is the discovery of facts, either for the purposes of research or evaluation, "the dialectical movement (between subject and object) is the fundamental preamble to understanding the facts. This movement implies in the first place an acting subject possessed of the theoretical instruments necessary to undertake the analyses of reality and that he grasp the necessity of continuously re-adapting these instruments according to the results obtained."⁴ Thus, critically conscious thought begins to comprehend the meaning underlying the following expression: "the dialectical movement between subject and object."

At the most general level of his theory, Freire believes that we are approaching an age the style of which will be more anthropological than anthropocentric. No longer will the universe be seen with man as the center of things; rather it will be an age typified by the effort to come to know what constitutes fuller humanness. This involves understanding more deeply how mankind differs from the world of animals, or more generally

what man's task is with regard to nature. What defines the human from non-human is precisely the capacity, the potential to recognize that there is such a thing as a 'not I'. It is the potential in all humans for the world to become an object of knowledge which results in actions intended to transform the world. (Knowledge and action are actually more intimately related than this simple cause, effect statement indicates). The capacity for reflection and action in an ongoing dialectic is the potential which is unavailable to animals (regardless of their capacity to successfully learn the symbols of A.S.L. speech for example; learning these symbols can never include the capacity for reflection as it is available to humans, and with which capacity human language is closely tied). Thus Freire's insistence that the 'word' contains within it reflection and action in a dynamic unity. Only humans have the capacity to come to recognize themselves as historical beings; this recognition makes it possible for humans to distinguish between what must inevitably be (nature) and what could be different (culture). Animals cannot tridimensionalize reality--they cannot develop a sense of the present in relation to the past and the future. Animals are driven entirely by the demands of the present, by the demands of the body. No possibility exists for an animal to recognize that the seat of decision making exists to some extent within; this recognition can only occur in humans as they recognize that they are both in the world and with the world, and are capable of reflecting upon the significance of that fact.

Animals are thus 'beings in themselves'⁵ incapable of being anywhere other than the 'flat atemporal present'⁶ and almost entirely dependent

upon instinctual instructions for action. Man can reflect upon himself and his actions, can see himself as a being of history. As a result of these reflections he has the potential to self-consciously act upon history on the basis of this historical consciousness. But, and this is crucial, these are man's projects; they remain tasks to be performed. The vast majority of mankind do not see themselves as in any way separate from nature, as potential actors upon the world. It is the development and fulfillment of this potential that defines the activity of humanization--the process whereby man becomes more human. The development of historical consciousness is not something that happens automatically as a result of being human. The only possibility that it will occur for any large numbers of people is if it becomes the project of educators whose aim is to educate for the development of critical consciousness. There is no absolute necessity that as man comes to recognize himself as a potential actor upon the world, as not entirely at the mercy of natural forces (inner and outer)--there is no absolute necessity that man set himself in opposition to nature, or as absolutely apart from nature as has occurred with such disastrous consequences in the advanced industrial nations. These are apparently simplistic and superficial distinctions, but assumptions about man's relationship to nature and culture eventually must be at the heart of any attempt to educate for critical consciousness, and thus a short diversion for further elaboration is crucial.

Some would say that these distinctions between culture and nature contradict earlier arguments which oppose the setting up of dualities. This is a good opportunity to also reiterate the nature of the dialectic.

It is not in our tradition to think dialectically, and in order to do so immersion in a tradition of thought not usually considered practical or up to date is required. Careful reflection will reveal the degree to which dualistic thinking and language are pervasive. Dualistic thinkers either recognize two poles--the subject and the object--and see it as possible to radically split the one from the other, or else they call for a collapsing of the one into the other. The dialectic thinker argues that "subject and object are not found dichotomized, nor are they in identity, but a dialectic unity. (emphasis mine)"⁷ There is a vast difference in these three positions. Liberal theory, closely tied to a capitalistic economic system, has come to see man in a war with nature; man's task has been to dominate nature. Efforts to dominate nature have to some extent been true of all civilizations, but no other has come to do so, so single mindedly. As the restraints imposed by religion slowly faded in strength, economic rationale became the main criterion for action, resulting in an uninhibited onslaught on nature. Obviously closely tied to the advances of science and technology were the political interests of some, in opposition to others. This link was well expressed by Marcuse:

The technology and technics applied in the economic process are more than ever before instruments of social control. The satisfaction of needs (material and intellectual) takes place through the scientific organization of work, scientific management, and the scientific imposition of attitudes and behavior patterns which operate beyond and outside the work process and precondition the individuals in accord with the dominant social interests.⁸

How to escape from these particular relations of domination and continue to use the advantages gained from scientific and technological development

is one great task of the industrial world. Educators, working to develop critical consciousness with people who have grown up in the western world must in some way deal with relationship of being dominated and the desire to dominate as it exists among these people. The mark of oppressed consciousness according to Freire, whose work was with peasants, is that one sees oneself as totally one with the world. The world of nature and the social world are in identical relationship with each other and with men; both the social world and the world of nature are experienced as a huge inalterable weight about which nothing can be done. Man's task is to adapt, not to create, as the oppressed consciousness sees it. (I will argue at length later in this chapter that it is also typical of mainstream social science in this country to treat large chunks of the social world as if it were identical to the natural world, i.e., inalterable, free from the taints of history, power, interests and the like).

One group, critical of the dichotomies that exist between man and nature ushered in by liberal consciousness argues for a collapsing of the individual into the group, for civilization into nature. This argument was prevalent during the late 1960's and has received its most recent boost from the book Earthwalk by Philip Slater.⁹ The sort of argument made by Slater has been so well received that a short diversion is called for, to critically analyze it. Slater's argument rests on his belief that Western culture has overemphasized individualism, that our task lies in realizing that 'freedom is inherently illusory',¹⁰ that we should give up the fruitless effort to become individuals, but rather should take our cue from primitive communities where apparently "Inter-

dependence exists, so dependency is highly muted. Narcissism is almost irrelevant since no one views herself as an isolated entity, but only (my emphasis) as part of a whole."¹¹ According to Slater the "tribe (the equivalent to simple community) has no centralized power, no chiefs, or nobles, no exploitation, no cities, no civilization. (my emphasis)"¹²

Slater is convinced that it is civilization itself which is our problem. Civilization requires men to remove themselves several degrees from reality (feelings, nature, the body). If only humans were better 'attuned' to reality we would all be better off. He is particularly regretful that Western civilization has so overemphasized the development of the intellect, the acquisition of knowledge, the formation of complex conceptual systems--all at an increased cost of our capacity to be tuned into reality. The 'checks and balances' (between ideas and feelings, pleasure and power needs) collapse in a "culture which values knowledge above feeling, power above pleasure, and the mind over the body."¹³ We must do away with the personality type who is so out of balance--the type who can successfully postpone gratification in order to achieve individual power and success. The way to do this is to join the feminist movement's 'assault' on the nuclear family. Only those people who have grown up with many adult nurturers (flat-gradient types) will not compulsively postpone pleasure to achieve success. They will be far more willing to demand immediate gratification, and to submerge within a group carrying out community goals, rather than individual aims.

Ironically at one point Slater quotes from Freud's Civilization and Its Discontents (ironically, because in that book Freud 'scorns the

distinction between culture and civilization' a position Slater obviously does not hold; he seems to think approvingly of people who have 'no civilization'.) Slater leads one to believe that his argument and Freud's can be equated when he says: "Freud once said that civilization is a process of exchanging joy for security."¹⁴ Slater refers the reader to page sixty-two of Civilization and Its Discontents where we find: "Civilized man has exchanged a portion of his possibilities for happiness for a portion of security."¹⁵ Freud goes on in the same paragraph to say that the instinctual life of primitive peoples "is subject to restrictions of a different kind but perhaps of greater severity than those attaching to modern civilized man."¹⁶ Freud, in the next paragraph says: "(We) are not showing ourselves enemies of civilization..."¹⁷ Slater's efforts to ally himself with Freud's position is one example of his conceptual confusion.

The psychoanalytic position is that we have never attained the 'individualism' Slater would have us do away with. His argument is reminiscent of B.F. Skinner's Beyond Freedom and Dignity. We have never achieved either the freedom or dignity he would have us go beyond. The bourgeois notion of individualism which Slater is correctly critical of, is not, and cannot be all there is to be said about what it means to be an individual. It cannot be the final stage of man's effort to achieve self-consciousness. "The 'man in the street' is very remote indeed from the ideal of himself projected by bourgeois individualism. He is group guided in every facet of his affective attitudes, is satisfied with his role as agent of various group requirements, and has neither inclination for, nor

understanding of, making independent decisions."¹⁸ We have not even come close to the ideal which Slater would have us overthrow. In fact, the only hope for the species is if more and more people come to recognize that only the life of the 'mind in service of eros', a phrase which captures perfectly Freud's life and work can save civilization from destruction:

Our historical period confronts us with special tasks. One of them is facing on a reality basis new situations for which there is either no historical precedent or--just as important--for which traditional solutions are inapplicable if immeasurable disaster is not to ensue. Thus the extension of our critical conscious is our most urgent need. A larger proportion of our behavior must be determined by insight and reflection than has hitherto been the case in social life as a whole.¹⁹

Slater, and so many others, believe that the development of the intellect, increasing the strength of the ego, stands in inevitable conflict with feelings and passion. The result is arguments of the sort Slater makes: arguments which, if acted upon, would result in regression--in losing those few gains we have made as a species. It is not less thought we need, but more and better thought--thought which by all means is passionate and fully aware of all dimensions of human reality; we certainly do not need any more emotional logic--of that we have more than enough.

The position Freire is calling for is one that refuses to collapse subject (man) and object (nature), just as it refuses to allow them to be dichotomized. There is a difference between the social world and the natural world; the difference is often very hard to discern, but very crucial. Man to some degree is separate from the world of nature. History is deeply implicated in his being, and he has the potential of learning from it, and thus choosing more wisely. It is possible for him to

come to understand the forces of nature as they work within him and without in such a way that he will be able to use nature's energies so as to enhance humanness. Going to war with nature intrapsychically or in the environment brings disaster. Now that the constraints of religion hold such little legitimacy, man's task is to transform nature from within as much as from without, with a common purpose--that of the liberation rather than the domination of men. There must no longer be judges or oppressors but creators said Nietzsche and the task today remains the same. Freud's famous and oft quoted statement is again quoted here in full to show how the inner and outer tasks remain so similar and of course so difficult, how inextricably man is tied to nature, but how necessary it is for him to forge from nature, culture for the liberation of all men: "Where it (id) was, there I (ego) shall be; it is a work of culture like the draining of the Zuyder Zee."²⁰ We see here two examples of man's possible and sometimes realized projects. Psychoanalytic therapy attempts to recover from the unconscious, repressed material, which, when successful, makes available additional energy to the ego. The ego is, to a degree, freed from irrational pressures and the possibilities for critical consciousness are enhanced. The draining of the Zuyder Zee makes available badly needed resources, without damaging the environment.

These then are the principles crucial to any concrete educational activity which claims to be Freirian in nature and content. One such activity which Freire proposes be understood as one moment in the overall educational process, is the investigation of social reality. The following sections are an elucidation of Freire's proposals with reference to other similar proposals.

Making Sense of Social Reality

"Because this view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate."²¹

Herein lies the key to the specific suggestions Freire makes for the development of an educational program, which is to be thought of as one moment (aspect) in the teaching program and its evaluation. Each moment is a stage in a single process; thus each one must follow the principles crucial to the theory. Education must not be a reduction of subjects to objects. Discovering where the 'students are at' is not a process of isolating their stage of consciousness (a fragment), but a process of learning from them what the nature of their thought-language is (see below). Knowledge is not to be deposited, nor are the people to be studied as objects, no matter how good the intentions. Freire's suggestions for how to proceed must be understood as standing in total critical relationship to that which is socially and politically dominant, and to any effort to objectify human subjects. The intensity of his conviction in this regard is captured in the following:

The investigator who, in the name of scientific objectivity transforms the organic into something inorganic, what is becoming into what is, life into death, is a man who fears change. He sees in change (which he does not deny, but neither does he desire) not a sign of life but a sign of death and decay. He does want to study change--but in order to stop it, not in order to stimulate or deepen it. However, in seeing change as a sign of death and in making people the passive objects of investigation in order to arrive at rigid models, he betrays his own character as a killer of life.²²

The specific focus of this section is the Freire approach to the understanding of social reality. The following is a brief summary of

his thought on the subject. In order to make certain concepts clearer I will integrate examples from other closely-related fields of sociology (ethnomethodologists and participant observationists), anthropologists (new ethnographers) and, recently, educators. All the thinkers from these schools stand closely to Freire's tradition. The following is an example, serving to show how this is so, and also to introduce the Freire method.

Social science research often appears to produce a situation in which a medical doctor tries to diagnose a patient's symptoms from around the corner and out of sight. The social scientists uses his 'instruments' to measure the response of the patient as though they were a kind of long stethoscope. The focus of the researcher has been on developing a better stethoscope for going around corners and into houses, when the real need is for the researcher to walk around the corner, go into the house and begin talking with the people who live there.²³

An important concept in Freire's theory is that there cannot be an analogy drawn between education and physiological processes; education is a social process involving depth understanding of the whole. This totality is one in which specific subjects (individuals and communities) think and act, and where their reality on the level of the social can be grasped only via a study of the thought-language reality of the people. Ideally (given the resources), prior to the preparation of an educational program, a group of investigators in conjunction with some of the program participants, conduct a co-investigation of reality.

The co-investigation as described by Freire has three stages to it. The first will be described here in full, and the other two only very briefly. The aim in this first stage is to probe slowly the 'living whole' in an effort to reach the nuclei of contradictions true of that reality. This process involves coming to know with the people how they

think and act. Each partial investigation is carefully discussed by the investigating team in a continuing effort to divide and re-integrate the whole. No effort is made to force values on anyone, but it is taken for granted that the investigating professionals (as opposed to the local investigators) have developed to some degree a critical perception of reality, "which implies a correct method of approaching reality in order to unveil it. And critical perception cannot be imposed."²⁴ Thus it is clear that Freire has a very strong conviction about the right way of going about the study of social reality. An effort must be made to understand how the people construct their thought. This in turn involves an understanding of the notion of intersubjective meaning (see below). As Freire puts it: "It is the 'we' think which establishes the 'I think' and not vice versa."²⁵ Or describing the complex relationship between man, world and meaning, Freire says:

From a non-dualistic viewpoint, thought and language constituting a whole, always refer to the reality of the thinking subject. Authentic thought language is generated in the dialectical relationships between the subject and his concrete historical and cultural reality.²⁶

The investigation is an effort to understand both the deep structure of a people's reality (their intersubjective and common meanings--to be discussed later) and also an attempt to understand their gestures, modes of speech and behavior, which comprise the obvious or surface structure of reality. The two levels of reality, the surface and the deep structures, are in complex dialectical relationship.²⁷ Unger explains this idea of a deep structure of thought this way:

To grasp a way of thinking we have to understand the problems with which it is concerned and the methods it uses to solve them. The

problems and the methods become in turn intelligible in the context of an experience of the world. Problems, methods and experience constitute the 'deep structure' of thought.²⁸

Schutz, who is primarily responsible for translating phenomenology into social theory begins similarly to Freire in his insistence that "consciousness is intent upon the world.", and this is why his contributions are mentioned here. "Any of our experiences as they appear within our stream of thought are necessarily referred to the object experienced. There is no such thing as thought, as fear, as fantasy; every thought is a thought of, every fear is fear of."²⁹ Believing that traditional science starts at the level of second-order concepts, phenomenological analysis attempts to see things as they are, to let the phenomena speak for themselves. This can only be achieved by the social scientist dispelling all his preconceptions by an act the phenomenologists refer to as "bracketing." This act Schutz refers to as a "radicalized renewal of the Cartesian method." It is basically a suspension in the belief in the outer world (the world is put in brackets). In this way the world will come to be recognized in its essence. "The essential characteristics of the world can be grasped via a suspension of belief in all presuppositions."³⁰ It is in this fashion that the level of meanings can be comprehended. Note how closely we approach empiricist categories here. The phenomenologist social investigators offer some interesting ideas on how to go about researching. Yet the actual reports they make contribute to the status quo, because of their conviction that reality must only be described. Bracketing means one must not make judgments. Radical subjectivity is at its roots only the other side of the coin to radical objectivity.

Spradley and McCurdy's New Ethnography contains concrete examples of what is involved in 'describing a culture in its own terms.'³¹ The aim is to discover "the characteristic way people categorize, code and define their own experience."³² The similarities to Freire are obvious. "...instead of studying the people, the ethnographer learns from them... he will ask those he studies to become his teachers and to instruct him in ways of life they find meaningful;...he will learn to speak and understand the language of those he studies."³³ Thus the Freire approach requires the educator to assume very self-consciously the posture of the learner. The assumption here is that everyone, teacher and student, has knowledge, but knowledge of a particular kind:

We were certain that a man's relation to reality expressed as a subject to an object, results in knowledge, which man could express through language. This relation...is carried out by men whether or not they are literate. It is sufficient to be a person to perceive the data of reality to be capable of knowing, even if this knowledge is mere opinion. There is no such thing as absolute ignorance or absolute wisdom.³⁴

The knowledge Freire is referring to is not in the same realm as the knowledge contained in Hegel, for example. It is not that one is necessarily going to discover great truths from students (which was the implication of much of the talk of the sixties, and thus the disappointment). Rather it involves the teacher recognizing that he knows little of the meaning framework, the thought-language reality of the people.³⁵ This recognition will cause the teacher to become authentically a student of the people's thinking. The teacher-student will really want to know, both what the people explicitly know as well as what they know tacitly. The problems the teacher poses, the questions he asks are legitimate,

authentic questions; they are not asked as a way of feigning ignorance. The process of asking questions and posing problems establishes dialogue, in the process of which 'teacher-student' and 'student-teacher' begin to acquire a critical perception of a particular reality. The knowledge referred to here is "the recipe knowledge of everyday life" revealed and expressed in the language reality of a people.³⁶ It is the world of language which can provide us with the meanings inherent in the social knowledge the people have.

Ethnographic Semantics is an effort to understand the codes, categories, and meanings as they are revealed in the language of the people. In order to understand how the people with whom one is working see the world requires a continuous asking of "what do these people see themselves as doing?" rather than "what do I see them doing?" "Implicit...is the premise that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings which these things have for them."³⁷ Thus in an effort to understand 'thought-language reality' considerable work needs to be done in the area of language--definition, contrast and meaning. A good description of an investigation of reality is one that occurs from the perspective of the people living in it. It is, however, merely intended to be descriptive. Bruyn, a strong proponent of participant-observation, critiques those who 'take a stand' and use their materials in order to defend a position. The aim should be merely to describe.³⁸

The insistence on description makes this approach potentially conformist. The problem lies in the very assumption that one can view social reality, having removed all presuppositions. The participant-observer

vationists and the ethnomethodologists make the same mistake here as the traditional empiricist. And clearly Freire's statement that a 'critical perception' should inform the professional investigator indicates his distance from Bruyn, et. al. Freire wants to get to the nucleii of contradictions. In this sense he is much closer to the psychoanalytic approach to reality, which attempts to look for the pathological in the normal. The analyst needs to be able to hear what the patient is not saying as much as what he is saying.³⁹ The same holds true for the social investigator. Freire in fact has referred to his work as a kind of social psychoanalysis.⁴⁰ What keeps the investigator on track is a high degree of theoretical self-consciousness. "The acting subject (must be) possessed of the theoretical instruments necessary to undertake the analysis of reality."⁴¹ It is his awareness of the implications of the particular position he (the theorist or researcher) is taking, that distinguishes him from the unawareness of the 'disinterested scientist', who merely tries to describe reality in order to discover the truth. The critical theorist knows that description and evaluation cannot be so neatly separated.⁴² It is thus the critical theorists' awareness of the normative implications of his position and of what he is looking for that establishes "objectivity" for him--an objectivity in an entirely different sense of the word to that used by the empiricists:

The social scientist does not see himself as some autonomous being standing 'outside society'. In common with most other people, he does feel that he stands outside the major history-making decisions of the period...At the same time he knows that he is among those who take many of the consequences of these decisions. That is one major reason why to the extent that he is aware of what he is doing he becomes an explicitly political man. No one is 'outside society'; the question is where each stands within it.⁴³

The difference awareness of implications makes is simply that a choice based upon clearer understanding of reality can be made. The scientist who says "I am outside reality." is deceiving himself. The scientist who says "I am aware of the political and social implications of the work I am doing;--I had the courage to look at the normative implications," is no longer deceiving himself, but choosing to go ahead with eyes open.

Freire is very explicit about where he stands, and he makes it known in various ways. One way is the following quote from Lenin which Freire gives: "Without a revolutionary theory, there is no revolutionary movement."⁴⁴ Revolutionary theory seeks to discover how men are being dehumanized, and intends to make the content of education an effort to deepen awareness amongst people of the extent to which they are dehumanized and in the process provoke change for the humanization of men and women.

Very briefly, in order to complete the picture, the following are the final two steps in the preparation for an educational program. The discovery of a nuclei of contradictions will include a discovery of what Freire calls the 'limit situations' which in turn imply limit-tasks. These are the areas which are taken as given; those situations where the people do not see the potential beyond the given. Once these limit situations are clarified (which only may involve overtly oppressive role relationships--see Alschuler's narrow definition below) the task is to find out what the people think about these situations. The results of these investigations reveal the themes true of these people which could include such notions as dependence, apathy, indifference, naive optimism,

or fatalism. Themes contain their dialectical opposite which awaits birth (e.g., dependence-independence). Finally, the preparation of the educational program takes place by 'representing' to the people what has been learned from them, "always in the form of a problem, never in the form of a lecture." A concrete example of this will be given in the next chapter. To develop full understanding of these final stages Freire must be carefully read in the original. It is not my purpose here to clarify these two stages, since this would require too long a diversion. I do, however, want to explain one aspect of Freire's system which he claims is crucial, and one that is often missed.

I have already explained that Freire goes to considerable lengths to argue that man is separate (but not radically so) from the world of nature precisely to the extent that he succeeds in fulfilling his potential as a maker of culture, a maker of history. The oppressed do not conceive of themselves as separate from nature. This deeply held assumption about man's relationship to the world is unconsciously held and at the core of how oppressed people act in the world, according to Freire. Typical of the way peasants see the world is as follows: "There is no difference between humans and animals; when there is the latter have the advantage--they are freer than we are..."⁴⁵ There exists between peasants (and I would add amongst all forms of oppressed peoples) and their natural world (and obviously the cultural world) "a strong umbilical cord which binds them."⁴⁶ This is an excellent example of what Taylor refers to when he speaks of the fact that the intersubjective and commonly shared meanings contain within them a perception of agent-other

relationships (see below). It is also an example of the simple elementary generalizations at the core of the paradigm any people inhabit. (In America the image of man as most like a machine competes with the animal metaphor. Common-sense and computer intelligence are seen as on two different points of the same spectrum.) Again, these are not insights an observer of a culture will necessarily grasp immediately. Insight can only come after carefully listening and problem-posing with the people about their thought-language reality.

Crucial to the Freire paradigm is the assumption that man, and only man, has the capacity to make a separation between himself and nature. In this sense he is potentially a decision maker. This is meant in the root sense of the term--decidere, meaning 'to cut'. It is man's capacity to reflect upon his actions that grants him this potential, and that makes it possible for him to separate himself to some degree from the demands of nature.

For Freire reflection on these relationships between man, culture and nature is central to an education for critical consciousness. In dialogical education, the teacher-student is not only responding to the themes he finds in the people's reality; he introduces themes too:

One of the basic themes (and one which I consider central and indispensable) is the anthropological concept of culture. Whether men are peasants or urban workers, learning to read or enrolled in a post literacy program, the starting point of their search to know more is the debate of the concept (i.e., an anthropological concept of culture). As they discuss the world of culture they express their level of awareness of reality in which various themes are implicit...

With the experience now behind me, I can affirm that the concept of culture, discussed imaginatively in all or most of its dimensions, can provide various aspects of an educational program.⁴⁷

Given the level of importance Freire attaches to this particular aspect of his theory it is surprising that so many interpreters miss it. In his Education for Critical Consciousness he provides the only concrete examples of his work that one can find. These examples consist of ten pictures which he typically presented to illiterate peasants. All of them are intended to provoke debate on this single issue: man's relationship to culture, nature and work. He was apparently able to provoke sophisticated philosophical discussions amongst illiterate, formally uneducated people. In addition, the results of his literacy training programs have apparently been remarkable. People were writing and reading very quickly. They were doing so boldly and confidently, overcoming the natural hesitancy typical of most beginners. "Elza Freire thinks this may be due to the fact that these persons, beginning with the discussion of the anthropological concept of culture, discovered themselves to be more fully human, thereby acquiring an increasing emotional confidence in their learning which was reflected in motor activity."⁴⁸

This starting point was to prove a most interesting and productive one in the experiment I conducted in order to see how Freire may be applied in this country. It did take me some time to get to this starting point, as the reader will see in the next chapter. Before describing these efforts, however, I wish to study in some depth the empiricist interpretation of Freire, and will begin by a discussion of the meaning of meaning.

II.

I would now like to make explicit the assumptions which are central to the effort of making sense of Freire's theory, or any other text or

human activity, for that matter. I will argue that we must unavoidably make interpretations when faced with the task of 'making sense' of something, whether it be a text or human activity in general (e.g., evaluating or planning an educational program). The specific focus of the following discussion is the elucidation of the concept of 'meaning'; the article by Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man"⁴⁹ has been seminal and the following discussion is based on that article.

I have already discussed how expression and meaning (or 'sense') must be understood as distinguishable, otherwise everything would always be understood in the same way by everyone. The fact that there is a difference between sense and expression means that interpretation takes place inevitably, sometimes more and sometimes less. When one is interpreting a text, the effort is to make meaning which may have been opaque, clearer. In addition, one cannot speak of meaning, only of meaning of something.

When one speaks of the meaning of something, there is a difference in the task of making sense of natural phenomena, such as glacier formations, blood samples, or chemical reactions and the task of making sense of human activity. The creation of a text, for example, is the creation by a specific human subject, and in the act of making sense of it "we are trying to make explicit the meaning expressed and this means by or for a subject or subjects."⁵⁰ A subject is in history, in and of the world, partly the man-made world; thus he or she already participates in the world of interpretation. The man-made world is not the same as the natural world (gravity exists, for example, regardless of man's

existence; social institutions such as the Court, do not). In addition to participating in one interpretation of the human condition (the particular condition in which the human subject grows up), the human subject is necessarily a self-interpreting animal. "He is necessarily so for there is no such thing as the structure of meanings for him independently of his interpretation of them; for one is woven into the other."⁵¹

When one speaks of meaning, then, it is meaning for a subject; there can be no meaning suspended in thin air. Meaning is for and by a human subject, and participates in a different dimension to that of the natural world. Thus ways of examining the world of meaning of human activities require a different orientation (and method) than those employed to make sense of the natural world.

Finally, "things have meaning in a field; that is, in relation to meanings of other things."⁵² If we look at how we understand each other's language this may be clearer. Our language makes sense because it distinguishes one thing from another for us. Thus, when I speak of being terrified it is understood in contrast to a set of other emotions and states which are not explicitly referred to. Thus being terrified is immediately understood as in contrast to being afraid or scared; in addition it is contrasted to a more usual state of affairs, that is, of being calm and safe. Similarly, in order to make sense of actions or words one needs to either automatically share what lies hidden in the background or else make every effort to become very familiar with the background.

Thus meaning is distinguishable from expression; it is of something,

by a subject, and in a field. These elements make up a whole of what constitutes meaning. Meaning can really only be understood in the context of the whole, whether it be of a text or a set of actions, and inevitably, the interpretation which occurs falls into an 'interpretative circle'. In order for me to get you to accept my 'reading' of something I have to appeal to other 'readings'; in the end you either understand along the same tracks I do, or you do not; either you 'get' the same appreciation of the whole I have or you do not, and we must start over again. Obviously if there is no way out of this 'hermeneutic circle' one must forever be uncertain to one degree or another; one may indeed be deceiving others as well as oneself. There is no guarantee that the truth has been found, and this is an unfortunate fact of the human condition. Freire would agree. He calls for a never ending process of reflection/action/reflection.

Empiricist Interpretation

The desire to overcome this uncertainty and to break out of the hermeneutic circle have been strong motivating forces behind the empiricist effort to explain and make sense of reality. We are fortunate to have available to us the empiricist effort to 'make sense' of Freire. The following is a critical summary of such an effort. (The words in quotation marks not specifically footnoted are quoted from these empiricist studies--hereafter referred to under the rubric "Alschuler, et. al").

Dr. Alfred Alschuler and his associates have conducted extensive 'collaborative' efforts to put some of the 'vague' notions replete in

Freire's thought and writings into a realm of certainty and objectivity. Alschuler's reading of Freire is a substantial misreading, and in my effort to make sense of Freire it would be very helpful to see what Freire is not saying. In addition, I will argue that the correct reading of Freire is in fact the one that provides greater insight into the nature of social reality and that it therefore makes sense to remain loyal to the intellectual operations which are suggested by Freire's paradigm. My intention, then, is to show that not only does the Alschuler version misapprehend--it domesticates precisely what is most revolutionary in Freire's pedagogy. This domestication has implications above and beyond the fact that it is unfortunate and that it provides an interesting intellectual exercise in showing how it domesticates. These implications are clearly suggested by Alschuler himself when he proudly asserts:

These intellectual extensions of Freire's theories have provided the basis for a major project we are calling "social Literacy Training". At present it includes cadres of teachers in over 30 public schools in four states, three university centers, and growing national interest."⁵³

In addition, doctoral students from the School of Education of the University of Massachusetts, who for one reason or another find Freire interesting, are being led to believe that these particular 'intellectual extensions' of Freire's theories (?) are indeed what they claim to be. It is my argument that these intellectual gymnastics are anything but 'extensions'; rather they are a domestication of Freire's theory. I intend to critique the work being done here at length and at differing levels of depth. I will move back and forth from direct reference to their work, to Freire's thought, and Taylor's article referred to above.

My hope is that in addition to understanding how Alschuler et. al. have vitiated Freire's theory, understanding of Freire will have been deepened.

The Alschuler-Smith Coding System

The thinking which underlies the entire project is captured in the attempt Alschuler et. al. have made to develop a coding system to measure stages of consciousness. These stages have been abstracted from Freire's work and referred to as 'magical', 'naive', and 'critically conscious'. These are explained by Bill Smith, one of Alschuler's graduate students whose dissertation is one of the products of this collaborative effort (see chart). The dissertation is called, significantly, "The Meaning of Paulo Freire" (my emphasis).⁵⁴ The coding system is intended to end vague, intuition-based 'consciousness-raising' efforts. Arguing that Freire's 'vague, abstruse philosophizing'⁵⁵ (v) often containing many value-laden words, has contributed considerably to the confused state of the consciousness-raising movement with which Freire supposedly has had much to do, the authors hope to set things straight. The goal is to set 'clear objectives' for 'workshops' and clear 'training objectives' for the 'training of trainers'. To ensure that we know for certain whether consciousness has been raised or not, and to establish for certain how long the learning endures, if at all, what needs to be done is to 'operationalize' Freire's theory. Thus the idea is to establish an instrument which would 'measure' consciousness, or 'conscientizacao'.

Why operationalize? The assumption throughout is that if the theories can be operationalized, only then could one make a claim that

Figure 1

William Smith's
Conscientizacao Coding Categories Diagram

CONSCIENTIZACAO CODING CATEGORIES DIAGRAM

M MAGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS "CONFORMING"	N NAIVE CONSCIOUSNESS "REFORMING"	C CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS "TRANSFORMING"
<p><u>1. PROBLEM DENIAL</u></p> <p>a. overt denial b. problem avoidance</p> <p><u>2. SURVIVAL PROBLEMS</u></p> <p>a. poor physical status/health b. poverty c. lack of work d. insufficient work e. money as an end in itself</p>	<p><u>1. OPPRESSOR DEVIATES FROM IDEAL EXPECTATIONS</u></p> <p>a. oppressed not live oppressor b. oppressed not meet oppressor's expectations c. horizontal aggression/intrapunitiveness</p> <p><u>2. INDIVIDUAL OPPRESSOR DEVIATES FROM IDEAL EXPECTATIONS</u></p> <p>a. Individual oppressor violates laws b. Individual oppressor violates norms</p>	<p><u>1. REJECTION OF OPPRESSOR/SELF AND PEER AFFIRMATION</u></p> <p>a. rejects modeling oppressor b. seeks to maintain ethnicity c. seeks to affirm uniqueness</p> <p><u>2. TRANSFORM THE SYSTEM</u></p> <p>a. procedures people b. rejects oppressive system</p>
<p><u>1. SIMPLISTIC CAUSAL RELATIONSHIPS</u></p> <p>a. blame physical states/poverty, health b. blame objects over people</p> <p><u>2. FACTS ATTRIBUTED TO SUPERIOR POWERS</u></p> <p>a. uncontrollable factors: God, Fate, Luck, Age, etc. b. fear of oppressor c. oppressor inevitable winner d. empathy for oppressor</p>	<p><u>1. PLAYING HOST TO OPPRESSOR'S IDEOLOGY</u></p> <p>a. accepts oppressor's explanations and expectations (education) b. self and peer deprecation c. blames ancestors d. self-pity</p> <p><u>2. UNDERSTANDS HOW OPPRESSOR VIOLATES NORMS</u></p> <p>a. sees intentionality by oppressor b. sees relationships between oppressor and oppressor's agents c. generalizes from one oppressor to another</p>	<p><u>1. UNDERSTANDS/REJECTS OPPRESSOR'S IDEOLOGY AND HIS/HER COLLUSION</u></p> <p>a. sympathy and understanding of peers b. self-critical/sees contradictions between actions and critical goals c. rejects horizontal aggression d. sees oppressor as weak/victim of system e. rejects oppressor and oppressor's ideology</p> <p><u>2. UNDERSTANDS HOW SYSTEM WORKS</u></p> <p>a. sees system as cause b. sees contradictions between rhetoric and results c. macro-socio-economic analysis d. generalizes from one oppressive system to another</p>
<p><u>1. FATALISM</u></p> <p>a. resignation b. acceptance</p> <p><u>2. PASSIVELY PLAYING HOST TO OPPRESSOR</u></p> <p>a. waiting for "good" patron or "good" luck b. dependence on oppressor</p>	<p><u>1. ACTIVELY PLAYING HOST TO THE OPPRESSOR</u></p> <p>a. models oppressor's behavior (education, dress, habits) b. mis-directed aggression (horizontal aggression, intra-punitiveness) c. paternalistic towards peers d. meets oppressor's expectations</p> <p><u>2. DEFENDING</u></p> <p>a. gregariousness b. make system work c. avoids oppressor d. opposes individual oppressor</p>	<p><u>1. SELF-ACTUALIZING</u></p> <p>a. seeks appropriate role models b. personal ethnic self-esteem c. self-growth/transformation learning d. subject/actor e. faith in peers/peer learning f. boldness/risk-taking/unorthodox solutions g. reliance on community resources/participation h. opposes oppressor groups</p> <p><u>2. TRANSFORMING THE SYSTEM</u></p> <p>a. dialogue politics b. comradeship c. scientific approach d. change norms/laws/procedures</p>

Freire's theories are true. This follows from the assumption that only that which can be empirically verified is true. Also, only when the 'instrument' is sufficiently precise will we have available a 'diagnostic tool' which will provide 'trainers' with accurate information as to what appropriate 'techniques' should be used for 'raising' a particular person's stage of consciousness. At some point in the future, then, enough will be known about 'raising' consciousness at the different levels so that a trainer will be able to apply the precisely appropriate technique at the precise moment upon receiving the results of the test. "Unless such a diagnostic procedure takes place, training experiences are just as likely to hinder the growth of consciousness as to raise it."⁵⁶

We have here the first clue as to how Alschuler and Smith have vitiated the meaning of Freire while trying to do away with ambiguity. The image they have of the educational process is revealed when they explain why they wish to operationalize Freire. Clearly an excellently 'trained' technician will carefully minister the appropriate texts; having overcome any need for interpretation the technician will be able to diagnose the appropriate piece of consciousness which needs raising by him (or her of course). 'Diagnosis' need not necessarily convey images of a doctor ministering to a passive patient; but when read in the context of the whole of Alschuler and Smith's work it is clear that the medical, technical metaphor dominates their thinking. Social reality, and the consciousness of the subjects can be understood, according to this view, in the same way one understands physiological processes and can be treated accordingly. Alschuler, when talking of the coding system,

frequently draws the analogy to the drawing of blood samples. From the blood sample, the technician can gain a great deal of information about the physical state of the human being which the doctor then uses to make his diagnosis. The reference to the technique used in the natural sciences is quite to be expected. It is a great goal of the empiricists to elevate the human sciences to the heights attained by the natural sciences. Yet the failure to understand how this eliminates the concrete human subject, objectifies him, turns him into an anatomical fragment which is supposed to provide information about the whole, is quite remarkable for one who purports to understand Freire's theory. Many of the other words I have put into quotation marks above create the same sense--that the developers of this 'tool' are nowhere near an appreciation of how radical a transformation Freire is calling for. The words 'operationalize', 'train', 'instrument', 'workshop' all reveal the image the authors have of the educational process and the human subject: i.e., of a human subject being objectifiable, manipulable and divorced from the matrix of social institutions.

A further example of this technical set of 'operations' is revealed in the idea of 'consciousness raising'. Freire never ever uses the words. Yet the words seem so much a part of the authors' view of the process that they attribute to Freire a central role in the 'consciousness raising movement'. The attachment to the words, along with the very idea of the coding system and techniques to raise consciousness, are revealing of assumptions about the nature of the human being, as well as assumptions about the nature of critical consciousness (the authors refutation

of the role played by philosophy notwithstanding). The very idea that consciousness can be raised by the appropriate carefully planned manipulations from without is simplistic and naive. It indicates a conception of the human mind as a complex machine; when one aspect of it is sufficiently understood the engineer can design the appropriate mechanism to make things work better. Everything moves linearly; if you make the program one that will move minds toward critical consciousness, and as long as your knowledge is sufficient and correct, then you will 'produce' critical consciousness. It is never the assumptions which are at fault, if something does not work too well; it is always our knowledge that is imperfect.

The sense that one gets from Smith's work as to the nature of critical consciousness is that when one's consciousness is raised there will be an 'initial' period of anxiety. Smith continues: "Raising consciousness often initially involves some confusion, uncertainty and anxiety as a new way of viewing one's experience competes with the comfortable old way. Unless each level of consciousness is defined clearly, trainers are likely to misinterpret or just plain miss the significance of this aspect of growth."⁵⁷ When this initial period of anxiety is over and consciousness is raised, and one has grown, things will be better in some way. This implication is enhanced by the authors' combining Freire's notion of critical consciousness with Maslow's theory of Self Actualization. This is all part of the effort to add a little glamour to what in the original (i.e., Freire) is hard, difficult work. Lest too many get put off it is better to hold out some carrots at the end of the line,

so that people will be rewarded for their initial periods of anxiety; if they expect growth to occur they may be prepared to tolerate this period of discomfort. Needless to say, this is a distortion of the idea of critical consciousness, which cannot be categorized in terms of 'growth' or 'better'. The following depiction from Wittgenstein communicates the 'state' of critical consciousness:

It is, if possible, still more difficult to think really honestly about your life and other people's lives. And the trouble is that thinking about these things is not thrilling but downright nasty. And when it's nasty then it's most important.⁵⁸

To classify realizations about the dismal realities of the past and the present alongside the idea of growth is painfully absurd. The tone the authors convey is captured in the following redefinition of Freire's notion of conscientization: "a degree of consciousness in which individuals are able to see the social system critically. They are able to understand the resultant contradictions in their own lives, to generalize these contradictions to others around them, and to transform society creatively with others."⁵⁹ Doesn't that sound attractive? Wouldn't you like to join? To move toward critical consciousness is to comprehend what men have done and continue to do to other men. To equate this kind of realization with self-actualizing peak experiencing of Abe Maslow is to confound the meaning of critical consciousness to a point where it is no longer recognizable.

The coding system must be designed so that any 'reasonably intelligent persons'⁶⁰ can use it. No biases must enter into working with it. It is best used by a technician; in fact, it will be appropriately precise when people who have no prior knowledge of the subjects who are

providing the protocols, are able to get 'coder reliability'. The coding system itself is intended as an absolutely neutral technique. The authors repeat in many contexts that this code can be used for ethical or unethical purposes depending upon the motivations of the user. This kind of thinking is an excellent concrete example of what Freire means when he refers to the dichotimization of the subject and the object. The authors are able to conceive of this man-made technique called the coding system as somehow without meaning in and of itself. It stands there, bare, simply a set of words (expressions); coders are able to approach these words and classify the words from the protocol with a minimum of interpretation--a problem that is anyhow taken care of statistically (as the original human subject who wrote those words disappears totally from sight). Neutral technicians will be working with neutral techniques. This is actually a typical American view of technology, and the rest of the world has been coping with the difficulties presented by it ever since 'well intentioned' individuals have decided to export American 'know-how'. If one understands Freire's notion of the dialectic relationship between man and the world one cannot hold the view of the neutrality of techniques. Technique as it is formulated by a specific culture is an expression of that culture. It is not a neutral colorless object which can be used in any way at any time, but rather speaks of a certain way of doing things, of understanding the world in a very particular way. Above and beyond the expression (the coding system) stands its implicit (tacit) meaning which can only be understood in the context of the whole. Freire is explicit about this:

"...technique itself as an instrument of men in their orientation in the world is not neutral."⁶¹

While on this level of discussion I wish to make one more point in connection with the content of the Alschuler-Smith version of Freire. In contrast to the interpretation presented in this dissertation, there is virtually no mention of the man-world dialectical interaction. The dozens of quotes as to what constitutes magical, naive or critical consciousness consistently leave out any reference to the subject/object dialectic. Of course this is one of the keys to why Alschuler and Smith have failed to understand Freire, and how they can ever conceive of producing a coding system to operationalize conscientization. They do not grasp how wide ranging are the implications of the subject/object dialectic; nor do they see how it is at the very heart of the theory. Thus they develop an instrument which, in almost every respect creates subject/object dichotomies, which is what Freire over and over again warns against. They miss the point so entirely that their coding system's (which is reproduced here) classification for the stage of critical consciousness leaves out any mention of what is at the heart of critical consciousness: the ongoing capacity to grasp the concrete manifestations of the fact that subject and object are in dialectical relationship, which requires the capacity to think using dialectic logic; action will follow because it is so inextricably linked with thought, although in an unfree world there will always be a tension between the two. Smith does point out that Freire argues for 'an interaction with man and the world.(italics mine).'⁶² This recognition of the man/world relationship only comes in

context of an argument to show similarities to the structural developmental theories of Kohlberg (who, significantly, is a psychological theorist), not in any other way. (The reduction to knowing only about individuals, which is all the coding system can achieve, is a result of the author's overuse of psychological methodology and thinking. This will be discussed further).

My interest is not only in showing how Freire is misunderstood and misapplied--that his very insistence that men should no longer be objectified at any point in the educational process is blatantly ignored. It is also my intention now to show that the understanding of reality which the coding system and other similar systems in the empiricist tradition provide, is inadequate and sterile. In addition, the subject/object dichotimization evident in the coding system is evident in other efforts of Alschuler to 'apply' Freire, and thus they are equally domesticating of Freire's theory, and equally fail to adequately interpret the nature of social reality. Much of what has been said already will become clearer, as will some crucial aspects of Freire's thought.

Although claiming neutrality, this coding system (like everything else) does not stand in isolation from a tradition, and therefore from history. Neither does it stand free from epistemological assumptions (how we know what we know), which are closely intertwined with ontological principles. Alschuler and Smith advise checking with works written by political scientists such as Almond and Verba, and Easton. These particular theorists are representatives of the recent drive in political science to model itself after the natural sciences; it's philosophical

roots are older and go back to the seventeenth century. The basic drive of the empiricists, like Alschuler and Smith, Almond and Verba, and many others who represent mainstream social science in America is to break out of the interpretive or hermeneutic circle I referred to earlier. They want to establish knowledge that is absolutely and certainly true. The truth must be beyond doubt. Crucially they argue that this is achieved when it is possible to eliminate the human tendency to make biased judgments and interpretations, an argument which is diametrically opposed to the one developed in this chapter. Only that data which we can be sure is not tainted by human judgment will be accepted as a building block of knowledge. Only that which can be seen or heard (and thus measured) can be allowed in as a real (i.e., legitimate) building block. Only 'brute data' is verifiable; only that which is verifiable can be called true; and the truth is established eventually through the collection of more and more brute data and the correlations existing statistically between them. The fact that bits of data are free from interpretation and can be established in statistically significant correlations confirms and establishes the truth of their interrelationship. Thus brute data are attractive because they lend themselves to no other reading or interpretation; in this way the interpretive, or hermeneutic circle is broken. It is this drive to know beyond doubt that leads inevitably to a tradition--a way of going about the investigation of social reality--which numbers of social scientists have in common. It is to Charles Taylor's critique of this way of knowing that I now wish to return.

Critique of Empiricist Epistemology

Taylor, by referring to the work of political scientists such as Lipset, and Almond and Powell, attempts to show the categorical grid of the empiricist thought. In their search for brute data the empiricists are forced to study aspects of reality in isolation from other aspects of reality, with the hope of later matching them up or showing correspondences. So, for example, the empiricist, in attempting to understand political reality, studies the objective reality on the one hand (how the government works, the allocation of resources, the judicial system, the economic system) and the subjective reality on the other--the set of beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and the values people hold in relation to the political institutions. The subjective realm can provide acceptable brute data only on the level of individuals. In order to be acceptable as brute data something has to be seen or heard, which the instrument helps us do to a greater depth than our mere eyes or ears. In this way the problem of meaning, or the subjective realm of political reality is accounted for. The idea is then to correlate these subjective beliefs, which have been obtained through questionnaires, with some behavior in relation to political activity; if there is correspondence then we know something.

The way Alschuler and Smith have come to feel optimistic about the potential capacity of their code to tell us something follows these procedures exactly. It is enough in this context to know that the code is only able to find out the opinions, attitudes, feelings individuals have about the social world. The demands of the instrument have caused

Smith to translate Freire's definition of consciousness to a point where it is no longer recognizable. In fact Freire's original definition is quoted by the authors in another context of their discussion as:

"Consciousness and world are simultaneous: consciousness neither preceded the world nor follows it."⁶³ The vitiated version is: consciousness is "how participants see, feel, and understand their social reality."⁶⁴

These feelings can only be discovered by asking individuals their response to a set of questions which are asked about an objectively oppressive relationship in that individual's world. This picture must depict a relationship between two or more individuals that is clearly oppressive. Clearly A must be oppressing B and this must be clearly portrayed in a picture which depicts the relationship. The responses individuals make to the questions asked, are then coded, and a 'score' representing a stage of consciousness is obtained. The whole process revolves around what can be clearly seen (with the help of an instrument). Since interpretation is forbidden one only looks for what is manifest. Having begun the process to check its validity as an instrument, the authors say that the code still requires much work, to avoid potential 'distortions' or 'error'. However there is cause for optimism about the code's capacity to report out brute data.

Thus it is considered worthwhile by them to focus considerable intellectual activity on the further development of the code. In fact it is about to be used to measure the 'growth' which takes place amongst participants in a \$180,000 project funded by H.E.W. The kind of intellectual activity people will engage in is determined by the initial in-

sistence upon obtaining brute data. Subject and object will have to be dichotomized, and in this fashion a whole world of social reality will be missed by the empiricists engaged in such intellectual activity. This is the realm of 'intersubjective meaning' as Taylor refers to it, which cannot be broken down to the subjective feelings or thoughts of the individual; it is simply not measurable or visible at the level of the individual. Rather, it is the taken for granted reality that is shared by a people as a result of their growing up in the same socio-political reality. I will clarify this notion now by referring to Taylor, after which I will further take up some of the Alschuler et. al. efforts to make sense of social reality.

Intersubjective Reality

There is a realm of practices which cannot be understood in isolation from the vocabulary used to describe them. That is, the language we use is constitutive of practice and vice-versa, the practices are constitutive of the vocabulary. The one without the other would completely change the nature of reality itself. Taylor calls on John Searle's discussion of constitutive rules. Searle distinguishes between regulative rules in a game of soccer for example, and constitutive rules. Regulative rules are those which will keep the game going and even if these rules did not exist the game could continue. In the case of constitutive rules, rules are not separable from behavior. For example, in soccer, one rule disallows the touching of the ball by everyone but the goalkeeper. If this rule was done away with, or if everyone broke this rule, there

would no longer be anything resembling a soccer game; something entirely different would be occurring (perhaps a game of rugby). The whole range of behavior recognizable as a game of soccer would disappear with the disappearance of this single rule. This is to be distinguished from a rule such as: "the goalkeeper must bounce the ball no more than three times before kicking it." The game, or the range of behavior which make up the game, would still be recognizable if the rule were removed.

Similarly with regard to practices human subjects engage in:

Just as there are constitutive rules, i.e., rules that the behavior they govern could not exist without them, and are in this sense inseparable from that behavior, so I am suggesting that there are constitutive distinctions, constitutive ranges of language which are similarly inseparable, in that certain practices are not without them.⁶⁵

As an example Taylor focusses on the practice of negotiation, which is one practice central to the way things are done in late capitalist America. Underlying the way negotiation takes place in this particular society there exists implicitly a "certain vision of the agent and his relation to others and to society."⁶⁶ In the case of negotiation assumptions about the 'autonomous nature of the individuals' which enter into 'willed relations' must exist.⁶⁷ Corresponding to these assumptions exist implicit norms "such as that of good faith, or a norm of rationality...or the norm of continued freedom as far as attainable. These practices require that one's actions and relations be seen in the light of (these assumptions) and the accompanying norms, good faith, autonomy and rationality."⁶⁸ These assumptions and norms are absent in many other societies; the result is that the practice of negotiations as we understand it is impossible in these societies.

It is crucial to understand that what Taylor is referring to is not a set of ideas in people's heads, which can be classified according to one criteria or another. "The meanings and norms implicit in these practices are not just in the minds of the actors, but are out there in the practices themselves, practices which cannot be conceived of as a set of individual actions, but which are essentially modes of social relation, of mutual action."⁶⁹ This is the essential point. When referring to intersubjective meanings Taylor is referring to a realm of practices and their constitutive language, which is not reducible to the ideas, opinions, attitudes, a person has about negotiations, or any practices of a similar nature (i.e., those at the heart of the way a society conducts itself). This does not deny that an individual does have thoughts, feelings etc. about social reality, and it is justifiable to refer to these on an individual level. People do bring these attitudes with them to negotiating sessions for example, but

what they do not bring into negotiations is the set of ideas and norms constitutive of negotiations themselves. These must be the common property of the society before there can be any question of anyone entering into negotiation or not. Hence they are not subjective meanings, the property of one or some individuals but rather intersubjective meanings which are constitutive of the social matrix in which individuals find themselves and act.⁷⁰

This is not a matter of consensus, of the convergence of beliefs and attitudes among individuals. Prior to the existence of such convergence (if it exists at all) must exist a common language which is constitutive of social practice. Again:

intersubjective meanings are not a matter of converging beliefs and values. When we speak of consensus we speak of beliefs and

values which could be the property of a single person, or many, or all; but intersubjective meanings could not be the property of a single person because they are rooted in social practice.⁷¹

Closely connected to this notion of intersubjective meanings is the notion of common meaning. Again this is a communal concept. When there are a high number of intersubjective meanings in a given society there is to be found a set of common meaning which is the basis for community.

Intersubjective meaning gives people a common language to talk about social reality and a common understanding, but only with common meanings does this common reference world contain significant common actions, celebrations and feelings. These are objects in the world that everybody shares. This is what makes community.⁷²

Thus, for example, the celebration of the American Way, or of the American Revolution results in a celebration called the Bicentennial. It is absolutely taken for granted by a large number of people that this could happen and that particular kinds of celebrations are appropriate as opposed to other kinds. The events have a common meaning for people. The common meaning is not a sharing of values but that "this shared value be part of the common world, that this sharing be shared."⁷³ A common meaning is often a cause for the most bitter lack of consensus. It is revealed by the counter demonstrations which occurred on July 4th, staged by various groups who were infuriated at the interpretation of the American way revealed by the mode of celebration. On the other hand those who did not participate in the common meaning at all are apathetic to the Bicentennial events. "We can only be happy or guilty in our own culture."⁷⁴

Since empiricists are searching for what individuals say and think, and attempt to show correlations to behavior and institutions, their

epistemology fails to take into account the world of intersubjective meaning, which remains unarticulated and completely invisible to them. This is a world of meaning on a communal level, a world, which if it did not exist would result in a disappearance of the very ranges of behavior which make up that social world. Since it is a world of meaning, interpretation of the particular meanings is inevitable. The epistemological categories of the empiricists "lack the notion of meaning as not simply for the individual subject; of a subject who can be a 'we' as well as an 'I'. This exclusion from the communal comes again from the baleful influence of the epistemological tradition for which all knowledge has to be reconstructed from the impressions imprinted on the single subject."⁷⁵ The notion that there is a level of reality, the communal, which cannot be reduced to single individuals is completely missed by empiricist epistemology.

The result is that all these studies miss what is most crucial to comprehend, particularly if one is going to educate for critical consciousness. A critically conscious person knows that revolutionary education must tap to the core the implicit picture held in common by people in a society, and engage in problem posing about this picture. To focus on the explicitly oppressive, for instance (because it lends itself to instruments) and the effort to measure consciousness (the feelings and opinions people have in response to the explicitly political) in order to make changes in the individual's feelings and thoughts about the situation, is to forever miss the point. A critically conscious individual understands the notion that "we are aware of the world through

a 'we' before we are through an 'I'."⁷⁶ Hence it is necessary to make the distinction between what is known to individuals and what is part of the commonly shared, taken for granted world, and the underlying assumptions which exist about the relations between the individual and the world, which have vast implications for all ranges of social practice. Alschuler's coding system simply cannot do this because, in the name of breaking the interpretive cycle, he has created an instrument which can only find out what individuals see, hear and feel about explicit politically oppressive relationships. This way of seeing informs other efforts undertaken by Alschuler to make sense of social reality. It is these to which we now turn.

The Social Literacy Project's Efforts to Understand and Act Upon Reality

The Social Literacy project (a name which allies the project with Freire's work) is engaged in 'consciousness raising'! It is called the social literacy project because "like all types of literacy we are interested in reading reality, understanding it better, and taking informed action."⁷⁷ These efforts are heavily informed by empiricist epistemological categories and thus in every case will conform to failures others in this tradition have displayed. So far I have only referred to one of the products of this type of thinking--the coding system. The following is a description of one effort to 'read' reality; following this I will describe an effort to 'take informed action'.

The project personnel have been hard at work at a Springfield Junior High School, where they have spent nearly four years. Two of these years

were spent in an effort to diagnose the problem as they saw it. "Over a two year period it has become increasingly clear that the central issue in this school is the central issue in many schools. It may vary in detail from place to place, but it falls under what is generally identified as the 'discipline problem'."⁷⁸ Consequently as part of their effort to educate for social literacy, techniques have been established for the overcoming of the 'discipline problem', as well as for discovering 'stress' that people within schools may be experiencing. These techniques are intended to focus on the system of interactions which occurs between student and teacher, teacher and administration and are hailed as victimizing none of the above. When people have discovered how they play according to the implicit rules of a self defeating game (ala Eric Berne) they will concentrate on transforming the rules rather than blame each other. In addition, other techniques are being developed (to be distributed across the country) which, when properly used in accordance with a good diagnostic instrument, will contribute to the overcoming of the discipline problem, result in system change and hopefully raise consciousness (as measured by the code). In making this diagnosis the 'team' divorced 'discipline' from the rest of reality. The problem of discipline is treated as if there is no reality outside of the school and classrooms in which the problem is occurring. Thus the solutions which are developed all contain the result of this limited view of the problem. It is the set of interactions between student and teacher, teacher and principal which is called 'system change'. The failure to include in the consideration of 'how to solve the discipline problem'

consideration of the question 'why does a discipline problem exist at all in America in 1976?' wipes out potential for any real 'system change'.

In periods like ours we must remember that the best will to create something useful may result in its opposite simply because it is blind to what lies beyond the limits of its scientific speciality or profession, because it focusses on what is nearest at hand and misconstrues its true nature, for the latter can only be revealed in the larger context.⁷⁹

A single school participates in the larger social structure--American Education, which has a history; this history is part and parcel of an ongoing American history. How is it possible to get a grasp on the underlying meaning behind the discipline problem without referring to the overall context of American society? What is the relationship of this discipline problem to the peculiar fact that, even in the light of nine percent unemployment (conservatively speaking), the American people seem so well behaved (i.e., do not rebel)? What is the relationship of the discipline problem to the apparent breakdown of the family in America--the disappearance of the father? What implications does the fact of the distant or the non-existent father have for how children relate to authority? Why is there such a peculiar raging against authority amongst American youth, on the one hand, and distancing from it on the other?⁸⁰ Surely in any discussion of discipline which purports to be about 'social literacy', the issue of authority and how to interpret it in America in 1976 needs to be raised. But none of these questions lend themselves to a check list which will record how many minutes students pay attention to the teacher, or how often the teacher raises the voice, or how many referrals there have been to the main office. Thus they do not get asked. Yet until there has clearly been some discussion

about the interrelationship between a single problem in a small milieu, and the larger social context, and its context in history, all we have is flat analysis. The solutions which are developed are the product of this flat analysis. I am not suggesting that because the whole should be taken into account in developing solutions that one should not act; it is possible to act as well as to reflect more deeply. I am saying that any solution which wishes to bear the name of revolutionary education or 'social literacy' must at least show that the solutions which are developed are the products of reflective thinking which involve extensive coherent interpretation of the nature of social reality based upon a theory of the individual in dialectic relationship to nature and history. Solutions which do not show the product of this kind of thinking but which focus instead on solving the discipline problem, in isolation from the world cannot pretend to be about the task of systemic change or social literacy. Nor can they claim to be the work of critical thinkers in the sense that Freire uses the term.

Social Literacy implies the capacity to think deeply about the causes of a problem which is occurring on a social level. We are not developing literacy on this level when we solve interactional problems. If the authors were educating for social literacy there would be some effort to educate people toward a better understanding between the part and the whole, an understanding that is entirely missing in the discussion of the 'discipline problem'. Freire is replete with the same message:

When men lack critical understanding of their reality, apprehending it in fragments which they do not perceive as interacting

constituent elements of the whole, they cannot know that reality.⁸¹

or

If we underestimate either the superstructure or infra structure it will be impossible to explain the social structure itself. Social structure is not an abstraction; it exists in the dialectic between super and infra structures. Failing to understand this dialectic, we will not understand the dialectic of change and permanence as the expression of the social structure.⁸²

The study of the Springfield school is a fragment; it is an abstraction. Like the coding system it fails to appreciate the significance of dialectic thinking, which does not lead easily and quickly to simple practical solutions, and must make do with continuing interpretations. This abstracted thinking stands firmly in the American empiricist tradition; it shows no interest in history and social philosophy in an effort to make sense of social reality. "To the literary empiricist writing balanced little essays, first on this and then on that, any attempt to 'see it whole' often seems an extremist exaggeration."⁸³ The whole thrust of Freire's work suggests that education which has any hope of leading toward critical consciousness must make the effort to 'see it whole', and understand the parts within the context. 'It is the whole that is true, and the whole which is false.'

The response from the Literacy project to what I have said here may well be: 'well we are after all achieving something; the number of referrals to the principal's office is reduced; students and teachers are both less victimized than they were before.' This would not change by a single iota what I have argued here. I am insisting that the idea that 'system change' is occurring is an illusion; in this case large numbers of people are involved in the illusion. There is a difference between

helping the victims of the social order cope better with the consequences of participating in a social structure (schooling in America) that is obviously in trouble, and declaring that the system has changed. The notions of radical education, or 'pedagogy of the oppressed' or 'education for critical consciousness' are emptied of their content. It is crucial that the differences between helping the sick feel better or cope better (therapy) and getting to the cause of the problem be maintained. The Alschuler message smacks of that too familiar American technique of announcing to the world that techniques for the cure of problems have been discovered, and that all we need now are willing and eager participants, and a new age will be ushered in.

The final evidence (if any more is needed) of how radically Freire's theory has been emasculated is contained at the end of one of Alschuler's articles on the discipline problem. He argues that once clear objectives have been established, the appropriate technique to use, since it has been shown to work as well as the others, but faster, is Behavior Modification (or IBM's Interdependent Behavior Modification).⁸⁴ The only problem with Behavior Mod is that it has been used for the wrong ends before. Now that we are developing the right ends it is to behavior mod that we turn, to hasten the process. This is one among a number of techniques which are being gathered together, probably soon to be published in the form of a handbook, to aid in the development of social literacy.

The techniques are glossy games such as 'stress hunt' or a sequence of different techniques under the headings of 'name it; frame it; aim it;' and others. The argument for the use and development of these

techniques is that teachers in the schools do not want theory, they want practical techniques which will work; the theory would be presented to them later almost certainly in the emasculated form of the coding system. Thus Freire has been jazzed up so that people will never have to think they are doing anything other than having 'fun'. Critical consciousness will seep in while the fun continues. I am not being facetious here. Freire's notion of co-investigation of reality (see below) is reduced to 'stress hunt'; the image is one of a group of people out hunting for stress. It is my conviction that the packaging of Freire into a set of techniques, one day to become a handbook, is the ultimate domestication of his work. In addition it will fail to produce the results that a truer following of Freire might in fact produce, although not necessarily on as grand a scale.

The world of intersubjective reality is never taken into account because it does not lend itself to interpretive free data; this world can only be 'seen' by those who are prepared to face up to the inevitability of interpretation--interpretation which is based upon a theory of the whole, which in turn depends upon a grasp of historical and philosophical concepts. But something must happen to this intersubjective reality when empiricists attempt to 'read' and act upon reality. It is too large a dimension to simply be ignored. What does happen is that it falls into the taken for granted sphere and is seen as an inevitable fact--much like the natural world. The following is an example of how this occurs, and what its consequences are.

In addition to helping people read reality better, the trainees

in the social literacy project 'practice blaming the system for our problems and exonerating all individuals who are victimized.'⁸⁵ One of the ways these practice sessions take place is via a game called the 'discipline game'. In the 'discipline game' one hundred frequently occurring classroom conflicts are presented--and players, in the roles of teachers and students, must attempt to resolve these in 'three minute negotiating sessions'. Not only do players 'earn points' in this game 'in direct proportion to the effectiveness of their bargaining', but the 'negotiations themselves often facilitate the discovery of underlying radical causes and solutions to these problems. (my emphasis)'⁸⁶

We even get more explicit information about the way in which players earn more points by studying the rules of the 'discipline game'. The following is taken directly from the rules:

- 1 Any negotiations that result in increased misunderstanding, anger, hostility or conflict.
- 0 Any negotiations which end in a stalemate, without apparent willingness to bargain in good faith, seek compromise or allow the other party in the negotiations any way to meet their needs. Either party in the negotiations may produce a "0" rating for the total negotiations by the unwillingness to enter open, serious negotiations.
- +1 At minimum, both parties in the negotiations must demonstrate serious intentions to find a mutually agreeable solution by their willingness to listen, to consider seriously the other's point of view, needs and proposed solutions. The negotiating parties do not need to decide on a mutually agreeable solution to earn a +1 rating. However, if players abdicate their self-interests as defined in the situation and basis for negotiation, the negotiations can only be rated 0.
- +2 In addition to the characteristics of a +1 negotiation, the parties must reach a clear, mutually agreed upon solution to earn a +2. Solutions must reflect a way to satisfy clearly stated different needs of both teacher and students to earn a +2 rating.⁸⁷

This is an excellent example of how the failure to take intersubjective meanings that are specific to this society at this time into account leads the social literacy personnel to actually bring the heart of the 'system' more deeply into the classroom than ever before. This, in the name of uncovering radical causes of problems. I will now explain this.

The reader is reminded of the earlier discussion on negotiations, based upon the Taylor article. "Our whole notion of negotiation is bound up, for instance, with the distinct identity and autonomy of the parties, with the willed nature of their relations; it is a very contractual notion."⁸⁸ These are the notions of the agent in his relationship to society and to his fellows, implicit and at the heart of the social practice called negotiations. These implicit notions, and the concomitant social practices, are precisely what we need to investigate, understand, and do something about if we seriously want to talk of radical causes and radical change. Since the empiricist epistemological grid is unable to see this level of reality however, it is accepted as part of the given; it is taken for granted much as one takes the natural world for granted. But it is precisely "the vision of a society based upon negotiations" which most needs examination, as well as the "attendant norms of rationality and the definition of autonomy."⁸⁹ If, as a society we are to make radical changes, we need to consider other kinds of visions which have implications for altogether different kinds of social practices. There are societies, for instance, in which the social practice of negotiations and the concomitant view of the individual in relation

to society, do not exist. There may be ethnic groupings in the Springfield school for whom negotiation-based relationships are entirely antithetical to an implicit agent/other view they hold of the world. Yet Alschuler et. al. not only fail to take this aspect of reality into account; they encourage people to become proficient at it by having them 'earn points' if they do it well! So the token economy enters even more deeply into the classroom as well. The students and teachers playing these games are being perfectly prepared to accept, as given, late capitalist America, where people will bargain in good faith, keep up their contracts, and be desirous of earning (and buying) more and more goodies. And the students in this case are going to be well-behaved, since they will no longer be a discipline problem. What more could one ask especially of an effort which is about education for social literacy?

And what has generally happened is that the interdependent productive and negotiating society, has been recognized by (mainstream) social science, but not as one structure of intersubjective meaning among others, rather as the inescapable background of social action as such. In this guise it need no longer be an object of study. Rather it retreats to the middle distance where its general outline takes the role of a universal framework, within which (it is hoped) actions and structures will be brute data identifiable and this for any society at any time.⁹⁰

In schools around the country a social order has broken down. People are literally not in any kind of organic communal relationship with each other. A major breakdown of authority and generations is taking place. The relationship between people is not one of a common purposes and principles, with concomitant mutual respect. Rather the relationships are of a purely instrumental and legal nature. A system change would establish some deep sense of mutuality in purpose, aim and relationship

between generations. Alschuler deepens and seals what is with a stamp of approval and good times to be had by all.

Method has been abstracted as if it simply hangs suspended and has nothing to do with a specific culture and a specific people and has no effect in and of itself on how people think. That is, we do live in a society where technique and technology have a history. That history is embedded in the way people view technology and in the kind of thinking that a heavily technologized society has produced. In the case of the United States 'knowing inevitably becomes know-how.'⁹¹ It is instrumental thinking which has become the strongest buttress against critical thinking in this country. It has resulted in the debasement of knowledge and critical reasoning power, and has led to an ever growing demand for the quick easy, practical solution. Instrumental thinking occurs at the level of intersubjective meaning in this country; it is part of the social world which is the taken for granted reality shared on a wide scale by American. "There is always an arrow which de-problematizes the situation...they are among thousands of directional signals in a technological society which, introjected by men hinder their capacity for critical thinking."⁹² To create more techniques for the development of critical consciousness is once again to deny the possibility for it to develop.

Technological progress has helped to make it even easier to cement old illusions more firmly and to introduce new ones into the minds of men without the interference of reason.⁹³

To respond to the demands for practical solutions to problems teachers experience in the classroom by creating new brightly dressed

techniques is not to develop critical consciousness. Instead we must consider ways to show how theory, philosophy and history actually can provide clues to our most difficult problems. Even though this would not guarantee quick twenty minute solutions they would be the only possible steps toward critical consciousness.

The rejection of computational reasoning does not mean and should not mean rejection of reason, to be replaced by feelings or a return to nature; it requires to resurrect an older and yet new kind of reason, and also to concentrate our thinking in different areas.⁹⁴

or this time from Freire:

Philosophy is the matrix of the proclamation of a new reality... cultural action for conscientization is always a utopian enterprise. That is why it needs philosophy, without which instead of denouncing reality and announcing the future, it would fall into the mystification of ideological knowledge.⁹⁵

The bureaucratization (packaging, technicizing, staticizing) of everything and the concomitant mode of consciousness is at the heart of our difficulties in America. Critical consciousness in this country means, among other things, developing the capacity to escape the need for looking to pre-packaged techniques, and developing instead the capacity to see how problems are linked together; it means developing the capacity to think to the roots of problems, which means being able to recognize the world of intersubjective meanings in which we live, but so rarely reflect upon. Setting up a package of techniques to facilitate this process must fail. Using these techniques may solve the immediate difficulties people are facing, but again we should be under no illusion that they achieve anything else.

It has been argued throughout that at the very heart of the problems

of the social literacy effort is the failure to comprehend the significance of the dialectical relationship of subject and object. This in turn has caused these theorists to omit the importance of dialectic logic, historical and comparative analysis, philosophy, and the need for interpretation. This failure on the part of the social literacy project personnel can be understood. Freire himself provides pertinent clues:

Distinct from specialities to which we are not opposed, specialisms narrow the area of knowledge in such a way that the so-called 'specialists' become generally incapable of thinking. Because they have lost the vision of the whole of which their 'speciality' is only one dimension, they cannot even think correctly in the area of their specialization.⁹⁶

In this case the 'specialism' is psychology. The authors hardly ever refer to any scholars other than psychologists. All references are to individuals or interactional patterns (a close analogy would be patterns as they occur between marriage partners). Discussion on the realm of the social, or the historical is non-existent, as is any reference to social theorists. Discussion on the level of the social must search for intersubjective meanings; the 'subject' in this case is a community, not an individual. Freire goes further:

The only authentic points of departure for the scientific knowledge of reality are the dialectical relationship between men and the world, and the critical comprehension of how these relationships are evolved and how they in turn condition men's perception of concrete reality.⁹⁷

Freire is unequivocal here. One cannot claim to be applying his theory without at least taking up this challenge. The only way to explain why the project personnel did not take it up is that they literally did not see these words; phrases such as these are opaque to the empiricists in the same way and for the same epistemological reasons that they do not

'see' the intersubjective world. When they read texts they also only look for those phrases which can be proven or disproven. They abstract these from the heart of the theory. One result is that people are no longer making the considerable effort needed to understand the theory by reading widely in history and social theory; rather the problems they take up are how to measure consciousness more precisely, or how to hunt for stress more excitingly.

Summary and Conclusions

I have tried to argue that Freire must be interpreted within the intellectual tradition he so clearly stands--that of critical theory. Critical theory is critical of particular assumptions about the nature of man, the relationships between man and man, between man and history and culture, which dominate liberal theory and society. These assumptions are constitutive of many different kinds of practices. One such practice is empiricist social science. To attempt to incorporate Freire's theory into an empiricist framework in the name of doing away with the ambiguity replete in his work, is to display an ignorance of his intellectual tradition and its relationship to empiricism; it is to display an ignorance of the nature of theory. One cannot simply lift concepts from one framework and expect them to have the same meaning when placed in another, especially when that other is precisely what Freire is trying to refute. The cost is to remove exactly that which is most cutting about Freire's theory. Freire attempts to refute the assumptions at the core of liberal mentality and practice. To use

words taken from his theory, while continuing those practices is to annihilate the meaning of Freire's theory--meaning which can only be grasped through interpretation, based upon readings in social theory and history (i.e., the kind of reading which so clearly influenced Freire himself). What is lacking here is a 'theoretical self-consciousness', a notion which is discussed at length in Chapter V.

I have made another claim in this chapter: that the empiricists' effort to comprehend social reality fails in fundamental ways, and that the hermeneutical effort is far more worthy of our attention. The empiricists' wish to break the hermeneutical circle, arguing that there is too much ambiguity when one relies upon interpretation and insight. According to the empiricist one can only claim that something is true when we know it to be so beyond doubt, i.e., unambiguously. The hermeneutical position does not claim that one can know the truth beyond doubt, but does insist that their effort to know social reality is the more insightful method, the one less likely to lead to delusion. I have attempted to show how those efforts to make sense of the nature of social reality from the empiricists' perspective misses what is most fundamental. The criteria for what constitutes the better argument are of course developed from within the hermeneutical framework. One must accept the inevitability of having to make interpretations when engaged in the analysis of human activity, in order to accept the criteria. The following from Charles Taylor sums up the point:

The superiority of one position over another will thus consist in this, that from the more adequate position one can understand one's own stand and that of one's opponents; not the other way around. It goes without saying that this argument can only have weight for those in the superior position.⁹⁸

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 74.
- ²Ibid., p. 86.
- ³Ibid., p. 81.
- ⁴Postscript to French edition of Pedagogy. op. cit.
- ⁵Freire, op. cit., p. 87.
- ⁶Ibid., p. 88.
- ⁷Postscript to the French edition, op. cit.
- ⁸Quoted in William Leiss, The Domination of Nature (N.Y.: George Brazillier Inc.), p. 204.
- ⁹Philip Slater, Earthwalk (N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1974).
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 58.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 79.
- ¹²Ibid., p. 78.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 61.
- ¹⁴Ibid.
- ¹⁵Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1961), p. 62.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸Alexander Mitscherlich, Society Without the Father, translated by Eric Mosbacher (N.Y.: Schocken Books, 1970), p. 47.
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 42.
- ²⁰Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1965), p. 80. (emphasis mine).

- ²¹Freire, Pedagogy, p. 118.
- ²²Ibid., p. 100.
- ²³Bud. L. Hall, "Participatory Research: An Approach for Change," in Convergence, Vol. VII, No. 2, (1975) p. 30.
- ²⁴Freire, op. cit., p. 103. my emphasis.
- ²⁵Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 137.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 14. emphasis mine.
- ²⁷See Aaron Cicourel, "The Ethnomethodological Paradigm," in P. Dreitzel ed. Recent Sociology No. 2 (N.Y.: MacMillan, 1970), p. 26.
- ²⁸R. Unger, Knowledge and Politics, p. 8.
- ²⁹Alfred Schutz, "Some Leading Concepts of Phenomenology," from unpublished collection Hampshire College, Amherst, Mass.
- ³⁰Ibid.
- ³¹J. Spradley and D.W. McCurdy, The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in a Complex Society (Chicago: Aldine, 1972), p. 9.
- ³²Ibid., p. 8.
- ³³Ibid., p. 12.
- ³⁴Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 43. emphasis mine.
- ³⁵A certain attitude is involved here which only few people are wise enough to hold. The idea expressed by Freud captures the essence of this attitude: "Only a man who really knows is modest, for he knows how insufficient his knowledge is." Sigmund Freud, Question of Lay Analysis (W.W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 73. Freire means the same thing when he says "Knowledge begins with the awareness of knowing little." in Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 119. This attitude is close to the heart of what it means to be critically conscious. c.f. to Alschuler and Smith's version of critical consciousness appearing on p.84a of this dissertation. Mention of this attitude is noticeably absent; it is not measurable.
- ³⁶Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality: A treatise on the sociology of knowledge (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1967), p. 12.

³⁷Spradley and McCurdey, p. 68.

³⁸Severyn Bruyn, The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation (N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 164, 185.

³⁹See Sigmund Freud, The Outline of Psychoanalysis (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1949), p. 31.

⁴⁰See Michael Maccobby, "Literacy for the Favelas," Science, (vol.172, May 14, 1971), p. 673.

⁴¹Postscript to French edition of Pedagogy.

⁴²See Charles Taylor, "Neutrality in Political Science," from Connolly and Gordon (eds.), op. cit., pp. 16-40.

⁴³C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, op. cit., p. 184.

⁴⁴p. Freire, Pedagogy, p. 120.

⁴⁵Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 163.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 105.

⁴⁷Freire, Pedagogy, p. 117. my emphasis.

⁴⁸Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 55., footnote.

⁴⁹Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," Review of Metaphysics (Vol. XXV, No. 1., Sept. 1971), pp. 3-51.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 11.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 16.

⁵²Ibid., p. 11.

⁵³Alfred Alschuler, Introduction to William Smith: The Meaning of Conscientizacao: the goal of Paulo Freire's pedagogy (Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1976), p. vi.

⁵⁴William Smith, The Meaning of Conscientizacao: the goal of Paulo Freire's pedagogy (Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1976). All words in quotes appear at various points in this work.

⁵⁵Alschuler, op. cit., p. v.

⁵⁶Smith, op. cit., p. 5.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 8., emphasis mine.

⁵⁸Norman Malcolm, Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 39.

⁵⁹Smith, op. cit., p. 2.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 6.

⁶¹Freire, Cultural Action for Freedom, p. 22. The views expressed by Alschuler and Smith on the subject of the neutrality of technique are precisely the same as those expressed by B.F. Skinner: "Such a technology (to change behavior) is ethically neutral. It can be used by villain or saint. There is nothing in a methodology which determines the values governing its use." in Beyond Freedom and Dignity (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1972), p. 143. Erich Fromm, writing about B.F. Skinner, could have been speaking to Alschuler and Smith: "...his political and social naivete can make him write sometimes more convincingly (and confusedly) than he could if he were aware of what he is trying to condition us to do ." in The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness (Greenwich: Fawcett Books, 1973), p. 64.

⁶²Smith, op. cit., p. 85.

⁶³quoted in *ibid.*, p. 85.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁵Taylor, op. cit., p. 25.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 26.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 27.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 28.

⁷²Ibid., p. 30.

⁷³Ibid., p. 31.

⁷⁴Mitscherlich, op. cit., p. 8.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 32.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Alfred Alschuler et al., "Blame the System or How to love everyone while changing their roles," Social Literacy Project, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., Jan 1976, p. 2.

⁷⁸Alfred Alschuler and J.V. Shea, "The Discipline Game: Playing Without Losers," in Learning Magazine, August/September 1974, p. 80.

⁷⁹Max Horkheimer, "The Social Function of Philosophy," in Critical Theory, op. cit., p. 260.

⁸⁰See for example Herbert Hendin, The Age of Sensation (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975), and the discussion by Christopher Lasch on "The American Family," in N.Y. Review of Books, Vol XII, No. 19 (Nov. 27, 1975), pp. 37-42.

⁸¹Freire, Pedagogy, p. 95.

⁸²Freire, Cultural Action for Conscientization, p. 33.

⁸³C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, p. 153.

⁸⁴Alfred Alschuler, unpublished manuscript, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.

⁸⁵Alfred Alschuler, et al., "The School Game: Playing Without Losers," Social Literacy Project, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., p. 10. This is an excellent example of the Alschuler team's inability to comprehend, or work within, the dialectic; they move here from one pole--the focus on the individual only, to the other--the focus on the group only. This position allies them with both the positivist Marxists and B.F. Skinner. Both schools do away completely with the concrete human subject; in fact they have no theory of the human subject (in the case of behaviorism only behavior is seen, not the behaving person). The relationship of this position and all else that constitutes the social literacy project and the similarities to neobehaviorism make political and historical sense:

"Skinner believes that man is malleable, subject to social influences, and that nothing in his 'nature' can be considered to be a final obstacle to development toward a peaceful and just society. Thus his system attracts those psychologists who are liberals and who find in Skinner's system an argument to defend their political optimism. He appeals to those who believe that desirable social goals like peace and equality are not just rootless ideals, but can be established in reality. The whole idea that one can 'design' a better society on a scientific basis appeals to many who earlier might have been socialists...Is not Skinner's way particularly attractive to a point in history when the political solution seems to have failed and revolutionary hopes are at their lowest?" (E. Fromm, op. cit., p. 63).

An example of a different position to the one adopted by Alschuler is given by Allen Wheelis; the complex dialectic between subject and object is maintained. Neither pole is collapsed into the other:

Wheelis has just seen a man strike his son in the face: "It's not hard to understand him. We can fill in a twisted and victimized life, can take a point of view from which he must be seen with as much sympathy as we now see his child. But to understand is not to forgive--not unless we regard that which we understand as being inalterably determined, in which case all is indeed absurd, for our reactions, whether of blame or forgiveness, would then be as determined as those of him whom we judge. However unfortunate his own childhood he yet is responsible, in the view of all who believe in freedom, for not inflicting such a childhood on his own son." Wheelis, The Moral (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 18.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 13.

⁸⁷From the rules of "The Discipline Game," (Social Literacy Project, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass, 1976).

⁸⁸Taylor, op. cit., p. 23.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 28.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 39, 40.

⁹¹John Leonard, "T.V. Samples the 'Peace of Mind Market Place'," N.Y. Times (June 20, 1976), p. 30., (Entertainment section).

⁹²Freire, Cultural Action for Freedom, op. cit., p. 50.

⁹³Max Horkheimer, "Social Function of Philosophy," op. cit.

⁹⁴Hans Peter Dreitzel, "Social Science and the Problem of Rationality: Notes on the sociology of technocrats," Politics and Society, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Winter, 1972), p. 180.

⁹⁵Freire, Cultural Action for Freedom, p. 47.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 49.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 47., my emphasis.

⁹⁸Taylor, op. cit., p. 47.

CHAPTER IV

The epoch in which we live can count as one of its great achievements the creation of technology which has the potential of liberating mankind from being totally absorbed by the demands of Nature. That is, it is now possible for large numbers of people (in the west) to be liberated from toil, from total involvement in making sure that there is enough food on the table and a roof overhead. In many respects the problem facing those of us who inherit these possibilities is how to make them count. For at the moment they do not. We only have achieved one part of the equation. We have the technological capacity for a life that is less miserable. Yet we are prisoners of the purposes, principles, assumptions which are at the heart of this era's achievement. **Problems** of boredom, dull routine jobs, overpopulation, are the products of our 'advances'. More of the same will not help us respond to these difficulties.

Yet we continue to act as if each new technological achievement should be greeted with the same acclaim as the first. So the New York Times speaks of the 'Viking miracle', and a scientist intimately involved in the Mars project speaks disparagingly of those who are apathetic about the accomplishment. Of course it is a great achievement, but the nature of the achievement is equivalent to Pele the brilliant soccer player scoring yet another brilliant goal, and receiving yet another accolade for his achievement, including an increase in salary. It would be an entirely different kind of achievement if Pele suddenly became a chess champion. The western world similarly could only really claim profound

achievement if there was a recognition of how limited an achievement the technological miracles in fact are--unless another achievement of a completely different sort is attained.

The technological advances we have made must be seen in their proper light. They are painfully small. There is a real question whether the telephone operator's daily activities are an advance over the Indian's daily preparations of an animal trap. As a result of our technological advances we no longer need to spend all our time getting food. Neither can many of us go back to the Indian's way of life. There are too many of us as a result of our discoveries in birth control and death control. The real happiness our technological age has brought us is succinctly described by Freud:

The voice of pessimistic criticism makes itself heard and warns us that most of these satisfactions (of technological advance) follow the model of the 'cheap enjoyment' extolled in the anecdote--the enjoyment obtained by putting a bare leg from under the bed-clothes on a cold winter night and drawing it in again.¹

Freud goes on to give a concrete example of the apparent rather than real advances we have made:

What is the use of reducing infant mortality when it is precisely that reduction which imposes the greatest restraint on us in begetting children so that taken all around we nevertheless rear no more children than in the days before the reign of hygiene, while at the same time we have created difficult conditions for our sexual life in marriage, and have probably worked against the beneficial effects of natural selection. And, finally what good to us is a long life if it is difficult and barren of joys, and if it is so full of misery that we can only welcome death as a deliverer.²

A new era which hopes to make our technological advances count for something will have a very different set of purposes, principles, and assumptions which dominate it. These assumptions would attempt to solve

the problems of equality of life, of how to more equitably redistribute resources; it would have as one of its central purposes the education of the civilized human being, not conforming, consuming human beings. The civilized man would strive to live the life of the mind, a notion that is broader than intellectual activity. It is a life not divorced from passion. The use of the critical intelligence would be a highly valued attribute in such a society. A society governed by an aim to educate its people for critical consciousness would hold a theory of the human subject which recognized latent as well as manifest aspects of the person, unlike liberal theory which only recognizes what is manifest.³ Obviously we are terrifyingly far away from a society committed to such a theory. We remain giants in our degree of technological mastery and pygmies in our knowledge of how to build such a society. The point is that so much of our effort is geared toward increasing our technological know how and hardware, and relatively so little toward the establishment of the kind of society of which I talk. If there is to be the conquering of radically different frontiers then there would be no time, no effort, no resources available for finding out whether there is life on Mars or not. This does not mean that we do away with technology. It means that the continuous output of more and more gadgetry would no longer occur. It means that technological production would not be the motive force of society.

Yet most Americans believe that their society at basis is fine; they cannot conceive of a society ordered along fundamentally different lines. The assumptions and principles driving American society are

taken as given by the great majority of Americans. Many of these Americans have graduated from American colleges. In their four years (or more) as students their propensity to conform has been assured. The research that has been done on the effect of colleges on American students overwhelmingly confirms this fact.⁴

But, paradoxically, one of the few institutions in the United States which can do a great deal to keep alive a questioning, non-conforming critical group is the University. The task must always be how to enhance this aspect of the University. This becomes especially obvious and necessary in the light of what has been said above. The liberal era is dying a slow death. The end may be sudden or catastrophic. A new age may be heralded by a series of revolutions. It is obviously impossible to predict what form or forms this ending will take. As an educator one must attempt to set the seeds for the kind of era which will emerge. As an educator one must try to educate for 'critical consciousness', because only critically conscious individuals have much hope of coping with the profound tensions of a transitional age. And hopefully it will be critically conscious thinkers who will be laying the theoretical groundwork for a new and different kind of era. There are various ways of nurturing the development of critical consciousness among students. Some of them may have nothing to do with the explicit study of social issues whatsoever.⁵ Freire's educational theory provides one seminal way to develop critically conscious students. In this dissertation I am focussing on two different groups for whom application of Freire's theory could have radical implications. The first group is

the large number of relatively unsophisticated students, particularly Freshmen who typically come to the University and it is this group which will be the focus of the next chapter. Another group are educators themselves and some ideas about how to educate for critical consciousness for this group will be presented in the final chapter.

Freire's successes came as a result of his conducting literacy training programs for formally uneducated peasants in Latin America. His aim was to help peasants to learn to read and to write from the inside out. That is, by beginning at the core of why they could not read or write and developing ways to dialogue about these core issues, insights would be precipitated which sometimes produced dramatic results. Starting from the inside out meant knowing the basic assumptions these peasants made about man, his relation to nature, culture, history, and his fellow men and women. It also meant knowing how these assumptions were articulated--the thought language reality of the people. By re-presenting to the peasants (using pictures for non-literate groups) some of these assumptions in the form of a problem to be solved by them, they (the peasants) could begin to make their own connections about complex philosophic issues such as the relationship between thought and action, the historical and situational forces responsible for one's situation in the world, the differences between nature and culture, man and animal. These insights produced radical changes in how the peasants viewed themselves, and produced great changes in the way they wrote (and thought) and the speed with which they learned to read and write. Freire's work with these formally uneducated people provides a powerful model for a very

similar group who come to college.

Freshmen who come to college do so at a significant time in their lives. They have lived for too long under the wing of their parents, and in the midst of stultifying small town and high school cliques (one major exception which comes to mind are the inner-city freshmen who attend city colleges). College represents a chance to finally break from home and enter the larger society. It is also a time of transition between adolescence and adulthood, a time of flux and potential reformulation. "It stands to reason that late adolescence is the most favorable period, and late adolescent personalities of any age group the best subjects, for indoctrination; because in adolescence an ideological realignment is by necessity in process and a number of ideological possibilities are waiting to be hierarchically ordered by opportunity, leadership and friendship."⁶ As I have already said, for too many this is a time when the potential for reformulation is rather hopelessly missed; the forces which most strongly socialize most college freshmen are peer forces.⁷ Contact with challenging ideas from more mature adults who share at the same time a degree of adolescent unfinishedness, is virtually entirely missing. In addition, instead of providing the freshmen or sophomore with a range of possible ways in which he or she could take on large doses of responsibility, the University presents a finished, hard set of rules enforced by a distant bureaucracy. The Hazen report on the entering freshmen is testimony to the missed opportunity for minds to be truly opened.⁸

One of the highest achievements of the liberal era is the idea of

a democracy. A democratic state was to be one where injustice propagated upon the many by the few was going to be halted forever by granting representation to the people. But the idea was predicated upon two assumptions: that the many would participate substantially in the affairs of society, and that they would have to develop the critical intelligence to do so. Those who took the idea of a democracy seriously realized that if the idea was to maintain its cutting edge, the people would have to be educated to be critical, to resist the various forces which would attempt to re-establish rule by and for the few. A true democracy has sufficient belief in the notion of government by, for, and of the people that it would wish its socializing agencies to graduate people whose critical faculties were alive. A democracy in the true sense of the word requires that its populace be political beings in the traditional (Aristotelian) sense of that idea. That is, they are not true citizens if they are not intimately involved in how their society goes about its activities. In contrast to this, and as has been stated so often, we have a society in which the dominating principle is to find ways to make sure its citizenry do not achieve critical thought and action. The aim is to create a populace which will consume more. For consumption of the sort required for the American economy to grow, to take place at all, requires that minds not be critically sharp and alert, but dulled and receptive.

It is this attitude to the world that one is likely to find amongst a typical group of college freshmen. It is liable to be one of those aspects at the heart of their framework of reality. Yet an education

which would address the set of assumptions that underly such an attitude must not at one and the same time simply change the subject matter, while still maintaining and hardening consumer passivity--(for a group of students whose passion to learn has already been awakened, this argument does not apply. I will describe the approach appropriate for such a group in the final chapter). It is not enough to start berating the students for being passive and consumer-like, urging them toward alternative action. An example might capture my meaning more clearly.

I was once teaching a special group of 'gifted' high school students, mostly from white middle and upper class suburbia. The class was ostensibly about community studies. One morning after struggling for weeks to find some way of getting beyond the dulled, but hopeful faces, I showed a video tape of one segment of Bronowski's The Ascent of Man, which has recently been shown on the educational television network. This particular segment ends with Bronowski ankle deep in the mud of Auschwitz; he ends his long discussion of the dangers of absolute certainty by saying, "We must learn to touch each other." I watched my students closely at this point, and nearly all of them had a look on their face that was vaguely familiar to me. Suddenly, and with shock, I realized that this was the same look that came over them when they watched Hogan's Heroes every evening before dinner. Most of the students were watching just another television show. In order for me to establish dialogue with these students, in order for me to make myself more clearly understood, I would need to know much more about the meaning of having grown up in white middle class suburbia, the meaning of

being an adolescent both in the psychological as well as the social sense. And above and beyond this I should know first hand exactly what the thought language reality of the students is. I know now that it makes no sense to show a television show to such a group, no matter what the content of the show. (It would make sense to view a television show if the explicit purpose was to discuss passivity and its effects).

So we cannot simply present to the students an alternative way of viewing the world. They will not understand what we are talking about. Most would sit passively and wait for the class to end not knowing why these issues were being discussed, assuming (if we asked them), that they were learning by osmosis. They do not know that when we say 'do you know that you make the assumption that you learn something by simply going around the university waiting for things to happen?' that we are in fact addressing them. They have no awareness of holding that assumption about how learning happens, even though that is the assumption they hold. Indeed they are not aware that they hold assumptions at all. The only way they will really have learned what we are trying to tell them is if they can come to that insight themselves. (The apparent contradictions in this argument will be discussed in the final section of Chapter V and Chapter VI).

Is then one to do nothing? Freire challenges us to do what is historically possible, and offers one way of coming to know these students. His proposal is that a co-investigation of reality should precede any program development. When one can really speak to people from inside their worlds, address them, while referring to language and thoughts

they have heard themselves express, we are liable to be probing to the intellectual roots of the people with whom we are working; in addition we will be addressing issues on the level of a set of taken for granted assumptions--assumptions which are seen as inevitable, as part of the way things are. In the case of our group of freshmen such an investigation is liable to reveal assumptions which are typical of an oppressed consciousness as described by Freire, as well as assumptions which are at the heart of the liberal paradigm, i.e., positivist assumptions. The way these assumptions will be articulated, the form in which they appear, can only be known as a result of a co-investigation of reality. When the specific form as used by Freshmen students in a university setting is known, it would be possible to re-present to them some of the words, expressions, thoughts they have heard themselves express (and thus these expressions would have meaning for them) in the form of a problem to be solved.

The following is a description of my effort to put some of these thoughts to work. In a condensed form I conducted a co-investigation of reality with a group of college Freshmen, and then re-presented to them some of their thought in the form of problems to be solved. Hopefully these examples will represent further clarification of Freire's theory. The context in which this work took place was a writing class; thus I had the chance to see whether some significant changes in the action of writing, at least, would occur. The material is organized in the following way: First a description of the background--the living situation these students inhabited; there follows a description of the

way I thought about approaching the class; then a brief overview of the linear sequence of the events which occurred in the class; finally a description of three aspects--the co-investigation and what I learned from that; the teaching I did; the re-presentation in the form of a problem.

The past two chapters have been an effort to point to the heart of the Freire method. It has been my argument that if the heart of Freire's theory is left out or misunderstood, then one will be doing something other than applying Freire. It has also been my argument that one reason Freire is so difficult to comprehend is because he speaks to us out of an intellectual tradition with which many of us are unfamiliar--one that is imbued with a philosophical and historical sense. One reason I have chosen to explicate his theory is precisely because it is so easy to misunderstand and misapply his work. There is a second reason for my attempt at explication. All Freire's work has been done with Latin American peasants. Is there a way in which his theory can be translated to formal American educational contexts at all? I have already argued that one such effort at translation was a distortion of Freire. What would a correct translation look like? Freire seems to have had considerable success in literacy groups (reading and writing) with peasants. Would there be similar successes in a formal American educational context? In other words would the students begin to write and read better while partaking in an educational effort to develop critical consciousness? The two efforts (developing critical consciousness and literacy) must take place simultaneously according to Freire's theory.

Background

The setting in which I did this work was Southwest Residential college, located within the University of Massachusetts. Southwest consists of five high rise towers each of twenty-two floors in height, and several 'low rises'. When the University of Massachusetts built Southwest between the years 1964-68, it waxed enthusiastically about its hopes for this college:

From the shape of the student rooms to the comfortable modern furniture they contain, everything about the new Southwest Residential College was planned with student convenience in mind and with academic excellence in the forefront...During the regular sessions of the University, each of the three 'houses' in each twenty-two story building has its own Head of Residence, Counselors, and student government, as well as its own Faculty Perceptor and faculty Fellows who bring to Southwest Residential College new Augmented Learning Programs which are intended to make the entire college a new and exciting 'classroom' of the University.⁹

Three years after completion, the following is an extract from a letter a student wrote to the college newspaper, calling for some way of cleaning up the mess in what had become an urban slum:

It was the Sunday after--after a rather ordinary weekend which once again has left Southwest a teeming pile of garbage and debris. I woke early...only to be hit by the stench of urine and beer and the eyesore of cans, papers, broken bottles and toilet paper...¹⁰

This is a fairly mild description of what is an overcrowded, concrete complex, housing five thousand people in close to a quarter square mile. Sometimes three students inhabit a small dormitory room; drugs and alcohol abound amidst a group of very bored students, most of whom have not the faintest idea why they are at a place called the "University".

As for the 'exciting' Academic program which was intended to be a

'living learning' experiment, its history is equally inauspicious. The University has not had the courage nor the finances to really provide the resources for an experimental college; the result is that the kinds of educational offerings have to be those which students would not find elsewhere. A collection of unrelated 'experimental' courses are offered year after year. Modeling the liberal university perfectly, this alternative has been unable to generate a clear set of purposes which would generate an integrated program with a beginning, middle and end to it. Rather, what it has achieved is to provide students with more choices than ever (part of the problem for students is that there is already so much choice, and no foundation to make any choices exists), provided them with classes that are in close proximity, and also 'easier' than most other courses in the University (thus keeping enrollments up). Students seem to enjoy this aspect as well as the greater informality which apparently exists in Southwest courses.

The Southwest community participated in an act of courage in 1972. They recognized the degree to which the University is implicated politically at the very core of its being. Students who have passed through the large bureaucratically organized multiversity have learned how to be well-behaved cogs within a large institution; they are perfectly well-adapted to living in late capitalist America. The myth of the liberal university which enforces Academic freedom, insisting that it takes no position, that it allows all options to be presented, is just that, a myth. This recognition by the Southwest community caused them to take the profound step of committing themselves explicitly to political

education. Their decision was to make the focus of their educational program the 'combatting' of racism and sexism. However this laudable decision has not been followed through with intense discussion and practice as to what constitutes a 'real alternative' to what exists. There has been no discussion as to the nature of the students who are being reached, and how come so many were not being reached (these were just written off as 'reactionary'). Implicit in the notion of combatting racism and sexism is the assumption that people are going to be changed. There has been no discussion as to what assumption people are making as to the nature of the human subject, and what constitutes effective, 'change' procedures that do not objectify these students. "The way to combat racism and sexism is to deal with racism and sexism;" there is a linear thinking which underlies this analysis that comes very close to the empiricist mentality which also sees one effect trotting neatly behind one cause. The failure to give radical consideration to these questions and to larger ones, such as what theory of human liberation is held, what vision of the ideal do people hold, has resulted in a new church rapidly growing up with all believers required to toe the line or else suffer the consequences. The people who launched into explicit political education cannot be faulted entirely for their mistakes. There is very little literature available as to what would constitute a humanistic (in the true sense of the word) liberating pedagogy. This is why Freire's work may be interesting and relevant for a community such as Southwest, a community which has already taken the kind of step they have taken.

Two years ago in the ongoing effort to seriously apply the 'living-learning' philosophy Southwest initiated a first year program. This program could only be run by using the available resources at the University (i.e., there was no more money to be had with which to launch a new program). One such resource was the Rhetoric program. This program constituted the University's effort to overcome the communication difficulties (broadly defined) which students were experiencing. All students are required to take two Rhetoric courses. Both of these are focussed on helping students develop their writing prowess. In Southwest it was arranged to hold special Rhetoric classes for Southwest students. These classes would try to focus on issues which were of clearer relevance to the students' lives than the typical and much despised (by students) Rhetoric classes. I was employed by Southwest to administer the first year program and 'facilitate' the training seminar for teaching assistants from the Rhetoric departments. During these seminars we would make an effort to think through what would constitute a good Rhetoric course within the Southwest context. What better group for me to try this Freire project out on than a group of Freshmen who would be registering for a required Rhetoric course?

There were all kinds of difficulties associated with this decision. The students' attitude to Rhetoric was similar to the one most people hold when they visit the dentist. Many students who register for dormitory based courses do so because it is the fastest route from bed to classroom. I had never taught a writing course before. I had never taught a required course before. I had never been with a group who were

exclusively Freshman. There was one element about the situation, however, which made it most amenable to my project. The students were registering for a course, the only requirement of which was that writing take place. This was not the normal situation in which an agreement of sorts exists before teacher and students meet. Generally, students register for a course they are interested in; they come to the course with some prior expectation as to what the content of the course will be. In this Rhetoric course the only expectation the students had was that writing would occur, and that it would probably be boring. This was perfect for me since it provided maximum latitude to discover whether my knowledge of the theoretical principles underlying Freire's work would serve as a guide in essentially unfamiliar territory. Knowledge of the principles would be deepened as the experiences wore on, and would serve as the guiding force whenever new situations or new decisions presented themselves. This fits completely with what I have been arguing all along. It is not techniques we need to pass along to each other, but an appreciation for and an understanding of the role of theory. Knowledge of theory, and an awareness of some of its implications would allow one to think creatively on the spot when confronted with new situations; it would provide teachers with knowledge of underlying principles; only with knowledge on this level does anyone have the appropriate tools with which to reflect upon their actions. Only with these tools can one begin to work outside of the dominating and dominant paradigm. (The question 'How do we pass the theory on to other teachers?' will be taken up more fully in Chapter V).

The following is a report on the nature of my decisions in regard to this Rhetoric class. This report is intended to reveal how the awareness of the central principles underlying Freire guided me in an essentially strange situation. My aim is to reveal a process of thinking here, not a static set of techniques to be replicated by others. The process of thinking I wish to reveal covers all of the following areas: How I prepared for the class; what I did in the class; what the students gave back to me and how I interpreted this information. All of these dimensions are important including the failures (which are included in the appendix). Some of the results of the application of Freire to a formal educational context in America will also hopefully be revealed.

Preparation

There are at least three ways I could have approached the task while still in the preparation stage. The first would have been to be one hundred per cent prepared in the sense that I would know fully what I was looking for. If this were the case I would be able to know fully what I would like to end up having achieved. I could for instance have decided that I would like to see these students make advances in their level of consciousness. I would then have spent considerable effort identifying 'scenes' which were representative of the oppression of these students. I would show pictures of these scenes, ask the 'existential' questions, code the resultant protocols, make a diagnosis, apply the appropriate medicine, and test again to see if there had been a movement (of consciousness, that is). If everything went smoothly I

would presumably be able to draw a graph to show the upward curve in consciousness taking place amongst a 'significant' number, and I would then know that I (they?) had been successful. Such a study fits neatly into place, can be written up clearly so that it can be duplicated quickly and easily elsewhere. Requests for workshop presentations would probably come in and so on. However, at the start of this venture it seemed impossible to me to attempt application of Freire's principles using such an approach. It would have been a distortion along the Alschuler lines. Pre and post testing students with whom I was trying to establish dialogue seemed absurd.

One alternative would have been to approach the whole enterprise as a phenomenologist who would let the phenomena speak for themselves. I would then merely describe all that I saw, and attempt in some way to organize the data so as to successfully describe the 'perspective' of the students. Although I began with very much this kind of perspective, it quickly became apparent, while engaged in the act of teaching as opposed to 'pure researching', that I could not maintain the detachment required for this approach to be successful, if it ever could be. But some of the ideas that phenomenological theorists have expressed helped considerably.

The particular aspect of Freire I was sure was most relevant for my purposes was the co-investigation of reality section and his discussions about the anthropological concept of culture, which I described in the last chapter. As I have said there was no prior agreement as to what would constitute the content of the course; it made absolute sense

to me to ask these students to write about their experiences here as students in the university. I intended to ask questions from the students as I went through their written work intending to provoke them into going deeper and deeper into a description of their social reality. My hope was that several problem themes would emerge, perhaps three or four; the students would see how their private troubles are actually social issues.¹² We would form small discussion groups and begin to reflect upon the causes of the problem with the intention of acting upon the problem in some way. Since the course could only last fifteen weeks I would actually have been quite content to have achieved the breakdown of three or four problem themes. This was as far into the future as I could see. Beyond that I had to trust that whatever knowledge of the theory I did grasp would act as some sort of a guide line for me when I was in difficulty.

E. H. Carr's way of going about the writing of history is similar to the approach I was adopting here. In his book What is History¹³ Carr describes his rejection of the effort to search for the objective facts of history, an aim of British historians in the late 1800's. Nor did he agree with the more recent efforts which emphasize the role of the historian in making history; his argument is that this approach leads to almost total skepticism. If the first approach split subject from object by hoping to objectively describe the outer world, the second approach did so equally by arguing for near absolute subjectivity--as if the outer world didn't exist at all. Carr's approach on the other hand is as follows:

For myself as soon as I have got going on a few of what I take to be the capital sources, the itch becomes too strong and I begin

to write; not necessarily at the beginning, but somewhere, anywhere. Thereafter reading and writing go on simultaneously. The writing is added to, subtracted from, reshaped, cancelled as I go on reading. The reading is guided and directed and made fruitful by the writing: the more I write the more I know what I am looking for, the better I understand the significance and the relevance of what I find...the relation between the historian and his facts is one of equality, of give and take. As any working historian knows, if he stops to reflect what he is doing as he thinks and writes, the historian is engaged in a continuous process of moulding his facts to his interpretation and his interpretation to his facts.¹⁴

The same relationship to this project was held by me. I had a plan that extended for a few weeks; the rest was vague. Only the ongoing relationship with the students would determine where we would end up. The other half of the equation was my reading of Freire's theory; it was to be the guide to the kind of decisions I made; it was the set of spectacles through which I was seeing the facts for which I was searching. Before I begin the description I must say a word about the difficulties involved in writing down and making sense for the reader what in fact occurred over the fifteen weeks in which the course was held.

The Project

Writing down what happened presents problems. The linear narrative history of what happened and how I thought about what I was doing day to day to day would be both boring and would fail to convey much meaning to the reader. So what follows first of all is only a very brief summary of the linear progression of the class, to put the reader fully into the picture. Following this I will explain how I interpreted and applied several categories of Freire's theory.

From a linear perspective the course can be broken down into the

following three stages:

1). Floundering Around. I was searching for a way to ground the theory. My main mode of investigating reality was to ask students what bothered them, annoyed them, worried them about their lives as students at the University. My main role following their written responses was to ask questions about the meaning of what they were saying. So for instance if a student wrote that she was at the University to learn, I would write on her paper "Please say what you mean by to learn." The resistance from students to this was strong; they were suspicious of me. In addition their writing was so bad that I was eliciting very little information. They were essentially doing assignments while I was conducting an investigation of their reality. I had told them that together we were going to try to discover what common knowledge they held, but failed to convey my meaning to them. I essentially failed in my goal to find three or four problem areas around which groups would focus in order to reflect upon, with the intention of taking action upon these problems. I ended up with multitudes of problem areas that range from alcoholism, to the problem of death, from golf tournaments to the problem of boredom. (See Appendix one and two for my first two communications to the students). I did find out about their attitudes to the issue of how they think they learn, though, and I will describe this in more detail below.

2). Teaching about assumptions and recognizing some core assumptions held by students. I realized that I must do some teaching. At the same time I realized that the students were profoundly distrustful of me, and

what I was doing. Some of the latter problem was overcome when we all traveled to Boston by bus to see the play Equus. The former problem I resolved by recognizing that we had to start from the beginning--with assumptions. I had to teach about this issue--assumptions, super assumptions (see below) and their implications for action in the world. In the process of teaching about assumptions I made some discoveries about assumptions they held about the world, and I experimented with two forms of re-presenting these assumptions they made to them, in the form of a problem to be solved. The first one failed to produce any insight, (Appendix three) the second resulted in some real breakthroughs. Finally I re-presented the whole course to them in the light of my reflections on it, asked for some difficult writing assignments to be done--and got back some outstanding writing from about one third of the class.

Before the midterm and in context with my teaching of assumptions I asked students to write to me on a multitude of subjects. 'Pretend that I am an old man, the wisest man on earth, and I am about to die. You have twenty-four hours to ask me any questions you like.' I was hoping this would be a way to discover some questions which were on people's mind; instead most said that they would not ask me any serious questions, because 'they could only learn from experience.' But the students did discover that when they changed some assumptions about who they were writing to their writing behavior changed. We were able to talk about a relationship between assumptions and actions; a seed was set. Continuing along this line I asked them to write about an ideal day ten years from now, and the worst possible day ten years from now.

My aim here was again to approach finding out about their reality in a different way. 'Change any two assumptions you might be holding about who you are when you write, go ahead and write.' In every case and using various gimmicks (e.g., write in class uninterruptedly for thirty minutes non stop; just keep going), I would write up the following on the blackboard: 'say your own word', and we would talk a little about what this phrase means.

3). Co-investigation of Reality. After the midterms I attempted an ambitious project. I attempted to organize the class for a co-investigation of reality of a very specific but broad ranging topic--their world of sexuality (in the broadest sense of the word). Their writing assignments were now to be about their investigations. I was fully aware that the most I could hope for was some crude idea of this world, and I was confirmed in these expectations. It took an inordinately long time to make myself understood, but in my efforts I learned a good deal. Finally as I have said I re-presented the entire course to them, and in this context attempted to re-present to them in the form of a problem some aspect of this work; their writing assignments did not reveal that this re-presentation was appropriate though.

Finally I was in a position to describe those aspects of the course which I thought would throw most light on how Freire was applicable to educational contexts in this country. I have left out entirely any description of the first aspect of the course--the 'floundering around'. The next section concentrates on the main 'successful' grounding of Freire's theory--the thread that runs from the teaching about assumptions

and their relationship to action, to the discovery of central assumptions held by the students, to the one successful problem re-presentation. A good deal of other material will be reserved for the appendix, and the careful reader might well want to peruse that section carefully. (A brief description of the effort at co-investigation appears in the appendix).

During this effort (co-investigation) the team will recognize the need to include some fundamental themes which were not directly suggested by the people during the preceding investigation. The introduction of these themes has proved to be necessary and also corresponds to the dialogical character of education. If educational programming is dialogical, the teacher-students also have the right to participate by including themes not previously suggested.¹⁵

I found this to be quite to the point one third of the way through the course and the following is a description of the actual content of what went on, as well as a description of the process of thinking which influenced me.

The Real Beginning

The particular things we see or hear in the world, are determined very much by the particular assumptions, theory we hold. I was at this time reading and re-reading Freire. More and more his insistence that the anthropological discussion of man must be included in every educational program stood out from his work. One of my Teaching Assistant colleagues who was teaching a Rhetoric course at the same time as I, mentioned that she was focussing on assumptions in her class and having an interesting time doing so. Suddenly I knew that we, my class and I, had to start at the beginning--with assumptions, leading to the assumptions

people were making about man, nature, and society (what Charles K. Smith in his book Styles and Structures,¹⁶ calls super assumptions, a name I adopted for my class). Freire's genius lay in his capacity to hold dialogue with formally uneducated peasants, about complex and seemingly abstract philosophic assumptions. He describes this most clearly in his Education for Critical Consciousness. By showing to peasants a sequence of pictures about animals, man, and man having made things, eventually pictures of men making the kinds of things they (the peasants) made anyway, the peasants began to make a distinction between man and nature: that one crucial distinguishing feature between man and animal was man's capacity to make culture. Man need not be as driven by nature as animals are; when confronted by problems posed by the natural environment man began to develop technology to intervene, to help him somehow transcend this limit situation. Eventually the structures (the cultural artifacts) man has invented have come to determine him almost as much as nature. However his/her inner and outer task is to somehow make more and better culture--not culture which acts in opposition to man (see Jules Henry), but culture for the permanent liberation of man. The fact that so many did not see themselves as potential makers of culture and history was one symptom of the problem. The fact that so many took it for granted that this was a normal state of affairs was another symptom. It is on this level of discussion that perhaps some vital changes could occur.

The discovery of the importance of assumptions is nothing new to long time Rhetoric teachers, and to philosophy teachers. Probably both

make a considerable effort at all times to communicate precisely this point to their students. But Freire's notion is that there is a political consequence which results from holding some assumptions as opposed to others. Thus the task here was to introduce the importance of looking at one very specific assumption: man as a potential creator of culture, and to find out where people stood in relation to that idea. In addition my effort here (following Freire) is to use the students' own thought-language for analysis, not other textual material. In these two senses are Freire's efforts novel, and of significant political consequence.

The Teaching About the Importance of Assumptions

The task was to do some teaching about assumptions. There were a series of facts about assumptions that I wanted to bring home sharply.

- 1). that they exist at all.
- 2). that they are mostly unconscious (hidden, implicit).
- 3). that they have implications on a number of levels for all our thinking and acting (and also obviously for how one wrote).
- 4). that only by uncovering them and holding them to the light of critical analysis would one become free to choose wisely, instead of being blindly driven by unexamined assumptions.
- 5). that there exists a whole set of so called super assumptions, such as the nature of man's relationship to nature, culture, and change; that these super assumptions have super implications for the actions and choices we make in our daily lives (or to put it in a different way, that there is a profound relationship between how we think and we act).
- 6). Finally I wanted the students to grasp the notion that one way of defining a culture is as a

set of interrelated super assumptions, and that all of us carry around the set of interrelated super assumptions which dominate the culture into which we are born. The point finally was to show that only by examining these assumptions and beginning to choose which to hold onto and which to reject could one begin to make a move from normalcy to sanity; this latter state was not necessarily a state of 'happiness' by any means. (The particular categories of thought normalcy, insanity, and sanity emerged from the Equus discussions and were formulated by David Cooper in his Death of the Family).

I worked on the teaching of these six facts about assumptions in a variety of ways, which I will only briefly mention here. Various simple exercises such as sitting on the floor instead of on seats revealed the fact that assumptions exist in relation to what is supposed to happen in classrooms. Comments in the class that were made about different people were used to show that assumptions are held about different people. Showing a series of numbers 1-3-5 and asking what comes next allows discussion about how getting to the assumptions underlying a set of 'data' allows one to make sense of it, and make predictions as to what will happen next given those set of assumptions, (in this case that the number 7 will come next). Obviously there are an endless variety of ways of approaching the task of having people come to realize that assumptions exist, and that they have implications.

Then I launched into another area: changing assumptions results in changed thinking and acting. I asked the students to play around with assumptions they made about who they were when they were writing and

who they were writing to. First I asked them to write to me as if I was the wisest man on earth about to die; it had already proven very difficult to find out what questions these students were asking. At least in this assignment they began to ask questions; many did say that there was no point in expecting any answers which would have any relevance to their lives, that this could only be learned by each one of them 'through experience'. This was to prove an interesting theme which held true for many of the students; they did not see very much relationship between the world of knowledge and their day to day lives. Issues they faced in their day to day lives they could only learn about 'through experience', not through reading or writing or talking for instance, i.e., reflection. Once they had asked their questions I asked them to now pretend that they were the old man and to respond to the questions they had originally asked. Finally I asked them to play around and change any two assumptions they normally operate under and to go ahead and write self-consciously having chosen who they were when they were writing. Students wrote some remarkable pieces, many from whom I would not have expected it. It is not to the point here to share these writings. The point is that slowly it was dawning on people that changing assumptions radically altered the action of writing at least. Many did not see what difference this made. At the same time that this insight was occurring, we had begun to break through the 'writing for assignments' syndrome, which got in the way so badly before. (At this point I must interrupt this narrative and explain that another set of activities (the co-investigation) was begun alongside these teachings and discussions about assumptions.

I want to very briefly outline what these activities were so that the reader can make sense of what follows. In the appendix I will explain in more detail. Some students began their co-investigation by examining the Blue Wall, the student dischotheque; another investigated single-sex living as opposed to co-educational; another few individuals reported on typical conversations they heard amongst dorm-mates. I was hoping to both gain in-depth insight into a single area of student life, while at the same time have the students learn a great deal about their reality. I also wanted to balance the seemingly abstract discussions about assumptions which was continuing in the classroom and which was therefore frustrating for a large number of the students). In the process of both teaching and participating in these investigations I was slowly learning to hear some central assumptions which informed the thought/language/reality of the student world. Before explaining these in more detail, we had reached the point late in the semester where the students had grasped on some level that there was such a thing as assumptions and super assumptions and that these made some sort of a difference, but none of the students were translating these ideas into their own lives; none saw very many connections between assumptions and their lives as students. My effort to confront this problem is the topic of the next section.

Recognizing Student Assumptions and Re-presenting to Them

Intertwined with the teaching of assumptions I came slowly to notice a connected strand of assumptions these students made about the

nature of man. It took time for me to make these connections even though they had been revealing them all along. Yet it was vital in terms of the process that I took the time to have them emerge; that I spent the time attempting to elicit from them what their assumptions were. That is, I intermingled teaching with questioning, not the sort of teacher-student questioning one has come to expect. Not even 'higher-order' questions of the sort those who would turn teaching into a science would have us ask.¹⁸ These were questions and exercises genuinely intended to find out what the 'everyday knowledge' students held. It was crucial to the process that the students actually came to hear themselves make the statements they did. Later when I re-presented to them aspects of their thought-language reality in the form of a problem to be solved, they knew that this was a part of their thought, and perhaps were now developing a glimmering of understanding that thought has implications for action.

The assumption that most dominated here, that revealed itself most consistently and strongly, had to do with the students not seeing themselves as potential actors on the world. This revealed itself in various forms and on various levels of generality. The first and most concrete form was quite to be expected. It emerged during the first third of the class when I was concentrating on the asking of numerous questions about aspects students took totally for granted. This was one of the occasions when the writings of the students revealed how clearly they saw themselves as consumers of learning. (Before I give some quotes as examples some clarification is called for. In a sense the writings of the

students revealed all along that they saw themselves as incapable of 'making culture' in the broadest sense of that term. These students like many, many others throughout the country write deplorably. The December 7, 1975, issue of Newsweek cover story asks "Why Johnny cannot write," and is filled with various answers to this question. One answer that was not discussed was that in a time when a sense of powerlessness is particularly pervasive people see little reason to do anything, and certainly little reason to concentrate on writing well). The following then are some quotes from the students which reveal how they see themselves in relation to learning.

"My personality is constantly absorbing new experiences." "The mind obtains knowledge from its surroundings by receiving information through the person's senses. This information is transformed into knowledge and is stored in the person's mind. Receiving and processing information into knowledge is learning."

"I am not aware of anything I make happen; everything in school is just happening to me."

"My classes are big; some have over 100 people in them but I'll get used to being a number."

"I have paid a lot of money to attend here so I want to make the best of it. The first semester I was a little disappointed because I did not like my classes." (Emphasis mine)

It must be stressed strongly that simply to have debated these positions with the students, to have argued that their thinking about themselves was incorrect, would, I believe, have produced little insight, and

thus little chance that change could take place. The opinions the students held about how learning happens were part of a string of assumptions the students held about man and his relationship to nature, culture and history. These assumptions are part of a full blown 'knowledge' the students have, albeit knowledge on the level of magical, or naive consciousness. A statement of Freire's I quoted earlier is appropriate here again:

Human actions in the world, are conditioned by their own results, by their own outcome. Thus there are different degrees of relations to the world, different degrees of action and perception. Nevertheless whatever degree of action on the world, it implies a theory. Even those actions called magic are governed by theory. (emphasis mine)¹⁹

On the level of naive opinion these students have knowledge; the knowledge they hold is constitutive of particular actions they take on the world. If there were no organizing principles underlying their knowledge their actions would be chaotic, would make no sense. The knowledge they hold is of a whole; it (like all systems of knowledge) contains basic ontological and epistemological assumptions which are closely intertwined. The knowledge these students have has 'come to them' as a result of their participation in a specific culture, a specific ethnic and class background, a specific era in which they live. The concrete assumptions they hold about learning are connected to other equally basic assumptions.

One very strong assumption, on this level, held by the students was revealed during a class discussion about the question: "What is human nature?" Again my role in this discussion was one of asking questions, and I focussed these questions strongly on the issue of whether we could

make any real distinction between humans and animals. And the almost universal response was that any distinction worth talking about was so slight so as not to warrant any discussion. In fact one of my students repeated verbatim a statement Freire quotes one of his peasants having made: "If there is any difference, then the difference is that animals are better than men." (See the similar Freire quote in this dissertation p. 77). (It is interesting to note by the way that one of the descriptive terms by which Southwest is known is as a 'Zoo'.)

I still only had a glimmering of how these assumptions were strung together. It became clear to me in another discussion that took place several weeks later. It was during this discussion that for the first time I was able to begin to make connections, to point out to the students connections between apparently abstract assumptions and concrete reality; for the first time I had the language to do so; I now knew enough about the students' thought-language reality to be able to speak to it and about it, in a language with which they were familiar. The discussion in which this occurred came after I had initiated various investigating groups (last third of the class) and there had been some talk about what was happening between the sexes; there had been a small group visiting the Blue Wall (or 'meat market U.S.A.' as it is known in student parlance). I have decided to quote directly from my notes here so that the reader can get a better idea of the process which was occurring. Preceding the class in question two students entirely independently of each other had asked me to express some of my opinions about issues. These students said they were anxious to hear from me instead of being

questioned all the time. I agreed saying that I would devote the next class to doing precisely this. I was sure as a result of these two interactions that many in the class shared this wish. A proviso I made was that I would only respond to specific questions the students asked of me, but that I would express my opinions about anything at all. At last I was going to have a chance to get a glimpse of what it was that the students wanted to know more about. "For the dialogical, problem-posing teacher student, the program content of education is neither a gift nor an imposition--bits of information to be deposited in the students--but rather the organized, systematized, and developed 're-presentation' to individuals of the things about which they want to know more."²⁰ The following then is taken directly from my notes:

'I launched the class with: I have a feeling based upon two incidents which occurred last week, that people here would like to find out what my opinions are about various issues; I am prepared to speak on anything you like--but first there must be questions; I can't simply speak off the top of my head.' I was intrigued to hear what the first question would be, and it proved to be very revealing: 'What are you hoping to do with your life?' I was prepared to speak frankly and did, explaining that I had come to expect insecurity; that I did not imagine it would suddenly vanish, that the task is to learn to live with it, rather than endlessly and compulsively attempt to gain security, that my goals had slowly changed and were now focussed on developing knowledge about how human beings come to do what they do, both psychologically and socially, that in fact knowledge was power in the midst of insecurity, and that only now that I was really in a position to make judgments about what I was reading and learning about, and that it seemed foolish to suddenly throw it all away because an attractive but demanding job was in the offing, and finally that I hoped to attain my goal via a systematic and prolonged study of psychoanalytic theory and practice. There followed a spate of questions: 'What is psychoanalysis? I heard that Freud was into sex and that he was a pervert.' 'How strongly determined are you to reach your goals?' 'How come you have goals such as these?' The discussion that then took place revealed a fairly large assumption the people hold, one which I had been vaguely aware of for some time: that human processes and natural processes were one and the same thing. That is, for example,

that historical change is very similar to natural change (such as the growth of a tree is the way it was put in the class), and that there is no important distinction between man and animal. It is precisely the revealing of these super assumptions that I have been hoping for. I am convinced that one of Freire's outstanding contributions is to show how reflection on the level of these basic assumptions can lead to change in thought and action. Discussion of history being similar to tree allowed me to introduce during the course of the discussion the idea of man as potentially the maker of a culture, and slowly we began to discuss the implications of holding such an assumption--the implications for writing, speaking, (Freire argues, and I think correctly that the culture of silence is a form of dehumanization) and for far less exotic acts. For instance in my jaunt with the students to the Blue Wall one of the students had said to me that there was no place to meet, other than discos and drinking places. Thus I was able to speak of the Blue Wall as an act of culture; i.e., that human beings had made a decision to set up Blue Wall--that this was different to the existence of a mountain, and an alternative meeting place was a potential act of culture. At long last I was able to take these abstract concepts and bring them to bear on the concrete reality of students' lives; this possibility only occurred as a result of my forays into the students' world; I was beginning to speak their language, but bringing reflective power to bear on it.

In the context of the discussion as it was taking place I knew that the great majority of students were not understanding me; they were missing entirely what I was getting at. I was beginning to learn how absolutely necessary it was to move slowly and carefully. Also it was necessary for students themselves to have a chance to grapple with the debate about man as either totally one with nature, or potentially a maker of culture; it would only be as a result of their grappling with it, that some may begin to make their own connections to areas of concern to them. At last I felt that I had a manageable even though difficult re-presentation to the students. The difficulty factor could be overcome I felt because I was presenting something they would so clearly recognize, unlike the far more enigmatic problem re-presentation I had tried earlier (see Appendix three). Freire's criteria for problem re-presentation is:

"(they) should be neither overly explicit nor overly enigmatic."²¹ In addition in this 'humanistic time' we provide the students a real dis-service by making things easier in the many ways and for the many reasons that are currently popular. Before I give the verbatim problem as I presented it to them, recall that throughout the writing assignments I had a phrase on the board 'say your own word'. Occasionally we had talked as a group about what this means and why it was such a difficult thing to do. The following then was the re-presentation:

"Rhetoric 100S, April 1976

Very often the task of trying to figure out what the meaning and implication of 'super-assumptions' is, can be a complex, difficult task--as complex as a mathematical problem, and I think more intriguing. The following task I am asking you to do is difficult; therefore the first part of the class will be devoted to allowing you to meet in small groups to talk the problem over, and attempt to make some sense of it. Take as long as you like; allow yourself to ask as many questions of each other as you like, and when you are ready, begin to write your thoughts down. You may take the whole period for discussion. Either way, get the writing part done as soon as possible and please hand in the writing no later than 4 p.m. tomorrow. Do not get into a panic because this appears difficult; rather take the opportunity to let your thinking powers go to work and make an effort to 'say your own word', which would include giving any concrete examples from your own life to make any points you wish to make.

"To say your own word is to transform the world."

is the same as saying...

"Man is different to animal or tree, precisely in that he/she is potentially a maker of culture." (Remember in the class discussion, I defined this very broadly).

These are super assumptions and have huge implications (please note) for every one of us in every aspect of our lives. For example, they have very considerable implications for our lives here at the university. At least two areas come to mind: the attitudes to and the choices one makes about learning and knowledge; the attitudes to and our behaviors in the area of sexuality (with regard to oneself--one's own actions--as well as one's attitudes and behaviors towards what others do, as well as with regard to the kinds of social activities that are available, or are not available for people here). You may wish to focus on only one of these two areas. Go ahead and discuss; simply make the effort to make sense of this. When you get home read the article by Booth; it is a good example of how to let your assumptions lead you to implications."

I am convinced that this re-presentation resulted in a significant breakthrough for a number of students. Convincing evidence of this is of course hard to give. Some would argue that the only acceptable evidence would be that which resulted from a carefully controlled experimental process, using one 'instrument' or another to test for change. I have already argued at length that the kinds of information we could gather using this approach would be specious. Ultimately there is no way I can claim beyond any doubt that these students achieved some significant breakthroughs. An interpretation of the evidence is inevitable

as I have also argued at length. I can, however, present evidence beyond what I saw in the students' faces and what I heard them say even though we don't thereby break the interpretive circle. The evidence I wish to present is of two kinds. The first will be some samples of the students' writing which immediately followed the re-presentations (following the discussion I re-presented the entire course to them in the form of a long written statement to be found in the appendix, and then asked the students to choose one final paper, also to be found in the appendix). This evidence is ultimately less convincing than the second kind which is the quality of the writing itself.

The following are examples of the content of students' writing. In each case I have chosen examples which to my mind were clearly not simple mimicing of what I had said or written to them. I am convinced that students were making some profound connections of their own--connections of a fundamental nature such as the relationship between thought and action; the significance and the importance of thought and knowledge as potentially making a difference to their lives; the fact that if man is in some way partially differentiated from nature that this could change dramatically how humans conceived of themselves and others. If most of these students were presented with a lecture about most of these topics they would grasp very little. The fact that these students had to themselves grapple with these apparently abstract notions in a domain and a language which was familiar to them made a great difference. Many students have no awareness of what the act of reflection is, let alone that there is a possible relationship between thought and action. Many

hardly ever look at the world of knowledge as a potential source of wisdom which may affect their everyday actions. (It should be clear that this is not the students' fault). Many hold fast to the conviction, albeit unconsciously, that the social world and the natural world are driven by the same principles and laws. In this respect they are very similar to the Latin American peasants with whom Freire was working. These assumptions of theirs are a few of the set of interrelated assumptions which lie at the heart of their world of everyday knowledge, which I discovered as a result of a serious effort to understand the nature of their thought language reality.¹⁷ If I am right that the following quotes represent real insights as opposed to mere mimicing, then I believe for these students the re-presentations did result in a real breakthrough. (I have not broken down the quotes into any specific order. I merely present quotes which came from individual students; the numbers refer to different individuals).

i). "We were learning from each other instead of just from the instructor... People were thinking and listening to each other and what they were saying were affecting each of us."

ii). "To say your own word you must question things and look at all angles before you speak." (This after saying that the discussion of 'say your own word' was boring and going nowhere, and from a student who was prone to speak glibly all the time).

iii). "I as a human have a responsibility to myself to know what assumptions are influencing me; how they affect every little thing I do."

Otherwise I am sacrificing part of a full life--the ability to see the interrelationship of assumptions on my daily life."

"If we don't know what is influencing us, how can we know how to deal with it? How can we separate what we feel is inevitable and what we actually can change."

iv). "...For two thirds of the semester I was completely baffled as to the intent of my instructor. I couldn't grasp what it was he was trying to convey to us. Then one day our class was split up into a number of discussion groups. Our teacher distributed a paper consisting of two quotes...Little did I know that these two quotes were the answer to the meaning of the course...What have I learned? Well the two above quotes state exactly what it is that I have learned, but it takes more than just reading them to understand them, though, a whole new way of living may arise...My attitudes to academic learning have changed also. I have a greater thirst for knowledge of all types. I feel that the more I learn the more I can contribute to the molding of my culture. I really want to hear what my professors have to say...I used to feel all my classes were totally irrelevant. Maybe they were but I was in no position to tell...Now my position has changed. I think more deeply and clearly and I can usually decide whether or not a course is relevant to my life. I still think most are not relevant, but now I am sure of why I think this way."

(And the following represents an excellent example of what Freire calls a 'critical insertion into reality'. The connections the student makes here are entirely his own; I never made mention of any of these impli-

cations or any like them. Note also that he is defining 'culture' in a different way from anything I had done).

"I saw my ideas change the culture of another. I, therefore, realized that the opinions of my peers may affect the culture that is within me, as well as the one that surrounds me. But then again it is not only the views of my peers that are able to effect me. Most all opinions expressed, whether they be from teachers, books, parents or television, are attempting to change my views. They all have potential to create new cultures and beliefs within me...Through the realization that others are gifted with the 'power', I am compelled to listen and analyze all that I hear...The analysis of what I have heard requires deep and hopefully objective thought on my part. I must decide whether or not the words I have heard are valid."

v). (The following is an example of one student having recognized how she sets up limit situations for herself. I had come to recognize that when many of these students said "I don't know" to a question of mine they were expressing an unwillingness to go beyond the limit situation; by pointing this out a number broke new ground; see the example following this one as well).

"I was told that assumptions are hidden. It's like putting together a puzzle. All the pieces are there, but the main idea is to fit them altogether...struggling through the course by talking and talking and prying and prying out of us what was inside our minds, pulling out those hidden assumptions that were there but were protected by the excuse heard many a time: 'I know what I mean but I just can't say it.'

Well no more of that bologna for this kid...I've not only gotten to write better, but I find I can talk better when it comes to explaining something. Again, I get my thoughts clear in my head and then it comes much easier to say exactly and clearly what is on my mind. This has helped as well at home with my parents, when it comes down to those 'heavy' talks with them. I find it no longer difficult to say and write what is going on in my mind...And this is a great feeling."

vi). "One of the big reasons for my progress in my writing and in conversation was the meeting I had with Ron Goldman. I walked into a small room in the John Adams Lobby where I greeted him at a small wooden desk. We talked for a while about living in Southwest. Every time Ron would ask me a question I would say 'I don't know.' He finally said 'come on man you do know.' I felt a bit dumb because I did know, I was just taking the easy way out by saying that I didn't know. While we were talking he made me feel important, because the only thing that he was concerned about was what I thought. He made me realize that I was a great deal smarter than I let myself think; what I had to say was as important as what others said."

vii). (The following comes from a student who wrote mindless essays throughout the first part of the semester. This paper and his final paper are quoted in full in the appendix along with one example of his earlier work).

"To influence people with your thoughts you must learn to think. I find most people are a product of their society and don't think for themselves. They seem to go on and on, their minds seem stagnant...I am

tired of learning straight facts; to me the value seems insignificant. I don't want to learn the same things in college as I did in high school. How to memorize and forget. These two statements (the two in the representation) have questioned my values and assumptions. I must decide what learning and knowledge mean to me."

viii). "I look at other people in the class and see the same things happening to them as have happened to me. People were concerned, curious, bewildered at our class and what was happening in it...The class was discussed outside of class time. I heard people begin to clarify their ideas, so that they were understood. Now I listen to others and realize how little is really understood or heard. I realize how little deep thinking is done. I find myself realizing that when I figure out what assumptions people hold, I understand them and I question myself and instead of as before just accepting no answer I find answers in myself. I hear other people talking and saying real concrete statements instead of wishy-washy flexible statements."

Probably two more students out of the class of twenty had insights on the level described in these quotes. It is a number which far exceeded my expectations. One of these students who was 'academically suspended' because he failed all his science courses wrote to me three months after the course ended: "I enjoyed the first Rhetoric class very much and as I told you it helped me learn more about myself in teaching me how to think more clearly, with some organization. Anyway I am interested in the things you said, the things that others in the class said...Listening to those people talk added new dimensions to my

world, to my thinking. I still can't figure out if all that went on as a result of your instigation and your prodding, or if it just happened."

The critic who states that these examples remain naive and poorly written fails to understand that the University simply has to respond to the new student who has entered academe. This student no longer comes anxiously wanting to learn. It is now the universities' responsibility to respond to people who are thinking and acting on magic and naive levels, with the aim of making the life of the mind seem like a worthwhile endeavor. The Hazen report makes the point succinctly:

The present dilemma in American higher education comes from the seeming contradiction of two propositions: 1) everyone has a right to a college education, and 2) the bright must be given an opportunity to get ahead because a modern society needs its highly trained elite. The committee contends, however, that the dilemma is only an apparent one and that the two propositions can be resolved by adding a third: Everyone--or at least far, far more than we previously thought--has the potential for critical thought and intelligent enjoyment of the riches of the Western cultural tradition. If American higher education cannot make as vigorous a commitment to the third proposition as it has to the first two, it is heading rather rapidly toward disaster.²²

A careful reader of Freire would challenge me and say that everything I had done took place in the realm of reflection and not in the realm of action. Freire argues that revolutionary pedagogy must continuously move back and forth from reflection to action and back again, a process he calls praxis. There is no radical dichotomy between thought and action. The thought-language reality of any person or group of people is constitutive of the actions they take on the world. "The concepts with which we apprehend the world either limit or expand our ability to make sense of, and to transform its apparent givenness. Wittgenstein

asserted that the limits of his language were the limits of his world."²³ (Thought and action must however not be seen as synonymous but as two different moments in a single process; it is possible to get stuck at either pole--activism or verbalism). The real test as to whether changes in fundamental aspects of a thought-language reality are occurring is if changed action occurs in a realm, not immediately and linearly related to the abstract thought. For example, in my re-presentation to the students I asked them to unravel the meaning of the super-assumption "man is potentially different to animal precisely to the degree that he/she is a maker of culture." I also reiterated that super assumptions have super implications for every aspect of our lives although I did not spell out in any detail what these aspects may be. Freire's work with peasants produced some astonishingly rapid changes in the peasants' capacity to write. Trying to explain this phenomena Freire quotes his wife: "Elza Freire thinks this may be due to the fact that these persons, beginning with the discussion of the anthropological concept of culture, discovered themselves to be more fully human, thereby acquiring an increasing emotional confidence in their learning which was reflected in their motor activity."²⁴ (my emphasis) The discussion groups Freire refers to discussed in a fuller and more complex way than I did man's potential to be a maker of culture, his separateness from nature.²⁵ The peasants were making the leap of recognition from the apparently abstract ideas expressed in the discussion groups to the concrete action of writing. Would my students in their last writing exercises--in this particular form of action, reveal similar kinds of change?

I had come to expect very little, so perhaps my surprise at the quality of writing which did emerge from about ten students was exaggerated. I showed examples of their earlier writings to various people, who were equally astonished. For the reader I can only reproduce the most striking examples, and this I have done in appendix V. Most significantly for the first time these students did not view the ten page paper I had asked them to do as an assignment; many wrote three drafts before they handed it in. Their excitement about the work they were doing as being a singularly human activity and potentially a vehicle for transformation seemed to grip them. None of the outrageous mistakes in spelling and grammar were to be seen, and this from the worst students. There is no way to convince myself or others absolutely that the strongest motivating force here was not the hope for a good grade. My only evidence for a contrary belief is the way people spoke about the work they were doing and their pride in doing it. Freire explains on a general level what I think occurred here and what I think his method makes possible.

Through this process the peasants progressively recognize that it is they who transform the world. If cutting down a tree, chopping it into sections, making planks of it, and using them to make tables and chairs previously meant little more than just physical work, these acts with the aid of 're-entering into' now take on the true significance they should have: that of praxis. Table and chairs will never again be just table and chairs. They are something more. They are the products of the person's work. S/he would have to begin by this discovery if s/he were to learn to make them better.²⁶

It is impossible to know what this one, isolated, very short and so nearly failed experience means for these students in the long run. For some, it is possible to imagine them listening to a lecture on the

importance of theory with an understanding which may elude many Graduate students. Others may make entirely different educational plans as a result of insight into the potential role knowledge may play in one's life (one student wrote to me claiming this was the case for him). Others may decide to experiment more widely as a result of taking this course. For many the course will have no long lasting effect. For all, the only way it could, is if they participated in an in-depth educational program based upon the same principles which underly this single course. I am convinced that a group of educators with a common commitment to the importance of theory and a concomitant theoretical self-consciousness could produce an educational program which would go a long way to meeting the Hazen Committee's urgent cry quoted several pages back.

FOOTNOTES

¹Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1961), p. 35.

²Ibid.

³See Robert Paul Wolff, The Ideal of the University (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

⁴See Philip Jacob, Changing Values in College: An Exploratory Study of the Impact of College Teaching (1st ed.). (N.Y.: Harper, 1957), and Nevitt Sanford, The American College (N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962).

⁵See for example Wolff, op. cit., p. 78.

⁶Erik Erikson, Young Man Luther (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co.), p. 134.

⁷Nevitt Sanford, "Developmental Status of Entering Freshmen," in Sanford (ed). The American College: A Social and Psychological Interpretation of the Higher Learning (N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962), p. 277.

⁸Hazen Foundation: The Student in Higher Education (New Haven: The Hazen Foundation, 1968).

⁹University of Massachusetts publicity brochure, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. (1962).

¹⁰The Daily Collegian, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. (September 22, 1971).

¹¹Howard Becker et al., Making the Grade (N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, 1968).

¹²See C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, op. cit.

¹³Edward H. Carr, What is History (N.Y.: Knopf, 1961).

¹⁴Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁵Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 114.

¹⁶Charles Kay Smith, Styles and Structures: Alternative Approaches to College Writing (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974).

¹⁷See Jules Henry, Culture Against Man (N.Y.: Random House, 1964).

¹⁸See for example Benjamin Bloom (ed.) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives the Classification of Educational Goals: Handbook I. Cognitive Domain (N.Y.: David McKay Co., Inc., 1956).

¹⁹Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 112.

²⁰Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 82.

²¹Ibid., p. 107.

²²Hazen report, op. cit., p. 56.

²³Jean Elshtain, Manuscript in preparation for publication, Chapter 2, page 1 (University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.).

²⁴Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 55. my emphasis.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 63-81.

²⁶Ibid., p. 162.

CHAPTER V

"As long as an unawareness of starting points persists, the critique of the system of thought will never break the circle that arrests its progress."¹

Introduction

A number of ideas have been hinted at throughout the dissertation without ever being explicated fully. The first two sections of this chapter are an attempt at explication. The overall argument of the chapter is that an 'education for theoretical self-consciousness' is an essential step towards establishing educational alternatives which educate for critical consciousness. Since it is important that the meaning underlying the idea of a 'theoretical self-consciousness' be clear, I have, at the risk of repeating myself, elucidated the concept slowly and carefully over the next pages.

Section One develops the argument that alternative efforts have tended to replicate and deepen what is rather than succeeded in transcending or being truly critical of what is. Section Two is a long diversion intended to show how a lack of theoretical self-consciousness leads to a failure to appreciate what is most cutting in a theory--in this case psychoanalytic theory. The discussion provides the opportunity to show what has heretofore only been hinted at--that there are vital inner links between psychoanalytic theory and critical theory. Section Three speculates about the nature of an educational program intended to nurture theoretical self-consciousness amongst teachers and first year students. (I have focussed on these two groups because

of my own involvement in first year college education, and in teacher training. I know most about these two groups, but hope that my discussion is significant for other groups of students and teachers).

Section One

Why a Need for Theoretical Self-Consciousness?

Paulo Freire is concerned that, amongst other things, an educational program develop a critical consciousness amongst students. This is a political concept; it is not the same thing as saying students must develop critical thinking skills, or that they must learn to think, or that they must be active participants in the classroom. These three latter ideas may be good and important, but they are a part of a different conceptual scheme of things from Freire's notion of 'critical consciousness'. What would an educational program intended to educate for critical consciousness look like? The answer depends upon critical interpretation of what needs to happen in a particular society at a particular time, as well as who the educational program is for, and will be answered explicitly in section three of this chapter.

We are now in a position to stand back from the various educational innovations which have occurred over the past decade and to expose them to critical examination. In general, one can say that these efforts have not only failed to provide true alternatives, but, to the contrary, have succeeded in both mimicking that which they proclaim to supercede, and in further entrenching and supporting the values and the norms of the status quo. If it were possible to understand how and why this has

happened--how so many efforts at progressive innovation have actually led to a hardening of what already exists, then perhaps we will have uncovered what most needs to be done by those administering educational programs.

One effort at an alternative has aimed specifically at political education. Its analysis of the current political status of educational programming is very similar to Freire's analysis. All education is political; it either educates people to become more tolerant of the status quo or it educates them self-consciously to become critical of what is. The anti-racist, sexist alternatives explicitly try to educate the uneducated about the racist-sexist society in which they live and in which all are implicated either through daily activities or via involvement with institutions engaged inevitably in racist-sexist policies. The racist-sexist analysis contains some truths; yet when truths which result from the social analysis that is made are translated into educational programming, fundamental errors are committed. Essentially a new group of 'knowers' has been created (those who are the experts on the issues of racism and sexism), and these knowers see themselves as charged with bringing the word to the ignorant.

When I have seen them in action, except for a few, this new elite display all the behavior typical of any group that sees itself as in some way superior--arrogant and dogmatic, harboring the attitude of 'we know it all', and any counter critique is seen as essentially reactionary in nature. The question arises: why has this tended to happen to the extent that it has? One reason is that the social analysis does

not contain with it an educational theory; the result is that without theory educational efforts duplicate exactly that which already exists. The 'knowers' deposit knowledge in the minds of the ignorant, and banking education is occurring again, this time from the left instead of the right end of the political spectrum. Typically this group sees any effort to establish dialogue as an effort to undermine them, as an effort to divert energy from 'the struggle'. Their minds are so absolutely made up that any effort at dialogue is conceived as a necessary evil, done only to ensure that they can carry on their work. They often sound, at these moments, like the busy technocrats who have no time for dialogue with the peasants about the changes they (the technocrats) have decided to institute. The possibility that there can be a position critical of the one they hold, one which is more radical and all encompassing in its analysis, is inconceivable. A critique is always seen as coming from the right. The same single-mindedness and absolute conviction produced the Soviet-State and its 'psychiatric' treatments of those insane enough to differ from what is so obviously the truth. The truly radical position in contrast is stated as follows by Freire:

The radical committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a 'circle of certainty' within which he alone imprisons reality. On the contrary, the more radical he is the more fully he enters into reality so that knowing it better, he can better transform it. He is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. He is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them.²

The radical educator is unafraid to speak what he thinks is true, but also takes his opponents absolutely seriously; when there are no opponents to be heard his main task is to encourage that this culture of silence be transformed.

Another example of an alternative effort is that which seeks to multiply options within education as widely as possible. The main proposition which seems to underly this approach is that students' needs must be met, that these needs are varied and multi-dimensional, and that especially in a large state-university every effort should be made not to fit students into the Amherst College mode (i.e., ivy league-like). Rather, if it will help them get jobs later on courses such as 'Hi-Fi systems' are appropriate; if it will make them feel good, courses on altering consciousness are appropriate; if it will prepare them better for a war against potential rapists, self defense programs are appropriate. Even further, students should be allowed to construct their own educational program: no requirements, no essentials, no explicit statement or theory is needed to unify their choice of courses. Primarily and essentially needs must be met, and in this view, as a result, we find that the market place has entered the world of academic knowledge with the same results which corporate business has had outside the academic world: namely, that there is a gradual proliferation of choice with the concomitant illusion of greater choice creating greater freedom--or in this case a better or broader education. Thus if there were not enough choice before, there is more now.³ If there were not enough demeaning of the world of ideas by the University via the introduction of such fields as landscape gardening, home economics, fashion marketing and the like, then the new alternatives make certain of the degradation. If there was not already a lack of anything resembling a community of scholars, then encouraging everyone to simply follow their

own impulses will guarantee absolute atomization. (At the luxurious Hampshire College, which has adopted this model entirely, one central complaint from students is their isolation from each other).

There is amongst those who hold 'the needs must be met' position, a self-righteousness and certainty as to the inherent justice of their position which matches that of the anti-sexist, anti-racist educators. Any critique of their position is seen as elitist and neanderthal-like. This educational position is really a non-position. Its proponents seemingly never have given serious thought to, or made public, their arguments, ideas and assumptions about the purposes of education. One to one relationships are drawn between their beliefs in a sort of participant democracy and the way an educational establishment should be run. There is no recognition of the fact that the real model they are mimicking is that of the economic system of advanced capitalism which would like nothing more than a populace without a center, without a backbone, who are used to having their needs quickly and easily met. It suits the purposes of advanced capitalist society that people do not have a grasp of the whole, that they have many bits of unrelated information at their finger tips; it would be much too dangerous if people could understand how parts fit together, how apparently isolated 'facts' have a deep inner relationship.

What is required is that educators have the courage to articulate what they stand for and what they do not. As things stand the critique of the 'needs must be met' school was well made by Robert Hutchins as far back as 1940: "The crucial error is that of holding that nothing

is any more important than anything else, that there can be no order of goods, and no order in the intellectual realm. There is nothing central and nothing peripheral, nothing primary and nothing secondary, nothing basic and nothing superficial...the course of study goes to pieces because there is nothing to hold it together."⁴ The 'humanism' the educators in charge of these systems espouse is often a disguise for a lack of courage or a disguise for the lack of real commitment to anything other than their own careers. In very direct ways comments one hears from these humanists reveal a deep seated anti-intellectualism or perhaps better a total miscomprehension of the nature of the enterprise called the pursuit of knowledge. It is quite likely that within educational settings these humanists will make statements such as: 'remember intellectualizing is a luxury' or 'gone were philosophic yawns'⁵ (which in this case refers to the need to speed up the 'problem solving' process and the introducing of twenty minute 'nuclear solutions').

Often these anti-intellectual positions are stated as if the intellectual endeavor were valued so highly as it is, as if, in other words, the anti-intellectual position was revolutionary in some way. The particular form the anti-intellectualism takes is, at its roots, that it makes little difference what people learn about so long as their needs are being met. Maritain in his Education at the Crossroads speaks to us of 'such persons':

(They) are afraid to face reality, especially when reality is intellectually difficult and stringent, deep or dire, and they replace the personal effort to grasp things as they are with a ceaseless comparison of opinions. Youth taught according to this pattern may furnish excellent specialists in the field of technique... For the rest in all that has regard to understanding of man and

culture and the highest and the most urgent problems, not only do they develop a nominalistic timidity, but they are absolutely lost in the midst of matters of knowledge and discussion, the inner value and importance of which they cannot and do not want to discern and recognize. For if we begin by denying that any subject matter is in itself and by reason of truth more important than another, then we deny in reality that any subject matter has any importance in itself, and everything vanishes into futility.⁶

It is no surprise that the modern version of persons such as these have been heavily influenced by the humanistic psychology movement, the third force as it is called, for here anti-intellectualism comes into its own. Fritz Perls, whose position on the subject is representative of one that can be found amongst many who argue that they represent an alternative (e.g., representatives of the men's movement, parts of the women's movement, the humanistic education movement), expresses it thus:

I know you want to ask why, like every child, like every immature person asks why, to get rationalization, or explanation. But the why at best leads to clever explanation, but never to understanding. Why and because are dirty words in Gestalt Therapy. They lead only to rationalization...I distinguish three classes of verbiage production: chicken shit--this is 'good morning', 'how are you?'--bullshit--this is 'because', rationalization, excuses...elephantshit--this is where you talk about philosophy, existentialism, gestalt.⁷

This statement, even though intended to apply only to the therapeutic situation obviously comes to mean much more. And indeed it has. Today the humanistic movement with its concomitant anti-intellectualism has made a strong impression upon numerous social groups and professional communities. One is quite liable to hear statements which are very similar to those expressed by Perls. It is all this thinking and analysis which has gotten us into trouble; our task must be to get in touch with and express our 'feelings'. The spirit implicit in this position is a seemingly revolutionary one, the conviction being that the way to a more

humane society is via less thought and more expression of feeling. It is no accident that the 'meeting everybody's needs group' and the 'get in touch with your feelings' and 'raise your consciousness' groups share comfortable alliances and are often comprised of the same people. There are compelling inner connections in the thought which they use to explain and act upon the world. It is a thought which is ahistorical in nature and which most often manages to hide the ugly facts; it is thought promoted by people who try to be 'nice' and to deny the facts of power, and who ultimately are most concerned about themselves, their careers, and far far less about the obligations to the next generation and thereby to history.

The critique inherent to a greater or lesser extent by these various positions of what is properly called 'abstract thinking' (over-intellectualizing, to use the vernacular) is I believe correct. It is the mode of thought which dominates academia to a large extent--abstract, instrumental, and ahistoric in nature, which concerns itself with issues independent of concrete concern to students (a good teacher can easily show how the questions which the Great Thinkers throughout history have asked continue to be relevant for our time). It is thinking concerned with issues abstracted from a material and concrete theory of history and of the person, and the dialectical dynamic between the two. It is thinking divorced from passion--a mode of thought typified by a refusal to face up to the degree to which it is implicated with a political structure; this is the effort to be 'objective'. It is a mode of thought often concerned about technical matters--how to construct a code for

instance, a better experiment, a more exact method. The effect on the students is not to encourage creative, passionate independent thought. This is an impossibility since there exists a virtual veto on thought--in the sense of developing the capacity to reason substantively rather than instrumentally. Only that which is experimentally verifiable or has been experimentally verified is permissible in discourse. Thought equals elephantshit--or to put it more politely--any thought or set of statements which cannot be shown to have been experimentally proven to be true, is essentially speculation (and thus to be reserved for the last chapter of a dissertation or book). However, the general critique of thinking (as by the alternative groups above) makes no distinction between this dominant mode of technical thinking and substantive reasoning. The sheer dominance of technical rationality in mainstream academia probably accounts for the fact that so many are in reaction against thought in general, and also why they are so sure of the revolutionary nature of their position. However, as has been said before, the rejection of this mode of thinking does not mean we throw out thought altogether: 'it requires us to resurrect an older and yet new kind of reason, and also to concentrate our thinking in different areas.'⁸ Substantive reasoning attempts to deal with the essential nature of reality; it concerns itself with ends, as opposed to means, with theory, rather than method.

The question now arises: what, despite ostensible differences of concern and emphasis, unites the so-called alternative modes of education which I have mentioned with this latter mode which so dominates

the University? What causes so many efforts at alternatives to either mimic what actually exists or become part of a movement toward regression which seems everywhere to hold sway ?

One fundamental reason this occurs is the same reason why Alschuler's effort to translate Freire turned out to be a domestication of his theory: namely, a fundamental lack of a theoretical self-consciousness. Both in the mainstream, and in the alternatives there is little display of an understanding of the nature of theory, its relationship to history, to social institutions and to practice. I include myself here. I have received my education in three different centers of higher learning in America. In none of them was there very much discussion about the inner nature of knowledge and its relationship to reality. This is not just an enterprise for philosophers.

To the extent that this question is not being asked in connection with all the various 'little theories' people are teaching or working with--to that extent will all those intellectual operations remain abstract, blind, and will almost certainly mimic or deepen the status quo. Abraham Kaplan has said: "Philosophy is culture made self-conscious."⁹ When philosophic questions are applied to the 'experimental method' or the experimental mode of education, then we begin to uncover the theoretical positions underlying these operations which hitherto have been unknown, but have been playing a considerable part. In the case of the alternative efforts, no clearly articulated critique of what exists is ever made with an understanding of the role of epistemological questions in theory. Yet the only possibility of ever truly

developing an alternative is, if a critique uncovers the roots of the problem of what exists. To the extent that the roots are not uncovered, they remain part of the natural, given world, part of the order of things. (See the discussion of the social literacy project in Chapter III). Reflecting on the core assumptions underlying our theories is, of course, time consuming and not conducive to getting grants or developing an academic career, or making the revolution happen in five years time; it is thus rarely engaged in academic departments or in alternative educational settings (interestingly everybody is always 'too busy' in both kinds of settings).

The reason that theoretical self-consciousness and the reflective mode do not hold greater sway is complex and tied closely to an economic and bureaucratic superstructure which does not support such activity. It is also tied to an American phenomenon whereby various intellectual positions and schools of thought are conceived of as being somehow free of ideology, free of bias, or political implication. Evidence of this is widespread. It extends from books such as Daniel Bell's The End of Ideology to the frequently heard statement: 'politics has nothing to do with me' or 'my position is free from political bias or consequence' (the disinterested scientists' position). According to vast numbers of Americans, in fact, ideology is only true of others--e.g., radicals or communists.¹⁰

Behind the apparently value free objective activity of both social and natural science lie a set of assumptions about the nature of man, the nature of mind, the relationship between man and society, a theory of

history. Often these assumptions remain unreflected upon, are never brought to the surface and examined. Any unreflected position can be classified as ideological in nature (see footnote).¹⁰ Often those who hold unreflected positions are the first to reject philosophy and social theory, claiming that philosophy is nothing but 'speculations upon speculations'. The essential point I wish to emphasize is this: there is a central underlying unity between the many efforts at establishing alternatives in education and the status quo, which among other factors includes a lack of theoretical clarity, a suspiciousness and devaluation of the meaning and role of theory. Russell Jacoby's critique of the neo Freudians and the humanists, both of whom saw themselves radicalizing and updating what exists, is relevant here.

As eagerly as they welcome the philosophy of existentialism they know little of social theory or philosophy. For this reason they turn out to be enthusiastic exponents of the prevailing ideology even as they intend to oppose it. Because they are unacquainted with theory, philosophy or history of positivism, their critique of behaviorism--ultimately their raison d'etre--does not resist behaviorism but complements it. They add soul and values to the facts, thereby fantasizing that the facts themselves change. Misconceiving the essence of positivism, they conceive of the alternative as as renamed more-of-the-same. Unable to escape the dilemmas of the non-dialectical, non-theoretical thought, they are forced between bad materialism and bad idealism.¹¹

To repeat, my effort is to understand why so many efforts at conducting what are called alternatives actually tend to reproduce the status quo, often more drastically. My argument is that a lack of theoretical self-consciousness makes a critique leveled at the roots impossible. Only when the roots are known is it possible to avoid snipping at some of the top most branches, which served to encourage a greater flourishing of the weed. The roots can only be known via a knowledge of the

history of positivism, the rise of capitalism, the image of the human mind which dominates, the degree to which the dominant view as to the nature of knowledge is intertwined with economic, social and psychological factors.

Alschuler's domestication of Freire (see Chapter III) can also now be understood as a lack of understanding of the nature of theory. Alschuler, because he has failed to understand the roots of Freire's theory, has skimmed the surface of Freire's work and transplanted Freire's words and phrases onto another set of ontological and epistemological roots, which are unself-consciously held by Alschuler. Thus, the work he is doing has the label of Freire on it, but is actually a set of intellectual operations in a different tradition entirely than that intended by Freire. The same lack of theoretical self-consciousness prevents Alschuler's critique of what exists to probe to the roots; the result is more of the same in a better disguise than ever.

Developing a self-consciousness as to the nature of theory would be a first essential step toward the development of critical consciousness. Only a deep knowledge of social theory and its implications would make it possible to escape delusions and self deception. 'Theory' here is meant as that which attempts to comprehend 'the relations among the economic life of society, the psychological development of the individual and changes in cultural life.'¹² This idea of theoretical self-consciousness is so crucial to understand clearly that further discussion elucidating this concept is necessary.

The Meaning of 'Theoretical Self-Consciousness'

T.W. Adorno, in reflecting about his experiences as a European scholar in America writes: "No continuum exists between critical theorems and the empirical procedures of natural science. They have entirely different historical origins and can be integrated only with the greatest effort."¹³ Contained in this short phrase is the key to one main argument of this dissertation: there can be no continuity between Freire's work which stands within the tradition of critical social philosophy, and empirically based social science research such as that conducted by Alschuler.

An explanatory theory can be thought of as analagous to a language. Like a language it has vocabulary and a history and stands in relationship to other languages. One may learn the vocabulary of a new language and still use the words one has learned incorrectly. One could hope to use the words correctly only if one came to know the tacit dimension of the language, if one had been immersed in the context in which the language was used. Polanyi captures the essence of the relationship between theory and language, as well as some of the dilemmas which result from the co-existence of different languages and different explanatory frameworks:

Different languages are alternative conclusions arrived at by secular groupings of different groups of people at different periods of history. They sustain alternative conceptual frameworks, interpreting all things that can be talked about in terms of somewhat different allegedly recurrent features....Different vocabularies for the interpretations of things divide men into groups which cannot understand each other's way of seeing things and of acting upon them.¹⁴

...Theological accounts of God must of course appear meaningless and often blatantly self contradictory if taken to claim validity within the universe of observable experience. Such a result is inevitable whenever a language that is apposite to one subject matter is used with reference to another altogether different matter.¹⁵

Explanatory theory then is context laden. Contained within a full-blown explanatory theory is a set of fundamental propositions about the nature of man, the relationship of these to history, society and other cultures. These fundamental propositions take the form of a complex set of interrelated statements, and can only be understood in the context of the whole theory, including its tacit dimension or its mode of discourse. One can claim to know a theory when one can speak in its mode of discourse, when one can face hitherto unknown situations and address them in a way which would be familiar to one who shared this mode. There is a 'line of influence' from the fundamental propositions one makes, to the conceptual system one is employing, to the procedures one uses to test the truth of one's hypotheses, to the normative implications of the theory.¹⁶ One is always liable to hold some aspects of a particular explanatory system with which one is working, unconsciously; this is the meaning of a tacit dimension. If one has not participated in or immersed oneself in a theoretical system, one is likely not to know its tacit dimension; one is liable only to know the vocabulary, not the deep structure. To continue to probe for the tacit dimension, for the roots of one's own theoretical position and the normative implications of these roots, is to be on the never ending road toward theoretical self-consciousness. Connolly makes clear in the following quote how important a deep understanding of the deep structure of one's theoretical

position is; even though two fairly similar concepts may seem to mean the same thing, it is only the theoretical context which they inhabit that these concepts can be understood in any depth.

To share the same vocabulary is not necessarily to share exactly the same set of concepts. And in fact these shared items tend to mask significant differences among perspectives in the definitions followed.¹⁷

For example there is actually a vast difference between the following fairly similar sounding statements: "Man and world are in dialectic relationship," and "there exists a dynamic transaction between man and world," and "it's a question of nature or nurture." The two latter positions have participated in an entirely different intellectual tradition to the first, and individuals holding either of these two latter positions would, for example, argue that psychoanalytic theory is an 'individual psychology' and therefore not the appropriate psychological theory to deploy if one wants to understand man/world dynamics. They could not understand how the first position (man and world are in dialectic relationship) would argue the contrary. (I will make this clear in the discussion about psychoanalytic theory below).

All individuals implicitly or explicitly hold a body of theoretical knowledge. This knowledge consists of a body of interrelated fundamental propositions which inform a conceptual system, all of which result from certain kinds of historical and social experiences and which in turn influence what they see and how they act upon the world. The more clearly one can bring to light the deep structure of thought influencing one's beliefs and actions the more one can choose, rather than

be driven by a particular conceptual system. In his "Theoretical Self-Consciousness" W. Connolly explains the point succinctly:

I approach theoretical self-consciousness as I attain awareness of previously unexamined assumptions at the center of my theory and I attend to its conceptual contours and to the test procedures it supports, as I probe the inner connections among these three dimensions and explore the normative implications of the entire system.¹⁸

Connolly goes on to urge social scientists to familiarize themselves with conflicting explanatory theories so that

even if my theory emerges from this process unscathed, I will now understand its depth grammar more fully; I will now have a solid grip on the range of its application, and the reasons and evidence which support it; I will adhere to it less blindly and dogmatically, and I will be better equipped to communicate rationally with critics, adversaries and potential converts.¹⁹

Connolly's recommendations helped sharpen understanding of the preconditions necessary for dialogue in the Freirian sense. The critically conscious educator must have some clarity about his own theoretical position, which means having subjected it to critical debate with other theoretical positions. It means having sufficient theoretical and historical knowledge to be able to hear, to discern the lines of influence running from fundamental propositions to a conceptual system and action and back again, as it is expressed amongst the student/teachers with whom he is working. Without a considerable degree of theoretical clarity the educator is likely to miss what is most fundamental in his dialogues with students and leave it unexposed, because he, like the students, conceives of these unreflected dimensions as part of the natural order of things.²⁰ The educator's theoretical clarity must be such, so as to make it possible for him to be somewhat detached from what is

dominant (i.e., the status quo), but never to depart completely from the culture; rather to come to know it in a way that is only possible for a Grenzmensch (a person who lives on the outskirts) to come to know the society which he inhabits.

My intention is to go beyond the mere description of what a theoretically self-conscious individual needs to do, but rather to argue clearly what kinds of errors one falls into if one does not comprehend the role and meaning of theory--theory now hopefully understood not as a simple vocabulary but rather a complex, context laden set of explanations, with a tacit dimension, as crucial as the specific vocabulary. I have already asserted that a failure to critique what exists at the roots results in a continuing repetition of the worst aspects of what exists. The inability to understand the deep structure of any organized activity or body of theoretical knowledge means never to understand it, and to always either miss vital truths, or make a caricature of whatever it is one claims to know.

Unaware of his own perspective (the investigator) is unlikely to probe opposing theories deeply. Translating opposing claims into themes more comprehensible within his own perspective, he refutes a caricature of that theory; and thereby encourages in himself an easy confidence in the superiority of his own position.²¹

This can serve perhaps as a partial explanation of the arrogance of so many who are both in the heart of the current academic mode, as well as those who are actively refuting, while actually mirroring that which exists.

In order to make my position clearer I wish now to provide one further set of concrete examples of what I mean when I refer to the

deep structure of an explanatory framework. At the same time I wish to take the opportunity of making clear what has been vaguely hinted at throughout the dissertation--that is that psychoanalytic theory is central to critical theory. Psychoanalytic theory is no longer a body of knowledge one can study systematically at most American Universities. It is reviled from the left, the center and the right, liberated men and women, sophisticated psychological theorists and naive college freshman. Freud's name evokes snarls and sneers, grimaces and groans. It has been my argument throughout this dissertation that a critical theory requires an explicit theory of the human subject as well as a theory of history. There must be a satisfactory explanation of how the outside gets inside and then once again gets outside again.

Most 'progressive' theorists who speak grandly of man and world in interaction with each other would recoil at the thought of psychoanalytic theory helping us explain this movement, since according to such persons psychoanalysis is an 'individual psychology'. Yet it is the argument of most theorists in the tradition of critical theory that Freud's work and the work of those who have followed in his tradition is an essential part of the critical science of society. It is not possible in the context of this work to argue this position fully.²² I do, however, want to focus upon certain aspects of the theory I would consider part of the core of the theory, without which we would have something other than psychoanalytic theory, even though parts of its vocabulary may still be used. So rather than concentrating on the actual content of the theory (such as the details of the oedipus complex, the

nature of repression, the unconscious and so on), I want to focus on the more tacit dimensions of the theory, and, in the process, hopefully elucidate more clearly what I mean by tacit dimension or a mode of discourse. Simultaneously I hope to at least provide the outline of the argument why psychoanalytic theory is crucial to the critical theory of society, and thereby elucidate what some of the absolute requirements for a critical theory of society are.

Section Two

Psychoanalysis and Critical Theory

The following interrelated areas will be the focus of the next section: the particular way in which psychoanalysis conceives of the relation between the individual and the world and the 'progressive' critique of this position; the genetic nature of the science; efforts to test psychoanalytic concepts; psychoanalytic view of man, and mode of discourse.

Psychoanalysis--the individual and the world. Psychoanalysis posits that the weight of history is a heavy one--one that weighs on every individual and, as a result, on all cultures. This weight is both ontogenetic and phylogenetic in nature. That is, the mental representatives of the earliest childhood conflicts and the resulting repressive energy put to work exert a considerable influence over all later relationships. Much more than this: all humans in a very basic sense are influenced by a form of racial memory; that is, Freud asserted the existence of a primal guilt as a result of the primal murder of the

father, the memory of which requires continuous working through via ritualized cleansing actions.²³ History at its core is the expression of man's aggressive urges directed at the memory of the oppressive father; in close competition with these aggressive urges are the forces of Eros--those forces which are at work to bring man into relationship with other men.

Man's history is one of conflict and that conflict is rooted in the fundamental contradictions between instinct and world. This conflict manifests itself in specific ways in mental life: there exist mental representations of the early clashes between instinctual drives and society; these mental representatives remain alive and charged with energy in the unconscious, and these in turn conflict with and press upon the ego. The developing ego is itself, then, in perpetual struggle with demands of the id and the world. It mediates inner and outer. Neurosis exists as a result of the inherent contradiction between biological demands that seek immediate gratification and civilization (culture's) demands that they be postponed, often indefinitely. Only humans, of all the creatures, can become neurotic.

The world lives inside the individual; it functions in the individual in very specific ways. One way is via the oedipus complex. The oedipus complex is a social event taking place within the mind of the individual. It is a description and an explanation of how the outside world becomes translated into the inner life of the individual and how its forces continue to exert influence. Ernst van den Haag, a contemporary practicing psychoanalyst expresses it this way:

What is psychoanalysis concerned with if not the relationship among people? Is Freud supposed to have thought of the oedipus complex as an intra-uterine relationship? Psychoanalysis is centrally concerned with 'interaction'.²⁴

The superego and ego form different functions in the mind. These too are social categories. But these are not social categories 'interacting' loosely with individuals--they are social categories at work in very specific ways within the mental life of the individual. The super-ego is almost entirely formed as a result of the impact of the social world on the individual; the ego is that part of the psyche which mediates between the demands of the social world and the demands of the id. Identification and introjection are two functions of the ego that explain the specific way we 'take the social inside', and how these inner mental representatives exert force both inside and, as a result, outside ourselves. These two functions, introjection and identification, are tied to bodily processes, particularly oral processes. Indeed the development of the ego as a whole is at base tied intimately to the body. In a profound sense it can be said that we come to know the outside world through different parts of our bodies. The radical departure this implies from the subject object split as posited by the English philosophers who have so influenced empiricists' modes of knowing is made clear by Bakan:

To understand the psychoanalytical view of human development we contrast it to the view associated with classical English philosophy: that development is the increase of knowledge through the informative senses--the eyes and ears, primarily, and to a lesser degree, taste, smell and touch...In contrast Freud stressed the noninformative sensations from the oral, anal, and genital regions of the body...(These) regions are related to the ingress and regress of the material substances associated with the actual physical existence of the being and the material production of

other beings. What (the Freudian view) does show is that there is a significant place in the psyche for the psychological counterpart of the physical continuity of persons with one another expressed most sharply in sexual yearning, and biologically centered on those parts of the body most materially continuous with the rest of the world.²⁵

The point of this lengthy quote from Bakan is to re-emphasize how radical an interpenetration between mind and world is in fact posited by psychoanalytic theory. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Freud's view of the nature of the human mind is one thing which is not at issue here. To argue that his psychology is an individual psychology is to display a naive reading of a complex body of work. One absolutely essential strand of psychoanalytic theory is the interpenetration and ensuing conflict between biology, mental representations of instinctual life and environment. Man has a mind, a mental life which is part of nature and can be known by him. There are very specific and observable patterns to man's mental life which have come to be known by this natural science, psychoanalysis. As a result, some profound observations of a radical nature can be made about the relationship between civilization (culture) and human subjects.

Because psychoanalysis has made a study of the instincts it was in a position to explain the origin of character traitism as collisions between environmental influences and those instincts, partly as expression of various instinctual demands, partly as a reaction formation against them.²⁶

Or as Russell Jacoby puts it succinctly capturing in a sentence the profound degree of radical subject/object interaction posited by psychoanalytic theory:

Critical theory drawing upon psychoanalysis sinks into subjectivity until it hits bottom: society. It is here where subjectivity

devolves into objectivity; subjectivity is pursued till it issues into the social and historical events which preformed and deformed the subject. This constitutes the subject/object dialectic.²⁷ (my emphasis)

No better statement of the meaning behind the idea of 'subject and object are in complete dialectic interaction' could be made. The inner connection to psychoanalytic theory leads us to understand how different a logic is at work here, to the logic informing positivist inquiry. It is not simply a matter of positing that there exists a 'transaction' between man and world and arguing that we need a psychology that takes this transaction into account. The kind of relationship which occurs is extremely complex; man and world are not loosely tied together but intimately so. Man is not a vacant tabula rasa when he enters the world who is then 'conditioned' by society. We do not need a psychology which takes the social into account; we have one. What is required is the considerable intellectual commitment and time needed to understand psychoanalytic theory and then to be able to work within its mode of discourse and to historicize it, (i.e., to be able to use its conceptual categories correctly without removing the 'cutting edge', and at the same time apply these categories to the world of 1977).

A 'progressive' critique of psychoanalysis. Our critic of psychoanalytic theory from the standpoint of its being an individual psychology divorced from a comprehension of the influence of environment, history and culture, posits another position which (and this is crucial) he or she sees as the more radical position. The following is a paraphrasing of a typical argument. It is in the social organization of our lives that the real problem lies; it is in the reorganization of the social

world that our energies must be put; it is in the study of sociology that our intellectual efforts must be invested. Our critic would insist that the whole point is that there is a 'transaction' between man and world, or that the social 'influences' the individual enormously. A typical statement of this position is to be found in a radical critique of our society and of psychoanalytic theory, as espoused by Shulamith Firestone,²⁸ whose work seems to have had considerable impact on both the women's movement and others who call for fundamental social adjustments of a certain sort, (e.g., John Holt²⁹ and Philip Slater³⁰). She sums up her critique in this way:...'a therapy that has proven worse than useless may eventually be replaced with the only thing that can do any good: political organization.'³¹

Firestone, like many in her camp, posits no mental life whatsoever. They may be prone to classify Freud's formulations as metaphors, rather than concepts which are based upon observation of material reality, and which attempt to explain mental phenomena. On the one side, according to these theorists, we have the social world, which somehow and in some way (never clearly articulated) has entered the individual; on the other side we have the individuals who are oppressing and being oppressed. The main dynamic between individuals is one of power. Alter the relationships of power and relationships in general will be altered for the better.

I am not arguing that we must concentrate only on the treatment of individuals; social structures, purposes, principles must undergo extreme change for a more human society to be established. The point is that the nature of the changes one would propose will be fundamentally

determined by the particular theory of the human subject one holds. If one posits an essentially blank mind whose inner working mirrors the social, then one will develop social solutions of the kind proposed by Firestone, Slater and Holt (examples given below). If one posits on the other hand that the human mind takes in the social in a complex and difficult way as a result of some fundamental biologically rooted conditions which can never be ignored, then one is liable to come up with some very different solutions. One may argue for instance that the superego and its appropriate development can represent one hope to overcome aggression, and free us to set our sights on more noble goals. The development of the superego is both a great achievement and a great problem for mankind. How to enhance the achievement and lessen the problematical aspects is a task still far from accomplished.

Clearly it would be impossible however to 'do away with the family', or 'allow children to become free if they so desire, no matter what their age', or 'to flatten out the intensity of mother, child, father relationships, so as to prevent neurotic oedipal searches later in life' (these solutions are condensed versions of those presented by Firestone, Holt and Slater, respectively). Each of these solutions is proposed as a more radical, more progressive version of what exists. They are actually regressive in the most fundamental ways, liable to contribute further to the already weakening superego and thus make it necessary for either harsher community (state) repression of aggression, or a greater outpouring of aggression amongst individuals. (This is a condensed statement of a long and complicated argument which cannot be explained fully in this

context).

Psychoanalysis--a genetic science. Psychoanalysis contains, then, at its core a set of fundamental propositions about the nature of the human mind. At its core too it is a genetic science. That is, psychoanalytic theory urges the investigator to uncover the roots of the matter at hand. Only by understanding the human subject at his/her roots are we liable to understand him or her in a radical way. This genetic position must be understood as dynamic in nature.

The central puzzle about which the genetic explanation is concerned involves a question of change--change in state, condition or location...tracing out connections between present and future states...it is concerned with antecedent or future states of the subject in question, and more particularly with such states and the subject's present condition.³²

An understanding of the roots allows us to be able to distinguish what is absolutely given, and what is as a result of accident. Without a genetic explanation, and a resulting genetic understanding, the whole can never be understood. The whole does not mean being able to see everything --requiring all the facts before we can claim to know anything. It means being able to perceive underlying essentials, how they inform prevailing and dominant patterns, and how these stand in relationship to what is latent--what is not on the surface, but making its presence felt nevertheless. (Just as critical theory is concerned with genesis, so is psychoanalysis at its core a genetic science). It is impossible to hold as true one aspect of psychoanalytic thought, while at the same time giving up its genetic nature, and still call what one is doing or writing about psychoanalysis, as Karen Horney does:

My conviction expressed in a nutshell is that psychoanalysis should outgrow the limitations set by its being an instinctivistic and a genetic psychology...we (will) recognize that the connection between later peculiarities and earlier experiences is more complicated than Freud assumes.³³

The position is that eventually, by concentrating less on the instinctivistic elements, we will be able to concentrate more on the 'sociological orientation'. The position Horney takes will not be disputed at any greater length than has already been done. Her position is no longer within the framework of psychoanalytic theory, and is thus certain to depart in the most fundamental ways, and have implications of a sort that could never be condoned by a psychoanalytic point of view. Fenichel's response to Horney is instructive because it establishes the parameter of the debate and insists on the maintenance of the core of the theory, for without it "psychoanalysis remains like a knife without a blade that has no handle."³⁴ He goes on to say in direct response to the Horney statement quoted above: "My conviction expressed in a nutshell is that the value of psychoanalysis as a natural science is rooted in it being an instinctivistic and a genetic psychology."³⁵

The arguments about and insistence on remaining true to the core of the theory is not intended as intellectual nit-picking. The long term differences between one seed and another is considerable even if at the beginning two young plants may look very similar. A theoretical self-consciousness attempts to grasp what is at the core of a theory and understand how the root and the resulting conceptual system are bound together. One cannot simply lift the conceptual system off its roots and attach it to another set of roots (usually unconsciously held)

without doing radical damage to the original theory (plant). Naturally remaining true to the core does not mean that there is nothing to be done, no further puzzles to be solved within the framework set by the theory. On the contrary, particularly with a theory of the dimensions of psychoanalytic theory a great deal has to be done extending far beyond the confines of the therapeutic environment.

Psychoanalysis--and efforts to test. It is relevant to mention here that various efforts have been made to test psychoanalytic concepts experimentally. David Rapapport discusses these attempts and his comments are worth quoting in full for two reasons: the first is that they sum up so well what has been argued here, this time in connection with research and 'testing'. That is, the mode of research and testing is directly implicated in the entire mode in which the theory participates; the one cannot simply be abstracted from the other. The second reason is that Rapapport's comments on the interpretation of Freud are so similar to those made in this dissertation on when analyzing Alschuler's interpretations of Freire, (i.e., Alschuler took one mode of researching and knowing and attached it to another). Here are Rapapport's comments:

Thus Freudian terms and crudely analagous observations invaded the experimental literature on a scale never before attained, but the price paid was that Freud's concepts were turned into vague conceptions, barely related, and at times actually contradictory to their original forms...The overwhelming majority of experiments designed to test psychoanalytic propositions display a blatant lack of interest in the meaning, within the theory of psychoanalysis, of the propositions tested. Thus most of them did not measure what they purported to...It is not that these experiments are useless as confirming evidence, but rather that at this stage of our knowledge it is not clear what--if anything--they confirm.³⁶

Psychoanalysis--a view of man, and a mode of discourse. From another point of view, psychoanalysis at its core is more than a set of interrelated fundamental propositions with an accompanying conceptual system; it is more than a genetic science. It contains a fundamentally tragic view of man, a view which requires facing up to and admitting in our theories. "To endure life" Freud said, "remains when all is said and done, the first duty of all living beings. Illusion can have no value if it makes this more difficult for us; if you would endure life, be prepared for death."³⁶ Freud was once reviewing a particularly devastating attack on his person; he commented to Ernst Simmel: "this author says I am wicked; he has committed a plagiarism. I said that myself years ago."³⁷

This tragic vision, this critical edge, has been the target of many subsequent theoreticians who, objecting to its 'pessimistic' nature have taken from psychoanalytic theory some essential insights, beautified them with another set of assumptions about the nature of life and offered their new theories as a better version than the original. Although psychoanalysis seems to have been well received in some quarters in America its welcome has been conditional. The condition has been that most of its essential insight has been softened up. One brief example is given by three contemporary observers. Rycroft, Gorer and others³⁹ point out that the reception to psychoanalysis in America has not included an acceptance of the theory of infantile sexuality; which is one of the three pillars upon which the whole structure of psychoanalytic theory is built. (It is in this view of man's life as

essentially tragic that psychoanalytic theory radically parts company with Freire, a point which will be further taken up in Chapter VI).

Very closely tied to this tragic view of man and life is another central core to psychoanalytic theory: its insistence on a certain mode of discourse, one that is summed up by the idea of negation. Erik Erikson is a psychoanalytic theorist who has deepened, expanded, and made popular various aspects of psychoanalytic theory but he has done so at a cost. The cost is only to be discovered by comprehending both the subtle and obvious ways in which Erikson has placed a halo around some of the nastier aspects of psychoanalytic principles. My aim here is not to explore Erikson but to give one extensive quote from a reviewer of his work, Joel Kovel. The following from Kovel is in essence a restatement and summary of various propositions that have been put forth in this chapter.

A more primitive and elementary conception is that of negation... to Freud human reality was a field of forces in conflict, within which a trend, repression, exists to split off negated qualities from the main, official body of consciousness. Further, these split off qualities continue to exert a major effect behind the screen of consciousness. This is the elementary explanatory logic of psychoanalysis. The theory of infantile sexuality plays such an important role in Freudian thought precisely because of its essential negativity...to recognize the ambivalence in the midst of our nature...this was Freud's permanent achievement.⁴⁰

Certainly, theoretical advances can and must be made.⁴¹ But the deep meaning, the deep structure of the theory must be maintained in order to represent psychoanalysis, as opposed to something else. "A theory remains coherent only if it sticks to a certain cardinal form of explanation, and organizes updated information under its aegis. Thus when psychoanalysis loses its principle of negation it loses its

critical and penetrating power as well."⁴² In the case of psychoanalysis the truth that is lost when this negating explanatory principle is given up, is almost the whole truth.

One central task for man is to be able to comprehend his helplessness and yet persist all the while. In other words the distinctions being insisted upon here are not simply nit-picking. A brief example must suffice. The political implications of one position as opposed to another are considerable. It is obvious that the growing 'pessimism' of the 1970's in America is of enormous concern to American business. Evidence of the concern can be found in the many current newspaper advertisements urging Americans to rekindle their optimistic, idealistic spirit. On the other hand a growing realism amongst Americans, which the current pessimistic mood may give birth to, could be the way through to a different kind of social structure:

In the light...the widespread loss of confidence in our political institutions and leaders, the lack of respect for authority, the alienation from the official values of the society, even the revulsion against politics...appear as sensible response to the debacle accomplished by those in authority. Ungovernability may be our last but it is surely not our best hope. Our best hope paradoxically, is in the pessimism of the present, in our disillusionment. It may signify that as a nation we are finally ready to abandon childish fantasies of collective omnipotence and overflowing abundance, that we are repelled at having made legitimate the corpulent powers that now govern us and at having accepted gratefully their tawdry benefits.⁴³

Understanding a theory then is hard work. If one really comes to know a theory as a whole, it has enormous consequences for the way we will see and act upon the world. Knowing a theory in the full sense which I have described here is by definition to come to see the world and

act upon the world in a different way. Theory and action are distinguishable moments, but the distinction cannot be a radical one. A person who knows psychoanalytic theory will always notice the sensuous facts, will always insist upon desimplification in any description of reality. What is at the surface is only partially true; the latent content contains the more crucial truth, consisting of congealed phylogenetic and ontogenetic history. Only with a discovery of the truth is there a relief from the severity of the symptoms. Only with a perpetual effort to continue to reach for latent content will the symptoms be prevented from regaining power; its truths are never fully discovered or revealed. Psychoanalytic theory, like critical theory, requires of those who study it a capacity and a willingness to overcome wishful thinking, a concomitant willingness and commitment to unearthing and naming the uncomfortable truths, as well as a preparedness to tolerate the fact that so little can be claimed as certain. Freud's 'illiberal' position on the question of truth is appropriate here. He is addressing those who would call on him to be more tolerant in his stance as to what constitutes psychoanalysis and what does not:

What further claims do you make in the name of tolerance? That when someone has uttered an opinion which we regard as completely false we should say to him: 'Thank you very much for having given voice to this contradiction. You are guarding us against the danger of complacency and giving us an opportunity of showing the Americans that we are really as 'broadminded' as they wish. To be sure we do not believe a word of what you are saying, but that makes no difference. Perhaps you are just as right as we are. After all who can possibly know who is right? In spite of our antagonism, pray allow us to represent your point of view in our publications. We hope that you will be kind enough in exchange to find a place for our views which you deny'.⁴⁴

...it is a simple fact the truth cannot be tolerant.⁴⁵

Only by comprehending the inner core, the mode of discourse of psychoanalytic theory can one understand the inner connections to critical theory, and the fundamental way in which both are in opposition to what is dominant, normal, everyday acceptable reality.

To sum up this section and introduce the next, the following thoughts are in order. Without a theoretical self-consciousness, one is likely to miss what is most progressive, and substitute what is most regressive, while all the while under the illusion that what one is doing is in fact more progressive. Theoretical illiteracy will result in a failure to adopt revolutionary theory. The dominant mode in this country, as has been argued, is a general suspiciousness of theory. This suspiciousness often hides anti-intellectualism and is part of the oppressive order; thus the combatting of such suspiciousness would be a critical political act. There is a general assertion amongst those who interpret Freire naively that our task must not be to merely study the social sciences but rather encourage action. This view misapprehends the state of affairs in this already too activist a society, namely, we need much more reflection organized and taught in a fundamentally different way to that which exists at present.

The maintenance of a critical social theory in hard times, times of encapsulation and integration, let alone oppression, is in fact an act of political defiance--or an act of political hope or faith--The active pursuit of critical theory in a so-called knowledge based society is in itself a political act, because a knowledge based society depends on the production of technically utilizable knowledge, not critical knowledge.⁴⁶

It is hopefully clear now on the basis of what has been said in the last

two sections, that education for theoretical self-consciousness would be a significant contribution to the development of a critical consciousness amongst various members of the academic community, including students.

Section Three

Developing an Educational Program based upon Freire's Principles

Crucial to the establishment of any educational alternative is a clearly articulated critique of what exists; the critique should display an ability to address what is dominant at its roots, and be able to speak the language of the dominant paradigm. The critique must make clear what it rejects in the dominant paradigm and what it wishes to maintain. Critical theory looks for the 'old in the new and the new in the old.' The statement articulating the purposes of the alternative must reveal a theoretical self-consciousness; that is it must be a statement articulating the roots of the alternative theory as well as its terms of discourse, its logic of explanation, what it considers as given, its view of the human subject and the possibility for change.

One vital task we face is to educate for the development of theoretical self-consciousness. The argument that such a task would constitute an act of critical consciousness was made in the last section. So many efforts to create alternatives fail because of the failure to comprehend the role of theory as it has been explicated. So many radical positions have their sharpness dulled by those well meaning educators who, in order that the theory be spread far and wide, simplify it, in-

strumentalize it, and thereby reduce it beyond recognition.

For the purposes of discussion I wish to speculate upon the nature of an educational program intended to educate for theoretical self-consciousness geared for potential teachers as well as first year college students. The following two sections explicate what some of the focii would be for these two differing groups. As far as the teachers are concerned, I make the assumption that they are ready and willing to undertake the course of study I describe; to an uncommitted group I would suggest they go through a course of study very similar to the one I propose for the college students in the second section.

Teachers. Freire's work is obviously addressed to intellectuals; all those not committed to the intellectual endeavor would not have the patience or the background to struggle through his books. Some, in order to overcome this difficulty with Freire would simplify his words, put them onto charts and attempt to experimentally prove various statements of his as true or untrue. In the process, as has been argued at length, the heart of Freire is neatly removed.

Teachers who would wish to understand and then use the principles articulated by Freire, and critical theory in general, would, for one and a half years of a two year program do nothing other than immerse themselves in the tradition of critical theory. This would mean readings in Marx, Freud, analytic philosophy, the critical theorists, including Freire, and readings about theory itself, so that a theoretical self-consciousness could begin to develop. It is absolutely certain that one criticism will quickly emerge: that this material is too difficult,

too obscurely written, and too removed from the everyday world of teaching problems. This will be responded to not by providing twenty minute 'nuclear problem solving sessions' in order to combat 'afternoon philosophic yawns', but rather as an issue to be discussed. Why is there such resistance to difficult material? Why might our intentions to master the material wane so quickly? What do our demands for simpler material say about our implicit understandings of the nature of humans and the social reality? What analogues to this attitude exist in the culture at large? Where do they come from? Who do they benefit? This kind of dialogue should occur whenever the reading causes a particular kind of response amongst a number of students; it would serve as a prototype for the kinds of dialogue which may take place with their own students when they begin to teach.

Those who wish to teach using these Freirian principles must be prepared to read in the social and political sciences, or if not, at least be prepared to explicate their contrary position. There is no way to be an educator who has some critical awareness in the sense described by Freire, and not to have read carefully and fully in these disciplines. The power of the dominant theoretical paradigm in which we all live, which is constitutive of what we see and how we act in the world, this power is too great to assume that a 'consciousness raising group' will achieve critical consciousness among its members. Only as ever deepening understanding of the weight of history, of the weight of forms of thought and language, and their intimate relationship to the world of everyday action, can help make it possible for an individual to become

slightly detached from the forces of the dominant paradigm. Thus the content of our one and a half year long reading program would include some work on the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the concomitant emergence of the liberal doctrine, with a very strong emphasis on the relationship of this doctrine to our institutional life, including every day modes of discourse and action.

It will also become necessary for the future teachers to understand that the crucial concepts of Freire's work such as reflection/action; dialogue/dialectic/subject/object, magic, naive and critical consciousness--have a history, that they have been debated and discussed for many years, that Freire is addressing an audience whom he presumes to hold a certain knowledge about the state of the debate. All arguments, all theoretical explanations take place in a context, and one can only claim knowledge of the theory when one also comprehends the context of explanation (this will include the forms of investigation and evaluation appropriate to that context).

The aim of this absorption in the tradition of critical theory is to encourage people to begin to reason critically about their world. It is not a question of developing critical thinking skills. Rather it would be a program intended to nurture the capacity to reason, by providing a theoretical framework, which assumes to begin with the immorality of what is, and argues within the context of explanation for a new order. We must learn to reason critically.

The task is to re-establish once again the value of the philosophic mind; philosophic thinking which is applied to the social reality is a

step toward critical consciousness. (Freire received his doctorate in philosophy; Marx wrote his dissertation on a remote philosopher who influenced Plato). It is the only way for the educators to approach critical consciousness. We simply cannot transcend what is by magic or by psychological manipulation, or by therapy (although the latter could have a role to play, but not in the context of formal education).

There must be an unwavering commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, and a recognition that the effect on action is considerable but not in a clear one to one relationship. The kind of knowledge worth pursuing is not that which is technical, abstract, and instrumental, but that which is passionate, and committed to the truth, which conceived of the intellectual endeavor as a difficult task requiring struggle. The overall goal of the educational effort then would be for the teachers to emerge with one thought clearly in mind: the pursuit of knowledge and the development of one's capacity to reason is a slow difficult path to liberation. It does not guarantee liberation by any manner of means, but it is the sine qua non of a truly democratic society. Freire puts it this way: "To the extent an epoch dynamically generates its own themes, men will have to make more and more use of intellectual and less and less of emotional and instinctive functions."⁴⁷

To those who ask how do we know that our teachers are approaching a critical consciousness, we give the words of Jules Henry: "To think deeply in our culture is to grow angry and to anger others. One of the rewards of deep thought is the hot glow of anger at discovering a wrong, but if the anger is taboo, thought will starve to death."⁴⁸ Thinking

must not be divorced from passion, nor passion from thinking. Ideally the one must be continuously contributing to the other. Perhaps Freud is the outstanding theorist of our time to demonstrate both in his person and his work how these two domains can stand in dynamic relation with each other.

The Students. Let us assume then that a small group of educators are in agreement about certain fundamentals as to the nature of theory; they have some understanding as to the nature of liberal theory specifically and the nature of the social institutions constituted by it. There exists agreement that education should attempt to encourage negative critical thinking (see Chapter II) amongst students; and that one way to do this is via an application of Paulo Freire's educational theory, which can only be fully understood in the context of critical theory in general.

Freire's work is written to a specific audience, which is the intellectual community. His presumption is that the intellectual is faced by a perpetual problem: how to translate truths which he/she is fairly certain hold value for mankind in general, to the less educated, to those whose critical faculties have been dulled due to oppressive social forces. An intellectual (for purposes of this discussion) is one whose basic commitment is to the search for knowledge, and to the discovery of some fundamental truths. To intellectuals the task of understanding Freire, may be a difficult one, but if there is an interest in his work the effort will be made to read his specific work and those other works which stand in his tradition. There is no need to come up with fancy techniques

in order to educate intellectuals about Freire's theory. There exists in them an active principle which makes banking education an impossibility--that active principle in this case is the desire to know. Individuals who have this passion are actively engaged, even while sitting perfectly still listening to a lecture. There is a form of dialogue occurring in this situation. Freire's pedagogy is intended for a very specific population: those people who have remained inhibited at a certain stage, and no longer wish to know or rather are prepared to simply accept whatever is given, without critically intervening in any way. (Note: the oppressor has also lost his wish to know more: he usually unconsciously thinks he knows a great deal, and is simply unable to put himself into a learning posture toward someone else). These individuals, whether peasants or first year college students are often taught various and sundry subjects regardless of their wanting to know anything. The result at best, is that nothing at all is learned, and a good deal of energy has been wasted, or more likely, that an additional regression toward apathy has taken place.

There are those who would argue that the university should not, and cannot, make the attempt to reach that large number who do not come here in order to discover, that there should be other kinds of institutionalized ways of making the transition from adolescence to adulthood, or of being trained for a vocation. This argument has considerable strength. Yet like it or not these shifts are unlikely to occur in the near future and in one way or another we are faced with the problem of how to educate these many students whose passion to know remains dormant. Various ap-

proaches have been tried, some more successful than others. The following are some speculations on what some of the principles would be guiding the establishment of a first year program based upon the educational theory of Paulo Freire.

I begin with a listing of principles. Following this there will be commentary.

1. Education would tend toward the developing of a theoretical self-consciousness, which in the long run would have profound implications for action.
2. A highly held aim would be to provoke the passion to know more. Students should leave a one year long program with a commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, at least thinking about the proposition that the right sort of knowledge can be a form of power. The right kind of knowledge in this case means knowledge which negates what is, responsibly and coherently, and aims for truths leading to a more just social order.
3. In every case where the educators feel compelled to communicate some principles which they feel the students should come to grips with, the effort must be made to have the students accomodate the knowledge, rather than via simple assimilation or absorption. (Accomodation in Piaget's scheme involves struggle or work).
4. For this last to happen the educator must make every effort to come to know the thought language reality of his students. This is a very different proposition from the following which also argues that we need to know more about our students:

(The) first step in making these studies is to know the entering

student, to know him as an actual or potential scholar, to know him as a person and to see him against his background and against the college environment and its subcultures. While the research is being done the unusually sensitive teacher will explore the relationship for himself and teach and counsel in the light of what he thinks he has discerned.⁴⁹

So according to this position the less sensitive teacher would eventually have a body of research while would provide him with the information he needs in order to know the students. I, on the other hand, am calling here for all teachers interested in the teaching endeavor--for all to become students of their students. Such knowledge cannot be abstracted from the real concrete human beings and laid down as a static unchanging body of knowledge in order to save the less sensitive teachers the trouble. The only kind of knowledge of the students worth having is that which is sensitively obtained from specific people in a specific moment of history, who come from specific socio/economic classes and ethnic groups. The task is to come to know their everyday knowledge. This knowledge is in most cases unreflected opinion, and thus even if the right opinion still in need of reflection. Without knowing the intricacies of the thought language reality of the students, any efforts to educate will almost certainly remain abstract, at least in the minds of the students. The aim, then, is to discover those words, phrases, thought patterns, which are taken as given by students, which seemed to be widely shared by them, and which the critically conscious educator perceives as a problem to be solved rather than a given order of things.

5. Finding out the nature of the students' reality is the first moment of the educational endeavor. Research is not an isolated activity,

however, to be followed by the appropriate courses. Discovery of the students' world of knowledge and dialogue about it are distinct but closely related activities. The educational program is underway at the same moment that the research begins. It is the first stage of the educational program.

These then are some of the principles which would inform our endeavor. The following is an elaboration on these points.

Ideally our group of educators would consist of a group who, apart from sharing a common theoretical perspective would be specialists in the following disciplines: social theory, education, language (including linguistics) and its relationship to the representation of reality, media (including reading, writing and use of film, slides etc.).

This group would in pairs or singly, or with some advanced students and in the context of the classroom begin the investigation of the thought language reality of the students. The entire first semester should have as its primary emphasis the discovery of themes in the students' lives. As has been said this means that education in the fullest sense is occurring all the while. That is, the teacher is teaching at the same time that he or she is attempting to learn from the students. The investigation would have to take place regardless of prior knowledge on the part of the educators regarding the nature of some of these themes. The following paragraph of Freire's explains how I view this process:

If the educators lack sufficient funds to carry out the preliminary thematic investigation as described above, they can with a minimum of knowledge of the situation--select some basic themes to serve as 'codifications to be tested'. Accordingly they can begin with introductory themes and simultaneously initiate further investigation.⁵⁰

Two interrelated themes would be at the heart of our educational team's interest. One would be the attitudes and thoughts, the students have about the world of knowledge and the actions they take with regard to it, and the second will be the very closely related theme, the view of human nature the students hold. As these issues are debated and discussed, their discussion "touches upon other aspects of reality, which comes to be perceived in an increasingly critical manner. These aspects in turn involve many other themes."⁵¹

Of course these issues--the nature of knowledge, and the question of the meaning of being human--are immense and complex. Yet they are surely part of the groundwork, part of what is absolutely fundamental for the students to begin to think about. The crucial thing is for the students to come to understand that they do have knowledge, and that they are acting on the basis of this unreflected knowledge all the time. The knowledge they hold contains the fundamentals of any system of knowledge: it consists of a set of fundamental propositions about the nature of mind, the process of coming to know something, the meaning of being human, work, all of which shades into a conceptual system which in turn is intimately related to action. In the process of coming to know about their own system of knowledge students come to know about systems of knowledge in general. More significantly, of course, they begin to reflect upon their own system of knowledge at the same moment that they discover that they do indeed have one.

In the process of decoding the participants externalize their thematics and thereby make explicit their 'real consciousness of the world'...By stimulating 'perception of the previous perception' and 'knowledge of the previous knowledge' decoding stimulates

the appearance of new perception and the development of new knowledge.⁵²

So in the process of these discoveries the students may begin to make some fundamentally different kinds of decisions about how they act in the world. However, any real changes in attitude could only come about if two further conditions hold: that the educators move slowly, and that the students be able to participate in more than one course of this sort.

The educators must be willing to move very slowly and carefully when wanting to find out more from the students as well as when wanting to communicate what they want students to know more about. The process of questioning students about the nature of their reality should follow the same principles as those which inform the psychoanalytic investigator who wants to know more about his patient. When the psychoanalyst listens to his patient he takes nothing for granted; he does not remain satisfied until the meaning of an apparently obvious statement such as I am 'lonely' is clearly understood by both himself and the patient. There is a continual 'say more about that', 'explain that word to me', 'what do you mean by that?' from the psychoanalyst to the patient. So it should be from the dialogic teacher who really wants to know more from his students. In addition, like the psychoanalyst, the dialogic teacher must learn to take what the students say absolutely seriously; often the important moments are not those which are most obvious. So for example the 'I don't know' from the students are the acceptance of a limit situation by them, not a fact to be accepted as such. Two comments of Freud's are applicable here. "...we have treated as holy writ what

previous writers have regarded as arbitrary improvisation..."⁵³

"(Psychoanalysis) is accustomed to divine secret and concealed things from unconsidered or unnoticed details, from the rubbish heap, as it were, of our observations."⁵⁴

The educator is continuously using his critical interpretive powers to make sense of the information he is receiving; unlike the phenomenologists who wants to bracket his subjectivity, the critical educator wants to use his in a controlled manner--in the same way the psychoanalyst does in the transference relationship. The aim is to make conscious what theoretical or other principles are at work in interpretation, rather than to pretend that it is possible to cause one's mind to become a blank receiver to the essential truths of the 'things themselves'.⁵⁵

These helpful analogies to the psychoanalytic process should not confuse as to the real nature of our task. The dialogic educator wants to stay away completely from overtly psychological issues or material. The educator wants to discover manifest and latent knowledge held by the students, while avoiding the specifically personal troubles the students are experiencing. Personal troubles which are shared widely by others can be discussed as social issues.⁵⁶ These can clearly be discussed on the level of the social, and even though the result of such discussion is self knowledge, the distinctions between education and therapy are always maintained.

The same holds true for material which the educator wishes to communicate to the students. In some cases a short lecture is appropriate. The important point is that the educator must move very slowly in his/

her effort to communicate fundamental principles. These principles will only be meaningful in any way if the students recognize their own thought/language reality re-presented to them as a problem; they must then be able to accommodate this material (i.e., grapple and work with it). It is one central thesis of this work, and of Freire's pedagogy that reflection, grappling with some root assumptions which students recognize as theirs, will in the long run produce some profound change. For college students I would argue this change could occur with regard to the nature of their commitment to the life of the mind.

But profound change of any sort can only come with time. One cannot simply switch theoretical propositions, especially culture wide ones, the way one would turn off a light switch. We can only hope to achieve a commitment to finding out more. In other words we can only hope to have provoked some comprehension of pain amongst the students. The normal state of affairs is taken by most students to be equivalent to the natural or most human state of affairs. The pain they are experiencing as they participate in this state of affairs is an unconscious one. This is the meaning of Freire's 'culture of silence'; the people perceive no problems. Only via a discovery of the actual pain which does exist (the pain which has as its cause predominantly in the social) can there result a commitment to discovering ways of resolving the pain which could then become a commitment to the life of the mind. Amongst some students a commitment to a more just, human order may result. These students will recognize that only a better use of human intelligence will make it possible for the race to survive at all. The relationship

of pain to learning was well put by Freud:

Do not have the symptoms disappear too quickly...every improvement in his condition reduces the rate at which he recovers and diminishes the instinctual force impelling him to recovery. If owing to the symptoms having been taken apart and having lost their value his suffering becomes mitigated, we must re-instate it elsewhere in the form of some appreciable privation; otherwise we run the danger of never achieving any improvements except quite insignificant and transitory ones.⁵⁷

So the task is to provoke the pain where it is not realized consciously by showing how the normal is in fact a problem to be solved. Then the task is to maintain the provocation.

Of course, one course can only begin to raise the curtain of consciousness, a curtain which for security reasons will be quickly drawn again, unless the pressure is maintained. Thus we come to the second requirement if the Freirian principles are to take hold--that the students participate in a second stage of an educational program. Briefly this stage would consist of the following: The educational team would attempt to compile the words, phrases, thoughts, which the students were expressing and which the educators thought were both social and problematical in nature. Here I can only give some outstanding examples of what some of these words, thoughts, phrases may be, based upon my own investigation. I have already given those with which I explicitly worked. The following are based upon my working notes.

1. 'We are all individuals'--this in answer to the question--is there a human nature? There is little sense amongst the students of ways in which humans are really part of common social matrices and participate in intersubjective meanings. There is little recognition of how much

needs to be done before one can claim to be an individual.

2. Closely connected, and a dominant theme acting as a limiting factor much the same way as resistance does in the individual psyche, is the following: 'Each one is an individual and has his/her own opinion'. The unsaid part of this statement is: 'so there is no point in discussing or debating this issue'.

3. 'Now that we are in college we are free', is a standard phrase; it opens up the chance to explore at length the meaning of freedom. At some point it would be appropriate to make a connection between freedom and knowledge. 'Slavery to an unknown master is slavery still; and not to know even that we are in bondage is to deepen it.'⁵⁸

4. 'We learn from experience'. This is a major assumption the students hold, and one that has been strongly buttressed by recent developments in educational theory. Much the same argument is made by those who say that young people are 'oppressed by elders' who claim access to truth and therefore teach the young. The fact is that a critical relationship to reality can only be maintained by theoretical critical reflection, which in turn leads to action. And only by maintaining the strictest discipline of continuous reflection can a tendency to reification be avoided. People's experiences, especially for the young is distorted experience

to privilege (this experience) is to absolutize a distorted relativity, to ground oneself in the flux of repression and to avoid the need to evaluate competing theoretical frameworks on the basis of their theoretical force--which (one) comes closest to grasping coherently a complex totality which incorporates the human subject at its critical core.⁵⁹

5. Explore the question of the absolute absence of the older generation in the midst of student life. Virtually the only relationships of any significance experienced by the students are with members of their peer group. No greater guarantee of conformity could be found. In my experience with the students this was a theme that they would have quite willingly spent some time exploring. The relationship of a provocative tension between the generations and the development of a critical consciousness is well expressed by Morris: 'A newer view of education as meaningful transaction between the generations through which society is changed and redefined, implying a teaching-learning relationship of partnership and discovery is only slowly gaining ground.'⁶⁰

6. "Things which are worth doing must be easy!" This assumption is obviously one of those contributing enormously to a consumer mentality.

7. 'I and many of the students I know know too well what we're doing here. So we spend a lot of time being bored.' The issue of boredom is not something to be resolved by providing further entertainment for students. This boredom is closer to a chronic depression and is pervasive in the student community like the one at the University of Massachusetts. A re-presentation to the students in the form of a problem focussed on this theme might look like this: "U. Mass is a great party school; you can also get a great education here if you push for it. Somehow I don't have all that much fun; I'm also not having a great education, and this is all my fault."

This however is not the context within which to present a detailed description of the forms in which the re-presentation would take place.

The point is that the second stage of the educational program will be a systematic re-presentation to the students of aspects of their thought-language reality. The educating team will systematize their presentations in consultation with each other. For example, the question of boredom will be re-presented, for a period of time. The question of individuality as it has developed in American History, and the direct relationship of historical events to everyday actions in the present would be discussed. Only via an understanding of the philosophical and historical roots of one's culture can one avoid blindly and unconsciously replicating old and self-defeating forms of behavior. Slowly, perhaps at the end of such carefully prepared systematic re-presentation, the students will come to recognize the degree to which powerfully enhanced knowledge could provide power to take truly transforming action on their worlds. Thus the change in action we would hope for from this group would be a commitment to a lifetime pursuit of knowledge, regardless of one's specific career. This could be the most profound of accomplishments. Of course the task and problem is how to achieve this for the 'new' student in the University. It has been and is my belief that Freire's work with peasants in Brazil does give some clues as to how to approach a population who share with the peasants similar oppressed states of consciousness. Freire sums up:

The important thing from the point of view of libertarian education is for men to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades. Because their view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate.⁶¹

FOOTNOTES

¹Unger, Knowledge and Politics, p. 8.

²Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 23,24.

³For a full discussion of this educational position see Robert Paul Wolff's, The Ideal of the University, op. cit.

⁴Quoted in Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 54.

⁵See Social Literacy Group, "Nuclear Problem Solving Process," (draft), Van Sickle Junior High, Springfield, Mass. (Spring, 1976), p. 1.

⁶Maritain, op. cit., p. 54.

⁷Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy Verbatim, op. cit., p. 44.

⁸Hans Peter Dreitzel, "Social Science and the Problem of Rationality: notes on the sociology of technocrats," Politics and Society, Vol.2, No. 2 (Winter, 1972), p. 180.

⁹Abraham Kaplan, "Freud and Modern Philosophy," from Freud and the Twentieth Century, ed. by Benjamin Nelson (N.Y.: Meridian Books, 1957), p. 209.

¹⁰The definition of ideology which stands closest to the point and essentially refutes the Daniel Bell position is given by Russell Jacoby... "in Marxism ideology is in no way restricted to what in Anglo-American tradition is called abstract thought; rather it refers to a form of consciousness: false consciousness, a consciousness that has been falsified by social and material conditions. As a form of consciousness it would include any type of consciousness." Russell Jacoby, Social Amnesia, op. cit., p. 6.

¹¹Ibid., p. 58.

¹²Peter Gay, "Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider," in The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America 1930-60, ed. by D. Fleming and B. Bailyn (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 47.

¹³Theodore W. Adorno, "A European Scholar in America," in Bailyn and Fleming (eds)., The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America 1930-60 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 348.

¹⁴Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, op. cit., p. 112.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 282.

¹⁶See William E. Connolly, "Theoretical Self-Consciousness," Polity, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Fall, 1973), pp. 6-35.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 35.

²⁰The reader is invited to re-read the critique of Alschuler's Springfield School project; the critique appears in Chapter III of this work, and clarifies the argument for the need for theoretical self-consciousness.

²¹Connolly, op. cit., p. 26.

²²See for example Erich Fromm, Anatomy of Human Destructiveness, pp. 102-110, Juergen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, pp. 214-300, Russell Jacoby's Social Amnesia, and Herbert Marcuse's Eros and Civilization.

²³For a full discussion of various forms of sublimated aggression see Eli Sagan, Cannibalism: Human Aggression and Cultural Form (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1974).

²⁴Ernst van den Haag, "Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences: Genuine and Spurious Integration," from Psychoanalysis and Social Science, ed. by H.M. Ruitenbeek (N.Y.: Dutton and Co., 1972), p. 171, my emphasis.

²⁵David Bakan, On Method: Toward a Reconstruction of Psychological Investigation (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1971), pp. 136, 137.

²⁶Otto Fenichel, "Review of Karen Horney's New Ways in Psychoanalysis," Psychoanalytic Quarterly Vol. 9 (1940), p. 116.

²⁷Jacoby, op. cit., p. 79., emphasis mine.

²⁸Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectics of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1970).

²⁹John Holt, Escape from Childhood: The Needs and Rights of Children (N.Y.: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1974).

- ³⁰Philip Slater, Earthwalk (N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1974).
- ³¹Firestone, op. cit., p. 71.
- ³²Michael Sherwood, The Logic of Explanation in Psychoanalysis (N.Y.: Academic Press, 1969), p. 26.
- ³³Karen Horney, New Ways in Psychoanalysis (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1939), p. 8, 9. I was directed to this work and its critique by Jacoby in his Social Amnesia.
- ³⁴Fenichel, op. cit., p. 115.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 121.
- ³⁶David Rappaport, "The Structure of Psychoanalytic Theory," quoted by Marie Jahoda, "The Migration of Psychoanalysis," in The Intellectual Migration, op. cit., p. 427.
- ³⁷Sigmund Freud, "Reflections Upon War and Death," in P. Rieff ed. Character and Culture (N.Y.: Collier Books, 1963), p. 133.
- ³⁸Ernst Simmel, "The Man and His Work," in Psychoanalytic Quarterly, Vol. 9 (1940), pp. 164.
- ³⁹Charles Rycroft, Geoffrey Gorer et. al., Psychoanalysis Observed (London: Constable Press, 1966), p. 45.
- ⁴⁰Joel Kovel, "Erik Erikson's Psychohistory," Social Policy, Vol. II, No. 2 (1970), p. 62.
- ⁴¹The vocabulary of a particular theory may even be restated for particular audiences without, in the process, cutting away the heart of the theory. See, for example, in this connection Selma Fraiberg's The Magic Years (N.Y.: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1959).
- ⁴²Kovel, op. cit., p. 63.
- ⁴³Sheldon Wolin, "The New Conservatives," New York Review of Books, Vol. XXIII, No. 1 (Feb. 5, 1976), p. 10 .
- ⁴⁴Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures In Psychoanalysis (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1965), p. 144.
- ⁴⁵Ibid., p. 160.

- ⁴⁶Norman Birnbaum, "Critical Theory and Psychohistory," from Explorations in Psychohistory, ed. by Robert Jay Lifton (N.Y.: Simon and Shuster, 1974), p. 201.
- ⁴⁷Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 6.
- ⁴⁸Jules Henry, Culture Against Man (N.Y.: Random House), p. 146.
- ⁴⁹T.R. McConnell and P. Heist, "The Diverse College Student Population," in Nevitt Sanford ed. The American College (N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, 1962), p. 249.
- ⁵⁰Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 117.
- ⁵¹Ibid.
- ⁵²Ibid., p. 108.
- ⁵³Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co.), p. 513, 14.
- ⁵⁴Sigmund Freud, "The Moses of Michaelangelo," in Character and Culture, ed. by Ph. Rieff (N.Y.: Collier Books, 1963), p. 92.
- ⁵⁵For a more detailed discussion of these ideas see Juergen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, p. 237.
- ⁵⁶C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, op. cit.
- ⁵⁷Sigmund Freud, "Lines of Advance in Psychotherapy," quoted in Juergen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, p. 234.
- ⁵⁸Abraham Kaplan, "Freud and Modern Philosophy," in Benjamin Nelson (ed.) Freud and the Twentieth Century (N.Y.: Meridian Books, 1957), p. 218.
- ⁵⁹Jean Elshtain, "Social Relations in the Classroom: A Moral and Political Perspective," Telos, No. 27 (Spring, 1976), p. 106.
- ⁶⁰Benjamin Morris, Objectives and Perspectives in Education (London: Routledge Press, 1972), p. 172.
- ⁶¹Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, op. cit., p. 118.

CHAPTER VI

Freire can and has been critiqued from various perspectives, some of which have more validity than others. Those which hold little validity are critiques based upon a misreading of the nature of Freire's theory; thus these critiques deteriorate into a caricature of the theory.

One example of such an effort is the strong critique of Freire's work by William S. Griffith.¹ Griffith echoes many in this technicist age who decry theory as 'impractical' and who call for 'practical guidance'.² A lengthy critique of technicist thinking is given in Chapter III and will only be repeated here in summary form. Griffith and those in his camp radically separate method and content, the development of intellectual functions and the objects of knowledge. Thus it makes no difference what teachers talk about as long as students are being asked 'higher order' questions, which encourage the "development of analytic and synthetic abilities which enable the students to examine the facts of a problem situation, identify the likely consequences of alternative actions, and finally select and implement the alternative."³

Griffith decries the fact that Freire has not addressed himself to all the academic material which shows how to enhance cognitive development, and in doing so Griffith displays his failure to grasp the deep structure of Freire's work. His demand that Freire use more 'up to date language' fails to recognize the fully blown theory of society, which, Freire argues, has implications for the nature of educational praxis. A valid critique of the idea of banking education (which is an

example of out of date language, according to Griffith) would be one which discusses whether the metaphor, 'banking education', aptly describes the line of influence running from a capitalistic economic system, to instrumental thinking, to everyday praxis, including educational praxis. Griffith wishes that we could just develop minds, which are conceived of by him as in an independent relationship to social structure. An education for critical consciousness cannot be reduced to the development of synthesizing, analyzing or coping skills. Education for critical consciousness requires an awakening to the fact that one is inevitably bound up with political forces, whether one is active or passive. Such an education is based upon a theory of society, not a theory of cognitive development. Such an education intends that people emerge with the recognition of the absolute necessity for reflection upon historical, philosophical and economic categories which are dominant and constitutive of everyday life. Reflection of this sort must lead to the recognition that the forces acting upon all of us have implications for how we in turn act in the world. Only reflection can produce action which responsibly resists that which is dominant and also dehumanizing. This requires the development of a moral position, something mere skills development cannot produce.

A critique based upon a profound understanding of Freire's theory is given by Manfred Stanley who, significantly, is a social theorist himself. Some of his points are an excellent restatement of Freire's position, as well as a critique of technicist analysis: "For Freire literacy is a quality of consciousness, not simply mastery of a morally

neutral technique...It is this connection between moral rationale and practice, not faddish negation, that makes him a radical thinker; radicalism entails locating what one believes to be the generic root of the problem, analyzing implications and acting accordingly."⁵ Stanley recognizes that "behind (Freire's) attack on the established notion of literacy (as a problem to be solved by appropriate techniques) lies a coherent diagnosis of what has allegedly gone wrong in modern societies...his concrete proposals for change derive with uncompromising directness from the nature of the diagnosis."⁶ So, Stanley has understood the deep structure of Freire's theory and his critique can be taken seriously.

In this context I only wish to deal with one of the points Stanley takes up, since I believe it to be so central a problem in Freire's work. True to the utopian tradition of Hegel and Marx, Freire seems to have a vision of a golden age when all people will once again have re-entered the garden of Eden; a rosy glow pervades Freire's work; as a result he has a responsibility for articulating where he stands with regard to what is permissible and not permissible to bring about such a golden age, but he does not do so. We have ample evidence that believers in the possibility of such a golden age have practiced atrocities beyond our power of imagination, to bring it about. Freire, as with Marx and Hegel, stands firmly within the Judeo-Christian tradition, which has always imagined that when the Messiah comes all men will once again be living in a state of peace and harmony with each other and with nature. Stanley says: "(Freire) does not apparently take much note of

the complexities, much less the dark side of liberation itself."⁷

Explicit in Freire is the conviction that once people have freed themselves from the internalized oppressor, they will be whole. There is, in other words, little indication in Freire's argument that he recognizes certain inevitable and eternal conflicts for man in his relationship to nature (both inner and outer), and civilization. Freud, on the other hand, recognized that there were absolute limits in any effort to reform civilization; he in no way thought, however, that we have achieved all that we can, but argued that we must resign ourselves to making very slow progress, and that there was kind of strength to be obtained in this recognition. The last lines of Beyond the Pleasure Principle are quoted from Ruckert's 'Die Beiden Gulden': "What we cannot reach flying we must reach limping...The Book tells us it is no sin to limp."⁸

Freire seems to be saying, in contrast, that there are no limits to what can be achieved. And in this, there is always a danger that those who read his work and others in his tradition will take it upon themselves to give birth to the new age on the basis of their certainty that such an age is indeed a possibility for mankind. Camus' speech to American students in 1946 is exactly to the point:

Now that Hitler has gone we know a certain number of things. The first is that the poison which impregnated Hitlerism has not been eliminated; it is present in each one of us. Whoever today speaks of human existence in terms of power, efficiency and 'historical tasks' spreads it. He is an actual or potential assassin. For if the problem of man is reduced to any kind of 'historical task' he is nothing but the raw material of history, and one can do anything one pleases with him. Another thing we have learned is that we cannot accept any optimistic conception of existence, any happy ending whatsoever. But if we believe that optimism is silly, we

also know that pessimism about that action of man among his fellows is cowardly.⁹

Freire's refusal to recognize certain limits as absolute in the human condition also leads him to argue that limit situations (i.e., those situations which people perceive as absolutely given, as unchangeable) are in fact only a state of consciousness. Oppressed consciousness, for example, is typified by a fatalistic relationship to the world. Often such a fatalism is all encompassing and does blind people to real possibilities for transformed actions upon the world. But the nature of Freire's argument leads one to believe that fatalism of any kind is inherently a state of false consciousness. There are, in other words, no real limits out there in the world--limits which are simply inevitable; where a fatalistic response is justified. Indeed, perhaps a fatalistic response in certain instances is a form of maturity. What Freire lacks is a more subtle analysis of passivity and activity. One can be actively passive.¹⁰ For example, when one is sitting in a lecture listening to someone from whom one passionately wants to learn, one is behaving passively in an active sense. The peasants with whom Freire worked, and many of the students I met, were passive in a pathological way. Their passivity had no active element to be seen anywhere. But Freire only argues for a complete rejection of fatalism; there is no concept of an active fatalism. The dialectic between activity and fatalism as a sound response to the world was well put by the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson.

A 'strong ego' is the psychological precondition for that freedom which has alternately been specified as the effort through

which the inevitable comes to pass--or the will to choose what is necessary.¹¹

The psychoanalytic recognition of limits and its concomitant tragic view of man, a view which is truer of Greek civilization than of the Judeo-Christian, can counterbalance Freire's rosy optimism. It is a great compliment to the psychoanalytic tradition that no atrocities have been committed in the name of Freud, unlike the countless numbers which have been committed in the name of Marx. True, much distortion of Marx has taken place, but he must be held responsible for the seeds of such possibilities which can be found in his work.¹²

When Freire says: "All prescription is oppressive."¹³ he is sewing seeds for a dangerous misreading of his work. He must be well aware of the literature of developmental psychology, particularly the psychoanalytic discussions about early childhood development. Yet he lends himself to an interpretation from educationists and parents who would have us educate future revolutionaries by letting children grow up with a minimum of adult guidance. Surely Freire would agree that a critically conscious individual must have a strongly developed ego--one that can withstand the pressures from within and without to react automatically. Such an ego must have as its foundation an early childhood based upon relationships of both unqualified love as well as on prescription and authoritative guidance. In the latter limits are set; as a result a child can develop ego ideals of adults who are decisive, and a sense of the world as a manageable place, where actions result in responses, sometimes negative ones. The disclaiming of authority by so many adults is to be seen everywhere, and often has, as its base,

the assumption that children who are brought up in 'freedom' are going to be agents for a new and more moral society. The increasing violence among young people in schools may have, as part of its cause, this refusal by adults to demand of the young that they meet certain standards of excellence before they can make a claim to participate fully in society. Eriksen points out that in Camus' The Stranger, Meersault (The Stranger), was pleased about and gave credit to his early participation in the 'logic and the ethics--of soccer football.' Eriksen goes on: "To fathom the limits of human existence you must have fully experienced at some concrete time and space, the 'rules of the game.' To live as a philosophical stranger is one of the choices of mature man; to have that choice the immature person must, with our help, first find a home in the actuality of work and love."¹⁴ Denying young people the chance to one day make this choice is precisely what the older generation does when it does not establish some 'rules of the game', which involves prescription. Obviously these rules must be based upon as much as we know about the nature of children. Alexander Mitscherlich, another psychoanalytic thinker means the same thing when he says: "Even the human freedom to attain critical detachment is not absolute; it has to be attained from some role. Maturity of the ego presupposes adaptation."¹⁵ Freud was once very explicit on this point: "It is even my opinion that revolutionary children are not desirable from any point of view."¹⁶

So Freire's work suffers in general from a failure to discuss how children become adults, and how education for critical consciousness would occur in the relationship between children and adults. This must

be a prescriptive process to a fairly large extent, and it is unfortunate that Freire does not include distinctions between what he advocates for adults and how he perceives the process for children. For this reason he must be held responsible for educational praxis being taken in his name and being entirely misapplied.

There is one apparent contradiction between theory and practice in Freire's work which must be taken up. Symptoms of it appear in my work with first year students reported in Chapter IV of this dissertation. The problem may be posed as follows: How can one claim to be searching with the students for the truth, while at the same time holding clearly in mind certain principles which one wants them to learn? For example, Freire wants people with whom he is working to comprehend the anthropological nature of man, that man is not one with nature and the group, but rather is capable of conceiving of a 'project' as opposed to being driven entirely by instinct. Freire clearly wants his students to learn something which he already has clearly formulated in his mind. Is not the idea of co-investigating with them the nature of reality a papering over of what is essentially just the 'discovery' method currently popular in science education? Here the students are not taught Boyle's Law, but are given all the material and information Boyle had available to him, with the intention that they come to the same discoveries he did. I do not believe that this analogy encompasses the idea of 'co-investigation' or of dialogic education. The latter processes are by definition different; by definition, because in dialogic education we are dealing with interpretations subjects make of their world, not with interactions between

subjects and the hardware of experimental science or between natural objects in the external world.

A better analogy to help explain dialogic educational co-investigation is with the psychoanalytic relationship between analyst and patient. The analyst knows that inevitably issues surrounding the oedipal conflict arise, yet it is useless for the patient to come to know the oedipal theory as it has been worked out in psychoanalytic literature. The patient must describe as freely as possible whatever occurs to him. The therapist, on the basis of his advanced theoretical knowledge, makes interpretations of these thoughts as they are reported (i.e., he provokes reflection). Even though the therapist is aware beforehand that certain themes will arise, the way they arise, and the form his interpretations take will be unique in every instance. The therapist does not know and cannot predict the way in which oedipal issues will surface. He can only probe with the patient in a common endeavor to comprehend the truth. He must ask questions which are genuine questions based upon a real desire to know, and he must make interpretations based upon his theoretical and practical knowledge.

The dialogic teacher also has more knowledge than his students. He has the responsibility to introduce themes which he thinks are crucial (such as discussion about the anthropological nature of man). But if the students are not to perceive these themes as abstract and unrelated to their world of discourse--without any significance, in other words--the educator has to introduce them appropriately. And he can only do so once he has made a significant effort to find out what the students' world

of discourse is. Like the psychoanalyst the educator must be genuinely motivated to know how the students think about and act in the world. The way the dialogic teacher introduces these themes is dependent upon the degree of knowledge he has about the thought/language reality of the students. (See for example the ten pictures Freire typically presented to Brazillian peasants which provoked discussion of the anthropological nature of man; they clearly reveal a profound knowledge of the way the peasants understood their world).¹⁷

The educator knows that he has succeeded in reaching the students in the same way a psychoanalyst knows that an interpretation has struck home.¹⁸ A patient who says: 'yes that is true' to a particular interpretation, but who then does not develop further associations, has in fact not agreed with the interpretation, or the interpretation was incorrect or inappropriately timed. An interpretation which strikes home produces further associations and provokes deeper insight for the patient. The analyst could only have made the interpretation as a result of what the patient had told him and on the basis of his knowledge of the theory. Again, Eriksen is to the point:

I, for one remember with pleasure the exclamations of a patient; 'You sure know how to decomplicate things!' Such flattery, however, is only as good as the surprise behind it: one cannot pre-decomplicate things.¹⁹

or from Freud:

The 'Yes' has no value unless it is followed by indirect confirmations, unless the patient, immediately after his 'Yes', produces new memories which complete and extend the construction. Only in such an event do we consider that the 'Yes', has dealt completely with the subject under discussion.²⁰ (my emphasis)

If the dialogic teacher introduces a theme for discussion appropriately, it will provoke associations to other themes--themes which will be suggested by the students themselves. In the process themes such as education, culture, freedom, work, love, the nature of reflection itself, are no longer seen as part of the natural order of things, but as problems to be reflected upon. There is no Boyle's Law to be discovered. In the act of dialogic education two subjects are attempting to find a common ground where they can share each other's interpretations of the world. In the process both are changed. The students may develop some profound insights that go to the very core of what they conceive to be right action. The teacher will be learning from them about their unique way of defining and explaining the nature of reality, while at the same time deepening an understanding of, and changing, when appropriate his own theoretical perspective.

Like psychoanalytic dialogue, Freire's dialogic education is simultaneously research and teaching.²¹ The differences between the domain of communications between subjects searching for knowledge, and the domain of scientific investigation--where subjects test theories via experimental action--is crucial to comprehend. Habermas points out the distinctions and the implications of the distinctions clearly and summarizes the essence of the argument contained in this chapter. (When he refers to 'theories' he is referring to the scientific endeavor, in contrast with 'general interpretations' or hermeneutics):

In the case of testing theories through observation (that is in the behavioral system of instrumental action) the application of assumptions to reality is a matter for the inquiring subject. In the case

of testing general interpretations through self-reflection (that is in the framework of communication between patient and physician), this application becomes self-application by the object of inquiry. The process of inquiry can lead to valid information only via a transformation in the patient's self-inquiry. When valid, theories hold for all who can adopt the position of the inquiring subject. When valid, general interpretations hold for the inquiring subject and all who can adopt its position only to the degree that those who are made the object of individual interpretation know and recognize themselves in these interpretations. The subject cannot obtain knowledge of the object unless it becomes knowledge for the object-- and unless the latter thereby emancipates itself by becoming a subject.²²

In the scientific endeavor 'A' acts upon and manipulates 'B'. In the dialogic endeavor 'A' acts on 'B' who in turn acts on 'A'. 'A' cannot know what his second action will be until 'B' has in fact acted. To equate the instrumental and manipulative relationships necessary to the scientific endeavor with dialogic education is to seriously misunderstand and reduce the nature of its task.

Finally, reference to the psychoanalytic situation does highlight one major problem which Freire does not address. A psychoanalyst only engages in dialogue when someone recognizes a severe problem and comes for help. Freire's work with peasants seems to involve his entering a community with the intention of helping. There was no call for intervention or plea for help. The same problem does not apply to the work I did with Freshmen students since they have come to the University ostensibly to learn. But the contradiction does stare one in the face when considering Freire's efforts, and his failure to address this point is a serious detriment.

FOOTNOTES

¹William S. Griffith, "Paulo Freire: Utopian Perspective on Literacy Education for Revolution," in Grabowski (ed.), op. cit.

²Ibid., p. 79.

³Ibid., p. 70.

⁴Ibid., p. 68, 9.

⁵Manfred Stanley, "Literacy: The Crisis of a Conventional Wisdom," in Grabowski (ed.), op. cit., p. 37.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 42.

⁸Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1967), p. 110.

⁹Quoted by Nicola Chiaromonte "Albert Camus: In Memoriam," Germaine Bree (ed.) Camus: A Collection of Critical Essays (N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1962)), p. 15.

¹⁰For a full discussion of this idea see Erik Eriksen, Insight and Responsibility (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1964), pp. 86ff.

¹¹Ibid., p. 148.

¹²For a full discussion see Albert Camus, The Rebel: An Essay on Man and Revolt (N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1956), pp. 132-252.

¹³Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁴Eriksen, op. cit., p. 99.

¹⁵Mitschlerlich, op. cit., p. 44.

¹⁶Freud, New Introductory Lectures, op. cit., p. 151.

¹⁷Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, pp. 62-81.

¹⁸I am grateful to Deborah McIntyre for the ideas discussed here. They are more fully discussed in her dissertation which is soon to be completed and which serves as an excellent complement to this work.

¹⁹Eriksen, Insight and Responsibility, op. cit., p. 140.

²⁰Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," quoted in Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, op. cit., p. 269.

²¹Freud wrote: "in its execution (psychoanalytic) research and treatment coincide." quoted in Habermas, p. 252.

²²Ibid., p. 261.

APPENDIX I

Presented to the students at the beginning of the class.

To: The students of Rhetoric 100S--Writing and the University Experience

From: Ron Goldman

This "letter" will be the first of several I will write to you during the semester. The reason I will be writing (as well as speaking), is because one of the very important requirements of a Rhetoric class is that writing skills be developed. I know from long experience that to write down one's thoughts so that others can understand what one wants to communicate is a very difficult thing to do. So I would feel very uncomfortable sitting up in front of the class pronouncing on the "right" way to write without somehow also being involved in trying to write clearly and correctly to you. Thus one common task we will have this semester will be to develop our capacity to make ourselves understood by writing. There are going to be numerous occasions when you will not understand what I have written (or when I am speaking, what I have said), and the same will be true for me when I am reading your work or listening to you speak. It is going to be our common responsibility in this class to let each other know when those moments occur. I, for one, will be asking questions often. Some of them will seem naive or stupid to you, but I'll be asking them because I really want to be sure that I have understood you clearly, and I am hoping that you also will 'push' me to be clear by asking questions, no matter how 'silly' they

may seem. So, to write and to ask questions are goals I set for myself and expectations I have of you. I can only hope you will ask questions, but the course we are in together requires that you develop writing skills and that means you are going to have to write.

Those of you who are expert at anything, whether it be playing ball, dancing, gymnastics, potting plants, reading or whatever else, know that to become expert you had to practice a great deal. The same is true of writing. The more you do of it the better you will do it. So I am going to ask you to do ten to fifteen minutes a day. This is the one major requirement of the class and I would like to see the work you have done every Monday by twelve noon. I have a mailbox in Room 1 in the lobby of John Adams Tower and it should be simple to drop off your week's work. You will receive your papers at Tuesday's class and will spend part of the class working on questions I will have asked of you. Completion of the work will guarantee a "c" for the course. We will negotiate at the end of the semester for any grade higher than a "c"; the criteria will be what kind of learning has taken place for you, and/or some extra project or reading you may have decided to do during the semester. In order to make sure that we have the records of the semester's work intact please keep all your writing in a folder with your name on it, and please date all your work and also number all the pages starting from Page 1 to wherever you get to by the end of the term. In a way you are going to be writing a book.

"A BOOK!" I hear everyone silently scream as they read, "We do not know enough to write a book." It is my belief that we are going

to find out just how much we do know and the actual content of the course and of the writing you will be doing will be our common effort to discover each other's knowledge and in the process learn from each other. We all know how to do multitudes of things; we just take most of them for granted and do not consider what we know as knowledge. Most of us think of scientists, artists, musicians, dancers, authors, professors as somehow superhuman people as if they do these great things which somehow set them apart from us lowly creatures. Our greatest problem, I think, is that our knowledge is so close that many of us do not even know we have any. Our knowledge is something like our clothes, or more exactly like our skin. We have a lot of skin but take its existence completely for granted, giving it the occasional wash, the very occasional wash, the very occasional massage, sometimes cream or oil. If someone were to come along and say, "Hey, you have a lot of skin", we would think he or she had gone slightly dilly. But we do not easily believe the person who comes along and says, "Hey, you have a great deal of knowledge." The reason for the difference between skin and knowledge: you can touch, feel, see skin but you cannot do any of these things with knowledge; you have to discover it. That is our common task. We are together going to try to discover each other's knowledge.

But as I have said we have knowledge about a multitude of different realities; each one of us is an expert in one reality or another. Courses at the University are usually organized by having the expert in one reality telling a large group about his or her knowledge; the expert attempts to

give knowledge to others. We are, however, going to start at that point where we have all had some common experiences in order to share some of those experiences and to find out what we want to know more about from each other. The one place we can be sure of all having had common experiences is in our varying relationships to this University. We all have a great deal of knowledge about the University although it is probably so skin tight most of us are not aware of the details and richness of our knowledge. In order to discover these we need to do some careful reflecting together and this is precisely what we will be doing.

So we will begin with our common experiences as members of this University. But it is too big an area for each individual to take on. We have to each focus on some aspect of our lives here which we want to come to know more about. We will spend the early part of our experience together choosing what area to focus attention upon, and I hope to be helpful in this regard. Once you have made choices either individually or in groups you will be ready to discover and share knowledge. And the process and content of this experience will be what your book will be about.

APPENDIX II

January 29, 1976

I am going to ask you a whole series of questions for this first writing assignment. Please take your time on each one. I really want to know as much as you possibly can and tell me about life here at the University.

(1). Pretend you are writing to a complete stranger to the planet. (That stranger is me). Tell me what this place called the University is all about; keep in mind I have no idea what it is, why people go here or what they do with their time. Nor do I know why they do what they do. Start by telling me a story about how you come to go to the University at all; how did you make the decision? What had you heard about University life? What did you hope to be doing here? Have you been disappointed or pleased with what you have been doing? Tell me more about this disappointment and/or pleasure. What made you come to this particular University? Is it pretty much the same as you thought it would be before you came? What was surprising to you when you first came here? How is life different here from what you expected it to be? Can you give me examples of things that you do that are different from what you expected to be doing? What do you wish you were doing here that you are not doing? What do you wish were happening here that is not happening?

(2). This is optional. It would be very helpful for a stranger to this planet to know how you spend a typical day at this place called the University, but I don't want to insist that you tell me now, because it can be difficult to do so, but those who feel like spending a day a

little differently or who feel like really practicing writing skills and learning a lot at the same time can try the following: Decide tomorrow morning that you are going to tell me all about your day at the end of the day, and try to keep that in mind all day long so that you can notice carefully your thoughts, the conversations you have.

While waiting for these assignments to be turned in I continued on a very similar track. This one was heavily influenced by Alschuler's idea of the 'stress hunt' and another American educator who has interpreted Freire, John Ohlger. He suggests that one should not be asking people what needs they have but what makes them mad. So I adopted a modified version of these approaches and attempted to generate a long list of those aspects of University life that made students mad, those that pleased them (in order to balance the picture). I also focussed on dormitory life in particular and on so-called interpersonal domain. The class produced a long list of issues of concern and those that seemed common to a large group were as follows: Cliques, Core Requirements, lines (i.e., having to stand in long lines), Being used, the problem of nothing to do (boredom). For a second writing assignment I asked different students to write about particular problems they were most angry about; I asked them to tell me why they thought the problem existed, and what they thought should be done about it (again a way of approaching the students, which was heavily determined by Alschuler's coding system). None of these efforts stuck. At least in their early writings the students displayed little interest in writing about the material. A classic example of the difficulties I was having is contained in the following: I asked one girl (she preferred to be called girl) about the 'clique' problem; I asked her to write to me telling me what the clique problem meant to her, how come it existed as a problem, what kinds of cliques there were, how they were different from each other, and what they did, what cliques she belonged to, and how she ever got

to be in one? I asked her who was to blame for the problem of cliques, and what should be done about the problem? All her answers were one sentence long containing scanty information. Her response was typical and a replica follows.

1. What does it mean to you? To me a clique is a small group of people who believe that whatever they do is "cool". They will only associate with other people who either almost meet their standards or who worship them. Usually to become in their clique you have to do something to prove you are good enough for them. They keep to themselves and won't lower themselves to talk to someone who isn't in their clique.
2. How come it exists as a problem? It exists as a problem because nobody should think that they are great enough to insult or make fun of other people. We are all humans and we should all be treated as humans by everybody.
3. What kinds of cliques are there? There are many kinds of cliques. The jocks have their own cliques. The jocks' girlfriends have theirs. High society people have cliques and schools have cliques.
4. How are they different? What do they do? Basically I think all cliques are the same. Their primary goal is to be noticed by other people because they are really insecure. They stay within their own little group and party or do things by themselves without asking other people to join in.
5. What clique do you belong to? How did you get there? I don't consider myself belonging to any one clique. I hang around with about four different groups of people and alot of different friends. I don't have one set group who I'm with all the time.
6. Who is to blame for this problem? Nobody is to blame for this. It is just an insecurity.
7. What should be done about this? Nothing can be done about it. Wherever you live or go to school you are always going to run into cliques.

APPENDIX III

Rhetoric 100S, Section 1.

An example of a re-presentation which failed.

March 29, 1976

The work we are going to be doing this half of the semester is of a slightly different nature to that we were doing in the first half. Throughout your career at college you are going to be asked to do specific assignments on topics decided beforehand by your professor. So that is the kind of writing I am going to ask you to do, but you should continue to use anything that you have discovered during the first half, which works for you--which help you write well. Also the topics that I will be asking you to write about will seem familiar to you; they emerge from the writing and discussions we had during the first half of the semester. Before I explain, a word about the amount of work I am going to be asking of you for the next month. I assume that it was helpful to you during the mid-term period to have the pressure lifted slightly by not having to worry about Rhetoric assignments; well the same thing is possible as far as finals are concerned if we really work hard for the full month of April. I will be asking you to do frequent writing of thirty minute pieces, and I will be also asking you to do a group project, about which I will be explaining more shortly.

The written assignments will all be about assumptions you have expressed in different ways during the first half of the term. Basically I want you to spend some time writing about these assumptions, considering

whether you agree or disagree with them, and to consider their implications. Remember what I have said about assumptions:

- 1). They exist. All of us carry them around all the time.
- 2). They are often hidden (implicit, unconscious) from our conscious thoughts.
- 3). They affect all our thinking, acting, writing.
- 4). The more we discover what they are the freer we are to check out their validity and therefore to choose whether to hold on to them or not.
- 5). Every time one changes one's assumptions (no matter on how small a scale) there is an implication for how one behaves, thinks, writes.
- 6). There are a few super assumptions; these have to do with the assumptions we all make about what human beings are about, how they stand in relation to their fellow human beings, how they relate to nature, culture, change and a number of other seemingly abstract notions. But they are only seem to be abstract, because super assumptions have super implications for how one behaves, thinks, writes, relates to others. So the more one can find out what super assumptions one holds, expose them to the light of analysis and critical thought, the more one can slowly become free to choose the assumptions which have these super implications, instead of simply being driven blindly by a whole set of assumptions about which nothing is known.

So hoping that you understand the purpose of all of these writing exercises (apart from the sheer practice in writing itself), here goes with the first of them.

"Just about the only general statement I can make about human beings is that we are all individuals; each one of us is so different from one another that it is impossible to make any generalizations--we are all different. Yet we are all the same--human beings--it is only these third world people and some women who keep harping on differences."

Please carefully state what your thoughts are about these two sentences. (Take one at a time and say how you think about it, and then discuss how they fit or don't fit and what you think about that). Do you agree, disagree; altogether, just a little; with which part; which part would you want to change altogether, which keep the same? Also please tell me why you think the way you do, and give as many concrete examples as you can to back up your argument. Define any word that you use that may be ambiguous.

Please include in your discussion how you think it makes a difference in your daily lives, in your relationships with others, if you think one way as opposed to another. Or does it make no difference at all whether you think one way or another?

Two thirty minute pieces or one full hour, whichever works best for you. Second draft if necessary. Third thirty minute piece (or longer, if you are so moved).

APPENDIX IV (A)

In the class--and at the end of the semester--the following three documents were the catalysts for breakthroughs. People began to really understand the relationship between assumptions and actions. This was an aspect of Freire's theory that I had not originally expected to get at; it in fact turned out to be the major part of the course.

Rhetoric 100S, April 1976

Very often the task of trying to figure out what the meaning and implication of 'super-assumptions' is, can be a complex, difficult task--as complex as a mathematical problem, and I think more intriguing. The following task I am asking you to do is difficult; therefore the first part of the class will be devoted to allowing you to meet in small groups to talk the problem over, and attempt to make some sense of it. Take as long as you like; allow yourself to ask as many questions of each other as you like, and when you are ready begin to write your thoughts down. You may take the whole period for discussion. Either way get the writing part done as soon as possible and please hand in the writing no later than 4 p.m. tomorrow. Do not get into a panic because this appears difficult; rather take the opportunity to let your thinking powers go to work and make an effort to 'say your own word', which would include giving any concrete examples from your own life to make any points you wish to make.

"To say your own word is to transform the world." is the same as saying

"Man is different to animal or tree, precisely in that he/she is potentially a maker of culture." (Remember in the class discussion, I defined this very broadly).

These are super assumptions and have huge implications (please note) for every one of us in every aspect of our lives. For example they have very considerable implications for our lives here at the University. At least two areas come to mind; the attitudes to and the choices one makes about learning and knowledge; the attitudes to and our behaviors in the area of sexuality (with regard to oneself--one's own actions--as well as one's attitudes and behaviors towards what others do, as well as with regard to the kinds of social activities that are available, or are not available for people here). You may wish to focus on only one of these two areas. Go ahead and discuss; simply make the effort to make sense of this. When you get home read the article by Booth; it is a good example of how to let your assumptions lead you to implications.

(B)

Many of you are fed up, puzzled, angry, have given up on, what this course is all about. You can make no sense of what I am after--you believe you have learned little, if anything at all--and those who feel they have learned something do not know exactly what it is they have learned. The following is an effort to make myself clear, both to those who are in a state of confusion and to those who cannot name exactly what they have learned (I believe it is really important to name what one is learning so that it 'sticks').

The essence of what I have been trying to do can be summed up very briefly: to show that the assumptions we all carry around in our heads, assumptions which we have mostly incorporated into ourselves from the culture in which we have grown up, have enormous implications for how we carry on our daily activities. Since most of us do not know what these assumptions are we are not really choosing as we go about our daily activities; we can only choose when we have identified what some of these assumptions are, made some investigations as to their validity, and then decide to reject them or adopt different ones which are closer to the truth. I am making a large assumption that crucial to becoming human is the capacity to choose, instead of simply doing 'what comes naturally' to the extent we are not choosing, we are not engaging in a uniquely human process, and somewhere in our lives we will pay a severe price for this failure. There are many factors both in our inner lives and in the outer world which prevent people from choosing; in this course I have mainly focussed on one area--the assumptions we hold and the implications they have for how we behave day to day. The last two articles I handed

out side by side sums up everything I have tried to do in this course--the one, by Booth, which is a discussion of how different assumptions one may hold about the nature of man affects the kinds of educational programs which are set up, and the other by Hendin from his book The Age of Sensation, which discusses the concrete world of sexuality as experienced by college students. Before I go into any greater depth, I want to go on a fairly long diversion to explain how I came to focus on the interrelationship of assumptions and concrete reality.

For me the semester has been filled with struggling, questioning, wondering, talking to others, reading books--all in an effort to try to figure out what makes sense to talk about? What is important? What is there I can try to give you? For me to be able to answer these questions I realized that it was important for me to come to know you in some way; how could I give you anything, if I did not know enough about your world to know at least what the issues are that are of concern to you. What was there that you wanted to know more about? I also knew that it would not really get us anywhere if I were to ask you, "well what do you want to know more about?" I know that the things we really want to know more about are often so close to us, that they are difficult to see (compare this to the first little essay I handed you). They are the things we think about when we are alone, thinking, wondering--the things we may risk talking to a close friend about--and numbers of issues that are just difficult to get to and to get out. I had to try to listen to you--to hear both the words you were using, and under the words--what was not being said clearly. What were you asking for? What was important to you?

Of course it has been very difficult. It would have been much easier had I advertised a course I was interested in teaching, and those who were intrigued would have come. We would have had an agreement to start with. You and I had only one single agreement when we first came together--that this course would have something to do with writing. As I told you at the beginning I knew very little about how to help others write, but I did do some research and would like to share with you some of the results of this work.

First of all it quickly became obvious that numerous people around the country were/are worried about you and large numbers of your fellows from Harvard to University of Oshkosh, because it appears that, unlike previous generations, you cannot write well. There have been many articles in the major newspapers discussing why this is so, and what is to be done about it. I handed you one article from Newsweek, which was the cover story of that issue of Dec. 7, 1975--this is usually a sign that people are particularly worried. Now their worrying may be a mistake on their part--perhaps there is no reason to write at all in this age, but the point is that large numbers were/are worried and are anxiously figuring out what to do about you.

Second, I believed that one of the best ways to encourage the improvement of writing was simply by asking you to write as much and as often as possible. This was based upon my assumption that one major reason why there is a problem with writing is that people have not written very much (for all kinds of reasons--e.g., we now only need to make check marks in multiple choice exams, which the computer corrects)--so just

getting into the habit of writing a lot would gradually begin to result in better writing (you are the best judges of whether this assumption was correct or not).

Third, I believed that there was a very close connection between writing and thinking; the clearer one's thinking becomes, the clearer and more understandable one's writing would become; the more one recognized how difficult it is to think clearly, the more people would come to realize that the act of putting one's thoughts down on paper helped one get those thoughts clarified.

Fourth, and perhaps most important, there were close connections between how one taught a writing course and how one viewed what education was all about, which in turn was dependent upon the assumptions one made about the nature of human beings. A man, who I believe to be very wise, and who has made an important difference to my life as a result of his writings, wrote the following:

(The teacher's) aim is to help the individual become a self-educating man, who only then would be reasonable and free... These are very large goals and I must explain them in a slightly indirect way. We are concerned with skills and values. Among 'skills' however, some are more and some are less relevant to the tasks of liberation. I do not believe that skills and values can be so easily separated out, as in our search for 'neutral skills' we so often assume. It is a matter of degree, with skills at one extreme and values at the other. But in the middle ranges of this scale, there are what I call sensibilities and it these which should interest us most. To train someone to...write is in large part a training of skill; to help someone decide what he really wants out of life, or to debate with him Stoic, Christian, and Humanist ways of living, is a cultivation or an education of values. ...Alongside skill or value, we ought to put sensibility, which includes them both, and more besides: it includes a sort of therapy in the ancient sense of clarifying one's knowledge of self. It includes the cultivation of all those skills of controversy with oneself that we call thinking, and which, when engaged in with others we call debate.

An educator must begin with what interests the individual most deeply, even if it seems altogether trivial and cheap. He must proceed in such a way and with such materials as to enable the student to gain increasingly rational insight into these concerns, and into others he will acquire in the process of his education. And the educator must try to develop men and women who can and will by themselves continue what he has begun: the end product of any liberating education is simply the self educating, self cultivating man and woman; in short, the free and rational individual.
 (from C. Wright Mills' book, The Sociological Imagination, pp. 186, 187, emphasis mine).

So, in summary, the question before me was: what did interest you most deeply, no matter how trivial? If I could find out we could begin to talk to each other, and if we really began to dialogue together perhaps we would all begin to think better. Since writing is thinking on paper, writing can improve, if thinking improves.

We can come back now to the early part of this paper--the relationship between assumptions and reality--this time by my telling you a little about how I came to focus on these two aspects and what it was I was trying to say about them. A little after the semester started I came to the conclusion that we had to talk about something while we were trying to find out what made sense to talk about (I sometimes wish I had the courage to spend a whole term with people asking the single question--What are the important questions worth focussing upon?, but at least for the moment I don't think I could tolerate the frustration which would emerge). I decided that one common ground we all had is that we all hold assumptions about the world, our place in it, the purpose of life; the task was for us to get to what some of these assumptions were (the content of our assumptions was bound to be different, but the common ground was that we all held assumptions). How to get to them? I began by trying

to explain what assumptions are. I went on to try to show how they affect our behavior--that how we think affects what we do; or how the assumptions we hold make us act in one way as opposed to another. So, for instance, when I change my assumptions about who I am when I am writing, or what I am writing for, or to whom I am writing, or even more generally, when I change my assumptions about the value of writing itself, then my writing, which is one form of behavior--my writing behavior changes. I then went to try to get across the idea that apart from the many, many little assumptions everyone holds we all hold what I called 'super assumptions'; these are big general principles, such as what it means to be human, how humans are related to other humans, how human beings are related to nature (i.e., whether they are similar to or different from trees and cats). I believe that we all hold a set of super assumptions even though we often do not know what they are. I think if we did not hold these assumptions, our behaviors, day to day, would make no sense; they would be random, chaotic, without meaning. The task was, and is, to find out what these super assumptions are, and then to try to show how the kinds of super assumptions one holds have enormous implications for the behaviors we engage in day after day, for the activities, actions we partake in and for those we do not partake in. But if we do not find out what assumptions we are operating under, then great big chunks of our lives go on without conscious awareness on our part; we act blindly.

Humans can only become free if they are making some choices, or at least trying to do something about those blockages (both inside oneself or out there in the world) which are preventing them from making choices.

And they can only make choices, I am arguing, if they can begin to uncover, unveil some of the assumptions which they hold unconsciously. Only when some of the assumptions are uncovered, revealed, can one be in a position to choose. The process may go something like this, although it is never as simple: "aha! Now I see that all this time I have just assumed that humans are pretty much the same as animals, and I am also beginning to get a faint idea how this assumption affects my everyday behavior; I even begin to understand that this assumption is held by others and how it affects their behaviors; I see from this article by Booth that it even explains a lot about the way people educate other people in this culture. Well now that I realize that I hold this assumption I can begin to try to check it out; I can read some books, talk to others, go to certain classes in which this would be talked about-- I will even notice as I am doing this, that when I am actively trying to find out the answer to a question that is important to me, I really get into books, and into classes where these questions are taken up. After a while I find out that my assumption is right; but I now can choose; indeed I have chosen, and am clearer about what I do everyday and why. I may find out that I have been wrong all along, and now I am confronted with a whole new set of problems that arise from the change in my assumptions and the effect this will have on how I act day to day, because I also am beginning to understand that how I think affects what I do, and what I do not do, what I notice, and what I do not notice."

I have used the example of man's similarity to animals intentionally. As our discussion about assumptions progressed I found out that a dominant

assumption most of you held is that Man and Animal, Man and Tree (more generally man and nature) are more alike than they are different. That is, the similarities between Man and Nature are more important than their differences. (Now I am not saying that it is bad or wrong to hold this assumption; the point is that we managed to uncover it, and now we are in a position to dialogue about it, and what the implications of this assumption are). The fact that this was a dominant assumption held by you showed itself in many ways, both through things you said and did. You have said it often very explicitly in essays you have written and in class discussions. "Man is like a twig, blown about by the wind." "Humans do not, cannot change society in any way." "History happens in the same way that a tree grows." "Humans change in the same way that a flower grows, naturally." "The way humans learn is the same way that dogs learn--by conditioning--by a process of reward and punishment." "The building of houses by humans is the same thing as birds building nests." Many have also said at different times that the whole discussion is senseless--that these are all just 'words', that we are just the way we are, which is close to the same thing to saying that we should just do what comes naturally. Earlier in the semester when you spoke of learning, the analogy that made most sense, given the way you described what you did every day, was that of a bird, waiting with mouth open for food to be popped in. Booth put the same point another way: "Do you know your own reasons for your beliefs, or do you absorb your beliefs from whatever happens in your environment, like plankton, taking in nourishment?" (p. 266). Again the analogy is to Nature--birds or plankton.

So I handed you the Booth article to give you an idea about what some of the implications of this assumption are (i.e., the assumption that man is for the most part similar to trees, or animals). First of all you may have become aware, with a feeling of relief perhaps, that you are not alone in this assumption--that many many others in this society believe the same thing and act accordingly. (The article also discusses two other dominant assumptions in this society--that man is most like a machine, or that man is most like an ant--that many of the activities certain kinds of educators, for example, engage in, do not make sense until we understand the dominant assumptions they are operating under). I have hoped that this article would give you some idea about how super-assumptions are directly related to activities people engage in: people act one way when they are operating under one set of assumptions and act in another way under another set of assumptions. The converse of this is that very often people's actions only can make complete sense when one is able to grasp what the underlying and often unconscious assumptions driving these people are. (What can be very helpful in coming to know both oneself and those around one is to come to know the set of inter-related assumptions which make up this culture--the one that must have influenced all of us considerably).

Booth's argument is that man is not reducible to metaphorical definitions, such as he/she is like animal, like machine, or like ant; humans are ends in themselves, he argues. When you take the human capacity for curiosity, learning, loving laughing, crying, and consider these as a whole--that is refuse to reduce the human to a part of what

he is, then you can at least set humans apart from nature, or machine, in some way; not necessarily better, but apart, separate from. If we accept this assumption that there is something absolutely unique about being human, and a second crucial assumption he makes, that one does not automatically become fully human, then we are forced to consider the implications of such an assumption. Booth discusses the implications for educational activity and makes various concrete suggestions for education which would help nurture full humanness. It was Sara Natanson in our class who said that one thing that distinguishes man from animal is the fact that humans have such long childhoods--they have a long span of their lives devoted to education. Thus much of who we are as people has been made by man so to speak. Dogs and cats and trees are virtually incapable of going crazy; most of their activities are governed by their bodies--by instinct; there is no room for choice, or very little.

The reason I mention this is that so much of what humans are about is learned from other humans; huge possibilities for error, for violence, brutality, lack of love, exist. Again we don't automatically become fully human, in the same way that a tree does; we are only fully human. A super assumption it is and obviously with super implications for the kinds of educational programs which should be available to you and to me, but also for the kinds of choices you and I make about what kinds of courses and programs we are going to take. This is the essence of the Booth article, and the essence of what I have been trying to get to you in a very tortured way.

But where does sex get into all of this you may well ask? After all

you remember me saying earlier in this essay that it was the handing out of both the Booth article and the Hendin article (which deals with relationship between the sexes in college), that represents the essence of what I have been trying to do. You also remember that I said that we got onto the subject of assumptions in this course because there was no clarity for me about what we should say to each other. This was a problem since in this class we had no previous agreement to begin with. Well, in the course of the semester I read the Hendin piece and was profoundly struck by it; he seemed to be very worried about what was happening between the sexes. Listen to him: "The lives of college students express with eloquence what it means to be alive in America today...the collective thrust of their lives points to one overwhelming fact: this culture is at war and young people are at the front lines... the openness, the casualness with which young people regard each other presents a picture of surface camaraderie that leads people to believe we are ushering in an age of unprecedented sexual harmony. But in actual experience greater openness between the sexes often means greater openness about their fear and anger toward each other, and a general cynicism, disillusionment, and bitterness that one rarely found among the young twenty years ago." (pp. 2,3). I was astonished upon reading this; in your writings there was no mention of any troubles or worries you were experiencing with regard to the opposite sex, nor did you seem to be noticing any among your friends. Either Hendin was overdramatic or else for some reason his insights did not hold for this campus, or else you were not thinking that this was 'relevant' to classrooms.

"It seems as if the troubles about writing are nationwide," thought I; surely some of what Hendin is talking about must be happening here. So, having slowly learned to take the questions I ask myself seriously enough to want to find out more about them, I asked you individually and in groups to tell me more about the reality of relationships between the sexes. As I talked with you and read your writings I became even more astonished because it seemed as if you would essentially disagree with Hendin. Most of you seemed to be saying that basically things are okay--since everything is normal, things are as they should be. In many cases most of you were acting as if everything was fine; you were expressing little concern either for yourself or for others.

So I began to think a little more carefully, asking myself what assumptions you might be holding which would cause you not to notice, not to care, not to speak--I was not sure. But then I remembered various phrases I had heard from many of you over the course of the semester. "Everyone should be allowed to do their own thing;" "Each opinion is as valid as the next opinion;" "anything that anybody does or says is cool, as long as no one gets physically hurt." All these assumptions were of such a nature that nothing could ever appear as a problem, so there would be no way that anyone would ever talk about problems that they see going on around them. In fact, more to the point, if everything everyone does is basically okay and natural then how can there be any problems or troubles? Everything is 'normal' and 'natural'. This is where the dilemma remains for me as we approach the end of the course. I do not know whether Hendin is right or very very wrong about this

campus. I do not know whether it is the assumptions you are unconsciously holding which prevents you from noticing, caring one way or another, or talking about it, or whether we have in fact arrived at a state of sexual harmony.

I do want to point out, however, how the world of assumptions intersect with and have an effect upon another aspect of your concrete world, the world of sexuality. If we as humans are natural, like trees and flowers and so on, then whatever is happening out there is 'just natural'. Someone who holds such an assumption might say some of the following: "There is nothing I can do about anything because I am not a maker of culture; I am more like a dog or a tree, just doing what comes naturally, and allowing the rest of the world to take its natural course." "I learn by experience, not by thinking about experience, and reading and talking about questions that I have about my experience." However, if one has different assumptions: that for instance there might be some important ways humans differ from nature, then this has various implications. Human sexuality might be different in some way from 'natural' sexuality. One may begin to try to figure out, read about, talk about, what it means to be human, and begin to see how new understandings lead to different kinds of actions. One may for instance look around at the 'normal' or 'natural' activities that are going on all around and suddenly realize that one is horrified (or perhaps delighted, depending upon the nature of the understandings). One may be reminded at this point of one thought which has been discussed at length in this class: "Man is different from animal precisely to the degree that he/she is

potentially a maker of culture," and one may realize that now as a result of careful reflection one is in a position to begin to fulfill this potential. One has begun to see that the 'normal' and the 'natural' are not necessarily the most human and that this casts the responsibility to take some action, however small--to make culture--to transform the world.

This action would only be a true expression of one's own word (another phrase which has dominated in this class) if it were based upon reflection (thinking, talking, reading about some specific problem), and if following the action more careful reflection were done leading once again to different, hopefully wiser action--a life time task. In the context of life here at the University one may speak one's word in a multitude of ways; perhaps next time one hears someone make a demeaning remark about someone else, in a sexual way, in a racial or ethnic way, or in one of the various ways that humans have developed, one may try saying something to counter the remark. Or, one may believe that an institution devoted to more human ways of bringing people together should have different kinds of entertainments on the floors--different to those that exist at the present--or even more ambitiously that there should be a real alternative to "Meat Market U.S.A." One would also know that neither the wind, nor the sun, nor God is going to make any of these things happen; only humans who share these assumptions and who come together in order to give them fruit will make this happen. "Together we can move mountains"--from a poster in my office.

(C)

The Final Essay

There are various options open to you for this final piece of work. I am going to ask you three different questions. You may answer one, two or three of these questions. The only requirement I have is that the total amount of writing add up to the equivalent of ten typewritten pages or 2500 words. Only if you are absolutely unable to get your work typed will written work be acceptable--if you have to write please do so very carefully. As you can imagine to read twenty scribbled essays of this length would be horrendous.

The remaining class sessions will be devoted to your forming groups around the questions you want to answer and talking to each other about the questions. If you find class time too short I recommend arranging meetings outside of class. Obviously the final piece of writing must be done by you, but use the groups to get your thinking clear; remember if your thoughts are clear your task of writing will be simplified. I am giving you these questions early on so that you will have a chance to complete all the work required for this class before your exams begin. I will be arranging meetings with you during the exam period to get the grades set. You must have your paper done by then; also when you come in for that final conference (which will only be a short one) please bring the course evaluations with you, as well as your complete file of writings organized properly--i.e., sequentially. Good Luck. I hope you enjoy working together on this project.

(1). Write a history of this class. You may approach it from any number of angles. You may be an 'objective' historian who describes what has happened, interviews others, to find out what their thoughts, perceptions, memories, learnings, have been. (Remember interviews are only really useful if done in some depth). You may want to look at some of the writings others have done as you develop this history. Or you may write up a personal history of this class explaining your thoughts, perceptions, memories, attitudes as they were at the beginning, and how they slowly changed over time and why. Include in this what you have learned, why you think it is important, what difference you think these learnings have made in your own life (please give concrete examples in this case). You will want to refer to your own writings to refresh your memories, or ask others what they remember a specific class to have been about. Please discuss the highlights of the course, the low points, what you found exciting, what you found boring and why. A good historian also does comparative work. How was this class different from or similar to other classes you have taken in high school or college; in analyzing these differences what do you think are some of the elements of 'good' education or 'poor' education and why? What makes for 'real' learning as opposed to 'useless' learning and why? Include in your history an evaluation of what the instructor was trying to do; how well did he succeed, how poorly--what should he have done? Do not forget to include your research project as you evaluate what you have learned, and what the course has been about for you (or for others in the event that you are playing at being an historian). Remember you are painting a picture

for the reader; he knows nothing unless you give him full color--details, such as thoughts, feelings, descriptions of people, of small moments as well as big--if you talk with each other your memories will be refreshed. It's a chance to give full reign to your writing powers. Please use the essay I wrote in any way that seems helpful to you. You may want to take a few thoughts and critique them, or expand upon them or show how they make a difference to your life (with concrete examples)-- or you may want to take one section and do the same thing, or you may want to use the essay to weave in and out of your own discussion of the history of the course as you and others see it.

(2). Do you think we are living in an age which can be described as one where a 'sexual revolution' has taken place? In order to answer this question you first need to explain what you understand by the idea of 'sexual revolution'. Then explain what your idea is of a previous age where the 'revolution' had not yet happened. Then say how our age is different as you understand it. If you do not think a 'revolution' has happened explain why you take a position which seems to be in disagreement with popular opinion. Discuss also your vision of how things should be between the sexes in an ideal world, what should be done to move toward that ideal, what gets in the way of our moving toward it, and what you are going to do about it? Throughout your answer give as many examples from your own lives here at the college or elsewhere (including what you know about your parents' generation, so that your discussion has color to it, and so that your points are backed up. This

could include some of your own thoughts as to whether you are a part of this sexual revolution? If so, how? If so how not? Do you have any explanation for this--perhaps some description of your background, home town, ethnic group, religion may explain things to the reader. Obviously you should refer to any readings you have done on the subject and also very importantly take up the issue I raise in my essay in the last three pages. Can you answer my "dilemma" (see page 12)!

(3). You may feel that one or both these two questions are not the important ones to ask--you may want to spend this energy making some other type of investigation. You may want to spend your time in a group trying to ask what the question of questions is, and then go ahead and try to answer it; or you may want to extend part of your project, if you are really into it and do some in depth research around a particular question you have found that is most intriguing to you. So you may want to call for a group based upon something that is particularly fascinating and important to you whether it be very small or quite big--such as what needs to be happening to get people together differently that is not happening and how can it be made to happen, to what kinds of courses should be taught around here? It is difficult for me to give concrete examples here, obviously. This question is intended for those few who really want the space to work on something that intrigues them--the chance they take is that they will not have the advantage of the group support; anyone who chooses this option should consult with me though. Good luck and remember, "Say your own word."

APPENDIX V

The following are two sets of student writings. In each case I have placed one of their early assignments first, followed by two of their later assignments. Recall that at no time did I try to teach about the 'mechanics' of writing. The change in style and content has come about as a result of a different orientation to work in general. This is a change that occurred for a number of students and is discussed in the latter part of Chapter IV of this dissertation.

University Life

There are several reasons I decided to choose the University of Massachusetts. After the completion of high school, which is a lower form of education, I did not have by any means have a trade in which to earn a living. I realized I had to continue my education if I was going to be able to obtain a better job. Education at the high school level seems only to scratch the surface of knowledge. I have a desire to learn more about life and I think college helps to do this.

The decision to come to this University was not a difficult choice. I had no idea of what I wanted to study in college. I decided that going to a large school would offer me a wider variety of fields to study, hopefully finding a field that particularly interests me.

Another major factor in my decision was financial. I split the cost of the school with my parents. Therefore the school could not carry too large a price. Also I felt it was time to move out of my home town and meet some new and different people.

People had told me about the University's reputation of parties. I found this completely true. I met people who party six nights a week. This facet of university life depended totally on the individual. If you want to study, you can. The problem is finding a happy medium, of studying and partying. This comes only through experience.

My first semester, I really didn't know what I hoped to be doing. It is very hard for a freshman to get used to college life. My whole

first semester was a learning experience. At times I found my first semester disappointing. The first four weeks were very confusing, of course there were other setbacks, like tests. On the whole my first semester was excellent. I made many friends, several of whom I am very close to. I learned how to adopt to college life finding it very rewarding.

The University as a whole was just about as expected. One aspect that I really liked is the friendliness everyone seems to share. How everyone was accepted. In high school, people divided.

"To say your own word is to transform the world" is the same as saying "Man is different to animal or tree, precisely in that he/she is potentially a maker of culture." These statements have profound meanings. One rarely thinks as himself as a maker of culture. That one person can make a change in culture. In our group we said that just by speaking you influence other people. This is true but the influence exerted is minute, and is usually forgotten as quickly as it was spoken.

To influence people with your thoughts one must learn to think. I find most people are a product of their society and just don't think for themselves. They seem to go on and on, their minds seem stagnant. It is very easy to let yourself fall into this state of being. The mind must be stimulated in order to be creative. Most of us don't influence culture, we just live inside of it. We follow an already established system, not questioning if it is right and what is our place in it.

I was always under the assumption that college stimulated the mind. That I would be more creative and learn to think. I have found my courses the exact opposite. All my courses ask me to do is memorize and repeat what I have learned on a test. My courses don't want any original thoughts. What I am learning are other people's ideas and facts.

I feel the highest form of knowledge is original thoughts. Now I seem to let other people do my thinking for me, I learn their ideas. If one is to make culture one must have a mind which can think. Although I influence people with my thought. My thoughts are all from the society

in which I live. I just live with culture letting it take me along instead of looking at it and deciding what I want to do with culture.

I am tired of learning straight facts, to me the value is insignificant. I don't want to learn the same things in college as I did in high school. How to memorize then forget. These two statements have questioned my values and assumptions. I must decide what learning and knowledge mean to me.

People in this society are not raised to think. They are raised in such a way that they conform to the society in which they live. The word potentially makes me wonder. Will I realize what this word really means and make use of it or will I stay behind?

Rhetoric 100S

Jay Hollander

Learning About Learning

Rhetoric is a University requirement that should be avoided if at all possible. Those were my thoughts about Rhetoric at the beginning of the semester. I had taken two tests to become exempt from Rhetoric. I was hoping to pass the exams, get the credits, and take another course. When I came to school at the beginning of the semester, I discovered I only passed one of the exams. Now I had to take a Rhetoric course.

The next day I spent three hours trying to add a Rhetoric course, with no success. No professor would let me into their course. I returned to the dorm later that day quite disgusted with the Rhetoric department. I went to get my mail and saw a sign advertising Rhetoric 100S to be taught in Mackimmie. I immediately signed up for the course and thought how lucky I was to find a Rhetoric course. Better yet a course taught in the dorm.

I returned to my room and started talking about the course to a few people. They asked me what the course was about, and I said I had no idea. The only thing that concerned me was the fact that I had my fifth course and it was Rhetoric. I was already planning on sleeping until eleven o'clock on Tuesdays and just run upstairs to go to class. Many people I know had taken a 100 Rhetoric and received an easy "A". Therefore I thought the course would be an easy grade. Since the course was taught in the lounge it would be a good way to meet people who lived in Mackimmie. All in all I thought Rhetoric would be just another course.

The first day of class seemed to reaffirm my assumptions about Rhetoric 100S. The teacher did not show up. I just laughed to myself saying "I hope he makes a regular habit of missing class." Bruce Rose handed out your first letter and all the students present read it. When the letter said we were to write a book, I immediately started to think about all the work I would have to do for the course. The amount of work did not really affect me, I regarded it as a necessary evil. I still hoped for an easy course which would improve my writing skills.

One thing did make me wonder about the course when Bruce Rose said, in a very ominous voice, "Wait until you meet Ron Goldman." I started letting my imagination run wild. I thought Ron Goldman would be a real freak, boring and many other uncomplimentary things. Then I stopped and decided I would wait until I meet this guy before I decide what he is like.

In that letter there were two sentences that I read over. I did not think about the sentences, "knowledge is so close we do not know we have any", or "write about those aspects of life which one is puzzled, freaked out or worried". At that time I did not give either sentence a second thought. Little did I know how great an effect they would have on me later.

At our next class everyone met each other. I had my first taste of brainstorming and I admit I had no idea what was going on. You explained your letter, about writing everyday, again I regarded this as just a lot of work. I had no idea on the areas I would write.

My attitude toward class was that it was something I had to do.

Somehow my mind did not believe I would learn anything. My attitude was completely negative.

Rereading my early papers from the course my writing reflects this attitude. One of not caring.

As our class continued and we did more writings, I started taking notes. These notes were questions you had asked. I wrote them down several times. They are:

"What is worth writing about?"

"What do you believe in?"

"What puzzles you about life?"

These were the type of questions I would think about for ten minutes, then put it off until later. I did this numerous times. Questions like these worry me, but since I could not find a definite answer, I put them outside of my head. When you brought up these questions I gave them some thought, again I could find no answer. I did not know what kind of answer you were looking for. I knew inside that you would keep raising these types of questions and expect me to answer them. My reaction to this was to do exactly what Herbert Hendin wrote, 'not caring about what bothers them is the answer to what bothers them.'

This was a big turning point in the class. I decided to completely put these questions out of my mind. Right then I knew this class was too much. The class was questioning my values about life and I did not want to face them. My writing got very defensive. I would not write anything you could question. I wrote very simply, avoiding any provocative areas of thought.

I could not understand this stranger, Ron Goldman, and why he wanted to know the answer to these questions. What gives him the right to even ask these questions. Since I could not tell you that you had no business asking these questions, I decided not to answer them, and as you said, 'not getting into class'. I wanted to guard my opinions and not let any of my personal knowledge be opened to criticism.

I also realized this course required original thoughts. I had never written original thoughts in my life. I did not know how to think an original thought. My mind had become so cluttered with memorizing and repeating. It was very difficult to handle new ideas about learning. I could find no specific formula in which to interpret my ideas.

The way I solved the problem of not being able to think was to run away. I started missing classes. I figured I would pass in all the papers, go to a few classes, and pass the course. I really was afraid to go to class. I did not want to know which of my values would fall next. Ron Goldman brought all my insecurities to the surface. Questions such as, "What about my future? Do I think or just function along with everybody else?", I still could not answer. When I did go to class I did not say much. I did not feel my ideas were worth being brought up.

My assumptions about learning, knowledge, and even life were being questioned. I did not have enough confidence in myself to face up to them. The whole first half of the semester was one of doubt.

I really do not know what drew me back towards the class. I know there are several reasons. For instance, I was doing A/B work in my four other courses and I thought it would be a shame to get a C in Rhetoric.

Another reason which was far more important was our discussions about how man related to animals. Listening to talks on this subject, I could see how frustrated everyone was. The course seemed to be going nowhere. Believe it or not, I felt good about this. Ron Goldman came off to me as too perfect an individual. Someone who has all the answers for himself, but just raised doubts with everyone in the class. The two weeks spent on this topic showed me you were also struggling. You really did not have all the answers. Slowly I started coming back towards the class.

I wanted to try to face up to these questions. I do not like to back away from a challenge. I never had a challenge concerning learning and education. I was not proud of running away from the class. I had to make another attempt to find out what this course was all about, what you were trying to get from my mind.

Now the class started to mean more. I started to understand what Ron Goldman wanted from me. He wanted to know my own ideas and feelings. All I had ever learned was English, Mathematics and History, and everyone else's ideas. If I could find a way to write my own ideas, I would learn something about myself.

The complete change in myself and my attitude towards Rhetoric came when you passed out the paper with the sentences: "To say your own word is to transform the world, is the same as saying Man is different to animal or tree precisely in that he/she is potentially a maker of culture." I read these sentences and suddenly for the first time in college I had an original thought. I was amazed at what I wrote. My mind had been so

stagnant with other courses it seemed impossible for me to think for myself. When I wrote that first draft I knew I had something. I finally realized that I, Bruce Rosenberg, did not know how to think, and that for twelve years all I learned about were other peoples' ideas and facts. I had never learned about myself. Who Bruce Rosenberg was, is, and will be. My mind felt so free after writing that paper, it was released from invisible chains. This one paper took three months to write. Changing my assumptions so I could look at myself and make sense out of my ideas.

As this course comes to an end, I can honestly say that I learned numerous things. I can answer the three questions raised at the beginning of this paper.

"What is worth writing about?" I found by writing down my ideas, my thoughts were clearer. I can look at my work and decide if I really understand what I think. When things are written down it is easier to expand ideas. I plan on writing, just to please myself. I am really interested in seeing what kind of work I can accomplish.

"What do you believe in?" I believe that education should deal more with man and the common things in life that lead to the most puzzling questions. Education should teach people to understand more about themselves than about other peoples' ideas. My education never once tried to find out what puzzled me about life. It never questioned who I was. Every course I took, I approached just to get a good grade and never to learn something.

"What puzzles me about Life?" I would like to change this question

to read: What is now clearer about my life? My ideas toward my own education are clearer. I feel that I must spend more time learning about myself. I feel I am just at the start of being able to be educated. When I filled out my schedule this semester, I did not take courses simply to fill University requirements. I took courses that can teach me about myself. I am taking Psychology of Adjustment, which studies the development of humans and their current identity; Development of American Civilization, which criticizes the American Dream; Conversational French; Rhetoric; and Calculus. I have a different attitude toward education and I am now ready to learn.

Ron, you have made me realize I can think. I do have knowledge and can influence people to make a better culture. This is the best change I have ever seen in my character. Before, I had always kept my feelings to myself and never thought to question them. Now I am not afraid to let people know my ideas. I feel I can think objectively to choose my own assumptions.

I can not say enough for this course. I realize that not only am I a maker of culture, but more importantly, I am the maker of my life.

Peter Argus

Rhetoric 100S

The University is a place where people can go to develop their minds. It is also a whole learning experience where we meet new people, make new friends, have good times and learn more about ourself. Who we are and what we want to accomplish in our life time.

Many people go to our University so there are many different things people do. Most all go to classes where we learn, we also do a lot of studying in preparation for our classes. There are other things besides classes and studying. Some people like to play or listen to music. Others go to the gym and play ball others take walks or jog.

I decided to go to the University in my senior year of high school. I really did not know what I wanted to do with my life, I had the chance to to, and I am glad I came.

One of the big reasons for my coming was to play football for U. Mass.

I heard the University life involved a lot of hard work, but with work was a lot of good times.

I have been really happy with what I am doing here meeting people making new friends learning to depend on myself and learning. I was really pleased when I made the football team, thus giving me a chance to travel and play on a great ball team like U. Mass. This was one of the greatest experiences in my life.

Everything was just as I expected and wanted it to be. I especially enjoy the beautiful country which surrounds this University.

One thing that surprised me was how intelligent my professors are and how much I have learned from them in one semester. I really didn't think people could be that intelligent and I hope some day I may be as intelligent as they.

I have been enjoying my life at the University, I have been learning and having a great time doing so, and if you are going to stay for a while you should think about giving U. Mass. a try.

I sit here in my small room amongst thousands of other students or maybe I am a product, student or product what am I? I ask myself am I a man a maker of culture or am I just a tree. How can I say just a tree, a tree is as important as you and I who am I to judge the importance of a tree. I am not the lord but only a man. Or am I a product? A product of a culture of products of a culture.

I have not created a man, but a tree can create another tree so I being a man am less than a tree. Then to be a man I must create so I am not a man. I am a product my number is 5896589 that is me a number a product of the factory U Mass.

I may be a number a product the same but very different in a culture.

We are product the same but like a leaf in the wind being blown about and controlled by our own culture. But all the leafs don't end up in one pile, they land in different places, as do we end up different even though controlled by our culture.

Who are you Joe McLaughlin a helpless leaf in the controll of the wind called culture? I am not only a product, but also a leaf I will blow in the same wind but fall in a different path from all the other leafs.

HISTORY OF A RHETORIC CLASS

I walked into the classroom in the back of Mackimmie dorm lounge. There were many other students there besides myself, all of different shapes and sizes, from different families, towns and cities. I wondered what this class would be all about, and how much work I would have to do. What will I learn? I was a bit scared, because a few days before, I read the first handout and it said: "In a way, you will be writing a book." Me write a book? No way! My teacher, Ron Goldman said not to get upset because it would not be that difficult to write a book because we all have the knowledge to do so. At first I thought to myself, I have to get out of this class, but I decided to give it a chance.

My teacher was on the far side of the room from me sitting in a regular chair. He was a young looking man, younger than all my previous teachers at this University. He was of medium build and had dark hair. I detected an accent in his speech and wondered where he came from. He talked very clearly in a low voice, and it sounded very calm and pleasing. He tried to give us the impression that this was his first class he ever taught, and didn't know how he was going to run it. I say tried, because he carried himself as though he knew every step and had taught for many years.

It was a lot of fun, we played a word game about how we could best describe our life at the University with one word. This game helped us get to know each others names and how we thought of ourselves to be in the University.

It was real relaxed in class and conversation flowed through the

room with great ease. This is another reason why I thought he knew all along what he was doing. See, in order for people to say what they really think and feel they must be in a non-pressured situation. Unlike other classes in this University, you could talk without feeling embarrassed.

When this class had ended I was debating keeping or dropping the class. I could only think of the work I would have to do, not the profits I would be able to gain from this class. I really wanted to take the easy way out and find another class, but I decided to stay with the course. I knew I had to learn to write sometime, and I also knew it had to be soon.

The first assignment I had to write was, "What is it like to live at the University, why I had come, and what have I learned?" I sat down and began to answer his questions as best as I could, or as best as I conceived I could. I answered all his questions and I thought I had written a very good paper, but I had only begun to tap my mind full of knowledge, or so he said. I got mad when he gave me my paper back with all the questions in the world on it. When I read the questions and thought about them I realized that what I was writing was only bull-shit. I was writing like I did in high school, writing to get it done, and to get the grade. That was my big problem, not writing what was in my mind, what I really thought: How could I change? How could I begin to put my feelings on the paper?

In class we talked about why we had come to this college. I got the impression that not many people really knew why. Most of us said for knowledge, but what is knowledge? Ron must have asked this question

a million times. He was always probing, digging, and asking questions. He was trying to get the real thoughts and feelings out of us. I would say I want to learn, to gain knowledge. Ron, with a gleam in his eyes and a smile on his face would ask me what knowledge was. I was confused, I didn't know what knowledge was. I never questioned knowledge, I guess I never really questioned very much. This was my big reason for coming here, and seemed to be the reason for most in the class for coming to college.

Ron was bringing up questions which were never asked in any of the classes I had. They were questions which were important to me and other students in the class. Questions about what it was like to live at U. Mass, what we liked and disliked about it.

His questioning made me really start to think, why did I come to college? After the class had ended, I walked out confused. Why did you come to college Joe McLaughlin? For the first time in my life I had to think and reason for the answer to this question. It really bothered me, not knowing why I did come to college. Then, I realized I came for a number of reasons. I was pressured by my parents, by the way they always said "you must go to college in order to be a success in life." Other reasons were that my high school was a college prep program, and if you didn't plan on going to college, you were looked down upon. I also wanted to continue my career in sports. In high school I wasn't really interested in college, until I started getting scholarship offers to play football. This class made me realize that the only reason to go to college wasn't just for knowledge, but there were many hidden

reasons for my coming, which I never realized until I was made to think and ask questions about it. I don't know if Ron made me think or if he just started the wheels to turn within me to make me do the rest.

As classes went on, I became more and more involved with the class. I had attended all the classes and really got a lot out of them. We would discuss things which really made a difference and I learned what I thought about life here and what others saw life here to be. In my other classes I felt like a sponge just absorbing answers, answers to questions that did not even matter to me. I looked forward to going to class just to discuss different aspects of the University life.

We then went into sex, and I really thought I had my head together about relationships between men and women. Maybe I just never questioned these things. We talked about sex and relationships to a great extent. I heard other peoples feelings about this issue. Again I began to think about the reasons for the different relationships, when sex and male-female relationships were involved. The dating games, the one nighter and going steady. I really haven't found an answer to this question about sex, but at least I am trying to find my own answers instead of being a sponge.

After a while writing for me became a way to get my feelings out, and I really started to enjoy to write. I never thought I could enjoy writing, but I was. I started writing about things I did, trying to paint a picture of my experiences and how I thought, felt, and saw.

I wrote about my experience of thumbing home one night. I became very involved in this story, and did as best as I could instead of just

doing it for the grade. I could see my writing improve every time I sat down to write. My thoughts and feelings were flowing from the wells of my mind, and pouring on to the paper with much greater ease than ever before.

It was around the first of March, and I was looking forward to go to class, to discuss, and listen to what others had to say. Ron said we were going to write today for thirty minutes straight and not to stop. I got a little upset because I was in the mood for a discussion, and I was getting a lot out of them and enjoyed them. I knew I could not do anything else but write, so I decided to do my best. We were supposed to write about an experience which happened to us, and give as many details as we could. I picked a scene where I was in a classroom. I started to write and became more and more involved with my experience. I was actually there in the classroom, and could remember every detail and emotion of my experience. I was writing like I had never written before, and tried to paint a picture of what it was like to be there. I got inside my mind and dug out the real deep feeling, instead of just skimming the top of my mind. I had finished my writing and looked at what I had written and could not believe myself. I was extremely proud of what I had written, it was by far my best. Someone read their paper and it was a very well written paper. I could not decide whether or not to share my experience with everyone in the class. I was really worried that the class would not like it, but something inside said go ahead, you know it's good, so read it. I raised my hand to offer myself to the class. When Ron said to read it a shock went through my body. What was

I doing reading my writing to all these people? I became very nervous and had to put my paper down because my hands were shaking like a leaf in the wind. After I had finished, I felt good because I knew it was a good piece of work. I looked around the room and I think everyone also thought it was well written. I had a strange feeling, I felt as though I gave a part of myself when I had finished reading.

One of the big reasons for my progress in my writing and in conversation was the meeting I had with Ron Goldman. I walked into a small room in the John Adams lobby where I greeted him at a small wooden desk. We talked for a while about living in Southwest. Every time Ron would ask me a question I would say "I don't know." He finally said "come on man you do know." I felt a bit dumb because I did know, I was just taking the easy way out by saying that I didn't know. While we were talking he made me feel important, because the only thing that he was concerned about was what I thought. He made me realize that I was a great deal smarter than I let myself think; what I had to say was as important as what others said.

This gave me the confidence to write and say what I felt inside, instead of saying I don't know.

We talked about assumptions what they are and how they effect our life. Ron passed out an assignment, instead of writing to him we were writing to a wise old man. I finished the assignment but what I had written was not me, it wasn't a well thought out paper. I rewrote this paper three times approaching it differently each time until I had what I wanted. I would have never rewritten a paper or put as much into it

in any other class, but for some reason I just had to write it over.

I grasped the meaning of assumptions in the final hand-out on Comment on a Rhetoric Class. I realized how important they are and how they effect my life. They prevented me from becoming a maker of culture. I was like a leaf in the wind when I assumed what I did and said was not important. Now I realize what I do and say is important and now I can control my direction and become a maker of culture.

As a conclusion, this class has done more for me than any other class I have ever taken. I have learned so much about myself and others and why we are what we are. I am glad that I stayed with this class because my writing has improved along with my speaking. The only reason they have improved is because I have begun to think. I am glad I didn't take the easy way out. Thank you Ron Goldman for helping me begin to think.

APPENDIX VI

The following is another example of a re-presentation. Again the advantage of the re-presentation is that the students, for the first time, perhaps, began to detach themselves slightly from what is, and begin to understand it as a cultural form among many, which could be different in other cultures. This particular re-presentation I read aloud to my students acting as if I were an anthropologist who was studying the student culture.

Everybody dresses very similarly; all the people are of the same age just about although it is very difficult to tell about ages around here, because people look pretty much like big people or adults or... 'what'? I do not know what words these young people use to describe people who are older than them--I don't know how they think about people who are older than them. I don't know too well how they see the older generation in this society--I must ask them. Do they think there is anything to learn from older people or are they just out of date? The feeling that I get when I am in the 'real world' as the students refer to it (although I am not too sure what they mean by that; I must ask them about that as well), is that older people don't want to get old; they (the older people) seem to think that the best time of life is between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two. This is the prime of life; you have got to make this the good time of life or else you've missed the boat. Coming to think about it I don't know how these young people think about history; I have the feeling that they don't think there is anything to be learned from history; I am not judging this as good or bad; I just don't know. They don't seem to think about the future very much; everyone seems to live in the present all the time.

These people are very sure that they are individuals. People are so strong about this that they always try to solve the problems that are going on by themselves. By that I mean they never sit around in groups having pow pows about what to do about problems that are going on. Each person is so individual that they always see every problem (and that may be the wrong word I am using; people in this society may feel that this is a word which has negative connotations) as one which has to be solved by each separate person. In this culture people only play together it seems.

Although they do go to classrooms in groups and go through a ritual where most people sit and listen to one person who talks a lot. This is the activity called work. The people in this culture don't like this very much, but they show great fortitude because they get up every day early in the morning and stream to these activ-

ities very purposefully. Work activities also go on within the individuals' rooms, but here they display great reluctance and attempt to get the affair over with as hastily as possible. The individuals in this culture call this activity 'school' 'classes' 'study' (the word class here means something very different to the meaning given it in the real world--referring to groups who have very different levels of income and power; this kind of 'class' does not seem to be important to students because they do not talk about it very much). In public at least these individuals refer to their working activities as 'getting an education' although they seem reluctant to talk about this or else are not sure what this means.

All this reminds us of the kinds of rites that take place in all cultures for people who are on the point of becoming adults (in this culture the event takes place later than most). Most cultures hold this rite when people are fourteen and fifteen; here people are eighteen. In most cultures this is the time when young people are taken away from their homes so that they can make the psychological break with their parents, especially their mothers. They are taken to some separate place where they are subjected to various painful rituals, and instructed in the ways of the culture, so that they can play their full role in the culture as adults. In this culture, however, as we've said people seem to think that what they are doing here has very little relationship to the real world. It is clear however that these people are at the age where puberty rites would be taking place. The reason we are so certain about this is that these people got very heated about whether they are 'boys' 'girls' 'men' or 'women'. Some members of the group insist that they are boys; none of the males felt strongly that they should be called men. Some women in the group however felt that not only should they be referred to as women, but that all the other females should call themselves women, and that all the males should be called men. Many of the females seemed to believe that it did not matter very much to them, and so did a few males. What is peculiar about this culture is that none of the older generation seems to meet with these younger members to explain to them about these details; this is indeed very unusual, for as we have said in most other cultures this is precisely the time when adults other than the parents meet with the youngsters to educate them in the ways of life of their people. Here, when these youngsters and adults do meet (in the classes we referred to earlier), the adults do not refer to the issues which these youngsters seem concerned about--whether there are jobs to be had, what to do about the opposite sex, what the world and the culture and people are all about, and how they, the students, can be best prepared to face it. These adults talk about other things mostly, and these seem to be very important judging by the time the adults and the youngsters spend on it. When one leaves this arena of meeting ground between the generations--that is the classrooms--one finds that there is virtually no other place where the members of these two generations really meet each other. In other words these young people spend all time outside of the classroom engaged in activities where no members

of the older generation are present. In some ways we had difficulty fathoming this, since many of the questions about life, sex, religion, death, which one would expect to be dealt with between older and younger generations did not happen here. These kinds of discussions, as well as all leisure time took place only amongst people of the same generation. There was never any kind of socializing between people of different generations. Thus it seemed difficult to imagine how the members of the older generation could discuss much that what was of concern to these young people, because they were hardly ever present in the daily non-work parts of the people's lives. We soon realized that this particular puberty rite did in fact help people find out the ways of their world, but in a more subtle way than that which could be fathomed from the public instruction. We needed to spend a great deal more time trying to get to know the people better.

The discussion which took place following this re-presentation was intense, and mainly focussed on the issue of the older generation. There was general agreement that adults are missing from their lives. There was general agreement stated amongst the men that they were here to get a job and not for any other reason. There was general agreement that there was something to be learned from adults, if the adults would not be so naive, or pretend not to know what is going on, or not engage in weird fantasies about the sex lives of students. Any intense anger at the older generation seemed noticeably absent, although there was no reason to expect it to emerge in the context of the discussion. My emphasis on the issue of the absence of older adults is a reflection upon my conviction that this fact is a major theme in the lives of students, one that goes unnoticed and therefore is not discussed by many educators who think about students coming to college.

APPENDIX VII

Co-Investigation of Reality

It became obvious that the co-investigation of reality which was to become a central part of the course simply could not be. There were two reasons for this. The first was that the students' lives are really disparate to an extent that makes it very difficult to find certain thematic areas which they can all agree upon need to be focussed upon. Their 'life style' distinguishes them from the village population which Freire might enter. People here are really not sharing a life together. This fact is indeed a major theme in its own right and should be addressed by educators. There simply is nothing resembling an intellectual community. Each student has his or her own little program which is different from every other. The result is that it is impossible that there be any discussion after class about issues which may have come up in class. People's experiences are too disparate. The result of all this freedom to choose one's own courses is to prevent students from really ever doing any serious investigation, in depth, of any issues, and prevents the establishment of anything that can be called a community. This is now being addressed in a college in Baltimore where students focus on a common theme such as 'the meaning of being human' and investigate it from the eyes of science, the arts, and the humanities--an idea whose time is long overdue. The second reason the co-investigation could not really work had to do with the nature of the course. It was virtually impossible to break out of the mode of being in a formal class together and to begin to seriously investigate the nature of reality.

Except for a very few, the students treated these efforts of mine as parts of assignments for the Rhetoric class; this obviously would not do. It would have been far better to advertise a course which would be one where we would be learning to do ethnographies and where eventually the nature of student reality would be investigated. The Spradley McCurdy book Ethnography in a Complex Society would be an ideal text.

After considerable effort I simply launched a common investigation. The common focus was to be the relationship between the sexes. There is no doubt that an enormous amount is to be learned from such an investigation. Herbert Hendin's Age of Sensation provoked my effort. Hendin analyzed the dreams of Columbia University Freshmen and argues in his book that even though students will report that all is easy between the sexes, Hendin believes that there is in fact a war going on, and that it is intensifying, and has never been like this before. I hoped to find some of this out. But the task was too great and we had only begun by the time the semester was out. The evidence I did glean was too scanty to make it worthwhile presenting here. It would be perhaps interesting to the reader to get an idea of what I was learning and therefore I present a short excerpt from my notes.

A meeting in a student's room to plan a co-investigation. The room in which the meeting was held was an explosion of color (pink and red), posters, pictures, clever sayings--the child and the adult stood side by side on the walls of the room. Two pictures were particularly striking. Two tiger pictures. The one was of a tiger taken in the midst of a ferocious snarling growl with fangs exposed. The other was a tame looking tiger

almost in the posture of the domesticated cat. To my astonishment two students of the four I was meeting with, speaking casually to each other, referred to the growling creature as the female and the 'cute' tiger as the male. In my astonishment I pursued the matter; the only response I got was that the ferocious tiger was a sign of passion while the other was just quiet and sweet. Conversation swept on... but I will take it up later.

The formal conversation begins and I explain that I am running a first year program and that it is a concern of mine that the program offer courses that are not abstract, but that come close to issues people are concerned about; the problem, I say, is that we who run these programs don't know enough about the reality of the people's lives. What I am here for is to try to figure out a way to begin to cope with the problem, that I don't know too clearly what it is that I am after, but that in the process of talking with them it will emerge.

I try to make my explanation more concrete. Would you be interested, I say, in a course focussed on something like, "the psychology of love" and "the problems in loving" or "What is love" and their nods and yesses tell me instantly, what I had gleaned before from private conversations, that I've struck a chord. The nods and yesses were said with conviction.

Now the problem I have is how to design a set of courses without knowing the details of what is going on between men and women, boys and girls (whether people should be called boys or girls, men or women was a sore point of debate in Southwest, a fact which emerged for me both in and outside the classroom). Getting those details somehow is

what I want the group project to be.

We went straight into it. After that I merely tried to keep track and pay attention, because suddenly there was real dialogue happening. "Well, you have to break it into its different aspects," says Kelsie. "There's the bar scene, dating, dorms, co-ed life, all male floors, fraternity life," and she relates stories which clarify her point. At some point I saw that there are also other groups which can be classified as: a group of men and women who want to get into bed with each other, and another group who have a hard time really meeting the opposite sex. Ray talks about his difficulties in making contact with girls, "I'm sorry, women," he says to Nancy who had been insisting on the distinction once in a heated discussion in the classroom. "They aren't interested in me; they just want to hear themselves talk." Nancy reminds him (in thinking about it later) of Hendin's notion of a wall between the sexes when she responds by asking whether or not it is the male who is the aggressor or the female who is the aggressor (emphasis mine). The conversation ranges to the group that's out to get laid and Joe says it is easy for him to record a conversation between his friends as they discuss how to get a chick. And then came: "Ah, and there is a big difference between how guys from the city date and how guys from the suburbs date." It was a really good example for me about the kind of thing I was looking for without knowing it.

The conversation ranged from whether we could do without marriage in society to how people avoid meeting each other, to stories about bar scenes. Eventually we discussed the best place to get close to a 'scene', and the Blue Wall was the place chosen with the agreement that we focus

in tight on one particular scene within the Blue Wall and attempt to describe it. The students who participated in this investigation wrote up their descriptions and shared them with the class. They proved to be fascinating.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, Theodore, W. "A European Scholar in America," in Bailyn and Fleming (eds.), The Intellectual Migration. Europe and America 1930--1960. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969. pp. 338-370.
- Adams, Richard, and Preiss, Jack. (eds.), Human Organization Research. Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1960.
- Alschuler, Alfred. Introduction to William Smith, The Meaning of Conscientizacao: The Goal of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy. Center for International Education. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1976.
- _____, and J. V. Shea. "The Discipline Game: Playing Without Losers," Learning Magazine, Aug./Sept. 1974, pp. 80-86.
- _____, et. al. "Discipline, Justice and Social Literacy in Junior High School," Meforum, Vol. II, No. 1, Spring, 1975, pp. 48-52.
- _____, and Atkins, S., Wolpow, N. Santiago. "Blame the System: or How to Love Everyone While Changing Their Ideas," Social Literacy Project. Amherst, University of Massachusetts, Jan. 1976, pp. 1-13.
- Aronowitz, Stanley. Introduction to Max Horkheimer, Critical Theory. New York: Seabury Press, 1971.
- Assagioli, Roberto. Psychosynthesis. New York: Viking Press, 1971.
- _____, The Act of Will. New York: Viking Press, 1973.
- Bakan, David. On Method: Toward a Reconstruction of Psychological Investigation. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1971.
- Becker, Howard S., et. al. Making the Grade. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968.
- _____, Sociological Work. Chicago: Aldine, 1969.
- Berger, Peter, and Thomas Luckmann. The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise on the Sociology of Knowledge. Garden City: Anchor Books, 1967.
- Birnbaum, Norman. "Critical Theory and Psychohistory," in Jay Lifton (ed.), Explorations in Psychohistory. New York: Simon and Schuster, pp. 183-213.

- Bloom, Benjamin. (ed), Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals: Handbook I: Cognitive Domain. New York: David McKay Co., 1956.
- Blos, Peter. On Adolescence. New York: Free Press, 1962.
- Brown, George. Human Teaching for Human Learning: An Introduction to Confluent Education. New York: Viking Press, 1971.
- _____, (ed.), The Live Classroom. New York: Viking Press, 1975.
- Bruyn, Severyn. The Human Perspective in Sociology: The Methodology of Participant Observation. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1966
- _____, "The New Empiricists: The Participant Observer and the Phenomenologist," Sociology and Social Research, 51, 1967, pp. 317-322.
- Callahan, Daniel. The Tyranny of Survival and Other Pathologies of Civilized Life. New York: MacMillan, 1973.
- Camus, Albert. The Rebel: An Essay on Man and Revolt. New York: Vintage Books, 1956.
- Carr, Edward H. What is History? New York: Knopf, 1961.
- Cary, Harold W. The University of Massachusetts: A History of One Hundred Years. Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts, 1962.
- Chiaromonte, Nicola. "Albert Camus: In Memoriam," in Bree (ed.) Camus: A Collection of Critical Essays. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962, pp. 11-16.
- Chickering, Arthur W. Education and Identity. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1971.
- Cicourel, Aaron. Method and Measurement in Sociology. New York: Free Press, 1964.
- _____, "Basic and Normative Rules in Negotiation of Status and Role," in Dreitzel (ed.), Recent Sociology No. 2. New York: MacMillan, 1970.
- _____, "The Ethnomethodological Paradigm," in P. Dreitzel, (ed.), Recent Sociology No. 2. New York: MacMillan, 1970.
- Connolly, William. "Theoretical Self-Consciousness," Polity, Vol. VI, No. 1, Fall 1973, pp. 6-35.

- _____, and G. Gordon. Social Structure and Political Theory. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Co., 1974.
- Davis, Allan. An Analysis of the Changes in the Freshman Year Experience at the University of Massachusetts. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., 1974.
- Douglas, Jack. (ed.), Understanding Everyday Life. Chicago: Aldine, 1970.
- Dreitzel, Hans P. "Social Science and the Problems of Rationality: Notes on the Sociology of Technocrats," Politics and Society. Vol. 2. No. 2, Winter, 1972, pp. 165-183.
- _____, (ed.), Recent Sociology No. 2. New York: MacMillan, 1970.
- Elshstain, Jean. "Theories of Liberation," Unpublished Manuscript, University of Massachusetts, Department of Political Science, Amherst, Mass., 1976.
- _____, "Social Relations in the Classroom: A Moral and Political Perspective," Telos No. 27, Spring, 1976.
- Eriksen, Erik H. "Growth and Crisis in the Healthy Personality," Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture. 2nd edition, ed. by C. Kluckhohn, H.A. Murray, and D. M. Schneider. New York: Knopf, 1953.
- _____, Identity Youth and Crisis. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1968.
- _____, Young Man Luther. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1958.
- _____, Insight and Responsibility. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1964.
- Feldman, Kenneth, and Theodore T. Newcomb. The Impact of College on Students. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1969.
- Fenichel, Otto. "Review of Karen Horney's New Ways in Psychoanalysis." Psychoanalytic Quarterly, Vol. 9, pp. 114-121.
- Filstead, William J. Qualitative Methodology. Chicago: Markhaw, 1970.
- Firestone, Shulamith. The Dialectics of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution. New York: Bantam Books, 1970.

- Fleming, Donald, and Bernard Bailyn. (eds.), The Intellectual Migration. Europe and America, 1930-1960. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Fraiberg, Selma. The Magic Years. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons., 1959.
- Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Seabury Press, 1970.
- _____, Education for Critical Consciousness. New York: Seabury Press, 1973.
- _____, Risk, Vol.II, No. 1, 1975.
- _____, "Education, Liberation and the Church," Study Encounter, Vol IX, No. 1, 1973.
- _____, "Research Methods," Studies in Adult Education, No. 7, Dar es Salaam: Institute of Adult Education.
- _____, Cultural Action for Freedom. Baltimore: Penguin, 1972.
- Freud, Sigmund. The Outline of Psychoanalysis. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1949.
- _____, Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1959.
- _____, New Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1965.
- _____, A Question of Lay Analysis. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1969.
- _____, Civilization and Its Discontents. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1961.
- _____, "Reflections on War and Death," in P. Rieff (ed.), Character and Culture. New York: Collier Books, 1963, pp. 107-133.
- _____, The Interpretation of Dreams. New York: Avon Books, 1965.
- _____, "The Moses of Michaelangelo," in P. Rieff (ed.), Character and Culture. New York: Collier Books, 1963, pp. 80-106.
- _____, Beyond the Pleasure Principle. New York: Bantam Books, 1967.
- Fromm, Erich. The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Religion, Psychology and Culture. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.

- _____, The Sane Society. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1955.
- _____, The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness. Greenwich: Fawcett books, 1973.
- Garfinkel, Harold. Studies in Ethnomethodology. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1967.
- Gay, Peter. "Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider," in Bailyn and Fleming (eds.), The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930--1960. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969, pp. 3-90.
- Glaser, Barney, and Anselm Strauss. The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Chicago: Aldine, 1967.
- Goldman, Vivien. "The Polanyian Universe," Unpublished Manuscript, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., 1975.
- Goldsen, William, et. al. What College Students Think. Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1960.
- Gorer, Geoffrey. The American People; A Study in National Character. New York: Norton, 1964.
- Grabowski, Stanley. (ed), Paulo Freire: A Revolutionary Dilemma for the Adult Educator. Syracuse University Press Publications in Continuing Education, 1972.
- Griffith, William S. "Paulo Freire: Utopian Perspective on Literacy Education for Revolution," in Stanley Grabowski, (ed), Paulo Freire: A Revolutionary Dilemma for the Adult Educator. Syracuse: Syracuse University Publications in Continuing Education, 1972, pp. 67-82.
- Habermas, Juergen. Knowledge and Human Interests. New York: Beacon Press, 1972.
- Hall, Bud. "Participatory Research: An Approach for Change," in Convergence, Vol. VII, No. 2, 1975, pp. 24-31.
- Hazen Foundation. The Student in Higher Education. New Haven: The Hazen Foundation, 1968.
- Handlin, Oscar, and Mary Handlin. The American College and American Culture. New York: McGraw Hill, 1970.
- Hartz, Louis. The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1955.

- Hendin, Herbert. The Age of Sensation. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1975.
- Henry, Jules. Culture Against Man. New York: Random House, 1964.
- Holt, John. Escape from Childhood: The Needs and Rights of Children. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1974.
- Horkheimer, Max. Critical Theory: A Selection of Essays. New York: Seabury Press, 1971.
- _____, Eclipse of Reason. New York: Oxford Press, 1947.
- Horney, Karen. New Ways in Psychoanalysis. New York: Academic Press, 1969.
- Ianni, Francis A. (ed.), Field Work in Education. New York: Teachers College Press, 1971.
- Irish, Gladys. "Reflection on Ends and Means in Adult Basic Education," Adult Education, (U.S.), Vol 25, No. 2, (Winter 1975), pp. 125-130.
- Jacoby, Russel. Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing. New York: Beacon Press, 1975.
- Jacob, Philip E. Changing Values in College: An Exploratory Study of the Impact of College Teaching. (1st ed.), New York: Harper, 1957.
- Jahoda, Maria. "The Migration of Psychoanalysis," from Fleming, D. and Bailyn, B. (eds.), The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America 1930--1960. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969, pp. 420-445.
- Jay, Martin. The Dialectical Imagination. Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1973.
- Kaplan, Abraham. "Freud and Modern Philosophy," in B. Nelson (ed.), Freud and the Twentieth Century. New York: Meridian Books, 1957, pp. 209-229.
- Kenniston, Kenneth. The Uncommitted. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1960.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Lasch, Christopher. "The Weak Modern Family," New York Review of Books, Vol. XII, No. 19, November 27, 1975, pp. 37-42.

- Leiss, William. The Domination of Nature. New York: George Brazillier, 1972.
- Lichtheim, George. The Concept of Ideology, and Other Essays. New York: Random House, 1967.
- Lifton, Robert J. (ed.), Explorations in Psychohistory. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1976.
- Maccaby, Michael. "Literacy for the Favelas," Science, Vol. 172, May 14, 1971, pp. 671-673.
- Malcolm, Norman. Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.
- Marcuse, Herbert. Reason and Revolution. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941.
- _____, Negations: Essays in Critical Theory. Boston: Beacon Press.
- _____, Eros and Civilization. New York: Beacon Press, 1955.
- Maritain, Jacques. Education At the Crossroads. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943.
- McCarthy, D.W. "Gestalt as Learning Theory," G. Brown (ed.), The Live Classroom. New York: Viking Press, 1975.
- McConnell, T.R., and P. Heist. "The Diverse College Student Population," in N. Sanford (ed.), The American College. New York: John Wiley and Sons. 1962.
- Mead, Margaret. And Keep Your Powder Dry. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1943.
- _____, "Research with Human Beings: A Model Derived from Anthropological Field Practice," Daedalus, Vol. 98, No. 2, Spring, 1969, pp. 361-386.
- Mezirow, Jack. "Toward a Theory of Practice," Adult Education, (U.S.), Vol. 21, No. 3, Spring, 1971, pp. 135-147.
- Mills, C. Wright. The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- _____, The Marxists. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962.
- Mitscherlich, Alexander. Society Without the Father. Trans. by Eric Mosbacher. New York: Schocken Books, 1970.

- Morris, Benjamin. Objectives and Perspectives in Education. London: Routledge Press, 1972.
- Nelson, Benjamin. (ed.), Freud and the Twentieth Century. New York: Meridian Books, 1957.
- Newby, Sandra. "Getting at Responsibility," G. Brown (ed.), The Live Classroom. New York: Viking Press, 1975.
- Perls, Fritz. Gestalt Therapy Verbatim. Lafayette, California: Real People's Press, 1969.
- Polanyi, Michael. Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post Critical Philosophy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
- Riessman, David. The Lonely Crowd. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950.
- _____, David and Christopher Jencks. The Academic Revolution. New York: Doubleday, 1968.
- Rieff, Philip. Introduction to Sigmund Freud, The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement. New York: Collier Books, 1963.
- Ruitenbeek, Hendrik. (ed.), Psychoanalysis and Social Science. New York: Dutton and Co., 1972.
- Sagan, Eli. Cannibalism: Human Aggression and Cultural Form. New York: Harper and Row, 1974.
- Sanford, Nevitt. Where Colleges Fail. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, Inc., 1967.
- _____, (ed), The American College: A Social and Psychological Interpretation of the Higher Learning. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962.
- Schroyer, Trent. The Critique of Domination. Boston: Beacon Press, 1973.
- Schutz, Alfred. The Phenomenology of the Social World. Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1967.
- _____, Collected Papers Vols. I and II. The Problem of Social Reality. The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971.
- Sherwood, Michael. The Logic of Explanation in Psychoanalysis. New York: Academic Press, 1969.
- Shostrum, Everett. Man the Manipulator. New York: Bantam Books, 1968.

- Simmel, Ernst. "The Man and His Work," in Psychoanalytic Quarterly, Vol. 9, 1940, pp. 163-176.
- Skinner, Barrhus, F. Beyond Freedom and Dignity. New York: Bantam Books, 1972.
- Slater, Philip. Earthwalk. New York: Anchor Press, 1974.
- Smith, Kay C. Styles and Structures: Alternative Approaches to College Writing. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1974.
- Smith, William, et. al. "Critical Consciousness," Meforum, Vol. II, No. 1, Spring, 1975, pp. 12-18.
- _____, The Operationalization of Paulo Freire. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., 1976.
- _____, The Meaning of Conscientizacao: The Goal of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., 1976.
- Spradley, James P., and David McCurdy. The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in a Complex Society. Chicago: Aldine, 1972.
- Stanley, Manfred. "Literacy: The Crisis of a Conventional Wisdom," in Paulo Freire: A Revolutionary Dilemma for the Adult Educator. ed. by S. Grabowski, Syracuse University Press, Publications in Continuing Education, 1972, pp. 36-52.
- Stein, Maurice, et. al. (eds.), Reflections on Community Studies. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964.
- _____, The Eclipse of Community. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960.
- Tallman, Jan. On Ethnomethodology. Unpublished Collection, Hampshire College, Amherst, Mass., 1975.
- Taylor, Charles. "Neutrality in Political Science," from Connolly and Gordon, (eds.), Social Structure and Political Theory. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Co., 1974, pp. 16-40.
- _____, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man," Review of Metaphysics, Vol XXV, No. 1, Sept. 1971, pp. 3-51.
- Taylor, Harold. Students Without Teachers. New York: McGraw Hill, 1969.
- Turner, Roy. (ed.), Ethnomethodology. Baltimore: Penguin, 1970.

- Unger, Roberto. Knowledge and Politics. New York: The Free Press, 1975.
- Van den Haag, Ernst. "Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences: Genuine and Spurious Integration," H.M. Ruitenbeek, (ed.), Psychoanalysis and Social Science. New York: Dutton and Co., 1972, pp. 167-185.
- Wheelis, Allen. The Moralist. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973.
- Whyte, William F. "Interviewing in Field Research," in R. W. Adams and J. J. Preiss, (eds.), Human Organization Research. Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1960.
- Winch, Peter. The Idea of a Social Science. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958.
- Wolin, Sheldon. "Paradigms and Political Theories," from Politics and Experience. ed. by P. King and R.C. Porekh. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968, pp. 125-132.
- _____, "The New Conservatives," New York Review of Books, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, 5, 1976, pp. 6-11.
- Wolff, Robert Paul. The Ideal of the University. Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.
- _____, The Poverty of Liberalism. Boston: Beacon Press, 1965.
- Wolpow, Nellie, F. Stopsky, and A. Alschuler. "Stress Hunt," Unpublished Manuscript, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass., 1976.
- Yankelovitch, Daniel. The New Morality: A Profile of American Youth in the 70's. New York: McGraw Hill, 1976.

