

Re-thinking normative democracy and the political economy of education

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Introduction

Normative thinking around democracy often emphasizes the supremacy of electoral politics, underplaying the salience of education as a defining feature to produce a more meaningful, engaged, inclusive form of democracy. Critical pedagogy can be an extremely useful, illuminating and transformative means and process of deconstructing how democracy is conceptualized, understood and developed. Critiquing the epistemological, experiential and hegemonic predispositions, manifestations, and intricate thinking that underpin inequitable power relations is fundamental to achieving a more politically literate and liberated populace. Being humble enough to acknowledge that our epistemological framework may limit our understanding of democracy—along with a diagnosis of mainstream and normative assessments that are constrained by a tepid educational experience dominated by a neo-liberal political economy—is fundamental to re-formulating how democracy is understood, and, more important, how it may become more empowering for marginalized groups and all peoples. This paper explores a re-conceptualization of democracy, premised on a more critical and engaged education, questioning and problematizing how power works.

Framing a critical pedagogy of democracy

Some propositions and arguments which frame a critical discussion and definition of democracy include:

- Democracy is important, it should be studied, and, for it to be meaningful and tangible, it must be fully cultivated throughout the educational experience (Kurth-Schai & Green, 2006; Westheimer & Kahne, 2002, 2003, 2004);
- Elections are but a very small part of democracy, they are highly exaggerated, can lead to disenfranchisement, and can smother the universal quest for a more humane and decent existence (Carr & Porfilio, 2009; Palast, 2004; Putnam, 2001);
- Democracy is not, nor should it be, dissociable from social justice, and if the two are not connected the relevance of democracy should be questioned and re-evaluated (Nieto, 1999; Portelli & Solomon, 2001; Sleeter, 2007; Spring, 2004);

- The media does not play a passive, objective, neutral role in sustaining democracy, and the impact of misrepresentation, omission and corporate control of information can have a deleterious effect on public debate (Bagdikian, 2004; Chomsky, 2008b; Herman & Chomsky, 2002; McChesney, 1998a, 1999b, 2008);
- When formal democracy blends into the neutralization of marginalized groups from power and decision-making processes and centers, this can enshrine a stealth-like contamination and disenfranchisement of the masses (Kincheloe, 2008a; Lintner, 2007; Macrine, 2009; McLaren, 2007);
- Doing democracy requires embarking on a process of critical interrogation, engagement and action, cognizant of our limitations in terms of knowledge, experience and philosophy, and open to constructive new and alternative paths to hegemonic interpretations of power (Kincheloe, 2008b; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007; Parker, 2002, 2003, 2006).

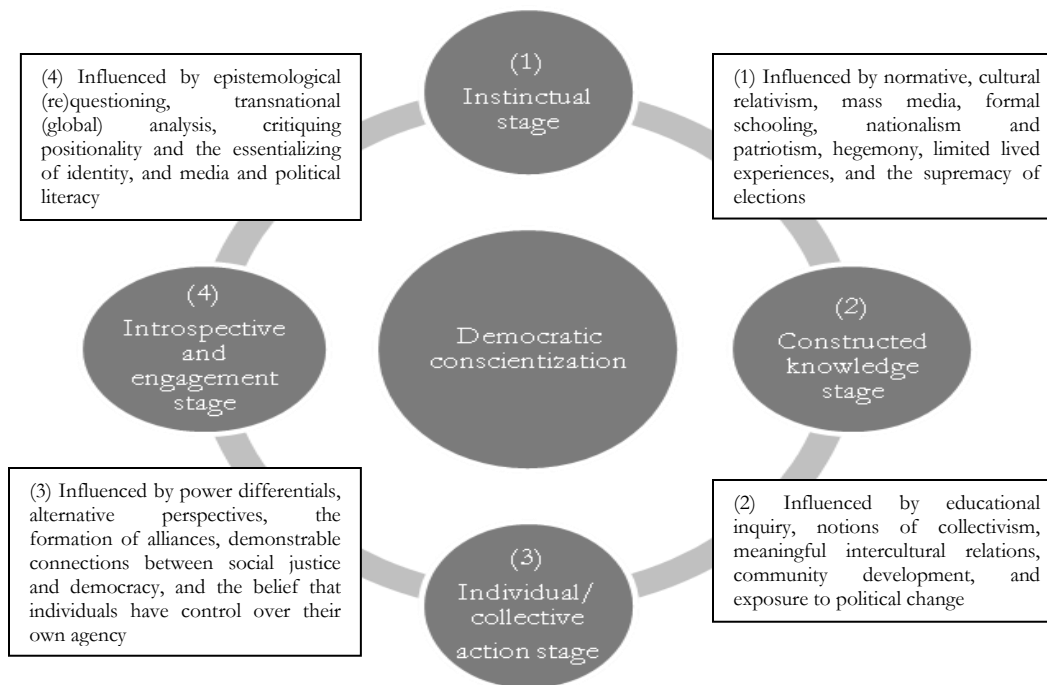
I am intrigued as to how educators perceive, understand and experience democracy because, I believe, there is a (direct/explicit and indirect/implicit) connection between our own relationship to, and understanding of, democracy, at the individual and collective levels, and how we will, ultimately, engage in/with democracy in and through education. My concern, as inspired by Paulo Freire (1973/2005, 1973, 1985, 1998, 2004), is whether this engagement is critical, substantive, and meaningful. Do we seek transformation or merely to reproduce social relations (Bourdieu, 1970; Bourdieu & Passaron, 1990; Kincheloe, 2008b)? Or is our involvement with power mitigated by the mainstream notion that individuals, supposedly, cannot change anything (Carr, 2008)? Can we change democracy if we are only weakly aware of what it is all about?

Can we have democracy if we have poverty? Racism? Sexism? Illogical, counter-productive and debilitating war? Systemic, entrenched impoverishment in a time of unprecedented wealth accumulation by the thin wedge represented by the postmodern, mercantilized-induced jet-set (Prins, 2009)? A number of critical pedagogues have written widely on the hollow shell of American hegemony, unearthing the deleterious effects of the neo-liberal confederacy (see McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007). Maintaining the

boundaries of US empire requires a constant stream of misinformation, propaganda and militaristic manipulation, all of which serves to disenfranchise democratic tendencies in society (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2006). Yet, their work, unfortunately, is not generally well known in Departments/Ministries of Education, nor through formal venues of educational decision-making, which is not to say that their ideas have not, or will not ultimately, be germinated within the broader societal Petri-dish¹. Although, for example, enslavement and colonization may not have been readily questioned at the height of their time, significant change has occurred, often with substantive struggle, always accompanied by visionary thinkers expounding on a different version of the truth (Zinn, 2003; Zinn & Macedo, 2005).

Figure 1 situates some of the characteristics, variables and concerns related to how we might achieve a more robust, *thicker* democracy—what I refer to below as *democratic conscientization*. This model attempts to illustrate some of the stages, or phases, that people may enter and pass through as they seek higher levels of *democratic conscientization*, building on Freire's (1973/2005) work. This model seeks to underscore the complex, problematic and nuanced challenges, obstacles and experiences that one faces when critically assessing democracy, which is, as I argue throughout this text, a much more encompassing, power-laden enterprise and political project than the limited, and thin, existence of elections. More importantly, this model underscores the fundamental role played by education—formal, informal, experiential—in cultivating a thicker interpretation and more critically engaged relationship to democracy, with the active and dialectical interplay between epistemological inquiry and critical action, ensconced in a vibrant democratic praxis. *Democratic conscientization* is a never-ending process, one that acknowledges differences, power imbalances, hegemonic forces and the non-neutrality of formal political and educational structures. Moving through the stages, one can also relate to some of the seminal research undertaken by Westheimer and Kahne (2004), which seeks to have students understand their political agency as well as reasons for inequity.

Figure 1 - Democratic education change model



Can we have democracy when only approximately half of eligible voters vote, not to mention the less than *bone fide* participation that the majority actually experiences (Cook, 2004; Patterson, 2003)? Can we have democracy with limited public debate (Parker, 2006)? Can we have democracy when the supposed cornerstone (elections) is fraught with serious systemic problems, such as the necessity to raise funds, the limited choice (two parties), the limited breadth of debate (a corporate media generally focused on the same issues from the same vantage-points), the lack of opportunity for engagement, the quasi-consensus that there are no alternatives, etc. (Carr & Porfilio, 2009; Macedo & Steinberg, 2007)? Is there now a “pulpless generation,” as Agger (2009) suggests, whose politics are decidedly different than one or two generations ago, including a detachment from books in favor of *cyber-democracy*? In outlining *econ-ocracy* and various conditions, issues and determinants related to democracy, this article provides some examples (American Idol, Haiti, categorization of democracies, development assistance to the South, and support for unsavory regimes) of how facile interpretations of democracy have had a nefarious effect on more structurally relevant concerns related to power.

Econ-ocracy as the new neo-liberal democracy

Econ-ocracy focuses on limited, often trivial, interests that divert attention from broader forms of democracy aimed at inclusive, transformative, participatory movements, and are inclined to address systemic inequities and marginalization. It refers to how theoretical conceptualizations of democracy rooted in epistemological interrogation and dialectical debate have been supplanted by *common sense, us versus them*, arrogance over humility, a bottom-line approach, and a disdain for critical anything, including critical thinking. *Econ-ocracy* relies on the market-place to sort out the whims of culture and the human condition. However, *econ-ocracy* is also dependent on exploiting inequitable power relations and advancing the hyperbole of neo-liberal thinking that competition is the only way of achieving collective gains, and, moreover, that we can and should quantify everything, including the education of children. Ultimately, *econ-ocracy* is dependent on the full weight of hegemony being pressed onto the backs of the working-class, the marginalized, indigenous peoples and other outliers from the center of power.

The issue of meaningful participation and engagement in the electoral process, combined with the role of the media, political (il)literacy, and the distribution of public and private funds, together, raise the question of what kind of democracy, or *econ-ocracy*, we are creating. Ironically, although the Iraq war/invasion was a pivotal issue in the 2008 presidential campaign, there was relatively scant attention actually paid to life in Iraq, let alone the rationale and objectives, of the military infiltration. Hartnett (2008) decries the manipulation and audacity of militaristic patriotism within a perceived awning of democracy, highlighting that “the president (Bush) won reelection in November 2004 by running a campaign emphasizing military strength, hunting terrorists, homophobic attacks on gay marriage, and tax cuts for the rich. It was a campaign of chest-pumping imperial bravado spiced by remarkable amounts of deception and much talk of God”. (p. 187) “Lying in politics” is often acceptable because of the fear of being labeled a dissenter, perilously contesting hegemonic power, as was the case throughout the rationalization phase for the Iraq War/conflict/invasion (Kellner, 2005, 2007; King, 2009). However, the alternative media profiled an almost endless amount of evidence,

insight and critique, which was broadly ignored by official channels as well as the mainstream candidates².

As Chomsky (2003, 2007, 2008b; Herman & Chomsky, 2002) has effectively argued, the media play an effective role in “manufacturing consent”. Corporate control (Bagdikian, 2004) and a nebulous editorial direction (McChesney, 1999, 2008) should create compelling arguments for schools to develop robust media literacy programs. A politically literate populace would, and should, be able to decipher the freshly wrapped veneer of the pervasive mainstream media message, which envelopes patriotic fervor in order to make democracy something more than a epiphany of expensive hair-cuts (the furor over the \$400 spent by candidate John Edwards during the 2008 election³), celebrity vignettes (the insatiable appetite for reports on the pastor at Obama’s church during the same campaign⁴), and beer summits (the several-week drama over comments made by President Obama in 2009, which eventually culminated in a very photo-opportunistic scene in the White House garden over four men and a couple of beers⁵). Endless energy and resources consecrated to banalities and insignificant trivia is the hallmark of a media-manipulated society, in which propaganda is something associated with the most barbarous regimes and not, supposedly, our own governments and marketeers in the business world.

Sex also seems to titillate, obscure and to play heavily in political coverage. During the campaign-period, the mainstream media maintained a central focus on the private meanderings of the freshly deposed Governor of New York⁶, then launched into a titillating foray about the extra-curricular activities of his replacement⁷, who acknowledged that he had already had extra-marital affairs during his inaugural press-conference, a pseudo pre-emptive strike against the presumed anti-investigative journalism of the new era. The most infamous case of sex dominating the political agenda, with impeachment being a direct consequence, relates to the tenure of President Bill Clinton, whose mandate was significantly derailed as a result (Mbakpuo, 2005).⁸ Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, there is a long history of sex scandals among elected

officials, including Presidents, although there has traditionally been a code of silence among journalists (Boertlein, 2010).

One often hears that democracy is the best of the lot, the system that works to achieve the most for the most people. Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill is well known for having stated that “Democracy is the worst form of government except for all those others that have been tried”⁹. Is it majority rule, and, if so, what do we do about minority rights (i.e., for women, racial minorities, the disabled, etc.)? If we are free to say what we like, who will listen? How do we know what to say? Why are so many voices muted? So, what is the point of democracy? Are elections, ultimately, the best way of securing democracy?

If we took money out of the American political system, would it matter? Would elected officials then not be relieved of the unbearable pressure of constantly seeking funds, which, ultimately, culminates in offering unparalleled access to their time and services to those who have provided for their campaign war-chests? The media covers the politicians endlessly, regardless, so would there be a loss of coverage if politicians were not able to pay for political advertisements? Would the removal of money from the formal political system open the way for more diverse representation outside of those willing and able to raise large sums? The economics of democracy is important but it is not the only consideration for opening up the system to more meaningful, legitimate, transformative and *democratic* potential. A challenge to *econ-ocracy* must, therefore, include a vigorous and critically engaged educational process.

American Idol and democracy

While I have never seen the television show *American Idol* (at least that’s what I say publicly), I know a fair amount about it. Students talk about it, the media is obsessed with it, it has become part of the political vernacular, and, of course, it is considered to be nothing but good news. A quick public narrative could be that it is simply people coming together to sing and enjoy the *American dream*. It seems that if you do not know about American Idol, you have somehow missed a significant part of (pop/popular) culture. It

would be easy to surmise that American Idol is what brings out the best in society: it is promoted as being nothing less (or more) than a little friendly competition, some passion, and lots of emotion. We can actually see people of different races cajoling and mixing. This reflection of American society makes us feel connected to the youth, who work with diverse folks in trying to realize their dreams. The personalities are larger than life. Should it be surprising to note that more people vote for their Idols than for candidates in US elections¹⁰? The level of analysis that is funneled into how the Idols dress, walk, dance, sing, enjoy life, etc. is extensive, and many people seem to be (critically) engaged as to who these people are. This raises questions about why so many people willingly say that they are “not political,” or are “not interested in politics” (see Carr, 2008a). The judges certainly add to the spectacle, and no one, the argument goes, is coerced into watching or being a part of it. Is it worth considering how American Idol is not just a subtle, feel-good representation of the American ideal?

Hidden away from the glitter and lights of the show, referenced only sparingly but in a glamorous way, the American Idol website¹¹ branches out into good deeds. A video in 2009 on American Idol, in attempting to highlight the charitable works that emanate from the show, portrayed a very poor girl in Somalia, who was separated from her brother, another street-child. The narrative and filming expose an easily-understood saga: the children live in poverty, they really do not have much to look forward to, Somalia is not a friendly place to look at (not, at least, through this video), and, thanks to American Idol, a very luxurious SUV was able to drive the young girl around town to try and find her brother. Some food and clothing are also provided. In brief, the message is clear: American Idol is making a difference.

Where does one start with all of this? That American Idol is backed by official sponsors not necessarily well known for poverty reduction (Ford, AT&T, Exxon Mobil, Coca-Cola), that the FOX network—the center-piece for Idol dissemination—has not been normally associated with the elimination of inequities, and that the fact that the program is premised on “average” folks providing the funds, rather than profits from the conglomerates making money for the show, may seem a little shallow.

Is it good to give? Yes. Is it good to give without getting an intellectual and political handle on the systemic problems underpinning poverty? This is more contentious. Charity is nice, and it is important to help out. This is, or should be, a basic and fundamental part of humanity but there is a difference between taking a can of beans to a food-bank and working on changing the root causes of poverty (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004).

Apart from the good times, American Idol is about making money, about supporting patriotism, and about not questioning social problems, especially decisions related to military conflict. Some might argue that there is no requirement for people to be engaged and to help others, or that entertainment need not have a direct political message. How much of the millions that the hosts earn are being dedicated to this (welfare) program, and how much of the billions that the sponsors earn will be earmarked for poverty-reduction? Should there be full disclosure, and, if not, why not?

Figure 2 – The American Idol Foundation

Idol Gives Back Foundation is a new not-for-profit organization established by the producers of American Idol and FOX to raise money and awareness for children and families living in poverty and at risk in the U.S. and abroad. Idol Gives Back Foundation is harnessing American Idol's ability to capture America's hearts and the power of entertainment to benefit some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world.

Foundation Functions

- To make grants for charitable endeavors that touch and change the lives of children and their families in the US and abroad
- Focusing on the provision of health, education and services for those in poverty and at risk

Guiding Principles

Idol Gives Back Foundation's grant selection is guided by the following criteria:

- Young people living in poverty and at risk
- Basic needs
- National Awareness
- Broad appeal
- Clear, measurable results

How We Do It

Idol Gives Back Foundation harnesses American Idol's ability to capture America's hearts and the power of entertainment to benefit some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world.

Who We Are

Idol Gives Back began as a meaningful way for those behind American Idol and FOX to give back in a significant way to children's causes worldwide. Idol Gives Back was successfully launched as a charity event in 2007 and has grown into a foundation comprised of Fox Broadcasting Company, FremantleMedia North America and 19 Entertainment.

Perhaps it is not polite to say that poverty is a political problem but, ultimately and arguably, it is. Social inequities are not choices that people wish to make, although many choices are factored into the equation. A baby does not choose poverty, for example. Poverty-reduction is about politics. The trillion or more dollars being spent in Iraq¹² has had implications for those affected by the sub-prime crisis state-side, with thousands of people losing their homes (Prins, 2009). In other words, politics is about establishing priorities and making decisions. *Econ-ocracy* characterizes the pivotal linkage between political and economic power.

Despite the widely-held myth that people on welfare and people in developing countries receive endless bounty for no good reason except that “we like to help others,” the actual amounts spent on poverty-reduction, as exemplified later in this article, are comparatively small. For instance, Africa pays more in debt-servicing than it receives in developmental assistance. It would not be surprising to discover that, after months of American Idol throwing its weight behind its good works program, an amount equivalent or less to one day’s worth of militarization in Iraq had been expended. Democracy wharfs into *econ-ocracy* when sophisticated campaigns to mask inequity and suffering are paraded about to convince the masses that we are all working together to achieve positive change when, importantly, the recipients of this change may quite compellingly argue the contrary. Gordon, Smyth and Diehl (2008) argue that the “many of the same techniques used by the Bush Administration in the build up to the Iraq War and in science have been adapted to control education in the U.S. under the guise of ‘evidence-based educational reform’”. (p. 173)

At a personal level, I could not help but feel for the little girl being driven around in the air-conditioned SUV, being used for a very slick and heart-wrenching photo-op. Rather than interrogate how Somalia, or any other country, has been mired in poverty, and our own implication in ensuring that the poverty is almost irreversible, the favored option is to point to how much the good folks are helping out. How did Somalia become a country replete with social, economic and political problems? Are we implicated in any misery that they might experience? Is it relevant to know that there have been accusations of Western countries dumping toxic waste in the waters bordering Somalia, that incursions from Ethiopia have been endorsed and promoted by the US, and that international efforts at supporting peaceful transitions in that country have not been cultivated with the same vigor and seriousness as in many other regions of the world?

Should we stop making and selling military weapons and bombs as a protest for the poverty that we see here and abroad, or are we obliged to continue on this path because of the economic benefits? Peter McLaren’s (2007) summation that we are in a “permanent war on terror” represents a clarion call for a more concerted and comprehensive

educational strategy aimed at political literacy. Westheimer and Kahne (2004) argue that to do charity work without some critical political contextualization can lead to the contrary effects, culminating in the donor having a limited emotional reaction without understanding that change can be made to stop the very reason for the identified charity in the first place. In the American Idol scenario, an important question that is over-looked by the emphasis on the *goodness* of the donor is: How are Americans and the US government complicit in the poverty evident in Somalia?

Haiti and democracy

In late April, 2008, there were a series of sporadic reports on the famine taking place in Haiti. Granted, these reports have ranged from short clips showing how “out of the control” Haitians were to more elaborate pieces that discussed how we are now experiencing a world-wide food shortage¹⁴. There has been no sustained reporting, and, more importantly, no significant analysis of the “story”. The reports almost always left the impression that it is “their” fault, and not “ours”.

Haiti is problematic for a host of reasons. The classic book *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* by C. L. R. James (1989) documents the almost unbelievable story of slaves taking back their freedom, culminating in the world's first black republic. Figure 3 contains my 60-second history of Haiti, which is not intended to capture all of the nuances, actors, events and full dynamism of the society but does attempt to highlight how other nations and peoples are vested in the Haitian reality (from slavery to revolution to independence to dictatorship to dependence, through various phases of under-development). What is most disturbing about Haiti now is that the world doesn't seem to care. More is spent in a few days of militarization in Iraq than is donated in development assistance to Haiti in one year (see Taft-Morales & Drummer, 2007).

Haiti was, arguably, not permitted to develop, to shed itself of dictators, or to opt for more reasonable and socially just policies. Why? Because it posed a threat? Because it is a country of Black people? Because it has no oil? Because it is easier to simply let it slip

away into decay? Farmer (2005) documents the insidiousness of neglecting the cries and pleas for humanity in relation to Haiti, and, significantly, the role played by the US in codifying incessant degradation in the lives of Haitians. Is there a democratic responsibility to know, understand and engage with Haitians, many of whom are held hostage to intolerable levels of poverty (Taft-Morales & Drummer, 2007) resulting from political regimes that have been beholden to foreign interests (Farmer, 2005)?

Haiti has, despite everything that has gone wrong, a rich, dynamic and joyous culture: art, music, literature, language, customs and cultural conventions that uplift the soul¹⁵. Why do so few people know of this, and, yet, other countries—Cuba comes to mind—are known around the world for their contribution to the world’s cultural heritage? Tourism to Haiti was once a vibrant and promising enterprise but it is not even a trickle today. Once considered the “Pearl of the West Indies” with tourist numbers out-pacing its neighbors, fears of being kidnapped, violence, criminal activity and corruption have virtually dried up all tourism from non-Haitians.¹⁶ Adding to the degradation, Haiti has practically no trees left (see Thésée & Carr, 2008), which effectively translates into erosion of the earth, less agriculture, more health problems, more housing problems (in a mountainous country), and an extremely problematic social dynamic for those crowded into relatively small living spaces.

So, why Haiti? Why is it so easy to forget Haiti? Is the Haitian diaspora—especially in Montreal, New York and Miami—a beacon of hope? Why should people fighting for rice in Haiti be our concern? How did we contribute to the present situation? Elsewhere, I (see Thésée & Carr, 2008) have elaborated a framework to examine the vulnerability of racialized/marginalized populations in relation to natural, militaristic and economic disasters. The connection to democracy here is clear as Haiti has been used and abused by other countries (in particular, the US, France and Canada), these very countries that tacitly supported years of an unstable, chaotic political climate, tacitly maintaining an unsightly dictatorship.

Figure 3 – Quick history of Haiti

After a bloody and sustained revolt, slaves overthrew the White elites that ruled Haiti in 1804 (James, 1989). The French left their mark through colonial domination, exemplified in modern times with the French-Creole linguistic struggle, and the massive reparations that Haiti was obliged to pay to France. With the Whites vanquished, Mulattos filled the void, and racialization became the order of the day (at the time of the Revolution, there were some 144 racial classifications used to categorize people) (James, 1989). All kinds of turbulence characterized the decades leading up to the 1950s, culminating in the enhanced dictatorship of “Papa Doc” Duvalier, a ruthless tyrant supported by the US (Farmer, 2005). Slowly but surely hundreds of thousands of educated and professional Haitians left the country, further entrenching social class differences, and eliminating potential resistance. “Baby Doc”, the off-spring successor, carried the torch into more devastation (Schmitz, 2006). “Baby Doc’s” wife is said to have had a specially-designed, air-conditioned room in the presidential palace to care for her fur coats, an intriguing necessity in a tropical climate. “Baby Doc” was finally chased from power, pillaging a few billion dollars along the way (the Haitian dictatorial team rivals the Marcos in the Philippines, Mobuto in Zaire, and Pinochet in Chile, all, coincidentally, vigorously supported by the US) (Stockton, undated). Jean-Bertrand Aristide was welcomed home from Canada, became President in 1991, was chased out, came back to power, and then was removed by force through a convoluted US military intervention. He was sent to exile in Africa, and chaos and instability have reigned ever since. Haiti has no military, with the United Nations being charged with keeping public order. Aristide is accused of drug trafficking, although it is not clear why the democratically-elected President could be forcefully removed from office. Aristide was not pro-American, which may explain part of his predicament. Over time, Haiti has faced economic pillage and catastrophe. Economic, social and political exploitation have been a common theme since the founding of the world’s first Black republic. Images of contemporary Haiti include unsightly portraits: locked into slave-like conditions in Dominican sugar plantations; young girls indentured as “reste-avec”; the infamous boat-people who throw themselves into rubber-tubes in the hopes of making it anywhere; the poor masses fighting for a meal (Taft-Morales & Drummer, 2007); and the drum-beat of silence from developed countries

(Canada is not a neutral player in this game) all mesh to make the west side of the island of Hispaniola an explosive cocktail. There are a few people (some say 11-12 families who essentially dominate the Haitian economy) that live extremely comfortably in Haiti, and are disaffected by the throngs clamoring for more. Haiti is tantamount to a state with a state, the absence of a functioning government being a palpable reality. The horror of the January 2009 earthquake that caused massive damage and a loss of life in the capital raised concerns about Haiti, and also the world: how did Haiti become what it is?

Generations of ex-pat Haitians are living with the reality that they may never be able to see their country, and this is a tragic phenomenon for many people who seek to understand and validate their identities, not to mention others', who may not have a multi-dimensional understanding of Haiti. If globalization means letting some countries, cultures and peoples be swept away as a casualty of the proverbially "market-place," then it may be time to question the collective sense of living/being (see Chossudovsky, 2003; Macedo & Gounari, 2006). The place of all peoples is fundamentally important if democracy is to have a significant resonance in a practical, tangible way, beyond the theoretical constructs and commitment to "one man, one vote". Haiti deserves better.

The North, the South and democracy?

Some fifty years ago, the nations of the world agreed that by the mid-1970s *developed* countries would allocate to *developing* countries, at that time considered as the *Third World*, a modest 0.7% of their GNPs¹⁷. Some four decades on, only a few countries have achieved this objective (mainly the Scandinavian ones), which raises serious concerns about the perceptions people in the Western world have about the developing world as well as the aid that is provided. As Figure 4 illustrates, developed countries, in general, do not provide infinite amounts to the developing world. The funds provided by the US, despite commonly-held views that "charity begins (or should begin) at home" and an unflattering portrayal related to how American *largesse* is liberally sprinkled throughout the world while there are unmet needs at home, represent a rather small percentage of its GNP (Gross National Product) and GNI (Gross National Income); in fact, it is the smallest per capita donation of all of the world's most developed nations. What is more

significant, however, is that much of the aid that is sent to developing countries comes with strings attached¹⁷. Funding projects that are often more beneficial to donor-countries does not necessarily support development, can underpin the hegemony of dictatorial regimes, spurring on corruption, and can also be premised on geo-politics and military manoeuvres more so than considering humanitarian, socio-cultural, economic and development considerations (Figure 4).

From a critical pedagogical perspective, how do we even frame the problem of development assistance? Are we concerned with the effect on the recipients (see Moyo, 2009, for a critique of the deleterious impact of development assistance to Africa, arguing that it has not been effective in spurring on development)? Do we care if our governments are involved in providing vast sums of *development assistance* in the form of military aid (see Figure 5)? How do we choose who should receive the aid, in what format, and how should the success of aid projects be measured? What is the connection between aid and development, and, within a Western context, between the critical interrogation of aid and education? It is interesting that it would appear that the average citizen is ill-informed about how his/her government is involved in provided development assistance, especially in relation to the military component (see Figure 6 for the primarily military aid that the US has provided to Israel since 1949). These important matters are largely over-looked during election-campaigns, smothered by the personalities and media-driven issues that are presented as being the most salient.

Another fundamental feature to this discussion is the reality that the *developed* world is not simply, benevolently, assisting the *developing* world. According to the UK-based non-governmental organization Share the World's Resources, the South has paid to the North almost \$8 US trillion in debt repayment since 1979, an amount that far outweighs the development assistance it has received¹⁸. The amount that developing countries pay and repay to developed countries, private donors and banks has the general effect of

Figure 4 – Official development assistance (ODA) (in millions of dollars)(GNI = Gross National Income)

	Country	ODA in US \$ millions				ODA as % of GNI			
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2005	2006	2007	2008
1	Australia	2,005	2,443	2,669	3,038	0.25	0.3	0.32	0.34
2	Austria	1,805	1,679	1,808	1,555	0.52	0.47	0.5	0.42
3	Belgium	2,264	2,209	1,953	2,214	0.53	0.5	0.43	0.47
4	Canada	4,476	4,008	4,080	4,577	0.34	0.29	0.29	0.32
5	Denmark	2,410	2,482	2,562	2,570	0.81	0.8	0.81	.082
6	Finland	1,037	935	981	1,047	0.46	0.4	0.39	0.43
7	France	11,599	11,846	9,884	10,168	0.47	0.47	0.38	0.39
8	Germany	11,369	11,592	12,291	12,994	0.36	0.36	0.37	0.38
9	Greece	450	476	501	636	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.2
10	Ireland	830	1,129	1,192	1,269	0.42	0.54	0.55	0.58
11	Italy	5,834	4,061	3,971	4,059	0.29	0.2	0.19	0.2
12	Japan	12,055	10,918	7,679	8,310	0.28	0.25	0.17	0.18
13	Luxembourg	302	323	376	382	0.79	0.9	0.91	0.92
14	Netherlands	5,818	6,036	6,224	6,522	0.82	0.81	0.81	0.8
15	New Zealand	305	305	320	355	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.3
16	Norway	3,373	3,287	3,728	3,638	0.94	0.89	0.95	0.88
17	Portugal	440	445	471	570	0.21	0.21	0.22	0.27
18	Spain	3,569	4,291	5,140	6,138	0.27	0.32	0.37	0.43
19	Sweden	3,884	4,441	4,339	4,508	0.94	1.02	0.93	0.98
20	Switzerland	1,904	1,750	1,685	1,794	0.44	0.39	0.37	0.42
21	UK	12,519	13,938	9,849	12,217	0.47	0.51	0.35	0.43
22	USA	29,611	24,166	21,787	25,439	0.23	0.18	0.16	0.18

Figure 5 - U.S. (military) foreign aid¹⁹ (the top six countries)

Country	Aid	Purpose
1. Israel	\$2.4 B	Virtually all of this money is used to buy weapons (up to 75% made in the U.S.). Beginning in 2009, the U.S. plans to give \$30 billion over 10 years.
2. Egypt	\$1.7 B	\$1.3 billion to buy weapons; \$103 million for education; \$74 million for health care; \$45 million to promote civic participation and human rights.
3. Pakistan	\$798 M	\$330 million for security efforts, including military-equipment upgrades and border security; \$20 million for infrastructure.
4. Jordan	\$688 M	\$326 million to fight terrorism and promote regional stability through equipment upgrades and training; \$163 million cash payment to the Jordanian government.
5. Kenya	\$586 M	\$501 million to fight HIV/AIDS through drug treatment and abstinence education and to combat malaria; \$15 million for agricultural development; \$5.4 million for programs that promote government accountability.
6. South Africa	\$574 M	\$557 million to fight TB and HIV/AIDS; \$3 million for education.

suffocating development efforts, leaving little, if any, resources to cultivate basic services, such as universal health care and education, food production, and a stable economic base. There have been, within a neo-liberal lens, positive

Figure 6 – US aid (Grants) to Israel since 1949 (billions of dollars)²⁰

Year	Total	Military Grant	Economic Grant	Immigration Grant
1949-1996	68	29	23.1	.87
1997	3.1	1.8	1.2	.08
1998	3	1.8	1.2	.08
1999	3	1.9	1.1	.07
2000	4.1	3.1	.95	.06
2001	2.9	2	.84	.06
2002	2.9	2	.72	.06
2003	3.8	3.1	.6	.06
2004	2.7	2.2	.48	.05
2005	2.7	2.2	.36	.05
2006	2.5	2.3	.24	.04
2007	2.5	2.3	.12	.04
TOTAL	102.2	53.6	30.9	1.5

NOTE: The \$600 million in housing loan guarantees, \$5.5 billion in military debt reduction loan guarantees, \$9.2 billion in Soviet Jew resettlement loan guarantees, and \$9 billion in economic recovery loan guarantees are not included in the tables because the United States government did not transfer funds to Israel. The United State underwrote loans to Israel from commercial institutions.

economic developments, such as in China and India, but in both cases rampant poverty, a re-distribution of wealth, universal access to adequate health care, education, housing and other services, and a weak democratic impulse to resist militarization have been notable factors. This condition of perceiving the *goodness* of the North as juxtaposed against the insufferable incompetence of the South, channelled through popular culture and education, is an outcome of *econ-ocratic* democracy (Moyo, 2009). The vast militarization of the South, with limitless arms sales from the North, further frames the

development quagmire, one which ultimately leads to mass migration, civil unrest, conflict, deleterious human rights and problematic electoral regimes that are incessantly propelled to imitate the two-party American model, or risk isolation, sanctions or worse.

Patriotic democracy and unsavory regimes

At the macro political level, there have been many attempts to label a nation/regime democratic or something incongruent with democracy²¹. Some of the countries deemed to be *undemocratic* can be destined to be marginalized (i.e., a 50-year US blockade against Cuba), face sanctions (i.e., Iran) or even be subjected to invasion (i.e., Iraq in 1991 and in 2003). The operative word above *can* qualifies the inconsistent and nefarious actions of some countries, which choose to support “dictatorial” or presumed “undemocratic” countries. The US, for example, considered Saddam Hussein to be a staunch ally during Iraq’s war against Iran in the 1980s, supplying him with arms and figuratively “turning the other cheek” when it was made aware of human rights abuses, and used

*Figure 7 – US foreign policy, democracy and un-democratic activity*²²

Date	Country	Regime	Outcome
1931-1944	El Salvador	Maximiliano Hernandez	Assassination of political officials/civilians; repression
1936-1980	Nicaragua	Anastasio Somoza & sons	Political repression; civilians attacked
1941-1979	Iran	Shah of Iran	Repression, corruption and instability
1954-1959	Cuba	Fulgencio Batista	Torture, women raped, repression, and killings
1954-1982	Guatemala	Armas, Fuentes, Montt	400 Mayan villages razed; rape and torture
1954-1989	Paraguay	Stroessner	Wide-spread torture; political repression
1957-	Haiti	Papa Doc Duvalier	20,000-60,000 murdered; political

1986		& son	repression
1965- 1967	Brazil	Banco	Rebels executed; students tortured
1967- 1998	Indonesia	Suharto	100,000-500,000 dead; violent repression
1969- 1988	Zaire	Mobutu	Stole \$3-5B; repression leading to bloodshed
1970- 1978	Bolivia	Hugo Banzer	Drug production and trafficking; repression
1973- 1990	Chile	Augusto Pinochet	3,000 murdered; 400,000 tortured
1975- 1989	Angola	Jonas Savimbi/UNITA	Killed/displaced millions
1976- 1981	Argentina	Jorge Rafael Videla	30,000 murdered;repression
1978- present	Egypt	Sadat, Mubarak	Civilians killed in rebellion; corruption; repression
1979- 1988	Iraq	Saddam Hussein	Repression; 1 million killed in war with Iran
1983- 1989	Panama	Noriega	Support to contras; repression
1990- present	Uzbekistan	Kamirov	Rebels executed; conspirators tortured
1999- 2007	Pakistan	Musharaff	Repression; political censorship; torture

“deceptive tactics” and “subterfuge” to coerce and manipulate the American public into accepting a nefarious militaristic ideology (Gordon, Smyth & Diehl, 2008). Moreover, the US has supported a range of brutal regimes in Latin America, Africa and Asia (see, for example, Chomsky, 2007; Galeano, 1973; Magdoff, 2003; Perkins, 2007; Schmitz, 2006, Zunes, 2007). Democracy, ironically, was not always invoked as a rationale to

condemn unsavory regimes, nor was it an instrument used to support and mobilize change in governing structures that were known to have tortured, killed and oppressed local populations. The throngs of refugees fleeing these regimes is well-known, and one can debate the direct causal linkage to the foreign policy of countries in the North. Figure 7 provides a portrait of some of the dictatorial regimes supported by the US as well as some of the diverse military actions undertaken under the guise of supporting the national interest. Interrogating the direct and indirect linkage to democracy would seem to be a necessary component to education.

There are many similarities in the dictatorial regimes selected in this figure, including: the dictators are almost always men; the US support has often come in the form of tacitly or actively orchestrating the overthrow of democratically-elected regimes (the Allende government in Chile being one of the most salient examples); the media coverage, general knowledge and educational approach in exposing such linkages to dictatorial regimes has been, arguably, very thin; there is always an exodus of refugees from dictatorial countries; the cost for such support in terms of dollars, human rights, morality, legality and local economic development has been high, conflicting with the normative conception of US democratic ideals.

As will be discussed later, a passive, neutral, non-critical appreciation of patriotism generally serves the hegemonic interests that dominate working people. Donaldo Macedo (see Zinn & Macedo, 2005) underscores the danger of a passive acceptance of indoctrination:

If one were to argue that patriotism involves a lot more than a jingoistic display of waving the flag—that it is more patriotic to work to make the country more democratic, more just, less racist, and more humane—one would probably be accused of a lack of patriotism or even of being anti-American. If one would point to the vulgar commercialism of the flag after September 11, ranging from American flag thong underwear to condoms designed in red, white, and blue, one would also be charged with a lack of patriotism. If one pushed the envelope further and pointed out that the leaders of our country were hiding behind the flag to promote one

of the largest shifts of wealth from the poor to the rich via tax cuts and corporate subsidies (\$15 billion to the airline industry alone) while cutting services to the poor and elderly and slashing funds for education and social services, including benefits for the very troops that the administration is asking us to support, the reaction would again be more finger-pointing about one's lack of patriotism. And if one went so far as to link the undemocratic nature of U.S. foreign policy with the present worldwide hatred of the United States, the possibility for further dialogue just might collapse. (p. 8)

Zinn (Zinn & Macedo, 2005), one of the US' most recognized progressive historians, who has advocated for a more genuine and inclusive account of history, argues that classism is a fundamental girder underpinning American patriotism.

If you look at the laws passed in the United States from the very beginning of the American republic down to the present day, you'll find that most of the legislation passed is class legislation that favors the elite, that favors the rich. You'll find huge subsidies to corporations all through American history. You'll find legislation passed to benefit the railroads, the oil companies, and the merchant marine and very little legislation passed to benefit the poor and the people who desperately need help. So the Law should not be given the holy deference that we are all taught to give it when we grow up and go to school, and it's a profoundly undemocratic idea to say that you should judge what you do according to what the Law says-undemocratic because it divests you as an individual of the right to make a decision yourself about what is right or wrong and it gives all of that power to that small band of legislators who have decided for themselves what is right and what is wrong. (p. 130)

Thus, how we look at the complexity of society, all of its contours, struggles, differences, inequities, achievements and relations with others in addition to power, can translate into the depth and scope of democracy in a given state. Clearly, this involves a much more rigorous analysis than the standard Gross National Product (GNP) of a country, which does not take into account socio-economic and political inequities.

Cookie-cutting democracy and the quest to categorize

One of the best known, and most effectively argued, rankings in relation to democracy is produced by *The Economist*. In 2008, it published its second *The Economist* Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy, providing a methodology and analysis underpinning the listing of countries that it evaluated. Specifically, it examined five categories: "electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Countries are placed within one of four types of regimes: full democracies; flawed democracies; hybrid regimes; and authoritarian regimes." (p. 1) *The Economist* qualifies the criteria by emphasizing that "Our Index embodies a wider concept than is the case with some other measures of democracy. Free and fair elections and civil liberties are necessary conditions for democracy, but they are unlikely to be sufficient for a full and consolidated democracy if unaccompanied by transparent and at least minimally efficient government, sufficient political participation and a supportive democratic political culture." (p. 1) The review echoes the sentiments above that "A combination of double standards in foreign policy (autocrats can be good friends as well as foes) and growing infringements of civil liberties has reduced the effectiveness of Western governments' calls for democratization". (p. 2)

The Economist is thorough in substantiating how it assembled its analysis, and constructive debate could be entertained to critique the underlying assumptions. The focus of this book, being on the critical pedagogy of democracy, leads one to question the preponderance and credence that *The Economist* has placed in the free-market and neo-liberal economic policies. It does acknowledge that "The standard modernisation hypothesis that economic development leads to, and/or is a necessary pre-condition for democracy, is no longer universally accepted. Instead it has been argued that the primary direction of causation runs from democracy to income" (p.3). Acknowledging that civil rights during a time of enhanced preparedness against terrorism have been problematic in the US and Great Britain, not to mention low levels of "voting turnout, membership of political parties, willingness to engage in and attitudes to political activity," and the increased visibility of extreme right-wing movements and parties in many European countries, *The Economist* keeps its focus primarily on the economic ball, so to speak.

When economic liberalism is curtailed, social and political liberalism also tend to be affected. It would be wrong to underestimate the anger that the developments on Wall Street have engendered on so-called Main Street, not only in the US but also elsewhere. There is talk of a broken financial system discrediting Western values in general. A broader backlash may develop against free markets and neo-liberal ideology in some countries as economic conditions deteriorate. While it is highly unlikely that developed countries would experience a significant rollback of democracy, there is little cause for complacency, especially about the impact on emerging markets with fragile democratic institutions. A lot will depend on the depth and duration of the economic recession, as well as the extent to which attitudes towards the market and role of government actually shift. (p. 13)

Revealingly, despite the astonishing detail consecrated on this study, *The Economist* confirms that:

There is no consensus on how to measure democracy—definitions of democracy are contested and there is an ongoing lively debate on the subject. The issue is not only of academic interest. For example, although democracy-promotion is high on the list of US foreign policy priorities, there is no consensus within the US government on what constitutes a democracy.

Although the terms freedom and democracy are often used interchangeably, the two are not synonymous. Democracy can be seen as a set of practices and principles that institutionalise and thus ultimately protect freedom. Even if a consensus on precise definitions has proved elusive, most observers today would agree that, at a minimum, the fundamental features of a democracy include government based on majority rule and the consent of the governed, the existence of free and fair elections, the protection of minority rights and respect for basic human rights. Democracy presupposes equality before the law, due process and political pluralism. A question arises whether reference to these basic features is sufficient for a satisfactory concept of democracy.

Thus, while there is debate around thin and thick interpretations of democracy, the instrument provided by *The Economist* privileges elections to the behest of social and

economic well-being. The distinctions between and within countries are not effectively made, nor is there (much) room to incisively critique how poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, etc. serve to undermine the interests of those citizens located in *democracies*.

The introspective discussion which *The Economist* initiates characterizes the complexity and problematic nature of democracy. How are we to understand it, engage in it, critique it, and, significantly, thread the education needle through it?

Democracy is more than the sum of its institutions. A democratic political culture is also crucial for the legitimacy, smooth functioning and ultimately the sustainability of democracy. A culture of passivity and apathy, an obedient and docile citizenry, are not consistent with democracy. The electoral process periodically divides the population into winners and losers. A successful democratic political culture implies that the losing parties and their supporters accept the judgment of the voters, and allow for the peaceful transfer of power.

Participation is also a necessary component, as apathy and abstention are enemies of democracy. Even measures that focus predominantly on the processes of representative, liberal democracy include (although inadequately or insufficiently) some aspects of participation. In a democracy, government is only one element in a social fabric of many and varied institutions, political organisations, and associations. Citizens cannot be required to take part in the political process, and they are free to express their dissatisfaction by not participating. However, a healthy democracy requires the active, freely chosen participation of citizens in public life. Democracies flourish when citizens are willing to participate in public debate, elect representatives and join political parties. Without this broad, sustaining participation, democracy begins to wither and become the preserve of small, select groups.

At the same time, even our “thicker”, more inclusive and wider measure of democracy does not include other aspects—which some authors argue are also crucial components of democracy—such as levels of economic and social well being. (p. 17)

The model derived by *The Economist*, which rates North America and Western European countries as being the most democratic, raises many questions (if considered legitimate, why are so many regimes labeled as authoritarian such staunch allies of the West, and why are some other regimes hived out for special (negative) attention? What is the role of education in cultivating democracy, something that appears to be largely absent from this economic-centered model?). Yet, this attempt at unearthing the foundation of formal democracy seems more advanced than some of the other, more election- and economics-based approaches.

A radically alternative version of the traditional model expounded by *The Economist* is that used by Bhutan, which favors happiness as its organizing principle. Developed in the 1970s, the Royal Kingdom of Bhutan has sought to counter the widely-accepted neo-liberal Gross National Product (GNP) measure for development (Centre for Bhutan Studies, 2009b).

...a GNH society means the creation of an enlightened society in which happiness and well-being of all people and sentient beings is the ultimate purpose of governance....

...happiness is an indicator of good development and good society. He (the King) also believed in the legitimacy of public deliberation, public discussion, and public opinion in defining any goal, including GNH, through democracy and enlightened citizenship.

...Across the world, indicators focus largely on market transactions, covering trade, monetary exchange rates, stockmarket, growth, etc. These dominant, conventional indicators, generally related to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reflect quantity of physical output of a society.

...The almost universal use of GDP-based indicators to measure progress has helped justify policies around the world that are based on rapid material progress at the expense of environmental preservation, cultures, and community cohesion.

...Once people are familiar with GNH indicators, they can have a practical effect on consumer and citizens behaviour. The behaviour changing function can emerge in significant ways when there are appropriate indicators that direct attention towards both the causes of problems and the manner in which behaviour and decisions can prevent and solve those problems.

... Our understanding of how the mind achieves happiness affects our experience of happiness by influencing the means we choose in striving towards it. In some branches of the behavioural sciences, the mind is conceived of as an input-output device responding to external stimuli. One consequence of this model is that happy and pleasurable feelings are seen as dependent solely upon external stimuli. Happiness is perceived as a direct consequence of sensory pleasures. ... With such an overemphasis on external stimuli as the source for happiness, it isn't surprising that individuals are led to believe that being materialistic will increase their happiness.²³

Within each of the nine dimensions in Bhutan's GNH index, there are a number of indicators, which contain various measures. Conceptually, the GNH is easily understood based on a more holistic, humanistic and counter-hegemonic notion of development, yet the actual formulation, conceptualization and measurement formula is intricately complex. Respecting the environment and non-materialist factors underpins the engagement required by the populace to produce the data that feed into the overall analysis. There are nine dimensions to Bhutan's GNH index: psychological well-being; time use; community vitality; culture; health; education; environmental diversity; living standard; and governance.

From a critical pedagogical vantage-point, it is relevant, and, I would argue, necessary to explore diverse conceptualizations of development, and to problematize the political, economic and social factors and considerations that frame our thinking on what constitutes democracy. The United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index Reports²⁴ provide a vast range of measures that contextualize the differentiated development of countries that surpasses the neo-liberal economic indicators. Normative values related to what democracy should resemble must be interrogated in order to allow for a broader analysis and understanding of the plurality of democratic models. Focusing on the needs, rights and conditions of working people, minority and marginalized groups and majority populations necessitates different paradigms that place less of an emphasis on the disjointed nature of economic growth (Hill 2003). Regardless of the model, in order to determine the democratic experience it

is important to determine how wealth accumulation and distribution can help all people within a given society.

Concluding thoughts

The epistemology of democracy is laden with normative values about the meaning of freedom, justice, liberty, fairness, and empowerment. Our knowledge about the lived experiences of others plays a fundamental role in pivotal decisions that are made about our relationships at the micro and macro levels (Freire, 1973/2005; Kincheloe, 2008b). This can flow into major decisions that deal with war and peace, migration, economic issues, health matters and environmental concerns that know no boundaries (Klein, 2008). It can also have a direct and tangible effect on what we learn in schools, how we develop intercultural relations and how we strive to build communities as well as the prospect to openly engage with the world (Kurth-Schai & Green, 2006). The examples, or vignettes, illustrated in this article—American Idol, Haiti, the North-South divide, support for unsavoury regimes, and the categorization of democracies—seek to further elaborate critical pedagogy for democracy framework. The reality of *econ-ocracy*, therefore, needs to be understood as a counter-weight to the widely-accepted notion that free and fair elections determine the direction of democracy.

Critical pedagogy offers a lens, perspective and approach to reconcile some of what our epistemological foundation is unable to diagnose. Accepting that our understanding of the world, or as Freire (2005) puts it, “our ability to read the world,” is limited, an open, dialectical, critical process of reflection, interrogation and engagement (*conscientization*) would be beneficial to achieving a more substantive and meaningful form of democracy. In sum, a more holistic and dynamic approach—pedagogical, experiential, political, social, economic and cultural—is a necessary step to attaining a more “decent society,” as Tinder (2004) has set out through his dialectical interrogation of *perennial questions*. It is inconceivable that we will never have peace (and justice) without a more human, dignified and humble engagement with diverse historical and contemporary forces and realities.

Notes

¹ I make this comment based on my 17-year experience as a Senior Policy Advisor in the Ontario Ministry of Education, and not based on any scientific study. From what I personally experienced, in addition to my reading of formal educational policy development in diverse jurisdictions throughout North America, there appears to be little evidence that critical theory and thought has penetrated mainstream educational reforms. Elsewhere, I (Carr 2006) have written about Whiteness in educational policy-making, emphasizing how the range of policy discussion often explicitly or implicitly marginalizes critical theory, which can manifest itself through ignorance, omission and a purposeful control of the agenda in opposition to social justice-based thinking.

² See, for example, the critical work of: Bob McChesney at <http://will.illinois.edu/mediamatters/>; Amy Goodman at democracynow.org; the Monthly Review at <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org>; The Center for Research on Globalization at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php>.

³ See http://www.swamppolitics.com/news/politics/blog/2007/04/john_edwardss_400_haircuts_fee.html.

⁴ See <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04252008/profile.html>.

⁵ See <http://www.greenleft.org.au/2009/806/41460>

⁶ The media spent an inordinate amount of time and energy on the extra-marital activities of Governor Elliot Spitzer in 2008 (see, for example, The New York Times report at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/10/nyregion/10cnd-spitzer.html>).

⁷ Incoming Governor David Patterson strategically sought to remove this potential irritant before commencing his mandate. See The New York Time report at <http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/03/18/paterson-to-hold-news-conference/?scp=5&sq=Gov.%20Patterson%202008%20installation%20sex%20scandle&st=cse>.

⁸ There are a plethora of reports on this topic, with detailed analysis about Clinton's relationships from his time as Governor through his Presidency. See, for example, CNN for a chronology of the Willinsky affair:

<http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1998/resources/lewinsky/timeline/>

⁹ Interestingly, Churchill's quote has been taken up by a number of people who adapt it accordingly to their diverse perspectives. For example, I attended a lecture given by Aleida Guevara, Che's daughter, in 1998 in Toronto where she stated: "Socialism is the worst form of government except for all those others that have been tried".

¹⁰ See

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/725199/american_idol_versus_the_presidential.html.

¹¹ See <http://www.americanidol.com/idolgivesback/foundation/>

¹² In late 2009, the National Priorities Project pegged the amount spend on wars in Iraq and Afghanistan at roughly \$1 trillion (<http://costofwar.com/>); in March 2008, the Washington Post estimated that the Iraq conflict could cost \$3 trillion, once associated costs such healthcare for veterans, is imputed (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/07/AR2008030702846.html>); in March 2006, MSNBC was already predicting that the war would cost more than \$1 trillion (<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11880954/>); a study compiled by scholars from Columbia University and Harvard University in 2006 foresaw that the war would cost

over \$2 trillion (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5156416>). In all cases, the amounts estimated by outside observers, scholars, activists and journalists are considerably higher than the official figures presented by government sources (see <http://www.warresisters.org/>).

¹³ See, for example, Toward Freedom's discussion of how international interests have dumped nuclear waste in Somalia's waters in addition to pillaging the fish stocks: <http://towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/1567/1/>

¹⁴ Of the many reports, the majority in the mainstream media focused on rioting and instability (see, for example, CNN's <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/americas/04/14/world.food.crisis/>) whereas a minority examined the needs of the population, such as this one by the NGO Doctors Without Borders, <http://doctorswithoutborders.org/press/release.cfm?id=3140&cat=press-release&ref=tag-index>.

¹⁵ Evidence of this can be seen in the vibrant Haitian community activities and organizations that are clearly visible in Montreal, New York and Miami, which include professional, media, political and other networks.

¹⁶ See, for example, the exposé by Haiti 2004 on Haitian tourism at http://homepage.mac.com/intersocietal/interso/h2004/h2004english/h2004_23.html.

¹⁴ See Global Issues: Social, Political, Economic and Environmental Issues That Affect Us All at <http://www.globalissues.org/article/35/us-and-foreign-aid-assistance#GovernmentsCuttingBackonPromisedResponsibilities>.

¹⁵ This is commonly referred to as tied aid, meaning assistance that requires recipient countries to adhere to certain conditions, such as purchasing services and products from the donor country. Even donor countries acknowledge the practice, underpinning their actions with arguments about the need to extend domestic markets and interests. See, for example, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development document on the subject (2005):

http://www.oecd.org/document/24/0,3343,en_2649_34171_2668440_1_1_1_1,00.html

¹⁶ From the US Department of State at <http://www.state.gov/f/releases/iab/fy2009cbj/>. This table is reproduced from a synthesis produced by Parade at <http://www.parade.com/news/intelligence-report/archive/who-gets-us-foreign-aid.html>. Without providing the context on comparative amounts with other countries, the amount of aid flowing from the South to the North, and the relevance of the US aid to developing countries, this table would seem to argue for a reduction in aid but not for the same reasons enunciated earlier above.

¹⁷ See <http://www.stwr.org/aid-debt-development/the-south-has-repaid-it-external-debt-to-the-north-but-the-north-denies-its-debt-to-the-south.html>

¹⁹ According to its website, "Freedom House, an independent nongovernmental organization that supports the expansion of freedom in the world, has been monitoring political rights and civil liberties worldwide since 1972". Freedom House compiles an annual survey of democracies, focusing on "free" societies, distinguishing between *electoral* and *liberal* democracies, the latter of which involves greater civil liberties. "To qualify as an electoral democracy, a state must have satisfied the following criteria: 1. A competitive, multiparty political system; 2. Universal adult suffrage for all citizens (with exceptions for restrictions that states may legitimately place on citizens as sanctions for criminal offenses); 3. Regularly contested elections conducted in conditions of ballot

secrecy, reasonable ballot security, and in the absence of massive voter fraud, and that yield results that are representative of the public will; 4. Significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and through generally open political campaigning.” (<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=2>)

²⁰ See Sharp, Jeremy M. (2008). *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel (CRS Report for Congress)*. Washington: Congressional Research Service (p. 18).

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl33222.pdf>.

²¹ See <http://silent-nation.com/us-foreign-policy-1940-present> for a summary of significant acts perpetrated by the US against other nations.

²² This table was constructed from a range of sources, including: www.infoplease.com/ce6/people/A0835878.html, icarusfilms.com/new2000/mob.html, yalibnan.com/site/archives/2006/12/saddam_husseins.php, www.iranchamber.com/history/mohammadrezashah/mohammad_rezashah.php, www.moreorless.au.com/killers/montt.html, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anwar_El_Sadat#Unpopularity_and_conspiracy_theories, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hosni_Mubarak#Mubarak_and_corruption, www.nytimes.com/2006/08/16/world/americas/16cnd-stroessner.html?pagewanted=all, www.economicexpert.com/a/Hugo:Banzer:Suarez.htm, www.moreorless.au.com/killers/duvalier.html, newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Batista#Aftermath_and_legacy, selectionatlas.org/FORUM/index.php?topic=22806.0, news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1203355.stm, uk.reuters.com/article/idUKJAK2399420080127?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=0, www.stanford.edu/group/arts/nicaragua/discovery_eng/timeline/

²³ Center for Bhutan Studies. (2009a). *Gross National Happiness: Explanation of GNH index*. <http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/gnhIndex/introductionGNH.aspx>

²⁴ The United Nations Development Program outlines the program as follows: “Each year since 1990 the Human Development Report has published the human development index (HDI) which looks beyond GDP to a broader definition of well-being. The HDI provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and gross enrolment in education) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity, PPP, income). The index is not in any sense a comprehensive measure of human development. It does not, for example, include important indicators such as gender or income inequality nor more difficult to measure concepts like respect for human rights and political freedoms. What it does provide is a broadened prism for viewing human progress and the complex relationship between income and well-being.” See <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>.

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