'Looters and Thugs and Inert Women Doing Nothing': Racialized Communities in Capitalist America and the Role of Higher Education

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Abstract

In the light of endemic racism in the United States, perhaps reaching its zenith in the pronouncements of a leading Republican, I begin by offering my views on 'race' and racism, before introducing and developing the Marxist concept of racialization. I then offer a Marxist-based definition of institutional racism. Next, I argue that racialization and institutional racism have most purchase in explaining the multiple manifestations of racism in Capitalist America (genocide, slavery, segregation and their legacies; and immigration policy). I conclude by discussing the potential of Higher Education (HE) to challenge racism. HE must, I argue, bring a critical analysis of racism back into the seminar room. HE should have as central, I suggest, a critical analysis of the capitalist system itself and accompanying modern-day imperialism, as well as an exploration of social class. Other global issues such as ecology and the media, I argue, must also be prominent, as well as local issues, including the making of connections with oppressed communities. All of the above should be seen, I conclude, in the context of the need, at the heart of HE, for space to be created for the development in students of theoretical sophistication.

Introduction

The focus of this paper is racism in the United States **[1].** On a recent, radio broadcast, William Bennet, a key player in Republican politics and a leading neoconservative ideologue, said:

> I do know that it's true that if you wanted to reduce crime, you could - if that were your sole purpose - you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down (cited in Van Auken, 2005).

Bennet continued, 'That would be an impossibly ridiculous and morally reprehensible thing to do, but your crime rate would go down' (cited in *ibid*.).

Reacting to negative responses from President Bush's press secretary, and from the Republican Party, Bennett defended his remarks, calling them 'a thought experiment about public policy'. 'I was putting forward a hypothetical proposition', he said (cited in *ibid*.).

As Bill Van Auken points out (*ibid*.), such 'thought experiments' and 'hypothetical propositions' have a long and repellent history. Theories about 'racial hygiene' and eugenics as a means of curing social problems were widely discussed in right-wing political and academic circles before they were implemented as a policy of mass extermination in Nazi Germany.

Significantly, Van Auken goes on to say that Bennett tied his comments directly to the social catastrophe unleashed upon New Orleans and its predominantly black and poor population in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. 'There was a lot of discussion about race and crime in New Orleans', Bennett told *ABC News*. 'There was discussion - a lot of it wrong - but nevertheless, media jumping on stories about looting and shooting, and roving gangs and so on' (cited in *ibid*.). 'There's no question this is on our minds' he continued. 'What I do on our show is talk about things that people are thinking ... I'm sorry if people are hurt, I really am. But we can't say this is an area of American life [and] public policy that we're not allowed to talk about - race and crime' (cited in *ibid*.).

Van Auken responds acerbically:

> [w]hose minds - in the aftermath of Katrina - are preoccupied with exterminating black babies? Who are the people who are 'thinking' about the fascistic policy that Bennett put into words on his radio show? For most who watched as tens of thousands in New Orleans were left to suffer - and many hundreds left to die - without food, water, medical aid or means of evacuation, the reaction was one of horror and anger over the abject failure of the American government and American society as a whole (*ibid.*).

However, Van Auken continues, 'a significant element within the American ruling élite and among its political representatives saw the chaos in New Orleans as the fault of the victims themselves, and drew the most reactionary conclusions' (*ibid*.). Indeed,

just a day after Bennett's radio comments, the *Wall Street Journal* published a long editorial comment by Charles Murray, co-author of the infamous pseudo-scientific and racist tract, *The Bell Curve* [2]. Entitled 'The Hallmark of the Underclass', Murray declared that the hurricane merely demonstrated that 'the underclass has been growing during all the years that people were ignoring it' (cited in Van Auken, 2005). The images from New Orleans, he wrote, 'show us the face of the hard problem: those of the looters and thugs, and those of inert women doing nothing to help themselves or their children. They are the underclass' (cited in *ibid*.) [3]. Murray also delved into a favourite topic of right-wing ideologues and pseudo-moralists like himself and Bennett - the 'illegitimacy rate' among blacks and 'low-income groups' generally (cited in *ibid*.).

Murray made no mention of the new US Census Bureau data showing a sharp increase in poverty for the fourth year in a row. More than 13 million American children now live in poverty, a 12.8 percent rise in the last four years. More than seven out of ten of these children had at least one parent working, many at a minimum wage that has not increased by a cent in the last eight years (cited in *ibid*.).

Based on his selectively culled statistics, Murray concludes that no government programmes can ameliorate the conditions of life confronting the tens of millions of Americans below the ridiculously low official poverty line [as of August, 2005, $19307 for a family of four]. He writes:

> Job training? Unemployment in the underclass is not caused by lack of jobs or of job skill, but by the inability to get up every morning and go to work. A homesteading act? The lack of home ownership is not caused by the inability to save money from meager earnings, but because the concept of thrift is alien. You name it, we've tried it. It doesn't work with the underclass (cited in *ibid*.).

Murray's belief is that nothing can be done, because poverty, unemployment, homelessness, the lack of health insurance and all of the social ills that befall large sections of American working people are merely manifestations of their own 'self-destructive' behaviour (*ibid*.).

As Van Auken concludes, the connection between the theories of Murray and Bennett's 'thought experiment' is obvious. If an entire layer of the population is a permanent, genetically determined 'underclass', beyond redemption and an unending

source of crime and social chaos, who can be surprised that within the ruling elite 'final solutions' involving genocide are seriously discussed as 'hypothetical propositions? (*ibid*.). As Van Auken puts it:

> The reality is that Hurricane Katrina exposed the crisis and decay of an entire social system based on private profit and the accumulation of personal wealth at the expense of society as a whole. It likewise laid bare the immense social polarization between wealth and poverty in America - a chasm that has widened over the course of decades. These grim social and class realities have inescapable revolutionary implications that have not been lost on America's ruling plutocracy. Its response will not be one of renewed social reformism or increased concern for a new generation of 'forgotten Americans' On the contrary, it is turning even more sharply to the right, embracing the most noxiously reactionary ideologies and relying ever more heavily on the police and military powers of the state. The resurgence of such fascistic conceptions as those of Bennett and Murray in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastation constitutes a grave warning to the American people (*ibid*.).

It is against this backdrop that I will assess the relevance of the Marxist concept of racialization.

'Race' and Racism

In order to understand the process of racialization in Capitalist America, it is necessary to examine the concept of racialization itself. In order to do this, we must first look at 'race' and racism.

'Race'

I would argue that 'race' is a social construct rather than a biological given. For these reasons, I put 'race' in inverted comma. That 'race' is a social construct is explained succinctly by Steven Rose and Hilary Rose (2005) and I will summarise their arguments here. They point out that 'race' is a term with a long history in biological discourse. Given a rigorous definition by the evolutionist Theodosius Dobzhansky in the 1930s, 'race' applied to an inbred population with specific genetic characteristics within a species, resulting from some form of separation that limited interbreeding. 'In the wild', they go on, 'this might be geographical separation, as among finches on the Galapagos islands, or imposed by artificial breeding, as for example between labradors and spaniels among dogs'. (*ibid*.). Early racial theorising also divided

humans into either three (white, black, yellow) or five (Caucasian, African, Australasian, American and Asian) biological 'races', supposedly differing in intellect and personality. However, in the aftermath of Nazism, the UNESCO panel of biological and cultural anthropologists challenged the value of this biological concept of 'race', with its social hierarchies. When, in the 1960s and 1970s, genetic technology advanced to the point where it was possible to begin to quantify genetic differences between individuals and groups, it became increasingly clear that these so-called 'races' were far from genetically homogeneous. In 1972, the evolutionary geneticist Richard Lewontin pointed out that 85% of human genetic diversity occurred *within* rather than *between* populations, and only 6%-10% of diversity is associated with the broadly defined 'races' (*ibid*.). As Rose and Rose explain, '[m]ost of this difference is accounted for by the readily visible genetic variation of skin colour, hair form and so on. The everyday business of seeing and acknowledging such difference is not the same as the project of genetics'. For genetics and, more importantly, for the prospect of treating genetic diseases, the difference is important, since humans differ in their susceptibility to particular diseases, and genetics can have something to say about this. However, beyond medicine, the use of the invocation of 'race' is increasingly suspect. There has been a growing debate among geneticists about the utility of the term and in Autumn 2004, an entire issue of the influential journal *Nature Reviews Genetics* was devoted to it. The geneticists agreed with most biological anthropologists that for human biology the term 'race' was an unhelpful leftover. Rose and Rose conclude that '[w]hatever arbitrary boundaries one places on any population group for the purposes of genetic research, they do not match those of conventionally defined races'. For example, the DNA of native Britons contains traces of multiple waves of occupiers and migrants. 'Race', as a scientific concept, Rose and Rose conclude, 'is well past its sell-by date' (*ibid.*).

Racism

Elsewhere (e.g. Cole, 2004a; Cole and Stuart, 2005), I have made the case for adopting a wide-ranging definition of racism. Overt intentional racism, based on biology or genetics, whereby people are declared inferior on racial grounds, is now generally unacceptable in the public domain (it is freely available, of course, on nazi and other racist websites, and in certain social and cultural settings). Contemporary

racism might best be thought of as a matrix of biological and cultural racism. In that matrix I would argue that racism can be based on genetics (as in notions of white people having higher IQs than black people: Herrnstein & Murray, 1994) or on culture (as in contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia). Quite often, however, it is not easily identifiable as either, or is a combination of both. A good example of the latter is when Margaret Thatcher, at the time of the Falklands/Malvinas war referred to the people of that island as 'an island race' whose 'way of life is British' (cited in Short and Carrington, 1996, p. 66). Here we have a conflation of notions of 'an island race' (like the British 'race' who, Mrs. Thatcher believes, built an empire and ruled a quarter of the world through its sterling qualities; Thatcher, 1982, cited in Miles, 1993, p. 75) and, in addition, a 'race' which is culturally like 'us': 'their way of life is British' (Cole, 1998a, p. 40; 2004a, p. 37).

Racism can also be overt, as in racist name-calling or it can be covert, as in glances, mutterings, and avoidance of people's company. It can be intentional or it can be unintentional. In other situations, seemingly positive attributes ascribed to an ethnic group will probably ultimately have racist implications. For example, the sub-text of describing a particular group as having a strong culture might be that 'they are swamping our culture', or certain groups may be stereotyped as being naturally good at sport or dance, but not at other endeavours. Stereotypes of ethnic groups are invariably problematic and, at least potentially, racist (Cole, 2004a, p. 37).

In still other situations, racism may well become apparent given certain stimuli (racist sentiments from a number of peers who might be collectively present at a given moment, for example).

I would argue, therefore, that, in order to encompass the multifaceted nature of contemporary racism, it is important to adopt a broad concept of racism, rather than a narrow one, based on notions of overt biological inferiority. Elsewhere (Cole, 2004a, p. 38) I have advocated a definition of racism, which includes individual or personal as well as institutional racism; dominative (direct and oppressive) as opposed to aversive racism (exclusion and cold-shouldering) (after Kovel 1988); overt as well as covert racism; intentional as well as unintentional racism; biological as well as cultural; and racism that is 'seemingly positive' as well as obvious negative racism.

There can, of course, be permutations among these different forms of racism (Cole, 2004a, p. 38).

As I suggested earlier, racism is not solely a matter of skin colour. Simpson, 2003, p. 225) recognizes the problematic nature of the concept of 'white', pointing out that, in the early 1900s, ethnic groups, including Jewish and Italian people, were considered more 'black' than 'white'. As she puts it, '[w]hiteness is not a monolithic way of representation; it is always contested and contingent on socio-cultural factors' (*ibid.*, In contemporary societies, Islamophobia is a rapidly growing form of racism, not based specifically on skin colour, but on culture. Moreover, for example, asylum seekers are subject to a form of racism, also not based on skin colour and described by Sivanandan (2002) as xeno-racism, and directed at not just those with darker skins, but white people too.

The Marxist Concept of Racialization

Robert Miles has defined racialization as an ideological **[4]** process that accompanies the exploitation of labour power (the capacity to labour), where people are categorized into the scientifically defunct notion of distinct 'races' (for arguments about defunct nature of 'race', see above). Racialization, like racism, is socially constructed. In Miles' (1989, p. 75) words, racialization refers to 'those instances where social relations between people have been structured by the signification of human biological characteristics in such a way as to define and *construct* differentiated social collectivities' (my emphasis). To avoid racialization being viewed in a functionalist way, Miles has pointed out that the processes are not *explained* by the fact of capitalist development (a functionalist position). However:

the process of racialisation cannot be adequately understood without a conception of, and explanation for the complex interplay of different modes of production and, in particular, of the social relations necessarily established in the course of material production (Miles, 1987, p. 7).

It is these interconnections with capitalist production, which I shall demonstrate later in this paper, that make Miles' concept of racialization inherently Marxist **[5]**.

Racialization and Skin Colour

Miles (1987, p. 75) makes it clear that, like racism, racialization is not limited to skin colour:

The characteristics signified vary historically and, although they have usually been visible somatic features, other non-visible (alleged and real) biological features have also been signified

I would like to make a couple of amendments to Miles' position. First, consistent with my preferred definition of racism (see above), I would want to add '*and cultural*' after, 'biological'. Second, the common dictionary definition of 'somatic' is '*pertaining to the body*', and, given the fact that people are sometimes racialized on grounds of clothing, I would also want this to be recognized in any discussion of social collectivities and the construction of racialization. Elsewhere (e.g. Cole, 2004b; Cole and Virdee, 2006), I have introduced the concept of xeno-racialization (developing on from Sivanandan's, 2002, concept of xeno-racism - see above) to describe the process whereby refugees and asylum-seekers (often white) become racialized. Given the widespread existence of xeno-racism and accompanying xeno-racialization it is important that in the current era, as well as through history, that racism directed at people with 'white skins' remains firmly on the agenda.

Racialization and the Working Class

Zeus Leonardo (2004, p. 485) is wrong, in my view, in suggesting that 'Marxism lacks the conceptual apparatus to ... provide compelling reasons for ... non-white overrepresentation in the working class'. Indeed the Marxist concept of racialization is that very conceptual apparatus for understanding the super-exploitation of 'non-white' workers, who are the globally the majority of the working class. As Marable (2004) writes:

> the problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of global apartheid: the racialized division and stratification of resources, wealth, and power that separates Europe, North America, and Japan from the billions of mostly black, brown, indigenous, undocumented immigrant and poor people across the planet.

Leonardo's assertion is all the more surprising since the concept appears in the sub-title of his paper - *Political Economy and the Production of Racialized Knowledge*, an indication that racialization might have appeared more prominently in the paper itself.

Racialization - a Two-Way Process

It is important to stress that racialization is not a one-way process. Racialization is clearly also internalised. As Franz Fanon (1967, p. 11, cited in Leonardo, 2004, p. 485) put it:

If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process:

- primarily economic;
- subsequently, the internalisation - or, better, the epidermalization - of this inferiority

Citing Hunter (1998, 1999), Leonardo (2004, p. 486) also notes that 'the "lighter the berry" the more privileges one garners, such as higher levels of education and status'. In addition, in most non-white communities female 'beauty' or 'prettiness' is associated with lighter skin tones (*ibid.*). As Leonardo (*ibid.*) puts it, '"fair" takes on the double entendre of light and pretty'. 'The point should be clear', however, 'that they are not regarded as white subjects but approximations of whiteness' (*ibid.*).

Institutional Racism

It is in Britain rather than in the US that the state, in a landmark report, admitted for the first time the widespread existence of institutional racism (The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, Macpherson, 1999) **[6]**. I will argue, however, following Cole, 2004a, that the Marxist concept of racialization transcends the rather nebulous and ahistorical definition of institutional racism provided by Macpherson. While the Inquiry admits the existence of racism among some *individual* police officers (an acknowledgement which I would suggest is understated) it accentuates *institutional racism* as the key problem.

Macpherson, in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, defines institutional racism as follows:

> The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people (1999, para, 6.34)

This definition was given a formal seal of approval by its having been read in the House of Commons on 24 February, 1999, by the former British Home Secretary, Jack Straw. It is interesting to note, however, that in repeating the definition verbatim in his speech to the House, Straw (1999) stresses the word, 'unwitting'.

While welcoming the Inquiry Report, I will, nevertheless, shortly offer a wider definition of institutional racism, a *defiinition* which includes *intentional* as well as unintentional or unwitting racism and one which incorporates racialization, rather than the psychologistic concept of prejudice, as well as developments in national and global capitalism.

For Marxists, any discourse is a product of the society in which it is formulated. In other words, 'our thoughts are the reflection of political, social and economic conflicts and racist discourses are no exception' (Camara, 2002, p. 88). While, such reflections can, of course, be refracted and disarticulated, dominant discourses (e.g. those of the Government, of Big Business, of large sections of the media, of the hierarchy of some trade unions) tend to directly reflect the interests of the ruling class, rather than 'the general public'. The way in which racialization connects with popular consciousness, however, is via 'common sense'. 'Common sense' is generally used to denote a down-to-earth 'good sense' and is thought to represent the distilled truths of centuries of practical experience, so that to say that an idea or practice is 'only common sense' is to claim precedence over the arguments of Left intellectuals and, in effect, to foreclose discussion (Lawrence, 1982, p. 48). Gramsci differentiated between 'good sense' and 'common sense'. For him the latter:

is not a single unique conception, identical in time and space. It is the 'folklore' of philosophy, and, like folklore, it takes countless different forms. Its most fundamental characteristic is that it is ... fragmentary, incoherent and inconsequential (Gramsci, 1978, p. 419)

The rhetoric of the purveyors of dominant discourses aims to shape 'common sense discourse' into formats which serve their interests. From a Marxist perspective, a definition of institutional racism must make it possible to relate racism to historical, economic and political factors, essential in understanding and combating racism.

Following on from this, institutional racism may be defined as:

> Collective acts and/or procedures in an institution or institutions (nation-wide, continent-wide or globally) that intentionally or unintentionally have the effect of racialising, via 'common sense', certain populations or groups of people. This racialisation process cannot be understood without reference to economic and political factors related to developments and changes in local, national and global capitalism (c.f. Cole, 2004a, p. 39).

Having outlined some theoretical issues concerned with 'Race' and Racism, Racialization and Institutional Racism, I will now turn my attention to some of the multiple manifestations of racism in capitalist America, and the extent to which these concepts can help to understand and challenge this. I will conclude with a consideration of the potential role of Higher Education in undermining racism.

Racialized Communities

Genocide and Its Legacy

I have argued that racialization means that social collectivities are constructed so as to be categorized into the scientifically defunct notion of distinct 'races', and that racialization connects with different modes of production. In Capitalist America, racialization has accompanied the interconnected modes of production of slavery and early (colonial) capitalism, and now accompanies advanced global neo-liberal imperial capital.

Once a particular group has been racialized as different and/or inferior, opposition to that group's exploitation and oppression is rendered less effective. Racialization not only accompanies the exploitation of labour power, it also smoothes the progress of the annihilation of specific groups and the seizure of land [7]. Racialized capitalism in America has a long history. Unleashed on a grand scale in 1492, and consolidated by subsequent invasions and conquests, it entailed, on the one hand, the attempted enslavement, the massacre, and the seizing of the land of indigenous peoples, both

local and adjacent; and on the other, the beginnings of the transatlantic slave trade. Both processes occurred, of course, to ensure and assist continued colonial containment and colonial and capitalist growth and expansion. This appropriation of land and maximization of workers' exploitation was facilitated by the racialization of both indigenous people and African slaves.

When specific groups are classified as a sub-human 'race' (Jewish people in Nazi Germany, for example), or as a savage 'race', as in the case of indigenous people in America), genocide becomes less problematic. According to David Stannard (1992), while estimates of the native population in North America in 1492 vary dramatically from 1.8 to 12 million; what is clear is that over four centuries that population was reduced to 237,000.

Andrea Smith (2002, p. 123) argues that genocide against Native Americans continues to this day, in the form of attacks against the reproductive rights of Native women, whose ability to reproduce, she argues, stands in the way of the continual conquest of Native lands, thus threatening the continued success of colonization. The majority of the energy resources, she continues, are on Indian lands (pp. 125-6), and therefore 'the continued existence of Indian people is a threat to capitalist operations' (*ibid*., p. 126). Smith concludes that:

> attacks against the reproductive rights of Native women can be seen as having less to do with a denial of reproductive 'choices' and more to do with the history of genocide against Native communities ... In the colonial imagination, Native women are ... 'better dead than pregnant' (*ibid*., p. 142).

Suicide is another legacy of colonialism and capitalism. Over five hundred years after the Spanish invasion and the attempted genocide of the indigenous population, suicide is the second cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives aged 15 to 24 and the third cause of death for Native American children aged 10 to 14 (Friends Committee on National Legislation, 2004).

Slavery and Its Legacy

While, on a world-scale, it preceded the capitalist mode of production, slavery remains the most intense form of capitalist exploitation. Slavery flourished, along with capitalism, for over three hundred years until its prohibition in 1865. Arwin D.

Smallwood (1999) describes the origins of this process, whereby the labour power of racialized peoples was exploited at the birth of modernity in the Americas:

From 1492 to 1502, the Spanish first enslaved the peoples of the Caribbean and Central and South America to satisfy their labor needs. In 1502, the Spanish were the first Europeans to enslave Africans in the Americas. Yet the native population quickly perished from European diseases like smallpox and from overwork. Thus in 1502, ten years after Columbus' landing, the Spanish brought the first African slaves to Cuba from West Africa to replace Indian slaves who were dying out. This began the trans-Atlantic slave trade between West Africa and the Americas.

Like Native Americans, African Americans were racialized as sub-human. According to the 'founding fathers' of America, black people were not full human beings, counting as two-fifths property and three-fifths human (Scully, 2002, p. 55). Black people were denied access, under the United States Constitution, to all the liberties and right accorded to white citizens. Black women and men who were enslaved were denied the right to choose sexual partners, to establish families, and to live in communities of their choice, without interference from white people. Moreover, it was illegal for more than two or three black people to congregate together, to learn to read or to assemble to worship (Kennedy, 1997, pp. 30-5, 76-84, cited in Scully, 2002, p. 55). In addition, black people were beaten, whipped, and subject to other forms of physical, mental, and emotional humiliation (*ibid*.). Immediately after emancipation, explicit laws (the Black Codes) criminalized behaviour of black people, behaviour which was allowed by white people. Such behaviour included vagrancy, unemployment, homelessness, loitering and 'shiftlessness'. Such crimes were punishable by incarceration (Kennedy, 1997, pp. 82, 91, cited in Scully, 2002, p. 56).

A major legacy of slavery today is surely 'the prison industrial complex'. The United States, home to some five per cent of the world's population, incarcerates twenty-five per cent of all prisoners worldwide (Battacharjee, 2002, p. 4). People of color are disproportionately represented in the prison industrial complex (see Part 1, endnote, 3 on the nomenclature, 'people of color'). Statistics indicate that 46% of inmates are black, and 18% Latino/Latina (Silliman, 2002, p. xiv). Women of color are at significantly heightened risk of HIV infection because of extremely limited access to preventive health care, and 'are arguably one of the groups least able to protect

themselves against a widening net of imprisonment or human rights abuses within the prison industrial complex' (Chandler and Kingery (2002, p. 85). Ninety-two per cent of women prisoners in federal prisons and sixty-eight per cent in state prisons are serving time for non-violent property or drug offences (*ibid.,* p. 83). Recalling horrendous imageries of slavery, Battacharjee (2002, p. 21) cites an *Amnesty International* report of a woman giving birth shackled to a hospital bed and surrounded by armed guards.

Bhattacharyya *et al* (2002, p. 43), argue that this new form of institutional racism performs the oldest management trick in the book - 'undercuts wages, exploits the most constrained workforce imaginable and, through this, disrupts the organisation of workers on the outside'. This super-exploitation is exacerbated by the fact that 'the most controllable workforce ... cannot unionize' (Battacharjee, 2002*,* p. 8). Silliman, (2002, p. xiv) notes that corporations engage in bidding wars to run prisons, and that the federal government boasts about saving money by contracting out prison management to the private sector. The Immigration Naturalization Service (INS) (see below) also serves as a growing source of income for county jails, which are rented out for immigration related detention (Battacharjee, 2002*,* p. 8).

Mass incarceration, of course, breeds mass political disfranchisement. Nearly five million Americans cannot vote. In seven states, former prisoners convicted of a felony lose their voting rights for life. In the majority of states, individuals on parole and probation cannot vote. About fifteen percent of all African-American males nationally are either permanently or currently disfranchised. In Mississippi, one-third of all black men are unable to vote for the remainder of their lives. In Florida, 818,000 residents cannot vote for life (Marable, 2004). Racialization is manifestly at work here. Substitute 'black' for 'white' and it is inconceivable that these statistics would be considered acceptable.

Segregation and Its Legacy

Amilcar Shabazz, 2004, deals with the history of and struggle against segregation, his focus being Higher Education (HE), and, as such, fills the gap between the centuries of slavery and the present day. The book is specifically about the struggle against *Jim Crow* education.

As Ronald Davis (undated) explains, the term 'Jim Crow' originated in a song performed by Daddy Rice, a *white minstrel* show 'entertainer' in the 1830s. Rice used to cover his face with charcoal paste or burnt cork to resemble a black man, and then sang and danced a routine in the caricature of a silly black person. As Davis explains, by the 1850s, this Jim Crow character, one of several stereotypical images of black inferiority in the nation's popular culture, was a standard act in the minstrel shows of the day (*ibid.*). However, he goes on, how the term became synonymous with the brutal segregation and disenfranchisement of African Americans in the late nineteenth century is unclear (*ibid.*).

What is clear, however, is that by 1900, the term was generally identified with those racist laws and actions that deprived African Americans of their civil rights by defining black people as inferior to white people, racializing them as members of a caste of subordinate people (*ibid.*), and underlining 'whiteness' as the norm.

Racialization in Capitalist America was given legal status by the enactment of segregation. The emergence of segregation in the South actually began immediately after the Civil War. The decade of the 1880s was characterized by mob lynchings, a vicious system of convict prison farms and chain gangs. Reminiscent of the pre-capitalist mode of production - feudalism; a system of sharecropping was introduced, whereby landless farmers were contracted to work the land for a share of the crop as their wages, to pay rent and to buy supplies. Some southern states moved to legally impose segregation on public transportation. Black people were required to sit in a special car reserved for them known as 'The Jim Crow car', even if they had bought first-class tickets (*ibid.*). The same segregation rules applied to buses. Rosa Parks, a black seamstress whose refusal to relinquish her seat to a white man on a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama, is a notable example of someone whose actions resisted this form of segregation. (Parks' personal courage helped touch off the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s).

Some states also passed so-called 'miscegenation laws' banning interracial marriages. Justifying such acts from a 'Christian' perspective, Basil Earl Masters, a deacon in the Baptist Church, who believed that the white 'race' were the chosen people of God, and feared the horror of 'mongrelization', or the loss of racial purity, put it thus:

> India - once a great race ... tall blond people. But they mixed with Negroes and look at them today. A thousand American soldiers could whip them. Spain - once a great nation. But they were invaded by the Moors, a sort of Negro people. Not much account today (cited in Shabazz, 2004, p. 147).

Almost all southern states passed statutes restricting suffrage in the years from 1871 to 1889, the effects being devastating: over half the black people voting in Georgia and South Carolina in 1880, for example, had vanished from the polls in 1888 (Davis, undated). Of those who did vote, many of their ballots were stolen, misdirected to opposing candidates, or simply not counted (*ibid.*).

By 1910, every state of the former Confederacy had adopted laws that segregated all aspects of life wherein black and white people might socially mingle or come into contact (*ibid.*). This was particularly the case with schools and universities. Shabazz traces the historical struggles that led to the 1950 *Sweatt v. Painter* decision which allowed blacks access to the University of Texas's law school for the first time. Four years later, the landmark decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* concluded that the policy of separate schools for white and black children was unequal and unconstitutional, thus outlawing discrimination (Younge, 2004a).

Brown v. Board of Education was a turning point in the history of segregation in the US. But we have to consider to what extent it was a cosmetic exercise. Commenting on the *Brown* ruling, and cementing his racist and sexist world-view, President Dwight Eisenhower stated:

> [Southern whites] are not bad people. All they are concerned about is to see that their sweet little girls are not required to sit in school alongside some big, overgrown negroes. It is difficult through law and through force to change a man's heart (Younge, 2004a).

During his inaugural address in 1963, the then Alabama governor, George Wallace, took to the steps of the state capitol and made a promise. Standing on the spot where Jefferson Davis had declared an independent southern confederacy just over 100 years before, he pledged:

> In the name of the greatest people that ever trod this earth, I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny and I say: Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation for ever (Younge, 2004b)

Over fifty years later, segregation is alive and well in 21st Century America (Younge, 2004a, b). On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of *Brown,* a Memphis newspaper reported that nearly 75% of Memphis City Schools are at least 90% African-American and over half are at least 99% African-American (McKenzie, 2004). Latino/a students also attend increasingly segregated schools. As Dixson and Rousseau (2005, p. 18) point out, following Orfield and Lee (2004) over 58% of Latino/a students in the state of New York attended highly segregated schools (90-100% minority) in 2001-2002. According to Bell (2004, p. 114), cited in Dixson and Rousseau (2005, p. 18)

the statistics on resegregation ... painfully underscore the fact many black and Hispanic children are enrolled in schools as separate and probably more unequal than those their parents and grandparents attended under the era of 'separate but equal'.

Milwaukee, an Algonquian word, believed to mean 'a good spot or place' (Brunner 2006) was in 2004 the most segregated city in the US. As Younge (2004a) comments, most black people shrugged at the news: 'Not much has changed here in the last 40 years, so it didn't surprise me'. Taki Raton, black principal of the Blyden Academy, there where the students recite and Afrocentric pledge rather than a pledge to the American flag, describes desegregation as 'a dismal failure' (Young, 2004a), while Wendell Harris, chair of education for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an organization which as Shabaz (p. 3) documents, was 'a leading force in the mid-twentieth-century challenge to white supremacy, as well as the premier architect of the field of ... civil rights', describes integration as 'a trade off' (*ibid.*). 'We gave too much and got too little' (*ibid.*)

Immigration

The concept of racialization is not only informative with respect to the exploitation of labour power, genocide and the seizure of land, slavery and segregation, and their respective legacies, it is also useful to understand immigration restrictions, pertaining to certain ethnic groups. Gareth Dale (1999, p. 308) explains the contradiction between capital's need for (cheap) flexible labour and need to control the workforce by racializing potential foreign workers:

On the one hand, intensified competition spurs employers' requirements for enhanced labour market flexibility - for which immigrant labour is ideal. On the

other, in such periods questions of social control tend to become more pressing. Governments strive to uphold the ideology of 'social contract' even as its content is eroded through unemployment and austerity. The logic, commonly, is for less political capital to be derived from the compact's content, while greater emphasis is placed upon its exclusivity, on demarcation from those who enter from or lie outside - immigrants and foreigners.

As Daniel J. Tichenor (2002, p. 2) argues, immigration reforms of the late-nineteenth century brought both sweeping Chinese exclusion policies and limited screening of other immigrant groups; while entry for most white European newcomers remained unfettered. During the 1920s, immigration opponents fought successfully for increasingly draconian restrictions targeted at southern and eastern Europeans as well as non-whites. The result was a fiercely restrictionist policy regime based on national origins quotas and racial exclusions that endured well after World War Two. During the 1960s, national origins quotas were dismantled in favour of a new preference system that reserved most annual visas for immigrants with family connections to US citizens and permanent residents. In subsequent years, economic uneasiness, unprecedented levels of immigration from Asian, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and the racialization of people from these areas, contributed to a surge of popular anti-immigrant views in the country.

With respect to twenty-first century globalisation, there are contradictions at work. Capital requires labour market flexibility, and Tichenor (*ibid.*) refers to several major reforms in recent decades that significantly expanded immigrant admissions and rights. However, resurgent economic crises have intensified the contradictions faced by states. Silliman (2002, p. xx) describes how certain immigrants are constructed as a source of danger in the United States. At present the INS has more armed agents with arrest power than any other law enforcement agency. Immigrants, she points out, are the fastest growing incarcerated population in the United States. Stringent controls have been implemented, and military-style tactics and equipment have resulted in immigrants undertaking more dangerous, isolated routes to cross, thus increasing risks of death, dehydration and assault. Jennifer S. Simpson (2003, p. 41) illustrates graphically the implications of this when she describes the road signs that the government has installed near the US/Mexican border: black bodies of men, women and children, hands together running, on a yellow square, posted on the freeway, so

that drivers like her 'will consider the possibility of braking for bodies and not only for border checks' (*ibid***.**).

Highlighting the contradiction identified by Dale above, Syd Lindsley (2002) addresses the tension between the temporary cheap surplus labour that capitalism wants/needs and the desire of a dominant white class to maintain its centrality in the US national identity and the subsequent need to racialize the Other. As she puts it:

> Capital wants labor, but doesn't want to bear the costs of reproducing it. In an ideal union between capitalism and white supremacy, immigrant women and men of color can continue to provide cheap, surplus labor, while remaining comfortably outside the realm of full citizenship. Thus, capitalist development can be preserved while the imagined white national identity can remain intact (*ibid*., p. 192).

Bhattacharjee (2002, p. 10) highlights the violence and abuse directed against immigrants, documented by various human rights groups, both at the United States-Mexico border and in the context of raids in interior regions of the country. Battarcharjee (2002, p. 21) points out that in INS detention centres, women face inadequate and uncaring medical services and disrespectful prison officials. Routine physiological events like menstruation can wreak havoc, due to inadequate sanitary provision.

Moreover, as Lindsley (2002, p. 193) points out, those immigrants who manage to get to the United States, that is to say, 'undocumented immigrants', are denied public services. This applies particularly to women and children. In general terms, '[t]he attacks on immigrant women and children are an attempt to solve the fundamental paradox of the simultaneous desire to exclude non-white foreigners from US citizenship, and to continue to enjoy the benefits from their underpaid labor' (*ibid.*).

The fatal shooting in the back of an 18-year-old immigrant, Guillermo Martinez Rodriguez, a Tijuana resident, by a US Border Patrol agent in December 2005 fuelled popular anger in Mexico over an increasingly repressive and xenophobic immigration policy that is being crafted in Washington (Van Auken, 2006). A few months before the shooting, the US House of Representatives passed a draconian immigration bill that will turn the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants residing in the US into criminals and further militarize the US-Mexican border. Outrage in Mexico over

the legislation has focused on the bill's proposal to build 700 miles of concrete and steel security fencing to seal off more than one third of the border between the two countries. Mexican politicians, including President Fox, have compared the proposal to the Berlin Wall and the security barrier that Israel is constructing on the West Bank. The legislation further requires the Defense and Homeland Security Departments to develop plans utilizing military technology to thwart border crossers (*ibid*.).

Critics of the border's growing militarization warn that these measures will only push those seeking to cross to more dangerous areas, resulting not in a decrease in the number of undocumented immigrants, but a rise in the number of dead ones. The official death toll on the border in 2005 hit a record high of 415 (*ibid*.).

The legislation, rapidly approved by the House, is clearly aimed at appealing to the anti-immigrant and racist sentiments of the Republican Party's extreme right-wing base (*ibid*.), and, of course, to consolidate and promote popular 'common-sense' racism (see Part 1 of this paper). Meanwhile, on the US side of the border work in the factories and fields, flourishes thanks to US efforts. At the same time, separate legislation is being drawn up by the Senate, which is expected to better reflect the demands of corporate America and particularly agribusiness, which are opposed to any measures that would deprive them of the ability to exploit low-wage immigrant labor. President Bush, who praised the House measure, has also vowed not to sign any legislation that does not include a 'guest worker' provision. This revival of the old 'bracero' program of the World War II era would create a legally sanctioned class of super-exploited workers without any rights and subject to deportation after three years (*ibid*.).

The New Racial Domain

Manning Marable (2004) has used the concept, 'New Racial Domain' (NRD) to describe the current state of affairs in the US. This New Racial Domain, he argues, is 'different from other earlier forms of racial domination, such as slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and ghettoization, or strict residential segregation, in several critical respects' (*ibid*.). These early forms of racialization, he goes on, were based primarily, if not exclusively, in the political economy of *US* capitalism. 'Meaningful social

reforms such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were debated almost entirely within the context of America's expanding, domestic economy, and a background of Keynesian, welfare state public policies' (*ibid*.).

The political economy of the 'New Racial Domain', on the other hand, is driven and largely determined by the forces of transnational capitalism, and the public policies of state neo-liberalism, which rests on an unholy trinity, or deadly triad, of structural barriers to a decent life (*ibid*.).

These oppressive structures are mass unemployment, mass incarceration, and mass disfranchisement', with each factor directly feeding and accelerating the others, 'creating an ever-widening circle of social disadvantage, poverty, and civil death, touching the lives of tens of millions of U.S. people (*ibid*.).

For Marable, adopting a Marxist perspective, 'the process begins at the point of production. For decades, U.S. corporations have been outsourcing millions of better-paying jobs outside the country. The class warfare against unions has led to a steep decline in the percentage of U.S. workers' (*ibid*.). As Marable concludes:

> Within whole U.S. urban neighborhoods losing virtually their entire economic manufacturing and industrial employment, and with neoliberal social policies in place cutting job training programs, welfare, and public housing, millions of Americans now exist in conditions that exceed the devastation of the Great Depression of the 1930s. In 2004, in New York's Central Harlem community, 50 percent of all black male adults were currently unemployed. When one considers that this figure does not count those black males who are in the military, or inside prisons, its truly amazing and depressing (*ibid*.).

Moreover, the new jobs being generated for the most part lack the health benefits, pensions, and wages that manufacturing and industrial employment once offered (*ibid*.).

Higher Education: the US Potential

What then can critical HE educators, including Marxists, do to alert students to, and to counter this state of affairs? What is the role of HE in undermining racialization and institutional racism? **[8].** Simpson (2003) has two central themes: first, the ongoing racialization of students of color and subsequent institutional racism; second, what

steps can be taken to challenge and undermine this racism. According to Simpson, racism is so rampant that cross-racial dialogue in the university rarely happens. This is because, in the words of a woman of color activist in her study, '[i]t's all a set up' (Simpson, 2003, p. 125). For Simpson, three interrelated reasons explain this. First, power in the academy is still in mostly European American hands; second, white liberals believe in the possibility of neutrality when it comes to 'race' and racism in local contexts (racism is thought to be the exception rather than the rule); third, there is widespread and frequent lack of awareness of most European Americans regarding the experiences of people of color (*ibid*., p. 126). In addition to a lack of cross-racial dialogue, these factors make it difficult for people of color to answer affirmatively to enquiries from their own faculty members as to whether they have experienced racism in their own institutions (p. 149).

Bringing a Critical Analysis of Racism back into the Seminar Room

Simpson examines how a discussion of issues of racism have been systematically excluded from HE. She argues that white people's recognizing the weight of racism, past and present, in their interactions with people of color is a necessary first step in antiracism (Simpson, 2003, p. 26). Addressing herself to other white people, she adds the important caveat that whereas '[r]ecognizing the presence of racism past may or may not be about what we have done. It is always about something of which we are a part' (*ibid.*). She is quick to assure readers that she is not referring to notions of white guilt:

White people must accept the unwelcome guest of racism past and present with clarity, frankness, and responsibility, rather than guilt, before mutual relationships between people of color can occur (*ibid.,* p. 25).

Sustaining antiracism requires three layers. First, white people must examine the history that they have learnt and, according to Simpson, be aware of what has been left out. Second, they must have a critical awareness of their own racial past. Third, Simpson argues that white people must listen to and read the work by people of color, which describes white people's own past (*ibid*., p. 57):

[While] cross-racial dialogue happens slowly and in rare instances, those who participate in that dialogue may be able to chip away at the set-up, to offer a different picture of talking and acting across difference (*ibid*., p. 153).

It is important to connect dialogue to theory. At the beginning of an article on racism in Britain, Alpesh Maisuria (forthcoming, 2006) explains his theoretical technique of linking state policy with his family's experiences of racism:

> I will ... [highlight] events and legislation that have shaped and defined macro policy, and also the micro experiences of the Maisuria family. It is of huge important to establish a connection between macro politics and micro struggles in a liberal democracy to see how the state links with lived lives.

As Leonardo (2004) and Maisuria (forthcoming, 2006) have argued, these dialogues need to be informed by Marxist analysis, in order to link such dialogue with objective reality.

HE students need to understand racism in order to combat it. It is necessary for students to have a critical awareness of racialization and institutional racism, and the way in which they contribute to an understanding of the past and present in Capitalist America.

Global Issues

Following Marable's analysis of the New Racial Domain above, it is necessary, in the twenty-first century, to link racism to the wider global economic picture. HE students need to engage in a global analysis of the mechanics of capitalist production and exchange, and the central role of social class in understanding this. Key questions to consider with respect to the global might be, *what is globalization; what is its relationship to capitalism; is globalization a new phenomenon, or is it as old as capitalism itself; is it inevitable; who benefits and who loses; how is globalization related to social class, locally, nationally and internationally; how does and racialization aid in an understanding of the processes of globalization, and in what ways does racialization facilitate globalization?* (for an analysis of globalization, see, for example, Cole, 1998b, 2005a).

Imperialism

Fundamentally linked to contemporary global capitalism is modern-day imperialism. Another basic question, then, is *what is the nature of imperialism?* The front cover of the *New York Times* Magazine on January 5th 2003, declared, 'American Empire: Get Used to It' (Harvey, 2005, p. 3). The belief that the USA, in the twenty-first century, is engaged in a major imperial enterprise is not novel. Indeed this interpretation of US intent is shared by a wide spectrum of political opinion, with wide support from neo-Conservatives, and condemnation from liberals and Marxists (see, for example, Hyland, 2002; Young, 2002; Smith, 2003; Ferguson, 2004; Lind, 2004; Cole, 2004c; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2005; Lieven, 2004; see Cole, 2004c for information on the political affiliation of these various writers). HE students need to be critically aware of systems of imperialism, and their multifarious links to racism and racialization **[9]**. If we are to teach of imperialism, past and present, with integrity in HE, the syllabus must, I would argue, incorporate the following, *in addition* to a critical analysis of the actual events themselves. There must be a thorough and critical analysis of theories of imperialism, classical, Keynesian, postmodern *and* Marxist (e.g. Barratt Brown, 1976). Students will need skills to evaluate the New Imperialism and what has been described by many as 'the permanent war' being waged by the United States with the acquiescence of Britain. Boulangé (2004) argues that it is essential at this time, with the Bush/Blair 'war on terror' and rampant Islamophobia, to show solidarity with Muslims, for 'this will strengthen the unity of all workers, whatever their religion' (p.24). This will have a powerful impact on the struggle against racism in all spheres of society, including education. In turn, this will strengthen the confidence of workers and students to fight on other issues.

For Marxists, an understanding of the metanarrative of imperialism, past and present, takes us to the crux of the trajectory of capitalism from its inception right up to the twenty-first century; and this is why Marxists should endorse its teaching. With respect to current US Imperialism, it can either be accepted as 'common sense', as inevitable, or even as benign, or it can be under constant challenge. Education, by default, can aid its progress, or it can contribute to a critical awareness of US Imperialism's manifestations, and, from a Marxist perspective, the need for its demise, and the replacement of capitalism with a new world order.

Mike Cole

Ecology

It is important to address the fundamental issue of the environment. McLaren and Houston (2005, p. 167) have argued that 'escalating environmental problems at all geographical scales from local to global have become a pressing reality that critical educators can no longer afford to ignore'. They go on to cite 'the complicity between global profiteering, resource colonization, and the wholesale ecological devastation that has become a matter of everyday life for most species on the planet' (*ibid*.). Since it is the developing world that is being plundered, the implications for racism and racialization are obvious. Within the US borders, environmental racism is also endemic. People living on Native American reservations, for example, are forced to live with radioactive mining tailings and nuclear waste dumps.

Noting the wealth of ecosocialist scholarship that has emerged over the last two decades (e.g. Williams, 1980; Benton, 1996; Foster, 2000, 2002), McLaren and Houston, following Kahn (2003), state the need for 'a critical dialogue between social and eco-justice' (*ibid*., p. 168). They call for a dialectics of ecological and environmental justice to reveal the malign interaction between capitalism, imperialism and ecology that has created widespread environmental degradation which had dramatically accelerated with the onset of neo-liberalism (*ibid*., p. 172). McLaren and Houston (*ibid*., p. 174) then propose an educational framework, of which the pivot is class exploitation, but which also, following Gruenwald (2003) interrogates the intersection between 'urbanization, racism, classism **[10]**, sexism, environmentalism, global economics, and other political themes'.

Local Issues

Fischman and McLaren (2005) address the need to be able to relate to shifting patterns of globalization and their effect on local communities; urban communities, consisting of people of color, being a major, though not exclusive constituency. Again, Marxism would be a logical starting point, since it can make connections between the international, the national, and the local state. HE students should not only be involved in struggles for a better education for *all* young people, they should also connect their professional needs with local community struggles for better jobs, working conditions, health services, day care facilities, housing and so on. What is

required is reciprocal knowledge. This should involve moving beyond white, Anglo-Saxon, middle class and heterosexist educational norms, and in Fischman and McLaren's (2005, p. 352) words, we should 'explore the subjugated knowledges of women [and] minority groups'. Here Critical Race Theory's concept of voice is germane. Transmodernism's 'new way of living in relation to Others' is related and also useful. The transmodern argument is that it is not just a case of thinking differently about 'suffering Others', but also about interacting with reciprocity and mutuality **[11]**. The Marxist concept of racialization is most pertinent in connecting with oppressed communities, since it helps understand how and why certain groups are oppressed. A move beyond traditional educational norms would, by necessity, involve HE teachers in a number of struggles. Local struggles would, of course, relate to national and international struggles. It would be important to make interconnections between them.

Media Awareness

Of course, the role of education in general, and teaching about global capitalism, social class and imperialism in HE has its limitations and young people are deeply affected by other influences such as the media and by peer culture. Indeed the latter reinforces the effects of the former, as HE students discuss popular television, internet and other media outlets in their universities and colleges, and during leisure pursuits with their peers. A good example of the power of the media are the racialized TV images of Hurricane Katrina, and accompanying stories of looting, rape and drugs.

Fischman and McLaren (2005) have emphasized the need for a media literacy curriculum, in order to acquire the range of literacies required to engage critically with hegemonic discourses. Understanding such discourses can be facilitated by the transmodern concept, described by Smith as 'enfraudening' (Smith, 2003). He has coined the phrase, 'enfraudening the public sphere' to describe 'not just simple or single acts of deception, cheating or misrepresentation' (which may be described as 'defrauding'), but rather 'a more generalized active conditioning of the public sphere through systemized lying, deception and misrepresentation' (Smith, 2003, pp. 488-489; see also Cole, 2004b; 2006b).

Lying, deception and misrepresentation with respect to issues of racism and imperialism abound in the media. The images of Hurricane Katrina are an obvious example of enfraudening internally. To take just one example of external enfraudening, all 175 newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch world-wide, staffed by supposedly independent editors, unanimously declared the Iraq war to be a good thing (Harvey, 2005, p. 12). HE students need to be able to find ways of breaking through these processes.

Given the ongoing process of commodification, in large part facilitated by multi-media capitalism, media literacy remains an urgent priority. Understandably given their counter-hegemonic potential, media studies have traditionally been demeaned by ruling elites as non-academic.

Theoretical Sophistication

All of the above suggestions as to the way forward for HE should be seen in the context of the need, at its heart, for space to be created for a consideration, both historic and contemporaneous, of varying understandings of society. Marxism should be central, along with other perspectives such as CRT, as well as more mainstream poststructuralism, postmodernism and transmodernism **[12]**. This would not only stimulate debate about the nature of our world, it might encourage student teachers to transcend 'common sense' and to move towards a critical understanding of all that envelops them. It might also engender a belief that a different more just world is possible, that 'history is always in the making' (Fischman and McLaren (2005, p. 356). We are talking about empowerment. As Antonia Darder (2002, p.110) has put it, with respect to school pupils/students, but equally prescient to HE:

empowerment ... entails participation in pedagogical relationships in which ... [students] experience the freedom to break through the imposed myths and illusions that stifle (them) and the space to take individual and collective actions that can ... transform their lives.

And, of course, the lives of others.

Van Auken (2005) has described the situation in the US thus: '[c]lass antagonisms and social conflicts between the super-wealthy oligarchy and the broad mass of working people have become so sharp that they cannot be contained within the traditional political and constitutional framework'. While the struggle against racism and racialization is clearly a major challenge in the US, as elsewhere, for Marxists, the struggle must be widened, and must be part of the struggle for socialism. Space here does not permit a detailed analysis of the origins, issues and possible futures for a truly *democratic* alternative to capitalism, namely democratic socialism (for this, see Cole, 2006b).

I will leave the last word to Manning Marable (2004):

> Socialism lost its way largely when it became decoupled from the processes of democracy. My vision of a just society is one that is democratic, that allows people's voices to be heard, where the people actually govern. C.L.R. James sometimes used the slogan 'every cook can govern' to speak to the concept that there should be no hierarchies of power between those who lead and their constituencies. Our challenge and task is not to construct a comprehensive blueprint for an alternative society. It is to in a small modest way speak to a vision of what society might look like if we didn't have 43 million people without medical care; if you didn't have a half million people in the United States last year being turned away from an emergency health clinic because they had no health insurance; if you had a society where several million people didn't sleep in the streets or were underhoused. That's a vision that can be realized through struggle, but it must be a struggle that harnesses the capacities, the intelligence, the will, the insights from our collective experiences. That's what I mean by radical democracy. That's why I am a socialist - because I deeply believe that an ethical and a humane society is possible through struggle.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. With respect to the use, in the title of this paper, of 'Capitalist America', I am, of course, aware that 'America' encompasses far more than the United States. Just as in Bowles and Gintis (1976) Marxist classic, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, I use 'America' in the title as 'a reminder ... [of the way in which] cultural imperialism affects ... the way we communicate' (Bowles and Gintis, 1976, p. ix). Moreover, the US is that part of the continent which is the world hub of neo-liberal capitalism and imperialism; hence the critical use of 'Capitalist America' serves to challenge US hegemony and the current US trajectory.

2. The thrust of Herrnstein and Murray's (1994) arguments in *The Bell Curve* is an unabashed defence of social inequality, attributing wealth and poverty to superior versus inferior genetically-determined intellectual abilities. The political conclusion of *The Bell Curve* is a rejection of all policies aimed at ameliorating social injustice and furthering democratic values.

3. Murray's interpretation is most interesting. First, it implies that media images are somehow objective (see below for a discussion on the importance of the acquisition of skills to deconstruct media images); second, in a most racist and sexist way, it juxtaposes black men and black women - the former, criminals, the latter, inept.

4. As Hill (2001, p. 8) has pointed out, the influence of ideology can be overwhelming. He cites Terry Eagleton (1991, p. xiii) who has written, '[w]hat persuades men and women to mistake each other from time to time for gods or vermin is ideology'. The efficacy of this observation resonates throughout this paper.

5. In adopting Miles' definition of racialization, I should make it clear that the concept is a contested term which is widely used and differently interpreted (for an analysis, see Murji and Solomos (eds) 2005).

6. This Report looked at racism in the Metropolitan Police and other British institutions. It followed a lengthy public campaign initiated by the parents of black teenager Stephen Lawrence, murdered by racist thugs in 1993. A bungled police investigation means that there have been no convictions.

7. The next four sections of this paper draw on and develop Cole, 2006a.

8. I refer specifically to Higher Education rather than education in general because while many of the following suggestions for HE apply also to all levels of the education system, it is the HE sector, particularly teacher education, with which I am most familiar, and from which I am able to draw my own examples. Teacher education is, of course, symbiotically related to schooling.

9. The focus of this paper has been racism *in* Capitalist America. For a discussion of the ways in which imperialisms, both present and past, racialize those at their receiving ends, see Cole, 2004c, d, 2006b. One example, here, of sub-human treatment will suffice. Jamal al-Harith, a British captive freed from Guantanamo Bay, informed *The Daily Mirror* (a popular British tabloid) that his guards told him: 'You have no rights here'. al-Harith went on: [a]fter a while, we stopped asking for human rights - we wanted animal rights. In Camp X-Ray my cage was right next to a kennel housing an Alsatian dog.

    He had a wooden house with air conditioning and green grass to exercise on. I said to the guards, 'I want his rights' and they replied, 'That dog is member of the US army'.

    (http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/allnews/content_objectid=14042696_method=full_siteid=50143_headline=-MY-HELL-IN-CAMP-X-RAY-name_page.html: accessed 29th January, 2006; cited in Cole, 2004b)

    Such treatment is sustained by racialization. Indeed, the *a priori* racialization of Muslims as sub-human terrorists serves to facilitate their torture, rape, humiliation and degradation, occurring on a massive scale and having apparently been developed by intelligence services over many years. In particular the humiliation of the body stands in stark contrast to the Muslim importance of covering. Racialization, under conditions of imperialism is fired by what Dallmayr (2004, p. 11; see also Cole, 2004d), has described as 'the intoxicating effects of global rule' which anticipates 'corresponding levels of total depravity and corruption among the rulers'.

10. Classism refers to discrimination on the grounds of social class. Marxists oppose classism, as they do all the other exploitative and discriminatory 'isms' (see Cole, 2005b, pp. 13-16 for a discussion of 'isms'). However, they do not believe that class equality is possible under capitalism, since capitalism's fundamental feature is the exploitation of one class by another.

11. There is some similarity between Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Transmodernism, in their joint stress on *listening* to the views of the oppressed. Thus, arguing from a CRT perspective, Dixson and Rousseau (2005, p. 10) define the concept of *voice* as 'the assertion and acknowledgement of the importance of the personal and community experiences of people of colour as sources of knowledge'. *Arguing in a similar vein to CRT theorists, transmodernists* advocate analectic interaction: listening to the voices of 'suffering Others' and interacting democratically with suffering Others (for a Marxist analysis and critique of transmodernism, see Cole, 2004c, 2004d, 2005c, 2006b).

12. For a Marxist critique of poststructuralism and postmodernism, see, for example, Cole, 2006b; see also Cole, 2003 and Hill *et al,* 2002. While, as will have been clear, my sympathies lie squarely with Marxism, it is crucial, I believe, for dialogues to take place between all radical thinkers who oppose racism. What follows, here, by way of example, is the content of three modules currently taught to BA (Education) students at the University of Brighton, UK:

Module 1:

- an introduction to Marxism and postmodernism and their relationship to education;
- the concepts of social class, 'race' and racism, gender, sexuality, disability and special needs and their relationship to education;
- a consideration of some current debates on educational policy;

Module 2

introduction to theories of capitalism and globalisation: is globalisation a new phenomenon, or as old as capitalism itself?

introduction to global trends in education, including The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the issue of privatisation and commodification.

Module 3

●The development of Marxist theory

●The development of Postmodernist theory

●Marxist and Postmodernist theory in a sociological context

●Marxism and Postmodernism in Educational theory

●Marxism and postmodernism in educational practice

●The relationship between postmodernism, Marxism and the Future of Education

Full module outlines for all three modules are available on request (Mike.Cole2@ntlworld.com)

Other examples of critical undergraduate and Masters degree modules are those currently run at the University of Northampton by Dave Hill and Glenn Rikowski. These are online at the Institute for Education Policy Studies website at <www.ieps.org.uk>. The undergraduate modules are listed under 'Modules in Critical Education', and the Masters degree modules are under 'MA/Med and PhDs with Dave Hill and Glenn Rikowski' (online at www.ieps.org.uk).

A counter-hegemonic Marxist teacher education course, a four year B.Ed (Bachelor of Education) full-time degree course, developed and led by Dave Hill 1990-1995 until it was terminated, is set out in Hill 2005, forthcoming, 2006a. It is described and analysed in detail in Hill, forthcoming, 2006b, and referred to in Hill, 2001, 2004.

Some counter-hegemonic space in teacher education in the UK may be facilitated by up-and-coming equalities legislation which requires all public institutions to be *pro-active* in promoting equality and equal opportunities (for an analysis, see, Cole, 2005b, 2006c). While the UK Government's primary intention may well be a more inclusive and flexible *workforce* rather than the promotion of equality, Marxists, as I have argued in this paper, support all such progressive reforms in capitalist societies, whatever the intentions of their innovators. This is, however, with a view to a longer term project of transformation to democratic socialism.

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