26-39

THE CONFLICT PARADIGM AND THE NOTION OF ENDEMIC STRESS/CHANGE

Studies of socioeconomic, cultural, and educational change using variants of conflict theory have increased significantly during the past decade or so (Coser, 1956; Dahrendorf, 1959; Zeitlin, 1968; Allardt, 1971; Carnoy, 1971; Collins, 1971; Smelser, 1971; Young, 1971; Boudon, 1974; Dreir, 1975). This work may be divided into three types of conflict "theory"—i.e., (1) Marxist and neo-Marxist explanations of socioeconomic conflict, (2) cultural revival or revitalization explanations of value conflict, and (3) the somewhat mixed bag of anarchist and anarchist-utopian institutional conflict and constraints on human development. It may also be further subdivided into studies that seek to extend and refine conflict theory per se, and those analytical and descriptive efforts to apply conflict theory so as to "explain" educational-change processes and outcomes in concrete settings.

MARXIST AND NEO-MARXIST THEORY

Marxist theory, by and large, has always been viewed as a legitimate political philosophical-cum-theoretical system in Western Europe, regardless of one's ideological orientation. Accordingly, it is not surprising to find a flourishing body of Western European reform studies—especially in West Germany, France, and Great Britain—using neo-Marxist frames to study the political economy of education and educational-reform efforts (Simon, 1965; Bourdieu, 1970 & 1973; Altvater, 1971; Klafki, 1971; Young, 1971; Vaughan & Archer, 1971; Huisken, 1972; Bernfeld, 1973; Bourdieu, 1973; Heinrich, 1973; Masuch, 1973; Rubenstein & Simon, 1973; Boudon, 1974; Forfatterkollektiv, 1975; Kallós, 1975; Touraine, 1975).

In a perceptive assessment of this increasing influential work, Kallós (1975) suggests that these studies may perhaps be best characterized as critiques of traditional economic analyses of education, on the one hand, and as attempts to analyze the effects of investments in education and in educational planning from dialectical materialistic frames of reference on the other.

In the United States, in marked contrast, Marxist perspectives on social and educational change have been largely rejected and/or ignored (Davis, 1959, p. 761; Dunkel, 1972). Although this tradition continues, there is a growing if limited and begrudging academic acceptance of analysis using neo-Marxist perspectives in the study of social and educational change and the sociology of development (Gintis, 1971, 1972; Bowles, 1973; Carnoy, 1973, 1974, 1975; Frank, 1973; Levin, 1973, 1974; Collins, 1975; Genovese, 1975; Zachariah, 1975; Paulston, 1976).

Although all variants of conflict theory reject the evolutionists' and functionalists' image of society as a system of benign self-regulating mechanisms where maintenance of social equilibrium and harmony is "functional" and disruption of harmony is "dysfunctional," only Marxism as social-science theory is linked with policy prescriptions for revolutionary change from below. The emphasis on power, exploitation, contradictions, and the like in the Marxist dialectical approach has several important implications for our question concerning the preconditions for educational reform. Formal education is here viewed as a part of the ideological structure which a ruling class controls to maintain its dominance over the masses and because formal education is dependent on the dominant economic and political institutions, it cannot be a primary agent of social transformation ... it can only follow changes in the imperatives of the economic and political social order (Gramsci, 1957; Zachariah, 1975).

Levin (1974) argues in the same vein that changes in the educational sector will parallel and follow from changes in a society's traditional economic, political, and social relationships. If school-reform movements violate "the percepts of the polity ... they either failed to be adopted, or failed to show results." Thus, he argues, many attempts to individualize instruction failed because they violated "the need for conformity and class-related interchange ability among individuals in the hierarchical organizations that characterize both industry and government in our society." In like manner, "Compensatory Education" for youth from low-income families fails because "schools are not going to succeed in reducing the competitive edge of the advantaged over the disadvantaged in the race for income and status." The "desegregation" of schooling fails for similar reasons, and attempts to equalize the financial support of the schools "will also fail since society regards the ability to provide a better educational background a privilege of the rich rather than a right of every citizen. In short, only when there is a demand for educational reform by the polity, will educational reform succeed. The historical record bears out that the "turning points" in the functions of schools coincide with major movements (Callahan, 1962; Tyack, 1967; Katz, 1968) that changed the social order" (p. 316.)

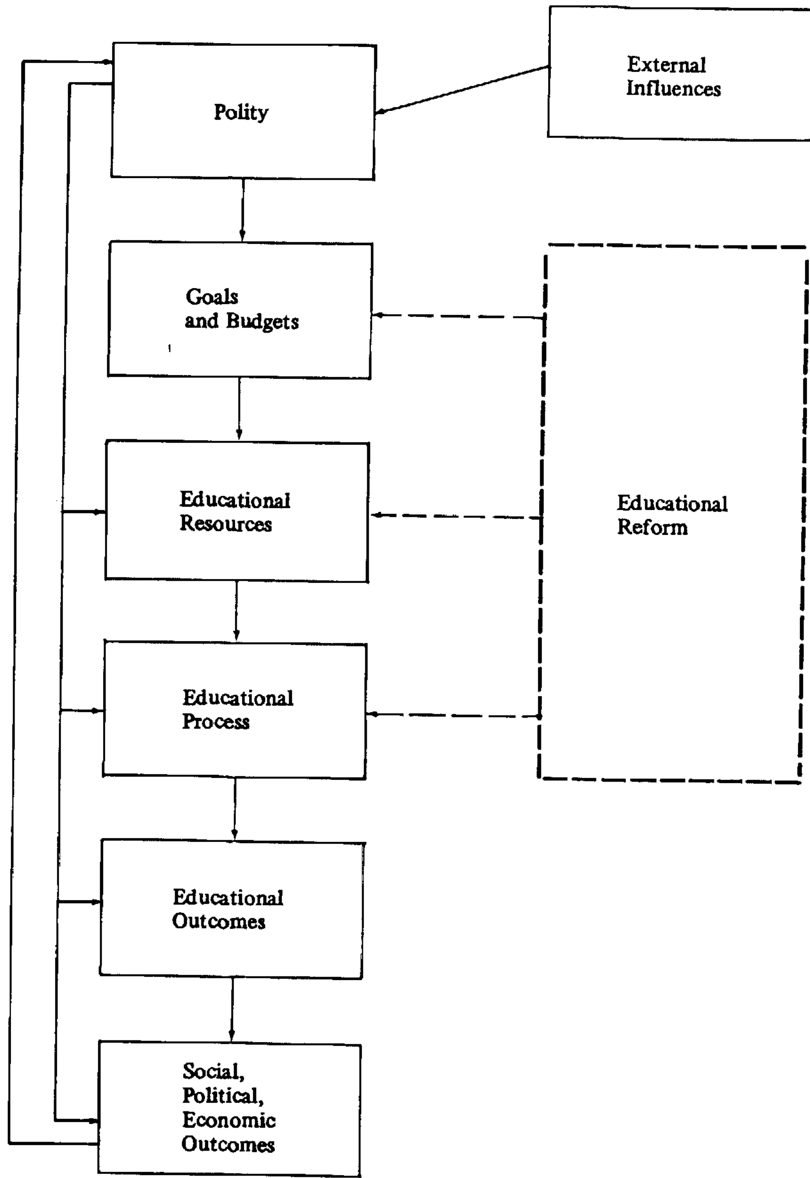
From the Marxist dialectical perspective, national reforms will only take place when they are viewed by dominant political and economic elites as defending or advancing their interest vis-à-vis nonprivileged groups in society. High wastage rates, for example, are viewed as "malfunctions," i.e., as a technical problem by structural functionalists. Marxists, in contrast, are more likely to view this problem as a part of a control process where dropouts are taught to accept the responsibility for their failure and their disqualification in competition for power, status, and consumption, while the winners will tend to defend and continue a highly inequitable status quo (Carter, 1975). From S/F and human-capital perspectives, schools carry out socialization for competence (Inkeles, 1966). Marxists, however, see schooling linked to the social relations of production. Inequalities in school experiences are, accordingly, viewed as differential socialization to meet the demands of hierarchical societies (Gramsci, 1949; Bowles, 1972; Bernfeld, 1973). Educational-reform efforts in nonsocialist countries that are not accompanied by efforts to change the social relation of production are, accordingly, explained as just one more use of public institutions to enable the few to maintain a self-serving cultural hegemony (Katz, 1968, 1971; Paulston, 1971; Karier, 1973, 1975; Carnoy, 1974).

From this orientation, Levin's (1974) flow model of the educational system presented in Figure 11 seeks to illustrate how the values and goals of the larger society and those of the educational sector coincide in "a continuous and reinforcing flow." The view of educational reform in isolation from the polity is represented by the dotted box to the right of the flow diagram. The three dotted arrows suggest that educational reforms, as in the Progressive Education Movement, or in the War On Poverty, are directed at altering (1) the budgetary support and goals of the education sector, (2) the various types of educational resources used, and (3) the organization of these resources in educational programs. If implemented, these reforms would, according to Levin, "create different educational outputs as well as social, economic and political outcomes and would result in a change in the polity. But to the degree that such reforms do not correspond to the social, economic and political order, our previous analysis suggests that they must fail" (p. 315).

Conversely, only with a socialist revolution and the ensuing ideological and structural changes toward equality in the larger socioeconomic and political context of education will it be possible, Marxists contend, to eliminate the inequitable

Figure 11

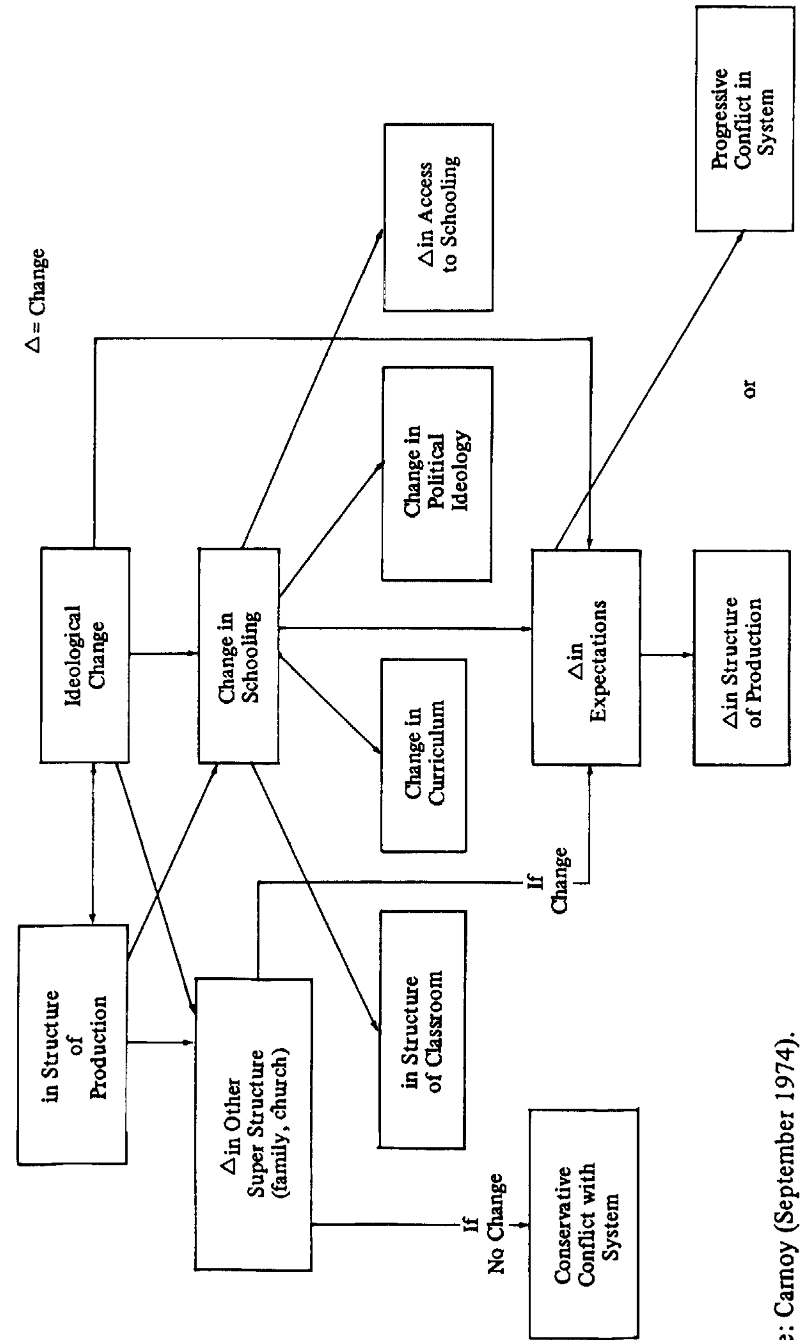
INFLUENCE OF THE POLITY ON EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC OUTCOMES



Source: Levin (1974), p. 308.

Figure 12

A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO EDUCATIONAL REFORM



Source: Carnoy (September 1974).

exploitative character of schools and other social institutions, or what Carnoy (1974) has termed, "Education as Cultural Imperialism."

We might note how several recent studies of the "colonizing" functions of schools and related social institutions have used systems models (Harvey, 1974; Carnoy, 1976). These efforts replace S/F premises of value consensus and moving equilibrium and, instead, seek to delineate, using conflict orientations and relationships between subsystems of exploited and exploiting social sectors. In a variation on this theme, Carnoy, in Figure 12, presents a systems view of educational-reform process where change in the social relations of production (see Vanek, 1975) and national ideology are viewed as key determinants of altered structures and behavior both in the educational system and in other social agencies.

Despite their evident diagnostic and predictive power, Marxist analysis and prescriptions have been viewed by state officials in most developing countries as subversive to the existing social and political order and of little, if any, value in collaborative efforts with U.S. institutions to help resolve what most American developmentalists view as essentially the technical and motivational problems or "malfunctions" constraining efficiency in formal school systems. In addition to its political liabilities as an alternative paradigm of why and how social and educational change takes place, Marxist and neo-Marxist theory–i.e., Marxist analysis that rejects such metaphysical and deterministic notions as "historical inevitability" and "class struggle" and largely settles for study of interest-group conflict (R. Dahrendorf, 1965; Dreir, 1975) also has serious problems in operationalizing key concepts (Smelser, 1971).

Yet, despite its dogmatic aspects and conceptual limitations, neo-Marxist theory applied to problems of social and educational change has contributed much to discredit equilibrium explanations of reform failure and success. With its primary focus on economic and political relations, however, Marxists and neo-Marxist theory have been notably unable to account for cultural-change phenomena, another area of conflict theory to which we now turn.

CULTURAL REVIVAL & SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY

In comparison to the vast body of work on socio-educational reform grounded in Marxist theory and its variants, the literature on culture change and culture conflict applied to educational change is exceedingly sparse. It may be recalled that functional theory assumes a high degree of normative consensus across social systems, while Marxist theory posits normative consensus or an ethos shared across major social groups–i.e., the working class, the middle class, and conflict between classes. Cultural-revitalization theory, in contrast, focuses not on social classes but, according to Wallace (1956), on "deliberate organized conscious efforts by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." Such efforts are viewed as constantly recurring phenomena, a type of culture-creating activity in collective efforts of varying size which seeks social and cultural change that may take place at local or national levels. This activity has considerable potential for both conflict and social change (Simon, 1965; Allardt, 1971; Paulston, 1972; LaBelle, 1973). In contrast to more gradual culture-change processes as exemplified by evolution, acculturation, and diffusion of innovations, cultural-revitalization efforts may be viewed as attempts to innovate not merely discrete elements, but largely new cultural systems specifying new social norms and behaviors (Goodenough, 1963). Wallace (1956) for example, contends that revitalization movements, as a form of collective action, occur under two conditions: high stress for individual members of society and disillusionment with a distorted cultural *Gestalt*. Where such processes take place as in "mass movements," "messianic movements," "ethnic movements," or "revolutionary movements," they all require members to profess adherence to the movement's ideology or evaluative principles about the ends and means of human action, and emphasize the need to reduce stress through collective efforts for change (Anderson, 1968).

Revitalization movements are relevant to this discussion because they may influence educational-change efforts in both steady-state and revolutionary societies. In the first situation, groups undergoing cultural revival or revitalization processes in conservative/liberal societies may reject formal public schooling for their young because it conflicts with their new cognitive and evaluative models, their ideology and aspirations for new social norms and relations (Itzkoff, 1969; LaBelle, 1975; Paulston, 1976). Shalaby's *The Education of a Black Muslim* (1972), for example, describes how innovative formal and nonformal educational programs created by the Black Muslim movement differ greatly from the education experienced by most American blacks in formal schools. Additional examples are the rejection of schooling as a means of resistance to acculturation by members of the native American and Chicano movements in North America today and by the Kikuyu School Movement before independence in Kenya. When the requisite resources and tolerance are available, culture-building movements may also seek to create alternative schools, or educational systems, educational settings where learning will be under movement control and shaped and infused by the movement's ideology and views of social injustice and culture conflicts as well as its new values, hopes, and dreams (Paulston, 1973, 1975; Adams, 1975; Paulston and LeRoy, 1975).

In the second situation, i.e., where a revolutionary-cum-revitalization movement has successfully captured political power in a nation, both formal and nonformal education will be extended and fundamentally altered in systematic efforts to implant and legitimize the new value system (Anderson, 1968; Allardt, 1971; Paulston, 1972). Figure 13 indicates in the left-hand cells–albeit in a superficial manner–how revitalization movements that come to power as what Anderson calls "underdog systems," as well as other types of revolutionary movements, have varying potential for building new culture and changing educational systems.

We might also note Wallace's attempt, reproduced in Figure 14, to indicate how learning priorities will differ in societies at different stages of socio-political change. Educational change in conservative-cum-liberal societies–as the United States and Great Britain–able to co-opt and manage dissent, will emphasize technique and normative consensus. When societies are dominated by a revitalization movement and move into a revolutionary phase as in Cuba and China, educational reforms will above all emphasize morality, both to promote the destruction of the old social and cultural order and to guide the building of the new one. Reactionary societies are post-conservative or failed-revolutionary–as Spain or Chile–societies under serious threat from what are viewed as treasonable, heretical conspiracies imported from abroad. Thus, educational priorities and programs in reactionary societies will seek to discredit any competing cultural movement by drawing on "traditional" religious and political values. In reactionary societies, change in education will accompany "re-emphasized religiosity, a refurbished political ritualism, repressive laws, and oppressive police–and in the schools–a

Figure 13

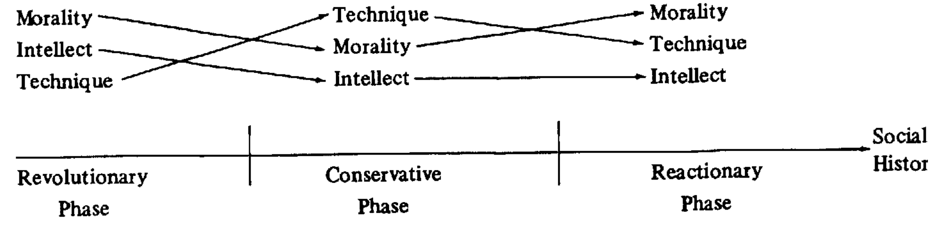
REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL FOR SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM

	Changes through an "Underdog" Mass Movement	Changes from the Top or from the Outside
Accomplished Structural Change Including Building of New Institutions	1. Major Structural Revolutions Cases: The Russian Revolution; The Castroist Cuban Revolution; The Maoist Chinese Revolution Effects: Considerable culture-destruction and culture-building effects. Educational systems radically transformed to inculcate and support the new value system.	3. Elite Revolutions and Mechanized Structural Transformations The Meiji Restoration in Japan after 1868. Turkey under Atat urk. Peru after 1968. Cases: The transformation of the Eastern European societies from above after 1945. Results: Cultural reformation imposed from above, but small likelihood of creating a shared new culture. Formal educational system adapted, differentiated, and regimented
Minor Changes, No Institution Building	2. Unsuccessful "Underdog" Revolts Cases: The European Uprisings of 1848; The Spartakus Revolt of Berlin, 1919; The Hungarian Uprising of 1956; Chile after Allende; Numerous revolts in colonial countries Effects: Repression and attempted eradication of the unsuccessful new culture-building efforts; educational efforts largely reactionary and punitive	4. "Palace" Revolutions, or Revolutionary Coups Cases: Most Latin American and African "revolutions" Effects: No culture-building or educational-change effects

Source: Paulston (1972), p. 481, and Allardt (1971), p. 28.

Figure 14

LEARNING PRIORITIES IN REVOLUTIONARY, CONSERVATIVE, AND REACTIONARY SOCIETIES



Source: Wallace (1956), p. 49.

conviction that the moral education of the young must take precedence over all else" (Wallace, p. 25).

From a related, but more prescriptive orientation, Horton (1973) contends that significant structural change in educational systems will always be a function of the emergence of mass underdog movements seeking to put a radically different cultural system into practice—i.e., cultural movements that again would fall, depending on their success, into one of the two left-hand quadrants of Figure 13. His strategy for educational reform draws on both the theory and experience of cultural movements seeking change from below:

> We should have learned by now that fundamental restructuring will not occur in response to outcries against inadequacies of the present system or according to elite blueprints for change. Advocacy alone . . . has never brought about radical change. We have learned from the folk schools in this country and abroad, from Paulo Freire and others like him, and from the great popular movements of this Century, that people become motivated when they are personally involved in processes relating directly to them and their own life situations. . . . Thus, the only way to effect radical changes in the educational system is for educators to make alliances . . . with community people, students, various ethnic groups, union members. . . . Goals, curriculum, and policy . . . will be changed to the degree more and more people begin participating in decision making and become agents of fundamental change in the educational system and society at large (p. 340).

ANARCHISTIC AND UTOPIAN THEORY

Anarchistic and utopian theories of social change share the Marxian goal of radical social transformation, and the concern of cultural revival and revitalization

movements for individual renewal. In marked contrast to all other previously noted theories seeking to explain and predict educational-reform processes, they rarely bother to validate their call to reform with the findings and methods of social science, or to put their theory into practice (Idenberg, 1974). Accordingly, utopian visions of educational transformation for a radically reordered world may influence the general debate on needs and priorities for educational change, but they are for the most part rejected by politicians and professionals responsible for assessing the feasibility and desirability of educational-reform strategies (Livingstone, 1973). The utopians' often insightful critiques of existing inequalities and "evils" in education may serve to provoke impassioned discussion (Rusk, 1971; Gaubard, 1972; Marin, 1975), but utopian analysis only rarely takes into account how existing oppressive power relationships and lack of tolerance for "deviance" or change in any given social setting will influence reform efforts of whatever scope or magnitude (Gil, 1973; MacDonald, 1973; Freire, 1974). Typically, the utopians begin with a critical analysis of socio-educational reality and rather quickly wind up in a dream world. Although few roads lead from their models to reality, the utopians' prescriptive work has been valuable as a spur to debate on the constraints that would-be educational reformers must recognize if their plans, as well, are to be more than pious "dreams."

Proposals for radically altered educational goals, programs, and outcomes that fit somewhere in this cell have burgeoned during the past decade. Reimer (1970) suggested alternative schools to help achieve "a peaceful revolution." Earlier, Goodman (1960) proposed that real-life encounters, or learning in the context of adult transactions (i.e., the Greek *Paideia*), and development of critical awareness are the best ways to prepare effective, knowledgeable citizens. Thus professions and trades would be learned in their practice and not in schools where knowledge is often divorced both from its origins and applications and therefore, from the utopian view, creates an alienating relationship between life and learning.

Illich (1971 and elsewhere) has refined and extended this critique of schooling with epigrammatic brilliance and paradoxical insight. He argues that political revolutionaries are shortsighted in their goals for educational reform because they want only "to improve existing institutions–their productivity and the quality and distribution of their products. The political revolutionary concentrates on schooling and tooling for the environment that the rich countries, socialist and capitalist, have engineered. The cultural revolutionary risks the future on the educability of man" (pp. 172-73).

Because Illich believes that institutions form not only the character but the consciousness of men, and thus the economic and political reality, he advises the world's poor and disenfranchised to shun the solution of universal schooling. For schools, with their "hidden curriculum," are the key mechanism used by the schooled to preserve their privilege and power while simultaneously diffusing any attempts at social transformation. In poor nations, especially, Illich contends that obligatory schooling is a monument to self-inflicted inferiority, that to buy the schooling hoax is to purchase a ticket for the back seat in a bus headed nowhere.

For Illich, meaningful educational reform means abolition of the formal school's monopoly on education and the creation of new ways to link work, life, and learning in such new educational approaches as "learning webs," "skill exchanges," and "reference services." Thus, he contends that meaningful educational reform will only take place following the abolition of schooling, certainly a utopian and somewhat *simpliste* demand if schools are viewed as the very keystone to the defense, legitimation, and perpetuation of privilege. This and other basic contradictions in Illich's strategy for educational change have been critically discussed in a number of recent telling attacks (Gintis, 1973; Gartner, 1974; Manners, 1975). Yet, his warning to Castro concerning the limits of educational-reform contributions to social reconstruction is instructive nevertheless:

> There is no doubt that the redistribution of privilege, the redefinition of social goals, and the popular participation in the achievement of these goals have reached spectacular heights in Cuba since the revolution. For the moment, however, Cuba is showing only that, under exceptional political conditions, the base of the present school system can be expanded exceptionally . . . yet the Cuban pyramid is still a pyramid. . . . There are built-in limits to the elasticity of present insitutions, and Cuba is at the point of reaching them. The Cuban revolution will work– within these limits. Which means only that Dr. Castro will have masterminded a faster road to a bourgeoisie meritocracy than those previously taken by capitalists or bolsheviks. As long as communist Cuba continues to promise obligatory high-school completion by the end of this decade, it is, in this regard, institutionally no more promising than fascist Brazil, which has made a similar promise. . . . Unless Castro deschools Cuban society, he cannot succeed in his revolutionary effort, no matter what else he does. Let all revolutionists be warned! (1971, pp. 176-177).

Where Illich sees the elimination of schooling as a necessary precondition for the millenium, Reimer (1971), Freire (1973), and Galtung (1975) view "true" education–i.e., becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it, as a basic force for revolutionary social renewal. According to Reimer, if the proportion of persons so educated were

> twenty percent instead of two, or thirty instead of three, such a society could no longer be run by a few for their own purposes, but would have to be run for the general welfare . . . class distinctions would also tend to disappear in educated societies . . . an educated society would become and remain highly pluralistic . . . an educated population would make not only their nations but also their specialized institutions responsive to the needs and desires of clients and workers, in addition to those of managers . . . any sizable educated minority would not put up with . . . the absurdities that inflict modern societies (pp. 121-122).

Reimer's "rationalist" strategy for utopia also calls for the redistribution of educational resources in an inverse ratio to present privilege; the prohibition of educational monopoly; universal access to educational resources; and the decentralization of power. This latter condition, according to Reimer, "rules out political revolution." Instead of political revolution with its "history of betrayal," Reimer proposes a *deus ex machina* of "peaceful revolution . . . in which the nominal

holders of power discover that they have lost their power before they begin to fight" (p. 139).

Freire's utopian vision grew out of his practical attempts to teach literacy and critical consciousness to poor peasants in Brazil and Chile. In two of his major works, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1971) and *Cultural Action for Freedom* (1970), he elaborates a highly ideological strategy for education that supposedly liberates oppressed people through dialogue, language development, and struggle to "emerge" from self-perceived cultural inferiority. His central message is that one can only know in proportion to the extent that one "problematizes" the natural, cultural, and historical reality in which one is immersed. In contrast to the technocrat's "problem-solving" concerns for education where students become expert in detached analysis, Freire advocates education where an entire populace (with leadership contributions from sympathetic members of the privileged classes!) attempts to codify total reality into symbols which can generate critical consciousness and empower them to alter their relations with both natural and social forces.

Such educational efforts seeking to facilitate the "maximum of potential consciousness" in the emerging masses take place in two stages: as "cultural action for freedom" when it occurs in opposition to the "dominating power elite"; and as "cultural revolution" when it takes place in harmony with a newly dominant revolutionary regime.

In a recent introduction to Freire's methodological primer, *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1973), Goulet cautions that

> Freire cannot be taken seriously if . . . judged only in terms of short term results. The oppressed in every society have no difficulty in recognizing his voice as their own [but] they heed only serious ideas which they can put into practice. It is in this basic way that Freire's approach to education, communication, and technology is serious: it means nothing unless it is re-created by human communities in struggle. Necessarily, therefore, short term results may prove disappointing because such efforts view creative Utopianism as the only viable brand of realistic politics in a world characterized by the *praxis* of domination (p. xiii).

As all conflict theories of educational change are essentially a view of the whole from the part, they are all more concerned with educational change seeking greater equity and justice. It may be appropriate to close this review with a comment on Adam Curle's recent book, *Education for Liberation* (1973). Here Curle describes his earlier work on educational-planning efforts that were framed largely in equilibrum and human-capital views of social reality and the "appropriate" economic- and educational-development strategies that follow from these perspectives. Curle concedes there is some truth in the hypothesis that because education also inculcates the attitudes and skills which increase productivity, the more education, the more wealth: "but the arguments are complex, ambiguous and moreover, now irrelevant to me because I have reached an understanding of development of which the keystone is justice rather than wealth" (p. 1).

Curle now views all school systems as more or less contributory to the continuation of structured inequality, environmental pollution, and racial disharmonies. "Instead of being hopeful about education, I began to see it in its total effect to be hostile to what I see as development." As "education enslaves" and people "become free through their own efforts," the direction of educational change should, according to Curle, be toward increasing the awareness levels of youth and adults in existing schools.

His change strategy calls for the conscious development of the "counter system," which exists, he contends, within "each one of us" and within the dominant institutional system as well (see Figure 15). He describes this system at the individual, psychological level as characterized by greed and aggression, and at the national level by power and exploitation networks that dominate human relationships. The counter-system, in contrast, is characterized as "democracy in its ideal and virtually unknown form" (p. 10).

Although Curle uses a conflict diagnosis and suggests that educational reforms in the counter-system may have "some effect" in undermining the system, he rejects efforts to mobilize the losers and openly press for the elimination of structured violence and exploitation.

> I have no patience with those who maintain that the society cannot be changed and the economic system cannot be changed . . . until the law is changed, and so on. Changes are brought about by people who try to influence the segment of life they are involved with, strengthening the relationships and institutions that promote the counter-system. Hopefully, if the educators do their part, then economists, politicians, lawyers and the rest will be comparatively active. We may have to operate with and within the existing facilities and take what opportunities are offered to make changes, however small, in the right direction" (pp. 11-12).

Thus Curle, as do the other utopians, presents compelling arguments for more humane schooling and more equitable life chances. But as a convert to the conflict paradigm his position is, to say the least, ambivalent. On the one hand he readily acknowledges conflict in educational and social relations. On the other, his prescriptions for school reform are quitessentially utopian and avoid the realities of how educated elites maintain privilege through control of economic relations and social institutions.

In his provocative study of Thomas Carlyle, Rosenberg has noted that "in the liberal conception of politics, force is always by definition something extraneous, abnormal and inevitably tainted with illegality," that liberalism is an ideology tending to prevent (however unintentionally) "the search for the locus of political power and to render more secure its actual holders."[2] Curle, along with the others presenting utopian school-reform prescriptions in this section, might be best described—using Rosenberg's aphorism—as liberal utopians unable to come to terms with the implications of their visions for social and educational reconstruction (House, 1974).

With the partial acceptance of neo-Marxist descriptive theory, and to a less extent its predictive theory as well (See Morgenstern, 1972), a number of essentially liberal technical-assistance organizations such as the Ford Foundation, the World Bank, *et al.*, are also to some degree now caught in Curle's dilemma of using the conflict frame for diagnosis and the equilibrium world view as the basis for their normative theory (Clignet, 1974; House, 1974; Simmons, 1975; Silvert, 1976; Stevens, 1976). This difficult balancing act calls for increased attention to

Figure 15

SYSTEM AND COUNTER-SYSTEM

	Level of Awareness	Mode of Identity	Motive	Dominant form of Relationship	Institutions (i.e., Schooling)
system	Lower	Belonging-Identity	Competitive Materialism	Unpeaceful (Conflicted) Relationships, Manipulative at Inter-personal Level, Socially and Politically Exploitative	Competition, Imperialism, Capitalism, Class and Political Structures Based on Power, the Exploitative Network
counter-system	Higher	Awareness-Identity	Altruistic and Empathetic	Peaceful (Unconflicted), Loving and Supportive	Co-operative and Egalitarian, Democracy in Its Best Forms

Source: Curle (1973), p. 10.

the need for a new dialectic viewpoint drawing on both equilibrium and conflict paradigms, a difficult task now underway (Coser, 1956; Berghe, 1963; Lenski, 1966; Schermerhorn, 1970; Galtung, 1975).

In Figure 16, Stevens (1976) presents an interesting variation on what we might call "the liberal's dilemma" in attempts to present logically consistent diagnoses and prescriptions for educational reform. He asks, for example, "how can school reforming be so popular and yet have so little impact on the institutional character of schools: their purposes, forms, and functions? How can we distinguish 'refining' reforms from the more revolutionary reforms?" His proposal is "to classify and analyze school reform ideas in an organizational, as opposed to an educational, political, or ideological context . . . to attempt to see the potential power of various reform ideas and their inherent limits as well" (pp. 371-372).

Stevens notes that his type III, or "process" reforms have the potential for fundamental change in educational control, i.e., "power," and accordingly for changes "in the schools' purposes, forms, and functions." Here he recognizes the impossibility of ignoring ideology and power in explaining reform failures by acknowledging that "if educational control is placed in different hands, it seems very likely that different kinds of educational decisions may be made—and that schools may well be turned to different ends and be remade in new forms" (p. 374). But as Stevens, like Curle *et al.*, avoids conflict in his normative theory, he is left with little more than a paradox, i.e., "that the more achievable reforms—those tied to the 'structure' and 'product' components of the schools—seem least likely to result in changes that are most needed. . . . Similarly, reforms that are most difficult to achieve—because they generate the strongest disagreement and most powerful opposition—are precisely the 'process' kinds of reforms that might well result in some fundamental educational reforms. Serious redesign of the schools is thus an uphill proposition whose possibilities are related inversely to its importance" (p. 374).

And because Stevens ignores the normative implications of his proposition that a shift in educational control is a possible necessary condition for basic change in educational goals, programs, and outcomes, he is left with little more than the conclusion that schools as entrenched bureaucracies are "almost impervious to redesign, typically withstanding the best efforts of the most skillful reformers" (p. 371).

2. P. Rosenberg, *The Seventh Hero: Thomas Carlyle and The Theory of Radical Activism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 116, 120.

Where functionalists view educational change from the needs of total social systems, and conflict-theory adherents explain reforms as a function of power rather than need, a non-Marxist dialectical perspective provides no a priori answers (Gouldner, 1976). Rather, the dialectic is an empirical approach, a way of knowing suitable for observing and probing social and educational change (see Figure 17). Gurvitch (1962) puts it well in his explanation that the dialectic: "regards all forms of social stability and structure as problematic and not fixed. . . . it involves the recognition, and attempts to portray, many types of duality that appear in continually changing social wholes, from complementarity and mutual implication to ambiguity, ambivalence, and polarization. Thus some types of duality involve oppositions and conflicts while others do not. As change continues, some types of duality are transformed into others under special conditions. One of the tasks of social research is to seek out these conditions and specify them in particular cases" (pp. 24-26).

From this position, I view the functional and conflict interpretations of total societies and of continuity and change in education discussed in this review as dialectically related. Both views are necessary for adequate explanation of change and lack of change in social and educational phenomena and relationships. Although my personal bias is toward conflict theory, I also believe along with Schermerhorn (1970) that "neither perspective can exclude the other without unwarranted dogmatism. This holds true for analysis both at the global level of total societies, as well as in the more limited spheres of . . . groups and their interactions with dominant groups" (p. 51).

In this regard, Dahrendorf (1967, p. 127) has also argued for a social science capable of recognizing alternative social realities. Sociological problems and processes such as structural change in educational systems, for example, can only be understood, he contends, with "both the equilibrium and conflict models of society; and it may well be that in a philosophical sense, society has two faces of equal reality: one of stability, harmony and consensus, and one of change, conflict and constraint" (p. 127).

There may be truth in the argument that the equilibrium and conflict paradigms are irreconcilable. There is however some evidence to the contrary in studies attempting to apply the dialectical method—if only in part—to the study of change processes (Berghe, 1963; N. Gross, 1968, 1971; Young, 1971; Campbell, 1972; Weiler, 1974). And if we are to gain greater theoretical insight into "why and how educational reforms occur," I suggest that such gains will follow in large measure from a more sophisticated and insightful use of the dialectical method in all its variations.