

Ideology, educational change and epistemological holism: A critique of some marxists and their critics

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ABSTRACT

The 1970's saw a resurgence of interest in marxism in many academic quarters, including educational studies. Philosophy of education has had its own experience within the general development. In this article I concentrate on one particular debate in philosophy of education on the question of the applicability of marxism to educational theory and practice. This debate occurred in a series of exchanges, over a few years, and is of interest because it demonstrates something of the developments in thinking of both sides of the debate - the marxists and their critics.

The 1970's saw a resurgence of interest in marxism in many academic quarters, including educational studies. Philosophy of education has had its own experience within the general development. In this article I concentrate on one particular debate in philosophy of education on the question of the applicability of marxism to educational theory and practice. This debate occurred in a series of exchanges, over a few years, and is of interest because it demonstrates something of the developments in thinking of both sides of the debate - the marxists and their critics. I think it is worthy of our attention also because of the close identification, especially by the marxists, of marxism with the interpretation of Marx given by the French philosopher Louis Althusser, an identification which has been widespread in the social sciences, and which, I think, has been beneficial to neither marxism nor the social sciences; nor, for that matter, to educational theory and practice. The exchanges appeared in the pages of the journal *Educational Philosophy and Theory* (EPAT); contributors also referred extensively to other publications, notably *Education and Knowledge*, by Kevin Harris.

On the marxist side it was argued that only marxism adequately explains certain social and educational phenomena and guides us to effective action. Theories of ideology were invoked to explain the shortcomings of non-marxist views, and to account for why people persist in holding such views and indeed continue to submit to capitalism. Critics of marxist claimed that one need not be a marxist to understand and respond to the social problems addressed by marxists; nor, it was said, does rejection of marxism automatically mean that one is a mealy-mouthed liberal. The critics object to the marxist theory of ideology insofar as it claims that the schools are mere transmitters of ideologically distorted beliefs, attitudes and values. Further, understandably, the critics object to being told that their thinking is ideologically blinkered, with the implication that they need marxism to escape their intellectual darkness. On top of these objections to the theory of ideology, the critics express annoyance at the marxist claim that they don't just need a bit of

marxism; that if they want a bit then they must take the whole lot. They reject the holism of the marxists.

On both these counts, then, ideology and holism, the critics object that “one need not be a marxist ...”.

1. The Attack on “Marxism”

The first critics of marxism writing in *EPAT*, Simons (1978) and Warren (1978),¹ construed their target fairly broadly, in the sense that - at least implicitly - marxists of various stripes and theoretical tendencies came under fire. The reply to Simons and Warren by Archer and Stevens (1979)² was similarly compatible with several versions of marxism, with some qualifications here and there.

There was a narrowing of focus, however, by the time Simons published his second critical article (1981)³, a narrowing which appears to have been due to the publication of Harris’ book *Education and Knowledge* (1979).⁴ This book presents some theory to which most marxists would strongly object, theory based on the work of the French philosopher Louis Althusser. In the main, it is Harris’ book which Simons has in his sights; though Simons also refers to two articles he ignored in his first article, one by Harris (1977)⁵ attacking R.S. Peters’ views on schooling, and one by Stevens presenting a distinctively althusserian position on ideology.⁶ Both these antedated the first round of anti-marxist articles, but were mentioned by neither Simons nor Warren in their 1978 pieces. Curiously, in his 1981 article, Simons makes no reference at all to Archer’s and Stevens’ reply to his first article. He also ignores more recent work by Harris (1980)⁷ also published in *EPAT*. However, in the same *EPAT* issue as Simons second article (1981), Watt entered the fray with an explicit reply to Archer and Stevens.⁸

I shall argue that most of the criticisms, to the extent that they are sound, apply to althusserian marxism, not to all marxist positions. I also venture some further criticisms, from what I should prefer to call a historical materialist rather than a marxist position,⁹ of the marxist side of the debate.

Simons rejects the marxist claim “that the schools function all too well, as agencies of the ruling classes”.¹⁰ Thus stated, however, the claim is vague. More precisely, Simons’ objection is to a very strong functionalist version of this claim, to the effect that schools, indeed capitalist social institutions generally, are such efficient agencies of the ruling classes, so successfully instilling ruling class ideology into people’s consciousness and thus rendering them so subservient to capitalism, that “[r]eformers might as well sink back into despair and float along with the social current wherever it takes them.”¹¹ These worries about the viability of reformist educational practice apply to “the attempt to teach well, to improve schools, to train better teachers.”¹² We can attempt all these but the attempt ‘according to the “radicals”’ will “simply perpetuate the evil machinery”.¹³ Simons dubs this position “radical defeatism”. He finds it “strange that some such radicals still protest when capitalist governments cut spending on schooling”.¹⁴

These objections are backed up with historical discussion showing that some capitalists have thought that education for the masses would lead to resistance to capitalist society and so have argued against universal schooling. Moreover, today, Simons points out, “to judge from the comments made by many persons who do seem to operate within the capitalist ideology ... the education system ... does not form people at all neatly for the workplace.”¹⁵ So these marxist radicals have got their facts wrong.

Worse, Simons reveals, they have got their Marx wrong. Although (in Simons’ view) Marx adhered to a now discredited deterministic view of history, failed to justify his value judgements and account for the possibility of conscious human intervention in social processes, Marx did, Simons reminds us, see education (and the capitalist labour process) as contradictory: workers could learn, through observing the contradictions, how the system works, and organize to overthrow it.

Faced with such grave indictments, the “radicals” (Simons almost always encloses the word in scare quotes) look to be in great difficulty, if not, indeed, incompetent and a little silly.

Before considering the indictments, we might ask just who are all these “radicals”? We are given a few clues in Simons’ sizeable set of alternative descriptions for them: they are apparently so numerous as to constitute a whole “current generation of radicals”, they are prone to unwarranted posturing as ‘self-styled “radical” critics of education’, they are somehow different to old or old-fashioned radicals – ‘modern “radicals”’ and from old-time marxists - “modern marxists”, and they are concentrated in the Antipodes - ‘Australian “radicals”’. The epithets are sadly unmatched by a similarly imposing set of instances. The whole trendy generation of modern marxist Australian radicals is represented by two people, Peter Stevens and Kevin Harris.¹⁶ And in the main it is Harris’ book which is taken as “a recent, though not isolated expression” of the view that “there is no hope whatever of doing anything with or through the schools.”¹⁷

In the face of all this, readers could be forgiven, if they were to turn to the writings of these lonely representatives, for being surprised to find explicit disavowals of the views Simons attributes to them and their generation. In their reply to Simons’ original article (a reply ignored by Simons in his second article) Archer and Stevens write:

Marxists have, as Simons notes, pointed to the overall effectiveness of schools in capitalist society in reproducing the class structure and hierarchical divisions of that society, transmitting bourgeois ideas and inculcating practical attitudes in the majority of (working class) children which fit them for the subordinate positions they standardly graduate to under capitalism. Simons refers to such marxist accounts as simply claiming schools to be “agencies of the ruling classes”.

Now, while there has been a tendency perhaps to over emphasise this aspect in recent marxist writings on education, there has also typically been a recognition that the schools and the educational system generally are the subject and site of class struggles and are far from being mere “agencies” for either side of these struggles.¹⁸

There follow several pages of argument in support of this view.

A similar puzzlement might be occasioned by a reading of Harris’ views of what can be achieved by linking change in the schools with strategies beyond the schools:

... it would be a matter of people talking, acting and working informally among themselves; discussing their lives, their freedoms, their constraints, their situations, their visions and their knowledge of the world; discovering the world for themselves through experience and with authorities, and linking up with movements in other areas of society, in a gradual process of changing themselves, education and society.¹⁹

For Harris, this can become part of a progress towards revolution. His views have nothing to do with ‘the “hard line” and stupid revolutionary creed that nothing significant can be done until everything can be done at once’²⁰ - a creed which Simons insinuates someone among his marxist opponents is committed to. Can it be Stevens and/or Harris, who are supposed to be committed to the view that nothing can be done, whether all at once, or in little bits? In fact, Harris and Stevens both expound the orthodox marxist view of social change occurring through the contradictions of capitalism. To say, as does Simons, that they have substantially departed from Marx in this respect is quite false.

Another critic of marxist educational theory, Watt, comments on a passage in Archer’s and Stevens’ article: “This is a remarkable passage to find in a philosophical journal.”²¹ I shall later defend the views expressed in that passage (concerning a problems/solutions approach to practical questions) against Watt’s charge that they are crude. But if the debate is going to be conducted in terms of what one may expect to find in philosophical journals there are two comments which might be made about Simons’ contributions in the current debate. First, it might be asked whether philosophers are justified in totally ignoring their opponents’ most recent writings, as Simons has ignored Archer’s and Stevens’ response to his original article particularly when those writings are

in response to one's own earlier article, and in defence of the views attacked therein. Such scholarship, or lack of it, would not pass muster, on either technical or ethical grounds, in some academic quarters. But Simons' attribution, to Stevens and Harris, of ignorance of or deviation from Marx's dialectical understanding of the contradictory process of social change, is based on an even more selective approach to the texts. For, second, Simons totally ignores what Stevens had to say about contradiction and social change in an *EPAT* article published even before his (Simons') first attack on marxism. This would be understandable if Simons had not been aware of the earlier Stevens article, or had discounted it as not being an instance of the kind of marxism he wished to attack. However, as we have seen, it is in fact one of the only two instances mentioned by Simons, a quotation from it appearing in the first paragraph of his article.

One passage not quoted by Simons goes as follows:

All this makes change look like a very remote possibility, but neological control of the dominated classes is not as total as it might appear so far. There are contradictory tendencies internal to a mode of production which force changes in it ... Through such conflicts there may be generated groups opposed to the prevailing neologies.²² ["Neology" means "lived ideology" - see below.]

The misrepresentation of Stevens by Simons appears even more serious when we notice that the several pages of the Archer-Stevens article devoted to replying to Simons contain three pages explicitly devoted to arguing that "Simons does not understand the nature of social contradictions" and that "this lack of understanding is tied to a basic assumption Simons makes about society".²³ I invite any reader to review what Harris, Stevens and Archer have to say about contradiction, and in particular the contradictions in ideology that make it possible, in Simons' words, that "the established ideology contains within itself the seeds of its own demise", and to assess the intellectual credibility of Simons' comment that '[m]odern "radicals" [viz. Harris and Stevens] come to this only as an afterthought".²⁴

Archer and Stevens complain that "Marxism, Magic and Metalanguages", Simons' 1978 article, ... reveals either a woeful ignorance of anything other than the most vulgarised and hostile views of marxism or a wilful misrepresentation for the purposes of simplifying the task. There is absolutely no reference at all to any marxist writings on education or indeed, on anything at all, let alone an intellectually respectable attempt to show that the views attributed to marxists are indeed held by at least some of them.²⁵

By 1981, Simons, in "Radical Defeatism", is at least prepared to cite and quote real rather than straw opponents, but only with the effect of revealing either his woeful ignorance or wilful misrepresentation to be worse than at first seemed the case.

It should be clear, then, that neither Stevens nor Harris consciously or intentionally embraces radical defeatism. It should also be clear that they pay close attention to contradiction and social change; that their revolutionism is not a mere afterthought tacked onto their theory of ideology. It may, however, still be the case that overall their views are internally inconsistent. This would be so, for instance, if some of their remarks were radical defeatist, or entailed radical defeatism, without their realising it. Simons, as I have noted, is at pains to portray their remarks as radical defeatist. Let us consider some of the remarks he does quote. From Harris:

Education in a class society is a political act, having as its basis the protection of the interest of the ruling class. It is a 'mechanism' for securing the continuation of the existing social relationships and for reinforcing the attitudes and beliefs that will continue to be accepted. Education is thus ... an ideological force of tremendous import.

Althusser is correct in categorising education as the number one dominant ideological State apparatus of the present day.²⁶

There is only one quotation from Stevens:

Someone who lives through the detailed rituals ... of schooling at a stage where 'consciousness' is relatively easily changed, is neatly formed for the modified continuation of the same ways of

thinking and behaving required by the workplace, i.e., they positively accept or become passively resigned to the conditions and relations of production of the capitalist production process. And living in the neology of schooling is just what everyone does during childhood.²⁷

Various other quotations show that Harris, who after Simons' first paragraph (after which Stevens drops out of the picture) stands as the sole representative of radical defeatism, believes that formal education, or schooling, by its process if not always by its content, distorts reality, creates illusions, produces compliant and (in a special sense) uneducated people, who lack the knowledge and critical skills necessary for criticising capitalism. Thus capitalism is perpetuated. As to changing the schools, quotations show that Harris does not believe that education as provided by capitalist liberal democracies will cease to be systematically distortive, nor that it will bring people to non-misrepresentative knowledge of the world.²⁸ On all these points Simons quotes Harris fairly and accurately.

Sadly this is not the case when Simons presents Harris' views on the possibility of radical reform of curriculum content. Simons' misrepresentation here extends into misquotation. He quotes Harris as saying:

There is no possibility of any radical reformulation of educational content emerging.²⁹

Harris actually wrote something quite different:

And there will be no possibility of any radical reformulation of educational content emerging.³⁰

This remark comes at the end of a particular discussion of a particular context in which curriculum change is sometimes attempted, namely when curriculum boards are set up on which there are representatives of various different interests. Harris is not making a generalisation about curriculum change. Whereas Harris may or may not believe what Simons suggests he does in the misquotation (my own view is that Harris is confused and inconsistent) what he is said to believe is not what he said.

Notwithstanding the philosophical irresponsibility of Simons' critique, there are serious problems with the Stevens/Harris brand of marxism, one of which is the inconsistency between their theory of schooling and their theory of change. As I have said, these marxists are part of the (largely unrepresentative) althusserian tradition. Let us now turn to a closer, and critical, consideration of althusserianism and its implications for educational change.

2. Althusserianism on Ideology and Educational Change

First, some statement of the general problem will be helpful. Looking at schools as systems producing certain outcomes, we can ask three quite distinct questions. (1) Given that schools have the outcome of reproducing capitalist social relations (outcome R) how effectively do they do so? (2) Whatever degree of effectivity they may have in producing R, can they be adapted to produce another, incompatible outcome, not-R? Can they, at least minimally, be turned into non-reproducers of capitalism? These two questions are connected insofar as effectivity in producing the first outcome causally prevents adaptations necessary for production of the second. Thus we can ask the further question: (3) how effectively does a school system have to produce R before there is no possibility of its producing, or being adapted to produce, not-R?

There is no doubt that Simons rightly represents the althusserians' answer to (1) as "very effectively". What is not so clear however, in either Simons or the althusserians, is what the "marxist" (althusserian) answer is to (3), setting aside for the moment the vexed question (2). How effective does a school/school system have to be as an agency for ideological control before, practically speaking, it is impossible for any step to be taken to change it? Nevertheless, Simons moves very quickly from the very vague "schools are very effective in producing R" to the all too precise "nothing can be done to change them into achievers of not-R".

It is also plain that the althusserians do not believe that schools are 100% effective. We have already noted their disavowals of this. We may also note (as does Simons, with the "Aha!" air of someone who thinks he has produced a knock-down argument) that insofar as reproduction entails mystification, the althusserians cannot assume 100% mystification since, despite their having been schooled along with the rest of us, they hold that they and presumably other critics of capitalism get the analysis of schooling - at least partly - right.

The crucial point, I shall argue, concerns the way in which the present school system works in producing R, whatever the degree of effectiveness, and whether the way in which it works or fails to work affects the possibility of its being adapted/exploited to achieve not-R. Neither the althusserians nor Simons, it seems to me, are sufficiently clear or detailed in their analyses on this point.

Simons, for his part, has managed to demonstrate no more than that the althusserians believe schools to be very effective. (I agree with Simons that they exaggerate. As noted, this has been conceded by Archer and Stevens.) He has not even attempted to show that the althusserian view of the ways in which or the degree to which the schools achieve R entails that they cannot be changed to produce not-R. He has failed to come to grips with their althusserian theory. Let us look at this in more detail.

Again, we must distinguish certain questions. There are two separate questions here which the althusserians have not clearly distinguished. (1) What conditions must be met for R to be achieved? (2) If a social system, such as schooling, is contributing to R, how and why does it do so?

The first question requests specification of causally necessary conditions: the second requests actual causal explanation. The unfortunate confusion of the two questions in much social theory, including althusserian and other brands of marxism, leads to the error of functionalism, i.e. to misrecognise effect for cause. To establish that schools abet R does not automatically establish why they do. Identification of functions is not equivalent to the provision of explanations. Bowles and Gintis, for example, who have influenced Stevens and Harris, fall into this error in their "correspondence principle". (They do, however, give some general historical explanations of how and why education has served capital, including explanations of why some capitalists have opposed mass education.)³¹

Althusserian answers to the first question, concerning conditions causally necessary for R, are fairly orthodox within marxism. Capitalist R requires a labour force amenable to capitalist relations of production and so on.

Question (2) is the difficult one. The althusserian lapse into functionalism, as well as being related to the failure to clearly distinguish the two questions, is reinforced, I think, by the tendency to start analysis of R at the wrong place, in broad economic-structural theory. In my view it is much more profitable to start in the area of learning and developmental theory. And here, as well as on the broad structural level, the question has two sides; on the one hand, if R is achieved, how is it; on the other, if it is not, why is it not? I would like to offer the conjecture that people will not raise the question of alternatives, of social change, so long as the present system is working reasonably well on its own terms. This is not simply because people will be satisfied (they may not be) but because social change (pace Althusser) occurs through human activity, and people cannot do what they have not learned to do. Therefore, from the point of view of explanation, the "if not-R, then why not-R" side of the question is equally as important as, and probably more important than the "if R, then why R?" side. Be that as it may, the "if not-R, then why not-R?" side is crucial for the question of social change. From this perspective, the problem is not so much one of explaining why the status quo is maintained as of explaining how people can and do come to conceive of alternatives, and take action leading to social change.

In general, I think, there are three main ways in which such learning can occur. First, through becoming acquainted (by reading books, viewing films, etc.) with historical examples of alternatives, or attempts to institute them. Second, on a small-scale, more micro level, we all, as we develop as

individuals come into contact with people whose practices are different from our own. Stevens gives the experience of students going from school to university as an example of this.³² Third, when a practice, or set of social practices breaks down, people are thrust into situations where they must formulate alternatives if certain of their needs are to be met. For instance, the recent events in Poland show how people begin to form their own associations, such as Solidarity, when established institutions cannot provide food or social security. (In fact, Poland illustrates very well the historical materialist view of how movement towards socialism is generated. That Polish and other eastern European societies are commonly called “socialist” simply reveals the ideological hegemony of Stalinism and bourgeois liberalism.) As individuals and groups, we may be driven into new relationships if our present ones are failing. The third way of learning is, in general, causally basic to the other two, in that some people must have learned the third way in order for others to learn in either of the other two ways. In the history of social change, which after all is history, the three modes of learning become intertwined to some extent, though this will vary from individual to individual and from group to group.

If the third way of learning is causally basic, our problem becomes one of specifying the ways in which the practices in which people are engaged break down. Here, as we have observed, marxists invoke the notion of contradiction.

The historical materialist claim is that whether or not a practice is working will depend on the way in which the contradictions embodied in it are working out. Contradictions involve forces which are causally related, either by being co-caused by the same material configuration of conditions, or when one force tends to give rise to another, or when the total causal situation brings two hitherto unrelated forces into a relation such that the two forces become causally mutually interdependent: in each case the forces are contradictory if they are antagonistic, tending to reciprocally annul one another. The classic historical materialist example, of course, is the class struggle. The two forces, bourgeoisie and proletariat are causally mutually constituted as ruling class and ruled class, a unity of opposites in the capitalist mode of production, each of which can maintain its position only at the expense of the other. Like husband and wife, there is neither one nor the other without the other. Wives and husbands are constituted as such by law, though their relationships may be or become contradictory in the historical materialist sense of dialectical contradictions, as it is commonly called. A closer analogy of the causal sort is the relation between antigens and antibodies in the immune systems of animals. Now, to return to practices, when a practice is not working well, this is due to the contradictions within it having become sufficiently heightened; typically when the opposing forces approach something like an equal balance of power, where either the hitherto dominated force becomes dominant and the practice is abolished or transformed, or the hitherto dominated force is re-subjugated and the practice re-established. When practices fail, this is due to contradictions having reached a crisis whose resolution becomes imperative.

As Archer and Stevens note, the historical materialist analysis of dialectical contradiction is an area of some controversy.³⁴ Though their own discussion of how education figures in the development, under capitalism, of the productive forces and the relations of production, is a lucid illustration, they do not give much by way of a general account of dialectical contradiction. Harris, on the other hand, provides a general and abstract discussion of dialectical contradiction, but little application to the details of education.³⁵ None of these writers, however, has much to offer by way of an account of the dialectical contradictions, in both reproduction and change, of educational practices. Before suggesting an explanation for this shortcoming, I want to relate the question of dialectical contradiction to Watt’s peremptory dismissal of Archer’s and Stevens’ proposal for a problems/solutions approach to practical questions.

For it is in relation to these issues concerning contradiction and change that the problems/solutions scheme comes into its own. This scheme is a model, from the point of view of practical theory, the theory of how to answer the question “what is to be done?”, for translating the historical materialist theory of dialectical social contradictions into a guide for action.

This theory, like any theory of course, may or may not be true. But if it is true, then Watt's dismissal of the problems/solutions scheme as evading the issue of value-judgements misses the point, which is that values and norms exist only in practices.

In very rough terms, the theory is that humans (and, I would add, all developing entities) are constituted through relations, and that these relations may be contradictory. Human practices are specified in accounts of relations between subjects. (Subjects may be individuals, who are relationally analysed anyway, or individuals-in-relation, such as groups.) As we have seen practices break down when contradictions reach crisis point. In Marx's account of the antagonistic relations constituting capital, the relations between dead and living labour, between the commodity and the labourer, and between the capitalist and the labourer, the contradictions in these relations cause problems for the human subjects living in the social relations of capitalism.

These problems are objective and given, though alternative accounts of them are possible, and one can analyse them incorrectly, just as scientists may disagree or fail to achieve a formulation of a problem caused by anomalies in their research, such as inconsistencies between theory and evidence. If the social practice, or the scientists' research programme, is to continue, the problem has to be dealt with somehow, or else a new programme or practice devised. If the problem is severe enough, it will cause the breakdown of the practice, or of the research programme. The research programme may be shelved while the scientists go home to dinner, or work on another programme: the practices of capitalism cannot be shelved. We either solve their problems or work out alternative practices.

Within this theoretical context, Watt's appeal to "values" is otiose, and his charge that Archer and Stevens ignore them is spurious. To be sure, we may say that we all have values, and must make value judgements in the sense that, for example, we wish to live not starve, and eliminate antagonisms where we can, and so on. The historical materialist point is that in any given problem situation, i.e. one where a decision must be made, we have a certain set of options, and these are determined by the social relations of the situation. To solve the problem we must adequately analyse/theorise the situation. From then on in, it is a matter, like scientific research, of finding the most powerfully coherent explanation of the situation and deducing, from that explanation, possible solutions. The best solution is one which solves the problem. If there are two solutions apparently equally good, it is not a matter of values, but of tossing a coin. The problem in the first place is not a matter of values applied to the situation: the only values we have are implicit in the problem-solving or problem-creating practices constituting the situation. There is no more we can do except analyse the situation and make predictions as to what the consequences of possible future courses of action will be. The point is not that marxists have no values; it is that they (like many others, incidentally³⁷) reject the fact/value distinction. Values are the norms constituting the practices we perform: if the practices are not working we must develop other practices. In a word, we must solve the problems thrown up by our present practices.

We are now in a position to return to our appraisal of the althusserian position on schooling. One althusserian error is to overrate the effectivity and coherence of educational practice, to insufficiently account for (however much althusserians may believe in) contradiction, and so to fail to theorise a dialectical, problems/solutions approach to schooling. The althusserians' functionalism is at odds with their dialectics. Let us look more closely at this tension.

The work of Althusser and his followers is highly complex, indeed abstruse. The following exposition of relevant aspects of it is inevitably extremely abbreviated and abstract. Although I make some criticisms of Althusser's theory, I cannot, of course, claim to have anywhere near adequately supported them from an analysis of the althusserian texts. I therefore acknowledge (as Simons should of his) that my criticisms are tentative and my exposition sketchy.

According to Althusser, a society is a global structure made up of substructures ("instances" or "levels") such as the economic, the legal-political and the ideological (and perhaps the theoretical). Within this structure, there are, in addition to productive systems (principally the economy),

reproductive systems such as the ideological state apparatuses, or ISAs, which include schools, the family, churches and trade unions. (These are distinguished from repressive state apparatuses, or RSAs, such as the armed forces, the police and the courts.) Although the economic structure is “determinant in the last instance” in the development of the social whole, each instance has a “relative autonomy” in relation to the others. The degree of autonomy is determined by the economic instance. Further, although the economic is determinant in the last instance, each structure acts causally on each other, the ideological having effects on the economic, law-politics having effects on ideology, and so on. Instead of there being a “linear causality” from the economic to the other structures there is “structural causality”, where the whole, a “structure in dominance”, “overdetermines” the parts, with the economy determining the scope and limits of each instance and the possible structural patterns of the whole.³⁸ These are the central althusserian doctrines of relative autonomy of instances, structural causality and over-determination, and determination by the economy in the last instance.

Each instance is constituted by practices, which are themselves structured to the form of modes of production, having their own specific raw materials, instruments of labour and products. The practice which interests us here, ideological practice, produces human subjects, i.e. people with certain consciousnesses in regard to their relations with each other and with material objects and social institutions.

A highly controversial, and for the EPAT debate the crucial, issue is whether human subjects are in any sense agents, or whether they are no more than “bearers”, “supports”, occupiers of spaces and performers of functions in the history of social structures. In his attack on “humanism”,³⁹ Althusser makes it plain that human subjects are definitely not agents in one common sense of the word. As Althusser’s co-writer Balibar puts it, “individuals are merely the effects of social practices”.⁴⁰ This is quite at odds with Marx’s position: “It is people who make history, but they do not make it under conditions of their own choosing.”⁴¹ (We might add, obviously, that what are effects in one relation may be causes in another.) For the althusserians, the real subjects of history are the structures. This presupposes, I would argue, a false and, ironically for marxists, an individualist dichotomy between individuals and structures. A historical materialist relational account does not view individuals as separate entities which can be slotted into pre-existing structures. It views structures as existing only in the developing relations between subjects (individual and non-individual) and views the individual as nothing more or less than, in Marx’s words, “an ensemble of social relations”.⁴² The althusserian account is similar to the liberal individual/society dichotomy. Althusserians would want to reject my claim, I realise, but I cannot argue for it in detail here.

As effects of structures, althusserianism claims, individuals are formed through ideological processes and in ideological institutions, the ISAs. The althusserian position on ideology is an area of acknowledged confusion and difficulty, however.

Stevens, for instance, distinguishes two senses of “ideology” in Althusser. First, as noted above, there is an ideology as an instance of the social formation (the ideological): and second, there is ideology as a form of theory opposed to science. Stevens coins the term “neology” to refer to the first, reserving “ideology” for the second.⁴³ Whether or not this serves to clarify Althusser, I believe it is a serious mistake, driving an artificial wedge between theory and practice. I shall return to this.

“Neology” is defined broadly to include all the established practices and rituals which make up a “specific material form of life”, together with their conceptual representations. The individual is “inserted” into these, and at the point where s/he “lives in” them (e.g. as wife-mother) inhabits a neological matrix”. This set of ideas is used to explicate Marx’s dictum that “social being determines consciousness”.⁴⁴

It is this neological matrix which constitutes that ‘social being’ of an individual which ‘determines consciousness’ in the sense that a person’s awareness of self, his or her attitudes, etc. are the accompanying results of living in specific neologies.⁴⁵

Stevens observes that much of this “consciousness” is in effect “profoundly unconscious”. It is the development of such consciousness in subjects which adapts them to living in a particular mode of production and thus fulfils one condition for the reproduction of that mode.

Neology in this sense is obviously always going to be with us. Indeed Stevens’ (Althusser’s) “neology” is very close to the anthropologists’ “culture”. Culture, I would maintain, includes ideology in Stevens’ second sense.

Now the problem for marxists is twofold: (1) to identify those practices (or aspects of them) constitutive of oppressive modes of production, and distinguish them clearly from the rest; and (2) to identify those conceptual representations which are accurate and comprehensive from those which are misrepresentative and distortedly selective.

At this point, epistemological problems arise for the althusserians. Given that we are all “inserted” into practice, including those of theory-production, how do we know which practices are progressive and which representations are accurate and comprehensive? Although Stevens may distinguish between neology and ideology, what we want is some method of identifying ideological neology. But the althusserian account of ideology (Stevens’ second sense) prevents us from making such an identification. For, according to Althusser, ideology...

... is distinguished from a science not by its falsity but by the fact that the practico-social predominates in it over the theoretical, over knowledge.⁴⁶

There are several things wrong with this. First, the “practico-social is set against “knowledge”: the two are mutually exclusive. For historical materialism and traditional marxism, the theoretical and the practical are aspects of the one material process. Second, there is an idealist theory of knowledge assumed, in which knowledge is regarded as “pure” in the sense that practice is not a test of it or as if the sentences of theoretical knowledge could be stated and analysed (though perhaps not “produced”) independently of any relation to social practice. Third, the anti-practicalist idealism defeats the althusserians (and all marxists’) purpose: epistemic and social progress. For the involvement of practical and social interests is taken here (extraordinarily for marxists) to be the cause of limitation and distortion in ideology. This is what gets Harris into trouble in his confession that:

I fail to see either the logical or the practical possibility of replacing ideology by science in situations where theoretical products arise out of social practices that contain within themselves conflicting social interests (or even conflict between social and theoretical interests).⁴⁷

Harris does not even have the advantage of Stevens’ capacity to see one form of ideology (neology) as not necessarily misrepresentative.

Even if Stevens and Harris were to say that ideology in a classless society would not necessarily be distortive, they lack the epistemological resources for identification of those theories which would believably and undistortedly tell us when we had arrived in a classless society despite their thinking that in the theory of dialectical contradiction they have just such a (presumably non-ideological) theory.

The idealism of althusserianism leads to several other conclusions which are unfortunate from a historical materialist point of view. First, the distinction between neology and ideology trades on a distinction between the material and non-material aspects of society, which is offensive to any materialist philosophy. (There are no non-material aspects of society.) Neology tends to be identified with the body, with doing, action, habits of behaviour and with the emotional and cognitive elements of these such as feelings about, attitudes to, and representations of one’s immediate practical situation. Ideology, though produced through a form of practice (“theoretical practice”) is to do with products of the mind as such: ideas, theories, etc.

This, as I say, locks althusserianism into a theory/practice split: a split between theory (science and ideology) and practice including the consciousness of practice (neology). It is quite ironic that

this vitiates one of the major aims of Harris' project in *Education and Knowledge*: to demonstrate the theory-ladenness of observation inasmuch as many of the observation situations to which Harris alludes are ones where he would say practice of social and political significance is occurring. But, worse from a historical materialist point of view, it undercuts the epistemological basis for a claim which all marxists would want to maintain, viz. that all practice has a theoretical aspect or, in the language of philosophy of science, is theory-laden. I would further maintain that there is no difference in principle between the theories embedded in our practices and the theories produced by theorists. But it is precisely this further claim that althusserians reject.⁴⁸ As I shall explain in a moment, their rejection of it is the explanation for their elitism and tendency to pessimism.

The theory/practice split is also related to troubles althusserians have in maintaining their distinction between ideology and science. Harris, in particular, gets himself into a terrible bind over this, lapsing into a positivism which has the effect of ruling out any genuine social science, a position stoutly rejected by Marx. Stevens follows Althusser more closely, locating scientificity in the pure theoretical practice (unalloyed with any practico-social interests?!) of the althusserian scientist.⁴⁹

Althusserianism, though developed within a definite historical "conjuncture" (and one described by Althusser⁵⁰) is a theory developed in almost total abstraction, devoid of any specific, let alone systematic historical reference. Indeed, ideology is said to be "timeless", to have "no history".⁵¹ The most woeful lack is of any detailed analysis of how structures (or social sub-systems) such as schooling produce the conservative social effects ascribed to them. For a "science" there is an amazing absence of any causal story of social development. (This is connected with the althusserian concurrence in the dominant bourgeois conception of philosophy as distinct from science.⁵²) At the most general level, there is precious little explanation of how "the economy" is "determinant in the last instance" of the social structure as a whole and of the scope and limits of the relative autonomy of its parts.

Abstract structuralism is one with functionalism, the attempt to explain (or rather, indicate how we would explain) how systems work by reference to their functions, the position which systematically misidentifies effects as causes. The structural-functionalist account of schools, rather more than the view of their supposed high effectivity, makes it hard for althusserians to apply their more orthodox marxist account, not only of change through the development of contradictions, but of reproduction through contradictions.

For it is not enough to theorise that a system works, or can break down, or be less than 100% effective. It must be shown how the contradictions, leading to ineffectiveness or breakdown, also produce conditions and forces (especially new learning situations) conducive to change. For example, we might ask, if the system is to some degree ineffective, how the people it fails to adapt to their social roles constitute a real threat to the social system, in that if there are too many of them unwilling to work the society will break down, and how the unsocialised might be, in precisely the specific ways in which they are unsocialised, some force for social change. Structuralism and functionalism make it very hard to provide these explanations. Nor is showing that a system can or will break down enough, by itself, to show how it can be changed into, or replaced by, something else.

The functionalist concentration on outcomes rather than causes, when wedded to althusserian structuralism which opposes structures to human subjects as elements of agency (cf. Harris' locutions: "what education is concerned to do", "education deliberately" ⁵³) bears little relation to the real world where human beings are involved in processes as both causes (agents) and effects (products). People engage in conscious, purposive action, as well as in unconscious action, and in both kinds of action are subject to some forces beyond their control. Actions may have intended as well as unintended consequences; and either sort of consequence intentionally or unintentionally may or may not be functional for institutions such as schools or for capitalist society as a whole. Within this complex set of possibilities we need to look for courses of action which consciously and intentionally open up avenues for social change. Such possibilities, from a historical materialist point

of view, though perhaps not from the viewpoints of Warren, Simons or Watt, arise from points of breakdown in practice. Althusserian theory of subject-development and epistemology prevents identification of such points and productive suggestions as to what to do with them. The well-founded dialecticism of Stevens, Archer and Harris is simply at odds with their althusserianism on this issue. They either part company with Marx or with structural-functionalism and the althusserian theory/practice split.

This split is disastrous. For althusserianism, science is not just relatively autonomous, it is totally autonomous. In this theory, the idea of scientific knowledge developing through class struggle simply cannot get off the ground. Hence Harris' problems in showing how his recommended attack on ideology can help bring about change.

I said that althusserianism entails two political options: elitism and pessimism. Elitism arises because scientific knowledge is produced by the specialist theorists, and has to be imported into the working class from outside. This is the Stalinist model of political practice, which has its origins in certain Leninist positions, and others in the peculiar circumstances of post World War I Russia. It has been dominant among "marxists" ever since. It has little to do with Marx's views about party and class. Although Marx may have been ambiguous from time to time on the question of the production of scientific knowledge, he was clear that epistemic progress could be made by workers, in the very conditions of their work-learning situations, and insistent that they did not need the leadership of intellectual theorists. (Which is not to say that the latter have no useful role.) "The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself."⁵⁴

It is an unfortunate though interesting feature of the *EPAT* debate that none of the althusserians shows much faith in the epistemic, let alone the political, power of the working class.⁵⁵ Having little faith in such power, liberals may be forgiven for ignoring it. But not marxists. In practice, their althusserianism becomes an ideological self-justification for radical intellectuals, just as orthodox philosophy of education is an ideological self-justification for liberal intellectuals.⁵⁶ (Though both of course are more than mere self-justification.)

The possibility of pessimism arises since (1) science is not part of the concrete class struggle of workers: and (2) workers by themselves cannot attain non-ideological consciousness; and (3) the ISAs, especially schools, are thought to be very effective (Simons' point). With such a low estimate of workers, such a high estimate of themselves, and such a high estimate of the capacity of schools to tame or exclude developments towards radical social change, it is no wonder that althusserians sound pessimistic. They are only too aware that schools, as Simons triumphantly points out, produce alienated radical intellectuals such as themselves. But the logic of this (althusserian) side of their theory tells them that they are produced by the educational system and granted a full knowledge of its evil workings, only to be hived off by the system and neutralized.

Now of course, as we have seen, the althusserians do not want to be pessimistic, let alone radical defeatist. They have, however, deprived themselves of any epistemological basis for optimism. Their dialecticism demands a programme for action and they try to mount one. But their structural-functionalism cannot explain how positive action can be taken, except on elitist (and, I think, ad hoc) grounds. Some of us (radical intellectuals) are deemed exceptions to the rule on subjectivity, viz. that subjects are bearers of abstractly determined positions in matrices within neological structures. The rest, non-scientists, are doomed to false consciousness and locked into the structures. This distribution of subjectivities is at odds with the conception of subjectivity assumed by the dialectical problems/solutions scheme. Moreover, I would argue, there are a mass of errors and misunderstandings here, on both sides of the debate, concerning the so-called freedom/determinism issue.⁵⁷

To conclude this section, following up my earlier remarks about learning and social change, let me pose an alternative view, using the historical materialist theory of ideology as commenced in Marx's *Capital*.⁵⁸ We should approach both questions - how society is reproduced and how to change it - by first examining how human subjects actually learn their practices; next, how they

formulate the problems to which their practices give rise; and finally how they theorise, deliberate and act with a view to., solving the problems in their practice. To push this analysis along we need, to be more specific, a dialectical rather than a structural-functionalist account of how systems work. But, and this is the point to be stressed, the beginnings of this account of systems will be found in our hypotheses concerning the three questions just raised, not somewhere else. The althusserian error is to consider independently the questions of system maintenance and system change, even though they try to bring together the answers afterwards. They adopt a dialectical position only on change; what is needed is a dialectical position on reproduction and change considered together. My earlier suggestions about learning and developmental theory follow Marx's argument that the question(s) of alternatives, and/or of social change, arise concretely for people when their practices break down, and that people's capacity to formulate alternatives is contingent on what they have learned through performance of existing practices and what they can learn through the breakdown situation confronting them.

3. Ideology, Epistemology and Holism

In this section I shall consider Watt's claim that non-marxists can accept, or share, many aspects of marxist thought without having to accept all of it.

As Watt recognises, there are two issues here. First, there is the demand that if you accept a bit of marxism, you should accept the lot. Watt caustically spurns this demand as "religious", saying that Archer and Stevens have assumed "the mantle of the prophet" and adopted the intolerance and fanaticism of "the true believer". While there are aspects of Archer and Stevens' article which have something of this tone, I believe that they are slight, and that Watt has exaggerated them.⁵⁹

More important, from both philosophical and political-educational points of view, and what Archer and Stevens are most concerned to stress, is the second issue, which concerns the grounds for the demand that marxism be accepted or rejected as a whole. I shall concentrate on this.

Archer and Stevens pose their position, perhaps unfortunately, in terms of a rejection of eclecticism. Their argument is epistemological:

Recent work in epistemology, both marxist and non-marxist, is decidedly against this eclectic possibility - individual concepts and theses cannot be extracted from the theoretical structures in which they are embedded without drastically altering their nature.⁶⁰

To this, Watt replies:

... the argument ... does not seem very convincing to me. The conclusion of the "recent work in epistemology" ... is most plausible when applied to highly formalised structures such as mathematical systems, in which concepts are given strict stipulative definitions and related to each other by stipulated sets of axioms. For instance, when an expression such as "parallel lines" is used within a particular geometrical system it is used in a sense which is to some degree peculiar to the system. This is why one can't simply extract from Euclidean geometry the statement that parallel lines ... will never meet: compare it with the statement extracted from a non-Euclidean geometry, that they will meet: and ask which of these contradictory assertions is true. They are not strictly contradictory assertions. The proper question is whether the one system as a whole is more useful than the other for some particular purpose.

But marxist social theory is surely nothing like a formal mathematical system. It does not employ a set of concepts which are given strict stipulative definitions and related by stipulated axioms, with the consequent constructions of a network of meanings peculiar to the system.⁶¹

I shall comment on three issues here: the possibility and desirability of formalization, the nature of contradiction between systems, and the problem of relativity of concepts to particular systems.

First, as against Watt, I would assert that marxist social theory, and any adequately formulated theory is precisely like a formal mathematical system. In fairness to Watt, I must agree that it is rarely

formulated as such (though see certain work in marxist economics). In principle it can and should be, with axioms and theorems. Like Quine (whom, presumably, Watt would count among reputable recent epistemologists) and other regimentalists in philosophy, I think that epistemic progress in any field is enhanced by formalization.⁶² The problem with most social, political and educational theory is a stubborn resistance to formalisation. Educational psychologists and sociologists, who deal in highly formalised statistical research, frequently shudder when they are confronted with a formalization of certain of their arguments, using the most elementary symbolic logic, or even an Aristotelian syllogism. Perhaps, given the curricular structure of higher education, this is understandable. But the same reaction is common among philosophers of education, and in such quarters, though perhaps understandable given the hegemony of an anti-intellectual ordinary language philosophy, it is less forgivable.

Second, there is Watt's point about whether, for example, Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometries are really contradictory, even though they contain contradictory statements using the expression "parallel lines". Let me waive the specific point about parallel lines and take up the general point about different conceptual schemes. I take it that although Watt may hold that the geometries are not really contradictory, but only different systems suited to different purposes, he does not intend to imply a general epistemological claim about all schemes and theories. That is, I take it that he agrees that certain theories' claims about the world are incompatible with the claims of other theories in the sense that not all the claims can be true; in short, I take it that Watt is an epistemological realist.

If he is, then the relevant question is whether marxism contains claims that are incompatible with the claims of other theories: perhaps those of people such as Ayn Rand. Clearly, Watt answers this question affirmatively: after all he doesn't want to accept the whole of marxism, presumably partly because he thinks, although some of it is right, some of it is wrong. For example, he thinks that "there is ample dispute about the best means of achieving a life that is in the interests of most people."⁶³

This leads to the third point. Watt is correct to reject Archer's and Stevens' sweeping claim that all "individual concepts and theses" are specific to the theoretical structures in which they are embedded", if this is taken to mean specific to competing theories in the sense that no concept in theory A can appear in theory B when A and B are incompatible. But, if this is what Archer and Stevens intend - and I think they are inconsistent on this - Watt is right, but for the wrong reasons.

Watt's reason, as we have seen, is that marxist social theory is not the relevant kind of theoretical structure, i.e. not highly formalized. But the specificity of concepts to particular contexts is not a simple function of formalization. The correct reason for disagreeing with the claim under consideration is that the doctrine of total theory-relativity of concepts and theses leads to incommensurability, which apart from being an incoherent position, makes nonsense of the theory-competition which I and Archer and Stevens (and Watt?) believe integral to epistemic progress. For theories to be incompatible, or in competition with each other, they must not only differ in some of their concepts and theses, they must also agree in some concepts and theses. I have already given grounds for assuming that Watt is not an incommensurabilist, in my suggestion that he doesn't think that the parallel lines case is typical of all cases of alternative conceptual schemes.

Indeed, of course, total theory-relativity of concepts and theses cannot apply even in those cases of highly formalized systems accepted by Watt. They all have some conceptual overlap. The need for common theoretical components for genuine theory competition has been recognised by Lakatos in his notion of "touchstone theory", a notion which I have further developed elsewhere.⁶⁴ It can be cogently argued that all rational theories and other conceptual schemes (going along, for the sake of argument, with Watt's distinction) accept, as touchstone, certain formulae of logic and mathematics, and probably other elements besides. Theories in social science all use basic sentence connectives and terms of quantification. They also, as Watt suggests, share certain substantive concepts. The tricky, but basic question is: which ones? In arguing that social theories, because they

are not highly formalized systems, share a wide range of concepts, Watt reaches a true conclusion, within a valid argument, but with false premises. (A formal point, incidentally.)

If the marxist epistemological position were stated in the terms I have suggested,⁶⁵ then the issue between Watt and the marxists more or less resolves itself into a disagreement about the claims of marxism itself, with respect to the nature and applicability of its own concepts. (Almost, but not quite, as we shall see in a moment.) Here I believe Watt is simply wrong about the concepts he mentions: those of class, interest and justice, for example. But I shall not argue the point here (nor did Watt, being content with assertion) being interested only in the epistemological issue.

The disagreement is not quite resolved in this way because Watt concedes that, in respect of “justice”, the concept in marxism “is very different from that in the competitive-individualistic ideology”. But he then goes on to claim that “even that concept is not really peculiar to marxism, and even if it were, there is so much conceptual common ground that a concept which was distinctive could be explained in terms readily intelligible outside the marxist communion.”⁶⁶

Here Watt is muddled. For there to be a competition between theories, it must be possible for at least one of the competitors to quote sentences from the other theory in order to rebut them. This presupposes that the quoting theory has the conceptual machinery to make the quotation inside its own sentences. Whether or not there is “common conceptual ground” with respect to the concepts in question is beside the point. What is needed is an extensionalist semantics, given which the issues between theories can be resolved by investigation as to whether the objects referred to by the theories exist in the world or not, and if they do, whether they behave in the way that the theories claim that they do. But if we adopt an intensionalist semantics, within which the meanings of terms are settled independently of their actual reference, then the whole weight of comparison and competition is carried, when concepts are not shared, by internal analysis of semantic relations within the respective conceptual schemes. (This is the procedure of orthodox “philosophical analysis”.) Although Archer and Stevens are not very definite on this point, I think that their exposition occasionally has unfortunate intensionalist overtones, due mainly to their althusserian epistemology,⁶⁷ and that this fits in with their unreasonable “all or nothing” approach.

If we can get such a theory-competition going, then the important steps will involve setting out, in the case of marxism, the marxist theses sufficiently clearly and precisely to be able to see what follows from them and what they are compatible with. But this requires exactly that formalization which Watt thinks is impossible in social theory.

I agree, then, with Watt that one need not always be a marxist nor a mealy-mouthed liberal to accept some parts of the other’s position. To repeat, the question is simply: which parts? When the matter is put like this, I have a feeling that Archer and Stevens might agree with me. They surely cannot be saying that marxists and liberals share no concepts and theses? We would need to go more deeply into althusserian epistemology to clarify their (perhaps unintentional) tendency towards incommensurability.

But notice that all this does not establish the falsity of holism as an epistemological position. Archer’s and Stevens version of it is defective, but their general holist instinct is sound. This is so for the same reason that social theory should be formalized and it is an epistemological reason. It is that, as asserted by the Duhem-Quine thesis, our beliefs, or those statements to which we assent, do not confront evidence and experience individually, but collectively as a body.⁶⁸ (Inductivist empiricists may reject this, of course; and in doing so they reject holism.) Our problem in gaining knowledge of the world, including how to solve our problems within it, is at bottom the problem of how to make consistent all statements to which we are inclined to give our assent, and in particular how to make our “observation statements” (which are part of what I would call touchstone theory) cohere with such axioms, theorems and analytic hypotheses as we already hold. To do this we need to construct whole chains of inference: to construct, that is, theoretical wholes.

In social matters there are obviously many conflicting sets of mutually consistent statements available for us to consider. Putting it another way, there are many competing theories. If there is a set of mutually consistent statements which Watt would like to label “eclecticism”, then this is simply one of the available theoretical options. In fact, of course, we may hold several different theories (eclectics usually do; in fact we all do) which is fine so long as they are mutually consistent and consistent with the observation statements to which we are disposed to subscribe.

One does not need to be a marxist or a liberal in such matters, but to make epistemic progress one does need to be a holist. Within the framework of a holist epistemology, one can then raise the question of whether, granted the similarities and differences, marxism or liberalism is a better theory for understanding society and promoting rational educational change.

Acknowledgements

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Notes and references

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2. Archer, R. and Stevens, P. (1979) “One Need Not Be a Marxist ... : A Marxist Response to Simons and Warren”. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 55-73.
3. Simons, M. (1981) “Radical Defeatism”, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 23-37.
4. Harris, K. (1979) *Education and Knowledge*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
5. Harris, K. (1977) “Peters on Schooling”, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 33-48. Since Harris is being mentioned as an althusserian, it should in fairness be noted that this article is not althusserian.
6. Stevens, P. (1976) “Ideology and Schooling”, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 29-42.
7. Harris, K. (1980) “Philosophers of Education: Detached Spectators or Political Practitioners?” *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 19-36.
8. Watt, A.J. (1981) “One Need Not Be A Mealy-Mouthed Liberal ... ” A Response to Archer and Stevens’ Response to Simons and Warren, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 55-63.
9. “Historical Materialism” is the theory initiated by Marx, but is not co-extensive with Marx’s writings nor with those of marxists. Marx and marxists could be, and were, wrong about the implications and productive development of certain aspects of Historical Materialism.
10. Simons, M. “Marxism, Magic and Metalanguages”, 31.
11. Simons, M. “Radical Defeatism”, 24.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Sarup gets a mention for his erroneous views on Engels. (See Sarup, M., (1978) *Marxism and Education*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London) There are many places Simons might have looked to find a more representative sample of Australian radicals: for instance, the journals *Arena*, *Intervention*, *International Socialist*, *Australian Left Review*, not to mention *Radical Education Dossier*. To go outside Australia would proliferate the sources enormously.
17. Simons, M. *op. cit.*, 30.

18. Archer, R. and Stevens, P. op. cit., 61. Stevens' article "The Struggle Against Capitalist Education", *Radical Education Dossier*, No. 5, 1978, is referred to to back this up.
19. Harris, K. *Education and Knowledge*, 188.
20. Simons, M. op. cit., 29.
21. Watt, A.J. op. cit., 60.
22. Stevens, P. "ideology and Schooling", 34.
23. Archer, R. and Stevens, P. op. cit., 58. For Harris on dialectics, see *Education and Knowledge*, 122-6.
24. Simons, M. op. cit., 25.
25. Archer, R. and Stevens, P. op. cit., 56.
26. Harris, K. op. cit., 141, quoted by Simons, op. cit., 30.
27. Stevens, P. op. cit., 39, quoted by Simons, op. cit., 23.
28. Simons op. cit., 31.
29. Ibid.
30. Harris, K. op. cit. 162
31. Bowles, S. and Gintis, R. (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*, Basic Books, New York.
32. Stevens, P. (1978) "Ideology", in O'Donnell, R., Stevens, P. and Lennie, I. (eds.) *Paper Tigers: An Introduction to the Critique of Social Theory*, Dept. of General Philosophy, Sydney University, 9.
33. See, for example, Ollman, B. (1976) *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, Second Edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, esp. 52-69.
34. Archer, R. and Stevens, P. op. cit., 58. The best place to start in the marxist literature is Ollman, B., op. cit.
35. Harris 9 K. op. cit., 122-6.
36. Some good pioneering work has been done by Willis, P.E., (1977) *Learning to Labour: How working class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*, Saxon House, Farnborough. For elaboration of the ideas sketched in the present article, see Walker, J.C., *Autonomy 2 Authority and Antagonism: A Critique of the London School in Philosophy of Education, and Ideology and Necessity* (both forthcoming).
37. See the collection edited by Hudson, W.D., (1969) *The Is/Ought Question*, Macmillan, London.
38. See, particularly, Althusser, L. (1971) *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, NLB, London. 127-186, and (1969) *For Marx*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Ch. 3.
39. Althusser, L. op. cit., Ch.7.
40. Balibar, E. (1970) "The Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism", Part III of Althusser, L. and Balibar, E., *Reading Capital*, HLB, London, 253.
41. Marx, K. (1951) *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, in Marx v K. and Engels, F., *Selected Writings*, I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 225.
42. Marx, K. (1959) *Thesis VI of Theses on Feuerbach*, in Feuer, L. S., (ed.) *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, Anchor Books, New York, 244.
43. Stevens, P. op. cit., 30 0
44. Marx, K. (1970) "Preface" to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, International Publishers. New York, 21.
45. Stevens, P. op. cit., 33.
46. Althusser, L. *For Marx*, 251, quoted by Stevens, P., op. cit.
47. Harris, K. op. cit., 64.

48. See the critique of Althusser by Callinicos, A., (1976) *Althusser's Marxism*, Pluto, London, esp. Ch. 3.
49. Stevens, P. *op. cit.*, 30.
50. Althusser, L. *op. cit.*, 9-15.
51. Althusser p L. Lenin and Philosophy, 160.
52. See the attack on this view by Quine, W.V., (1953) *From a Logical Point of View*, Harper, New York. Ch. 2 and *The Ways of Paradox and Other Essays*, 55-6, and Evers, C.W. and Walker J.C., (1982) "The Unity of Knowledge", *Access: New Directions in Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 19 No. 2.
53. Harris, K. *op. cit.*, 1.
54. Marx, M. (1974) "Circular Letter to Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke, et al." in *The First International and After*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 375.
55. It is left to Simons to outline Marx's view on the development of proletarian consciousness and forms of political organization. Simons, M. *op. cit.*, 26-28.
56. As I have argued in the case of analytic philosophy of education. See Walker p J. C., *Autonomy, Authority and Antagonism*, (*op. cit.*).
57. For the problems/solutions theory, the procedure of solving problems in our practice is a procedure of causal explanation and prediction. Not only are reasons causes, but the rational production of reasons is a process of causal inquiry.
58. See Geras, H. (1971) "Essence and Appearance in Marx's Capital", *New Left Review*, Vol. 65, 69-85, and Walker, J. C. *Ideology and Necessity* (*op. cit.*) Obviously, I do not believe the althusserians share this theory; however, the matter is complex and I am sure that they would deny this.
59. Watt, A.J. *op. cit.* 55-6.
60. Archer, R. and Stevens, P. *op. cit.*, 56, quoted by Watt, A.J., *op. cit.*, 58. Neither side is specific about what this "recent work" is, but we can assume that it includes the work of Popper, Lakatos and Feyerabend, and of course for the althusserians, Althusser.
61. Watt, A. J. *loc. cit.*
62. Quine, W.V. (1960) *Word and Object*, The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge (Mass.) Ch. 5, esp. Sect. 33, "Aims and Claims of Regimentation", 157-160, the ideas in which are undated and extended by Quine in his "Reply to Davidson", in Davidson, D. and Hintikka, J., (eds.) (1969), *Words and Objections* Reidel, Dordrecht, esp. 333-4.
63. Watt, A. J. *loc. cit.*
64. See Evers, C.W. and Walker, J. C. *op. cit.*
65. The project of elaborating historical materialism through a quinean logic and epistemology is as yet novel, but has received recent support in McClellan, J. E. (1981) "First Philosophy and Education" in Soltis, J. E. (ed.) *Philosophy and Education*, (N.S.S.E. Yearbook, 1981) Chicago, 284.
66. Watt, A.J. *op. cit.*, 59.
67. See, e.g., Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. *op. cit.*, Part II, Ch. 6
68. Duhem, P. (1954) Chapter VI of *The Aims and Structure of Physical Theory*, translated by Philip Wiener, Princeton, Princeton University Press, as reprinted in Harding, S. G. (ed.) (1976) *Can Theories Be Refuted?*, Reidel, Dordrecht, esp. 1-11. (Duhem's book was originally published in French in 1906). See also Quine, W.V., *From a Logical Point of View*, (*op. cit.*), 41.