WAYS OF SEEING EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN LATIN AMERICA:
A Phenomenographic Perspective

Rolland G. Paulston
University of Pittsburgh

MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: THE BRAZILIAN EXPERIENCE. By Dole A. Anderson. Latin American Monograph Series, Michigan State University. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1987. Pp. 205. $36.50.)

EDUCATION AND REVOLUTION IN NICARAGUA. By Robert Arnove. (New York: Praeger, 1986. Pp. 160. $35.00.)

TEACHING CHILDREN OF THE POOR: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN LATIN AMERICA. Edited by Beatrice Avalos. Published in English and Spanish. (Ottawa, Ont.: International Development Research Centre, 1986. Pp. 175.)

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSITION IN THE THIRD WORLD. By Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff, with Mary A. Burris, Anton Johnston, and Carlos A. Torres. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990. Pp. 410. $49.50 cloth, $14.00 paper.)

LOW-COST PRIMARY EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTING AN INNOVATION IN SIX NATIONS. By William K. Cummings. (Ottawa, Ont.: International Development Research Centre, 1986. Pp. 126.)

LEARNING TO QUESTION: A PEDAGOGY OF LIBERATION. By Paulo Freire and Antonio Faundez. (New York: Continuum, 1989. Pp. 142. $16.95 paper.)

UNDERSTANDING EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN GLOBAL CONTEXT: ECONOMY, IDEOLOGY, AND THE STATE. Edited by Mark Ginsburg. (New York: Greenwood, 1991. Pp. 402. $36.00.)

WE MAKE THE ROAD BY WALKING: CONVERSATIONS ON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE. By Myles Horton and Paulo Freire. (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1990. Pp. 256. $25.00.)

NONFORMAL EDUCATION AND THE POOR IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: STABILITY, REFORM, OR REVOLUTION? By Thomas J. La Belle. (New York: Praeger, 1986. Pp. 384. $36.95.)

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIES AND DECISIONS IN CEN-

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TRAL AMERICA. By Sylvain Lourié. (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 1989. Pp. 202. $20.00 paper.)

MOVIMENTOS POPULARES: A ESCOLA COMUNITARIA E A CIDADANIA. Edited by Maria S. Peixoto. (Bahia: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 1990. Pp. 178.)

NEZAHUALPILLI: EDUCACION PREESCOLAR COMUNITARIA. By Jorge Pérez Alarcón, Lola Abiega, Margarita Zarco, and Daniel Schugurensky. (Mexico City: Centro de Estudios Educativos, 1986, Pp. 271.)

THE POLITICS OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA. By Carlos Alberto Torres. (New York: Praeger, 1990. Pp. 180. $42.95.)

HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA: ISSUES OF EFFICIENCY AND EQUITY. By Donald R. Winkler. (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1990. Pp. 147. $10.95.)

How might one choose a knowledge-framing perspective to characterize discourse representing a wide variety of inquiry communities, as with the fourteen books to be assessed in this review? An examination of prior issues of *LARR* and related journals suggested several possibilities. A few of what Richard Rorty calls "strong poets" continue to stand fast on the heights of Olympian orthodoxy and apply a standard of privileged truth, with a capital T.[1] In contrast, a growing number of warriors following the paradigm of Thomas Kuhn choose heterodoxy and proclaim a new Truth over an old one on the agonistic plain.[2] A third group, small but growing in number, bypass both orthodoxy and heterodoxy for the bazaar, for a more heterogeneous research-framing perspective that rejects centering structures and accepts juxtaposition of discontinuous images and worldviews that contradict as well as complement (see Feyerabend 1981; Galtung 1990; Little 1991; Lyotard 1988; Paulston 1990a, 1990b; and Roth 1987).

The first two orientations to knowledge seek completeness, a closed system of knowledge, a rational "whole" beyond logical contestation or revision. A heterogeneous orientation, in contrast, is ecumenical and polyocular. It is concerned more with discourse than with substantive issues; its attention focuses more on the presentation of discourse than on "fixing" or predetermining conclusions. A heterogeneous orientation is

1. For examples of historical materialist orthodoxy, see Dobriananov (1986) and Youngman (1986). For exemplary positivist orthodoxy, see Laudan (1977), Salmon (1984), and Psacharopoulos (1990).

2. Here anti-positivist and anti-patriarchal examples are numerous. Some of the best are Kuhn (1970), Geertz (1983), Harding (1986, 1987), and Jansen (1990). Whereas orthodoxy is oblivious of its own negation, heterodoxy denies its opposite. Feminist research, for example, makes its most valuable contribution by revealing the importance of what has been left out. Its greatest liability is in coming to terms with what it leaves out. For a recent argument for epistemological holism that denies patriarchal positivism, see Vandra Masemann, "Ways of Knowing in Comparative Education," *Comparative Education Review* 34, no. 4 (1990):465–73. For an artful defense of global social transformation versus the "pastiche" of postmodernity, see Alex Callinicos, *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990).

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also concerned with "rules of engagement" and, to the extent that room is left for cultural diversity and local self-determination, the value of incompleteness (Walzer 1990). Although methodological pluralism or a critical and pragmatic research-framing approach rejects the notion of "one proper set of rules" for defining social process, it is neither neutral nor simply epistemological nihilism (see Walzer 1990). Such an approach views all knowledge as inescapably fallible, opposes fundamentalist arguments, and embraces paralogy (the counterlogical). This approach also recognizes that values and preferences regarding knowledge arise from standards, practices, and experiences as well as from the effects of history and power. Johan Galtung's rationale expresses this point well: "We should learn to enjoy the pluralism inherent in our task, to understand better the human condition, both in its empirical manifestations and in its latent potentials. For that we have to be polyglot, not only in the languages of the societies we study but also in the languages we use to comprehend what we study. If we can learn foreign languages and translate from one into the other, so can we do with social science metalanguages, and with intellectual styles" (Galtung 1990, 111).

Having chosen heterogeneity, how then to proceed? A phenomenographic approach as proposed by Ference Marton is one possibility and will be used here to type research approaches and determine how various authors have sought to understand the phenomenon of Latin American education and social change. The basic idea of phenomenography is that a phenomenon can be experienced or conceptualized in a limited number of qualitatively different ways, and it is the task of phenomenography to map these possible understandings. Ways of seeing—the various ways that researchers have presented the world—will be identified for each text by using horizontal and vertical dimensions to produce four categories of research-framing orientation. I have chosen two dimensions, ontology (the nature and relations of being) as the horizontal axis and axiology (or valuing of change) as the vertical axis, in attempting to capture the essential and most distinctive aspects of the texts. The attempt being made here is, via a reflexive turn, to "map" ways of seeing and thinking about the topic, not to describe things "as they are" (see Marton 1988, 181–83). Employing these dimensions, four ways of seeing are derived and used to organize the review: the structuralist-functionalist (a realist view of reality and a preference for incremental social change); the radical functionalist (a historical materialist view of reality combined with advocacy of transformative social change); the interpretive (a relativist view of reality and an orientation toward incremental cultural change); and the radical interpretive (a critical-relativist view of reality combined with advocacy of transformative change in consciousness via negative dialectics).[3]

3. On earlier multidimensional attempts to type paradigms and theories of education and

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A phenomenographic approach accepts the indeterminacy of translation between different research languages. Categories are textually derived and not imposed by prior ideological or theoretical determination. And they are useful to the extent that they can uncover deep-seated assumptions and principles in the texts and accept and reflect their variety.

Regardless of their orientations toward knowledge, all recent studies of Third World education agree that costs have greatly increased, pupil performance has declined, and education has not been able to maintain its share of national budgets.[4] The situation is especially severe in Latin America, where crushing debt, an oppressive status quo, and the decline of modernization and dependency theories have provoked the debate found in the texts reviewed here. How do the authors view the crisis in Latin American education? What are perceived as its origins and effects, and what can be done?[5]

Structural-Functionalist Views

Structural-functionalist and radical functionalist texts share a realist ontology—the acceptance of objective structures and conditions and a belief in universals and foundational knowledge, or Truth. Both approaches are concerned with the quest for nomothetic (lawful) knowledge and believe in the possibility of progress. But whereas functionalists most often use positivist philosophy and empirical scientific methods, radical functionalists use variations of Marxist social science and historical materialist (or dialectical materialist) approaches.

Jon Elster and Anthony Giddens have provided some useful categories for describing and typing research that employs functionalist arguments.[6] Both contend that functional analysis (explaining causes by effects) has long been the dominant form of sociological explanation. Elster

social change, see my *Conflicting Theories of Social and Educational Change* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Center for International Studies, 1976); Burrell and Morgan (1979); and Paulston and Tidwell (1992).

4. For an account of explosive expansion in international education during the past two decades, see *Teachers and Teaching in the Developing World,* edited by Val D. Rust and Per Dalin (New York: Garland, 1990).

5. Two earlier *LARR* reviews might be noted. Virginia Leonard framed her review essay in a historical-functionalist perspective in which national system dysfunctions (like poverty, debt, excessive population growth, economic stagnation, military expenditures, and rigid bureaucracies) were perceived as undercutting the efficiency of educational programs. See Leonard (1988). In another review essay, Daniel Levy typed authors' policy prescriptions and placed them on a political spectrum ranging from the "Marxist left" to "moderate reform." He calls for small, practical policy alternatives tied to "political feasibility and empirical research." See Levy (1984).

6. See Jon Elster, "Marxism, Functionalism, and Game Theory: The Case of Methodological Individualism," *Theory and Society* 11 (1982):453–82; and in the same issue, Anthony Giddens, "Commentary on the Debate," 527–39.

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identifies three variants. The "weak functional paradigm," also known as the "black box" or "invisible hand" paradigm, asserts that those initiating an institutional or behavioral pattern may receive unintended or unforeseen benefits. This paradigm provides no explanation of the effort at change that has these consequences, which is to say that no causal mechanism is specified. In Elster's "main functional paradigm," latent functions of an institution, project, or behavior explain the presence of that institution or behavior. Finally, in his "strong functional paradigm," all projects or institutions or behaviors have a function that explains their presence.

Giddens draws three more distinctions: "covert functionalism," as exemplified by the works of Louis Althusser and Nicos Poulantzas, who refuse functionalist labeling but use functionalist arguments; "naive overt functionalism," as in the work of Robert Merton, where "manifest function" substitutes for explanation; and "sophisticated overt functionalism" à la Claus Offe, which seeks to demonstrate some sort of mechanism or causal rules whereby the consequences of a social practice are shown to react back on that practice.

In using these categories to assess the studies in the following sections on functionalist and radical functionalist views, I will demonstrate that all of them share to varying degrees the assumption that the unintended or unanticipated consequences of efforts at educational and social change explain their existence in some way. In a similar manner, both views seek to demonstrate that social structures impinge on and influence efforts at educational change. In the structural-functionalist texts, research typically ignores process at the individual level to codify instead complex empirical regularities. In the radical functionalist texts, research most often seeks to derive social facts from various a priori theories. Functional as well as structural theory promises explanation based on regularities deriving from human agency. But as Daniel Little (1991) demonstrates, the causal mechanism is rarely specified.

In *Low-Cost Primary Education*, William Cummings presents an example of the "black box" or weak functional paradigm in describing Project IMPACT (Instructional Management by Parents, Community, and Teachers) in six developing countries, including Jamaica. Begun in 1974 in the Philippines and Indonesia, this project sought to provide improved educational management and productivity at lower costs, especially in isolated rural schools.

Rejecting the conventional educational delivery system that "requires more resources per student as it expands into less developed areas," IMPACT experimenters built six different national projects with varying support from INNOTECH (a Southeast Asian organization promoting innovation and technology), U.S. AID, the World Bank, and the Canadian International Development Research Centre. Goals of reducing costs and dropouts and improving quality were sought by four means: radically

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increasing the student-teacher ratio to upwards of 150 to 1 and shifting savings into more classroom materials and instructional guides; reducing bureaucratic obstacles by using community resources, volunteers, and student tutors; reducing the cost of scarce instructional materials via self-instruction modules, pupil worksheets, and radio instruction; and upgrading quality via integrated instruction, longer class periods, programmed learning, differential pacing, peer tutoring, and similar methods.

Case-study assessments carried out in 1983 indicate that this international effort at complex educational innovation had widely mixed results in achieving project goals. Programs in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Bangladesh met with rural community approval. But they were not institutionalized due to opposition from teacher unions, educational bureaucracies, and political opponents who viewed IMPACT as just another form of coercion, a new mode of cultural imperialism. Cummings, while supportive of the project's goals, acknowledges the political naiveté and overemphasis on technical issues that "blinded experimenters" early on. He now advocates a reorientation away from implementing the project and toward studying the process, along with a greater appreciation of the complex effects of innovation within the affected systems. But he makes no mention of how critical or interpretive views of what happened might inform important political and ethical issues raised (but not examined) by his book. Cummings claims, "At the beginning of the IMPACT project, there was no clear theory" (p. 108). Nor, apparently, has he been able to come to terms with the projects' continued framing according to systems theory. Thus in his attempt to explain why the Jamaican project "was least successful" (a failure), he cites causes like confusion over objectives, lack of political will, and excessively complex inputs. All these observations may be accurate, but this unreflective nonassessment masks Cummings's ethical and value orientations, and it does not consider the relevant evaluative discourse concerning related projects, discourse that is widely available but unfortunately ignored.[7]

Of all Third World areas, Latin America has experienced the great-

7. For related efforts to recast technicistic educational planning into an orientation more like a contingency puzzle, an orientation that acknowledges possible cultural and political obstacles to smooth implementation of top-down change, see Dennis Rondinelli, John Middleton, and Adrian Verspoor, *Planning Educational Reforms in Developing Countries: A Contingency Approach* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), 182. The authors argue a neofunctionalist line that planners must understand the political context of efforts at educational change because without political support, project implementation and viability will be problematic at best. Yet these authors also note that "World Bank staff with technical expertise are uncomfortable doing political assessments" (p. 56). Rondinelli et al. focus on power in project management and implementation but unfortunately ignore the larger politics of social class, gender, and ethnicity as well as the question of who benefits from development projects. For an excellent study of UNESCO's policy and planning responses to failures in development education, see Phillip W. Jones, *International Policies for Third World Education: UNESCO, Literacy, and Development* (London: Routledge, 1988).

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est degree of direct transfer of the U.S. business school model through formal contracts for technical assistance. Beginning in the 1960s, U.S. AID in collaboration with U.S. business schools founded schools in Somoza's Managua with Harvard University, in Cali, Colombia, with Syracuse University and Georgia Tech, in Medellín with the University of Georgia, in Lima with Stanford, and in Caracas with Northwestern and the Ford Foundation. Most of these and similar organizations are autonomous institutions unaffiliated with local universities, yet they remain closely tied to a Latin American regional association of business school deans. Most business schools offer postgraduate degrees for middle managers and face ongoing difficulties in making imported teaching materials and U.S. case methods relevant to Latin American business environments.

Dole Anderson's *Management Education in Developing Countries* examines attempts to transfer the U.S. business school model to Brazil. He concludes that U.S. efforts to export modern personnel practices linked with technical assistance failed miserably because modernization did not fit the needs of a traditional bureaucracy. U.S. business practices, Anderson claims, took hold only in the private industrial sector and then only in the most modern setting (São Paulo). There U.S. AID founded what were eventually to become two leading centers for national training, one with technical assistance from the University of Southern California and the other with support from Michigan State. These two "flagships" and their efforts to develop the disciplines of public administration and business education in Brazil are the focus of Anderson's institutional analysis, which uses surveys of graduates, faculty, and employees. He concludes that although efforts at building institutions have been able to replicate the U.S. model, the schools remain outside national business and organizational culture. Links between employers and the Brazilian political community are limited, and the absence of traditions of public service and philanthropy make fund-raising difficult. Patriarchal management in Brazil resists notions of "scientific" professional management, and no networks exist (like those in the United States) to facilitate the flow of ideas, graduates, and resources from theory-oriented schools to local business organizations. Anderson contends that an unintended result has been the institutionalizing of a management education that is in many ways "dysfunctional" in terms of important structural and cultural elements. How are these transplants to survive without endowments or significant national support for public and business administration? Anderson concludes that private schools of administration have "too much freedom" to expand enrollments and that control of "diploma mills," along with increased attention to student concerns, is required. He would also like to see a bigger role for the Brazilian government and for corporate funding. But as to the larger theoretical issues of institutional transfer and viability in socioeconomic, cultural, and historical context, Anderson's descriptive

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systems view is incapable of perceiving or explaining beyond the weak functional paradigm.

Here *Management Education in Developing Countries* would have benefited greatly from a broader, more comparative analysis that would identify related efforts in Brazil to build institutions using U.S. models. Graham Howell, for example, has provided a relevant study of just such a related institution-building effort (Howell 1984). The Escola Superior de Guerra (Advanced War College) founded in 1949 united the Brazilian military elite with leading citizens from business, Catholic, education, and civil-service sectors to participate in courses and form a military reserve with officer status in the event of a national emergency. U.S. influence in the ESG has been reinforced by frequent Brazilian staff visits to U.S. military and industrial installations as guests of the U.S. government. Perhaps most influential for Howell has been the theoretical compatibility between the positivist orientation of the Brazilian military and the structural functionalism of the U.S. advisors. Both groups view Brazilian society as a structure subject to laws analogous to those that govern the functioning of biological organisms; and both perceive the concept of public order as fundamental for living organisms and societies (Howell 1984, 23). Had Anderson compared the results of several varieties of cold war institutional transfer from the United States to Brazil, he would have been better able to address the issue of causal mechanisms. Although such an approach would require an expanded study, it would also help the author shift into a more active tense and away from functionalist preference for the passive.

To avoid the problems perceived as accompanying a narrow systems view of educational research and development (such as technical rationality, linearity, and "black box" vision), Sylvain Lourié framed *Education and Development: A Study of Educational Reform Efforts in Central America* in a more interactive framework that examines the behavior of actors (educational administrators) in a structural and cultural context. Lourié acknowledges his own subjectivity and the fact that his history of efforts at reform is interpretation, not science. He has also incorporated evaluative comments on his study—some of them critical—from leading "actors" in the Latin American educational world. Coming from a UNESCO humanistic background, Lourié sets out to share with the reader the limitations of his initially "skewed view" from the angle of an educational planner by describing how the requirements of a five-year assessment forced him during his stay "to shift to the more evasive instruments of sociology and political science" (p. 5).

Lourié views "forces" from the position of the planner or decision maker. Upstream forces are contextural, political, sociocultural, and financial. Downstream forces operate in the locus of implementation, in the educational bureaucracy or at the site of innovation. Forces operate

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through vectors or actors within the constraints of structures, functions, and the responsibility to produce educational products. How effective is this way of viewing efforts at reform in six Central American republics? Lourié uses Michael Crozier's and Edgar Friedberg's metaphor of the game as a human construct to integrate without reconciling the contradictory egotistic strategy of the administrator-actor and "the final coherence of the system" (how actors use either a "breakdown" or negotiation strategy).[8] A breakdown relies on authority and power to isolate or intimidate, as in union negotiations. A negotiation strategy, in contrast, operates from weakness, from a need to maintain a presence and ensure survival. Lourié also introduces the criteria of satisfaction, the ethic of responsibility, and consciousness of time as means of assessing possibilities of change.

Yet Lourié falls back on functionalist "explanation" in his conclusions regarding Costa Rica and Panama: urbanization and a middle class "are the guarantee of a stable education in which innovations will remain limited." He perceives both systems as being in a state of "stable equilibrium." Guatemala and Honduras, in contrast, remain "static and out of date with blocked, or fixed, equilibrium." Lourié characterizes El Salvador, despite its prolonged near civil war, as being in a state of dynamic equilibrium. Nicaragua, which has tried to replace the fragmentary and elitist education of the past with a new free and open schooling to serve a new populist society, Lourié describes some two years after the revolution as being in a state of "stable" or "healthy disequilibrium." But even if one may question Lourié's types or the value of his conclusions as to readiness for national reform, he lays out his criteria clearly, examines his assumptions, and succeeds in demonstrating in an exemplary way the value of his reflective and contexturalized way of seeing.

Lourié has chosen an interactive perspective to examine how actors come to make policy choices within a matrix of structures and values. Donald Winkler, however, has chosen the more traditional structural-functionalist lens for viewing issues of efficiency and equity in *Higher Education in Latin America*. This study's importance goes beyond its copi-

8. See Edgar Friedberg, *Actors and Systems: The Politics of Collective Action* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1980). An outstanding related study using a somewhat similar perspective may be found in Joseph P. Farrell, *The National United School in Allende's Chile* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986). Farrell's effort to explain why the Allende government sought radical educational reform and to account for the devastating effect of the reform proposal on the regime's political destiny yields a two-part analysis. One part examines the internal decision-making structure and process in the Chilean education ministry as a reflection of political infighting. The other part of the analysis situates education in a larger sociopolitical context at the time of the reform debates. Farrell offers his history as an interpretation, an attempt to open up the "black box" of decision making by viewing history as "decisions taken by individuals whose actions are shaped and constrained, but not determined, by their circumstances and positions within the spectrums of power and ideology within a society" (p. 4). Thus Farrell chose an interactive way of viewing a reform disaster.

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ous statistical update: for the first time, a major World Bank study of problems in Latin American higher education devotes considerable attention to issues of equity. Winkler's recommendations for public policies to increase low-income groups' access to schooling and to improve the distribution of public subventions for higher education include financial aid to lower-income students, improved academic preparation in primary and secondary schools, pricing of higher education contingent on income, and adaptive class hours for working students. While these "strategies" may pass muster in terms of economic rationality, they appear idealistic and even simplistic given the reality of poor peoples' lives, continuing structured inequality, and social-class disadvantage. Moreover, although Winkler is quick to note "successful examples" of improved system efficiency (all in the private sector), he does not mention Cuban and Nicaraguan successes in actually making higher education more open, equitable, and efficient via attempts to construct revolutionary societies that are committed to redistribution and human solidarity.[9]

Relying largely on statistical reports from education ministries, studies by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, the *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook*, and similar sources, Winkler's study nevertheless provides a valuable if incomplete compilation of baseline data capable of supporting generalization concerning policy options. The core problems he identifies are by now familiar: a tenfold increase in higher education enrollments in Latin America between 1960 and 1985, and a declining share of government spending that has led to reduced faculty salaries and instructional materials. While the quality of instruction and research in public institutions has been declining, the private sector in higher education has expanded and grown stronger. Findings from Winkler's partial analysis of internal and external efficiency, equity, finance, and research productivity are used to support the World Bank's current strategy of seeking to improve the efficiency of higher education in three ways: innovations to reduce instructional costs, increased cost recovery, and the use of performance criteria in resource allocations. But as has been demonstrated in Fernando Reimers's far more comprehensive analysis of the "culture of cuts" in Latin America, concern with the inefficiencies of higher education largely misses the point.[10] As

9. Even Eusebio Mujal-León in his bitter attack on Castroism in Cuban higher education has acknowledged that "there have been advances in the extension of educational opportunities for Cubans, especially for those who live in the countryside and among the members of the working class. Enrollments have increased and so, apparently, have expenditures for primary, secondary, and university education." See Mujal-León, *The Cuban University under the Revolution* (Washington, D.C.: Cuban American National Foundation, 1988), 47. Winkler, in contrast, seems oblivious of Cuban achievements. For a historical assessment, see Rolland G. Paulston and Cathy Kaufman, "Educational Reform in Cuba," in *International Handbook of Educational Reform*, edited by Peter Cookson (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1992).

10. See Fernando Reimers, "The Role of Organization and Politics in Government Financ-

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Winkler himself notes, even during the 1960s and 1970s, when spending on the poor was expanding, "the primary beneficiaries were the middle classes" (p. 14). Today basic education is even less protected from "the adjustment process," of which Winkler's study is an integral part.

The rise and fall of nonformal education (outside schools) as a First World strategy for bypassing perceived dysfunctions in Third World formal schools (especially those in Latin America) are covered in rich detail by Thomas La Belle in *Nonformal Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.* His review of the literature annotates 226 publications, many from obscure Latin American sources, in identifying and categorizing recent efforts at nonformal education as part of attempts to effect social, economic, and political change. La Belle identifies three strategies, which he assesses in terms of their instrumentality in "promoting the well-being of the poor" (a research priority of the Inter-American Foundation, which funded the study). Human-capital approaches to nonformal education are perceived by La Belle as associated with equilibrium theory and modernization strategies, and with government ministries and U.S. capitalism, U.S. AID, the World Bank, and major U.S. foundations. This approach requires a "top-down" organization and seeks to "develop" the rural and urban poor via skills training in agriculture and industry, political socialization, and tightly controlled self-help projects.

Popular education, which La Belle considers to be an alternative to human-capital nonformal education, is divided into two types. One often associated with nongovernmental organizations seeks innovations and reforms within existing economic and political systems by using consciousness-raising education in the tradition of Paulo Freire and the Educación de Base, which draws on liberation theology. The other kind of popular nonformal education in revolutionary movements seeks structural transformation, as in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Cuba.

La Belle's evaluative reading of the texts uses the "strong functional paradigm" in contending that independent capitalist countries maintain oppressive structures that thwart both human-capital and popular education efforts to better the lot of the poor. Although many poor individuals viewed as potential "human resources" have made heroic efforts to secure new skills in literacy or job training, inequitable distribution of power

ing of Education: The Effects of Structural Adjustment in Latin America," *Comparative Education* 27, no. 1 (1991):35–50. The question for Reimers is "whether the debt crisis can also change organizational and political systems in such a way that efficiency and equity stand a chance" (p. 49). In a perceptive review of recent World Bank country studies in Latin America, David Plank makes a serious critique of the bank's "parochialism [and] increasingly closed and cramped intellectual universe," its leaving out the political context in which decisions on social spending are made, and the growing "divergence between their research findings and their policy decisions." See Plank, "Three Reports by the World Bank," *Economics of Education Review* 11, no. 2 (1991).

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and resources have largely denied them the chance to manifest these new skills in a way that will enhance their societal position and rewards (p. 243). In the revolutionary approach, La Belle finds that nonformal education has contributed significantly to revolutionary struggle and to the creation of more equitable postrevolutionary societies. But the costs are high, and the outcomes of the revolutionary choice are dangerously unpredictable. Accordingly, current nonformal-education efforts in countries like Brazil, Chile, Columbia, and Mexico are increasingly taking place in the popular education tradition, in survival efforts to organize poor communities and to provide programmatic responses in lieu of declining or nonexisting government services in education, health, and social welfare.[11] La Belle concludes that the attractiveness of such incrementalist popular education "may be related to the dismal record of human-capital programs and the avoidance of more radical clandestine efforts, both of which leave little room for those who have been repressed to participate realistically in their own development. In other words, there is a feeling that avoidance of what has not worked and placing confidence in what might work in some distant future may be the best hope given the alternatives" (p. 214).

La Belle's *Nonformal Education in Latin America and the Caribbean* is a welcome addition to Latin American educational studies as a reference tool and also as another manifestation of neofunctional analysis that recognizes structured inequality, conflict, and the legitimacy of collective action. Yet the value of this original work is diminished by several problems. One is La Belle's unreflective treatment of textual materials. He says nothing about his role in selecting the texts or about his aims and rationale in using them. Accordingly, La Belle falls into what Wexler calls the trap of "textualism," in which the text is viewed as having an objective reality while its existence as historical artifact with its own social historicity is not recognized. More serious is La Belle's positivism in choosing to view the literature as a mirror of reality, as a proxy capable of supporting functionalist analysis that offers policy implications. A third problem follows from his omission of relevant textual materials on the successful use of popular education in social movements. This omission seriously skews his database in playing the game of facts and policy recommendations.[12]

11. Guy Gran contends that a number of grass-roots education programs for the poor in Latin America have achieved notable success despite hostile environments. Twelve factors supporting such efforts in Bolivia, Haiti, Nicaragua, Mexico, Panama, and Uruguay are identified and discussed in Gran, *Learning from Development Success: Some Lessons from Contemporary Case Histories,* Working Paper no. 9 (Washington, D.C.: School of International Service, American University, 1983).

12. See, for example, Frank Adams, *Unearthing Seeds of Fire: The Idea of Highlander* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: Blair, 1976). This work describes the contributions of nonformal education to labor, community, and civil rights movements. See also Paulston, *Other Dreams, Other Schools* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981); and Paulston, "Education as Anti-

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This failure to recognize the extensive theoretical and case-study literature on nonformal education in reformist social movements leaves La Belle with a preponderance of texts incorporating either human-capital (equilibrium) or Marxist (revolutionary) perspectives. This distortion leads directly to the overly pessimistic conclusions already cited.

As the social science disciplines move fitfully from natural science to literary methodologies, scholars must take care not to impose positivist assumptions on textual interpretation. In this regard, La Belle's analysis also provides a good example of the dangers of conflated epistemology.

Radical Functionalist Views

Authors and works adopting this perspective view education from functionalist perspectives while advocating the necessity of social revolution to eliminate capitalism and build socialism. As Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff express this approach in their substantial new book, *Education and Social Transition in the Third World,* "our aim is . . . to compare educational change itself across societies, and to analyze whether and why education develops differently in societies that seek to make a transition from capitalism to socialism" (p. 3). As overt and sophisticated functionalists, they argue that the state—not the economic system—provides the dynamic in revolutionary societies, that politics, much more than the relations of production, drives social development. Politics as the "causal" link is examined in five case studies on China, Cuba, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Nicaragua. Carnoy's scholarly assessment of the Cuban case documents the success of revolutionary structural transformation, or how Cuban educational policy has come to set "a standard for educational expansion and reform in other third world countries, particularly in Latin America" (p. 154). This masterly account of the revolution's greatest success story is the best yet published. Carnoy nevertheless concludes that despite revolutionary achievements, the mechanism that would secure a transition to socialism is missing. Three decades of Fidelismo with the state monopolizing truth, power, and correct consciousness have created economic inefficiency and apathy among workers and students. To wit, "Serious questioning of policy and bottom-up influence on political leaders is relatively absent, so much so that there is little motivation to exert undue energy in being innovative and highly productive, not only in politics, but in other aspects of daily life. Without such openness in the larger

Structure: Nonformal Education in Social and Ethnic Movements," *Comparative Education* (Oxford) 16, no. 1 (1980):55–66. For more recent applications of this research-framing perspective, see Richard Altenbaugh, *Education for Struggle* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1990); and Patricia Petherbridge-Hernández, "Reconceptualizing Liberating Nonformal Education: A Catalan Case Study," *Compare* 10, no. 1 (1990):41–52.

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political system, the influence of collective socialization in Cuban schools is necessarily muted . . ." (p. 192).

The teleological message of *Education and Social Transition in the Third World* is that the five countries examined are "in transition," progressing along some crooked evolutionary path from capitalism to socialism. This message becomes even more dubious in the chapter on Nicaragua by Carnoy and Carlos Alberto Torres. The authors ask two questions: "Why were educational changes such an important issue for the Sandinistas?" and "What political and social forces influenced these changes?" (p. 315). By using a study of "forces," the content of revolutionary education is again "explained" by its function, which is to help sustain a politics and an economy of a particular kind (i.e., the superstructure protects the base). The Sandinistas, like the Fidelistas (and one might include the authors as certified *vanguardistas*) are viewed as having emerged triumphant from epochal conflict as the class (of intellectuals) best-suited for and capable of presiding over the development of politics and productive forces at a given time. Saying nothing about individual behavior, Carnoy and Torres focus instead on the forces and relations constraining and directing collective behavior. Thus the level of "development" or evolution of the political and productive forces in a society is considered to determine as well as explain the corresponding structures and behaviors, a classical historical materialist representation.[13] G. A. Cohen also argues in this regard that "the central claims of historical materialism are functional or consequence explanations where something is explained by its propensity to have a certain kind of effect" (p. 27).

Interestingly, Carnoy and Torres note that Sandinista emphasis on popular or non-public-school education placed a great deal of responsibility for educational decision making and real power in the hands of local branches of mass organizations. Although this partial decentralization of political power certainly helped transform what the authors characterize as Nicaragua's "conditioned capitalist society," it also strengthened mass-organization opposition to the continuing—if then revolutionary—bureaucratic form of public education.

As noted, international donors since the 1970s have sought to bypass Latin American formal schools with educational intervention programs linked directly to industry and agriculture. Why have these efforts been viewed as largely unsuccessful? Why do national governments continue to favor the formal school systems at the expense of adult education

13. For a brilliant defense of functionalism in Marxist argument, see G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defense* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978). For an orthodox rejection of Elster's "empirical-causal" turn, see Cohen, "Functional Explanation, Consequence Explanation, and Marxism," *Inquiry* 25, no. 1 (1982):27-56. Cohen argues, "Since functional explanation cannot be removed from the center of historical materialism, game theory cannot be installed there in its stead" (p. 33).

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efforts to teach dropouts and young adults who did not attend formal schools? These and related questions are addressed by Carlos Alberto Torres with his formidable analytical skills in *The Politics of Nonformal Education in Latin America.* Martin Carnoy provides ideological guidance in a foreword entitled "How Should We Study Adult Education?" His answer is by means of a "research agenda" that illuminates "this dialectical interaction between structure and history—between the attempt by the state to impose a history on workers and peasants and the struggles of these groups to make history" (p. xv).

Here Carnoy employs the strong functional paradigm along with a conspiratorial worldview that perceives all educational activities as benefiting the capitalist class and these benefits explaining their presence. Torres then demonstrates how major types of Latin American adult education controlled by the "conditioned capitalist state" serve and benefit the capitalist class, even when dominant ideological institutions are "capable of masking the character of the state's function" (p. 27). In analyzing the Latin American experience, Torres explains why adult education has played such a marginal role in public policy formation: because it "lacks correspondence with the model of capital accumulation and political domination" (p. 33). He cites Mexico as a case in point. Yet case studies of revolutionary adult education in "transition to socialism" (Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada) are not developed well and even raise serious doubts about the strong paradigm explanation chosen (p. 67). As Torres acknowledges, "In socialist societies, adult education seems to fulfill similar roles as in conditioned capitalist societies: The main difference is that the fit between adult education and the labor market is much tighter" (p. 100). Torres's study then turns quickly from "transitional" cases to an extended theoretical-methodological discussion of how and why his historical materialist hypothesis "needs to be addressed" (p. 148).

Brilliantly argued at times, *The Politics of Nonformal Education in Latin America* is an exemplary radical functionalist text flawed by a number of problems and omissions. For example, in his implicit search for nomothetic (lawful) regularities, Torres avoids the subject of adult education in practice and lapses into theoretical idealism. The understanding that empirical analysis or validation might falsify his teleological project (as in Cohen's work) is nowhere apparent. Torres also confuses typology, conflates terms, and omits much relevant literature to support his ideologically driven structuralist "correct theory." Also left out of his analysis is any consideration of gender, whether as an aspect of the capitalist dynamic or in the growing literature on women in development.

It is to be hoped that after this demonstration of theoretical power-lifting Torres can now turn to more policy-oriented concerns. He notes the "challenge of scale," which implies a concern for the comparability of micro experience versus macro and the transferability of lessons learned

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from the individual group to the level of systems. Such an approach suggests a number of interesting questions and would afford opportunities to forge links with practice and action, a serious omission in *The Politics of Nonformal Education.* Marxist studies, with the shift from being sacred text to just another research tool in constructing social science theory, are undergoing a painful and radical transformation that is not yet apparent in this book. For example, Jon Elster (1985) advocates rehabilitation via analytical Marxism, by using an approach favoring game theory that draws on empirical methodological individualism. Nancy Fraser (1989) calls for a feminist turn capable of perceiving the patriarchal grounding of Marxist metanarrative. Mark Poster (1990) argues for a poststructural neo-Marxism that moves beyond passé arguments about mode of production to a mode of information view that is equally functionalist yet more appropriate to the emerging world electronic community. Finally, Jürgen Habermas (1991) brings the work of George Herbert Mead to bear on Marx because "Mead's social psychology . . . clears the way for a communication concept of reality . . . where intersubjective relations are seen from the perspective of the participants themselves" (p. 151).

Several recent studies in Latin American research might also be cited in this turning away from an orthodox Marxism that views history as destiny. Robert Arnove's *Education and Revolution in Nicaragua* provides an excellent account of attempts to create a Sandinista revolutionary educational practice after four decades of education under the Somoza family dictatorship. Arnove's perspective is more dialectical in focusing on the constraints facing educational policymakers that arise from history, the cold war, and economic dependency. He interprets gross contradictions as part and consequence of radical change in an impoverished and conflicted setting. His firsthand view perceives populist revolutionary education not as theory-driven but more as a struggle to alter consciousness and jointly construct new popular structures. As an example, he examines the national literacy campaign of 1980 in detail as "a new model of social change based on the substantial devolution of decision-making powers to the grassroots level. It demonstrates that communities through their own effort, and in conjunction with the government, can provide basic social services" (p. 40).

Mark Ginsburg's *Understanding Educational Reform in Global Context: Economy, Ideology, and the State* cleaves to the need for Marxist grand theory that focuses on "the ideological and superstructural levels." But Ginsburg is also receptive to Arnove's dual methodological focus that includes local progressive struggles and the contradictions and openings they engender. Given the opportunities opened up by such contradictions, Ginsburg suggests a reasonable compromise: a two-pronged research approach that encompasses orthodox revolutionary views of education and the state as well as agonistic reform attempts in which various actors chal-

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lenge unequal race, gender, and class relations beyond historical determinism (p. 30), thus including both historicism and historicity.

Clearly, the field of Latin American studies, like the social sciences in general, is currently enmeshed in a transition in which new social conditions and sensibilities question old orthodoxies, especially those based on realist assumptions and boundaries. Neither dogmatic reiteration nor cynical flight into postmodern metaphysics offers an acceptable way out. Rather, I concur with Douglass Kellner's proposal that social scientists recognize the limitations of all structuralist modes of thought and action as well as the need for more creative synthesis of the old and the new.

Interpretive Views

Interpretive representations of Latin American education, although they lack a strong research tradition, definitely constitute an idea whose time has come. Their attractiveness follows in large part from the fact that they provide what long-dominant, but now fading, structuralist representations leave out. This actor-centered view stresses understanding and describing education from the inside by utilizing the points of view of those directly involved in the change activities being studied. Although descriptive and speculative writings on education have predominated in Latin America, they typically lack an empirical database or rigorous analysis. Such polemical and oratorical works should not be characterized as interpretive representations in the sense used here.[14]

Rather than perceiving human beings as environmentally determined, interpretive research focuses on the way that views of "education" are constructed, modified, and interpreted by individuals. In this respect, interpretive research is an attempt to move beyond normative models to observe actual social dynamics in the educational process. Policy suggestions from this perspective are based less on criteria of efficiency or correct theory than on criteria of relevance and shared meanings.

In this regard, a fine example is the practical guide *Nezahuâlpilli: educación preescolar comunitária,* which was written to help parents in poor neighborhoods organize preschool programs. Authors Jorge Pérez Alarcón, Lola Abiega, Margarita Zarco, and Daniel Schugurensky selected useful ideas needed for practice from Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, John Dewey (not acknowledged), Paulo Freire, and Jean Piaget. The authors thus combined ideas from phenomenology, ethnomethodol-

14. For a useful review of educational entries in the *Handbook of Latin America Studies* during the editorship of E. Egginton, see his "Educational Research in Latin America: A Twelve-Year Perspective," *Comparative Education Review* 27, no. 1 (1987):1–20. I have drawn selectively on Paulston and Tidwell (1992) in this section.

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ogy, and symbolic interactionism to produce an engaging text that features cartoons and numerous practical how-to-do-it examples. These options contrast authoritarian and participatory approaches and draw on years of experience and practice in the preschool owned and operated by the Mexican community of Nezahuâlpilli. Working together, some five generations of children (about eleven hundred of them) along with their parents, teachers, and administrators have jointly constructed the model program. The resulting guide merits the widest possible distribution, and not only to poor settings in the Third World. *Nezahuâlpilli* clearly demonstrates the value of an interpretive approach and provides a gratifying counterexample to the more common top-down, professionals-know-best approach.

The interpretive view is further characterized by a low-change orientation. Rather than advocating a radical change of structure or consciousness for the whole society, interpretive representations tend to suggest or imply adjustments in processes or levels of awareness that could improve on existing arrangements by enabling them to operate more meaningfully for participants.[15]

Ethnographic studies conducted in the 1940s and 1950s by U.S. anthropologists appear to have been the first disciplined use of the interpretive perspective in research on Latin American education (e.g., Redfield 1943 and Brameld 1959). These studies conceptualized education in the broad anthropological sense as a process of cultural transmission. They compared how participants viewed the relevance of schools vis-à-vis traditional forms of informal education like child-rearing practices, ritual, or oral traditions. Most anthropological studies through the 1960s continue to be guided by some notion of cultural transmission and cultural conflict between modern and traditional cultures, or continuity and discontinuity via socialization or enculturation. Frequent criticisms were leveled at the insensitivity of schooling to local cultures and the perceived lack of relevance of formal education.

Studies by Alexander Moore and Nancy Modiano continued this tradition of inquiry into the 1970s.[16] Both view the formal educational systems they study as fully comprehensible only within the immediate sociocultural milieu, and both strive to obtain participants' perceptions of the formal educational process. Moore's and Modiano's principal arguments fault a lack of shared intersubjectivity between the meaning sys-

15. For a review of the social-change problem implicit in policy research based on ethnographic "thick description," see John Singleton and Chris Ward, "Anthropology, Education, and Development: Arrogance, Ambivalence, and Ambiguity," paper presented to the Comparative and International Education Society, 15 Mar. 1986, Toronto.

16. See Nancy Modiano, *Indian Education in the Chiapas Highlands* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973); and Alexander Moore, *Life Cycles in Atchalan: The Diverse Careers of Certain Guatemalans* (New York: Teachers' College Press, 1973).

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tems of the social classes and cultures that participate in the educational process. This lack results in an absence of cross-cultural understanding in the classroom as well as in differing interpretations of the relevance of educational situations and goals. From the interpretive perspective, the desired outcome is generally a clarification of the subjective meanings involved in the educational process. Moore and Modiano conclude their studies with suggestions aimed at affecting national-level management of educational efforts. In doing so, they do not use functionalist arguments or the criteria of efficiency but attempt instead to alter the sensitivity of educational decision makers regarding the validity of local cultures and also to create a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions of formal education in their actual circumstances. Moore and Modiano argue that organized educational programs must take these subjective factors into account to be more tolerant, humane, and adaptive to the needs of participants with markedly different attitudes and orientations than those often assumed by educational policymakers and World Bank economists.

Beatrice Avalos continues the Moore-Modiano line of inquiry in *Teaching Children of the Poor,* an ethnographic study of school settings in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela. She attempts to demonstrate the utility of this approach in providing "knowledge about processes related to failure experiences of children during their first years of school . . . [and] the way in which failure can be constructed for first-year pupils" (inside cover). Although Avalos does not deny the validity of structural-functionalist or Marxist attribution of factors external to the school as causal, she goes into the classrooms "to interpret the reasons for the persistence of failure" (p. 10). Her study focuses on the influence of teacher attitudes and behavior on the outcomes of schooling for poor children. Synthesizing the projects' ethnographic findings, Avalos concludes that although interpreting school failure is partly circumstantial, it is largely believed to be produced actively within the schools by teachers' "practical ideologies" and behaviors as well as by schooling conditions.

Avalos deduces from her study three major implications for policy and professional practice: the need for further study of the few teachers who brought about school "success, not failure"; the dissemination of techniques and materials used by the successful teachers in teacher education and workshops; and the need to help teachers become more reflective about their guiding assumptions, practices, and relations with parents. Avalos considers her study's most important contribution to be that it "discovered the way in which particular nets of relationships are webbed together; how parents interact with teachers and pupils, and pupils with each other" (p. 164).

It should be noted at this point that Latin American interpretive representations based on ethnographic methods are caught in several contradictions. One revealed in the study by Avalos is the use of a rela-

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tivist approach and descriptive methodology that do not support her nomothetic ambition. Anther contradiction follows from ethnographers' emphasis on local culture and practice while choosing to frame inquiry according to critical perspectives that impose an outside agenda for change. Where the agendas for change of critical ethnographers coincide with those of community groups, as in the next work under review, one can find promising examples of knowledge supporting the practice of change.

Movimentos Populares: A Escola Comunitária e a Cidadaniais is a study of the community school movement in Bahia edited by Maria Peixoto. It describes how university students and teachers using neo-Marxist perspectives of Antonio Gramsci and Jürgen Habermas collaborated with community self-help efforts to respond to Brazil's crisis in educational funding. Sometimes called "Belindia," Brazil combines a small high-income sector comparable with that in Belgium and a large impoverished underclass comparable with that in India. Brazil spent 2.8 percent of its gross national product on education in 1983, well below the Latin American average of 3.9 percent and far less than Mexico (4.7 percent) or Venezuela (5.1 percent).[17] As David Plank has shown, clientelism and interest-group favoritism in Brazil are diverting ever greater amounts of state spending on education away from public primary and secondary schools (especially those in disadvantaged communities) and into private pockets, private schools, and private universities.[18] In the state of Bahia in the Northeast, the poorest region of Brazil, local community associations supported by local nongovernmental organizations have united to form a broadly based community-school movement. Drawing on the experience of related efforts in Rio, Belém, and elsewhere, the Bahia movement has sought to provide preschools, day care, and primary education in the absence of government provision or to supplement inadequate public schooling.

Several insightful accounts of these efforts in *Movimentos Populares* stress their use of favela culture, empowering of poor people in a struggle for better education, and role as a catalyst or unifying force in efforts to organize communities. Also noted is the fact that community schools tend to attract funding from nongovernmental organizations, bring in jobs and income, and provide beneficial experience to those who later become public school teachers (most of them women).[19] In fact, poor women have played a major role in organizing and operating community schools. Interpretive studies of this experience would be valuable in describing how

17. World Bank, *Brazil: Finance of Primary Education* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1986), 7.

18. David Plank, "The Politics of Basic Education in Brazil," *Comparative Education Review* 34, no. 4 (Nov. 1990):538–59.

19. See Léa Tireba, "Porquê Escolas Comunitárias?," *Tempo e Presença*, no. 238 (Jan.–Feb. 1989):13–25; and Ana Lúcia Formigli and Maria Helena S. Silva, "Escolas Comunitárias: Uma Experiência Popular em Educação," *Cadernos do CEAS*, no. 94 (1989):49–62.

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participants perceive the value and consequences of struggle in hostile settings (Little 1991, 79).

Discouraging aspects of the movement can be seen in the difficulty of mobilizing desperately poor people who must fight for daily survival and the ease with which associations and schools become hierarchical and top-down. A larger issue of concern is that the movement's hard-fought gains also diminish pressure on the Brazilian government to improve the quality of favela schools and thus enlarge the life chances of the subaltern youth who attend them.[20]

Radical Interpretive Views

When the interpretive way of presenting the world is combined with an orientation favoring major change, the result is what Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan have characterized as a radical humanist perspective, or a radical interpretive perspective. They define it as "a frame of reference that is committed to a view of society which emphasizes the importance of overthrowing or transcending the limitations of existing social relations. The radical humanist places most emphasis upon radical change, modes of domination emancipation, deprivation and potentiality" (Burrell and Morgan 1979, 32).

First presented by the critical theory school in the 1920s, the radical interpretive framework has been used in Latin America since the 1960s to focus almost exclusively on adult nonformal education. This perspective is firmly rooted in a commitment to liberation from domination and to fundamental social change. It rejects mechanical notions of economic determinism that posit a preordained reality or an imposed modernization agenda to which human beings must adapt. Education is always viewed as a political process that either reinforces an inequitable status quo through control of consciousness or seeks to change it through critical reflection in struggle. This view is presented in both the works under review coauthored by Paulo Freire, *Learning to Question* with Antonio Faundez and *We Make the Road by Walking* with Myles Horton.

The core problem for radical interpretivists is the entrenched inequity in Latin American society that dehumanizes the haves as well as the

20. For efforts by a leading Mexican anthropologist to move beyond the struggle for equitable access to schooling (as in Bahia) to the possibility of a critical pedagogy via microethnographies of "local knowledge," see the following works by Elsie Rockwell: "La relevancia de la etnografía para la transformación de la escuela," in *Tercer Seminario Nacional de Investigación en Educación, ICFES* (Bogotá: n.p., 1986); and "The Latin American Qualitative Research Network: Content, Process, and Products," study conducted for the International Development Center, Ottawa, 1984. A member of the Departmento de Investigaciones Educativas of the Instituto Politécnico Nacional in Mexico City, Rockwell is an effective advocate of critical ethnography in Latin America.

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have-nots. According to this view, generations of material and social inequality have led the poor of Latin America to internalize the dominant sectors' conceptions of them as ignorant, lazy, and unworthy. The poor therefore accept their social position in life fatalistically and feel powerless to change it. The key role of education according to this perspective is to liberate the colonized consciousness of the poor so that they can develop fully as human beings and begin to participate as subjects rather than as objects in the historical process. The desired outcome of such an approach is to involve the poor actively in changing their life conditions, which Freire and Faundez believe will then lead to fundamental changes in existing social relationships.

Although Freire's numerous texts published since 1969 are the exemplars of the radical interpretivist framework in Latin American educational discourse, his writings represent only one source that has guided the development of educational programs adopting this perspective. Liberation theology, nationalist revolutionary movements, and some ethnic movements all have added important elements to this perspective in Latin America.[21] Authors choosing it advocate research that is integrated with social action in order to transform the conditions of life for the poor. Investigation is often conceived of as a process of the social production of knowledge and experiences directly developed within a social base in which all members participate in all stages. The terms *action research* and *participatory research* usually designate this approach. Research for radical interpretivists is used primarily as a guide to selecting the most effective educational actions to meet consciousness-raising needs. It should be noted that Freire's privileging of the teacher-intellectual's voice over the learner's voice and experience has been scored by Faundez and others as a bureaucratic imposition that thwarts consciousness-raising. Responding to such criticism, Freire has countered (unconvincingly, I believe) that although educators should obviously reject "arrogant authoritarianism, we should also remain vigilant about excessive or irresponsible spontaneity that in its lack of seriousness and intellectual discipline undermines the teacher's necessary authority."[22] Faundez also takes Freire to task for his reluctance

21. For a compelling argument (based on more than a decade of fieldwork in southern Texas) that radical interpretive research should focus on "ethnohistorical studies of regional macro economic and political forces," see Douglas Foley, "Rethinking School Ethnographies of Colonial Settings: A Performance Perspective of Reproduction and Resistance," *Comparative Education Review* 35, no. 3 (Aug. 1991):532–51.

22. See Freire's foreword to *Educación de adultos en América Latina*, edited by Jorge Werthein (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor, 1985). Although Freire suggested earlier that the oppressed have false consciousness while the teacher-liberator (presumably Freire) has true consciousness, today he is willing to grant the oppressed student partial consciousness. From an orthodox Marxist perspective, Youngman (1986) approves of Freire's stress on the political nature of adult education, his anthropological concept of culture, his sensitivity to linguistic issues, and his emphasis on consciousness and domination. Youngman's final verdict, how-

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to accept Mariátegui's challenge "to enter into the secret of the other so as better to understand our own secret, both at the individual and collective level" (p. 72). Freire replies by placing revolutionary (structural) imperatives over understanding the Other.

In *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change,* Freire and Myles Horton share their educational experiences and agree to disagree over pedagogical theory. Horton, the U.S. radical populist, opts for a facilitator's role in helping the oppressed reach within themselves for practical, largely nonviolent responses to oppression—the Rosa Parks model. Freire, the Latin intellectual, sees the teacher as a liberator bringing correct ideas to revolutionary struggle—the Leninist model.

Radical interpretive discourse undeniably contributes to the political polarization of the haves and have-nots of Latin America. It also represents a direct challenge to both the expert-centered approaches of the structural functionalists and the vanguard-centered approach of the radical functionalists. But as Robert Arnove notes in *Education and Revolution in Nicaragua,* the participatory aspects of supposedly liberating education programs are frequently characterized by top-down control and unreflective imposition of political messages. Thus even the widespread acceptance of a radical interpretive perspective in Latin America does not readily negate still powerful authoritarian traditions in politics and education.

Conclusions

How then do the researchers discussed in this review see education and efforts at social change in Latin America, and how do they present this phenomenon to the reader? The examination of fourteen texts has discovered or identified four heuristic categories: the structural-functionalist with its modernization theory view of change as structural innovation for social efficiency and "progress"; the historical materialist focused on structural transformation for "social evolution"; the interpretive, which perceives the need for cooperation and self-help in "participatory" change at the grass roots; and the radical interpretive, which views authentic reform as transformation of consciousness for "empowerment" and "liberation from domination."

Choosing different dimensions might well generate different categories, and new texts will no doubt suggest additional ways of viewing educational phenomena. It is to be hoped that the absence of feminist and

ever, is that "from a Marxist perspective, Freire's work as a whole does not provide a satisfactory basis for adult education for socialism. His work is eclectic and lacks the 'imperious coherence' that he himself demands of revolutionaries" (p. 191). My view of Freire is more paradoxical: he has made a powerful contribution in bringing critical theory to education, but his seeming inability to stand back and let the student experience critical insight on his or her own terms has relegated Freire to the role of ideological guru hovering over practice.

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poststructuralist or postmodernist texts in studies of Latin American education will soon be remedied.

How are researchers to choose from this rich phenomenographic yield? Here I would again bypass orthodoxy and heterodoxy for heterogeneity and the freedom to choose a research vocabulary and the way of seeing that works best for a given purpose. And as Richard Rorty has demonstrated, no single purpose is closer to reality than another. Each way of viewing Latin American education identified in this review contains partial truth.[23] Each compliments and contradicts, while incorporating what the other views leave out. A phenomenographic perspective catches something of this complexity and contradiction, even if at the loss of some predictive power, ideological correctness, and metatheoretical grandeur.

23. Here I agree strongly with the recent work of Albert O. Hirschman and its phenomenographic breakthrough in presenting economic analysis. See Hirschman, *Rival Views of Market Society* (New York: Viking Press, 1986).

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