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# Dialogue

## *Fresh Perspectives on the School Transformation—Reproduction Debate: A Response to Anyon from the Antipodes*

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The decade of the “new” sociology of education has been extremely exciting for anyone involved in the study of education from a sociological perspective. The period has been punctuated by a series of exchanges between sociologists and philosophers as writers have sought to develop a sound theoretical basis for the claim that knowledge was being used as a form of social control, and that schools had not advanced much from the days when they began with the chant “God Bless the Squire and his relations, and help to keep us in our social stations.” Yet, as is so often the case, most of the writing remained at the theoretical level. In the United Kingdom—the outstanding research of Willis’s *Learning to Labour* excepted<sup>1</sup>—the lack of empirical work is virtually complete; in Australia and New Zealand the only relevant work is Johnston’s (1978) account of “dangerous knowledge,” Connell and his colleagues’ (1981) investigation of “ruling class” schools and Ramsay and his colleagues’ (1981, 1983) investigation of schools with special needs. In the light of this lack of research elsewhere it is encouraging to find that a tradition of empirical

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Editor’s Note—Peter Ramsay is responding to an article by Jean Anyon, “Social Class and School Knowledge” which appeared in Volume 11, No. 1 of *Curriculum Inquiry*.

assessment of some of the key ideas of the “new” sociology of education is emerging in North America in both political economics (Bowles and Gintis, 1976) and in curriculum studies (Apple, 1971; Popkewitz, 1977; Anyon, 1978, 1979, 1981).

These researchers have addressed themselves to the key issues surrounding social transformation and reproduction, and the role schools play in such processes. Some of the researchers have followed a tradition of focusing on the “hidden curriculum,” which, they claim, teaches children to conform to the rules and regulations of the existing ideology (see Meighan, 1981, for a useful summary). While this is obviously an important part of the reproduction–transformation debate other writers have looked more closely at the way knowledge has been presented in schools, how it has been legitimated, and what ideologies have been appealed to in order to justify its status. Most prominent, and in our view most interesting, amongst this small group of researchers, is Jean Anyon. Her article on this topic in the Spring 1981 issue of *Curriculum Inquiry* will become one of the most discussed in the area of the potentiality of schools as agencies of social transformation.

It is because her research is of such seminal importance—and because we were surprised by some of her findings and their discussion—that we have decided to respond in the light of our own work which was conducted at about the same time in Auckland, New Zealand. We believe the area of study so important that great care must be taken to adopt the most fruitful research techniques and that the findings should be interpreted scrupulously. In this response, which considers only one part of Anyon’s research, we will argue that the picture she paints of working class schools is too neat and tidy, and fits too facily with a gross framework of class structure. Social life is not as predictable as Anyon presents it, and we conjecture about the possibility of an operative mirror effect. Perhaps her research tells us as much about the researcher’s predispositions as about the phenomenon studied.

Specifically, four of Anyon’s findings about working class schools are questionable, not so much for their content, as for their certainty and clear-cutness. These are as follows:

- (1.) That “knowledge” was presented as a series of isolated and fragmented parts somewhat removed from the experiences of the children;
- (2.) That the teachers held negative stereotypes of the children, viz. “they’re lazy; they don’t know much about the U.S. so you can’t teach them much; you can’t teach these kids anything” (Anyon, 1981, p. 7);
- (3.) That the curriculum did not emphasise the social and historical meaning of the working class;
- (4.) That children saw through the facade and that “resistance” to the normative patterns emerged as a dominant theme in such schools.

We will discuss each of these findings in turn drawing on material from our own research. We do not, though, treat our findings in any detail as accounts may be found elsewhere (Ramsay, 1982; Ramsay *et al.*

1983), but rather we will give sufficient information to suggest where further research may be needed, and where there may be shortcomings in Anyon's work.

In our conclusion to this article we will pick up some of Anyon's more provocative points on transformation and reproduction, and offer our own views of what schools are likely to achieve in this respect. In addition we will raise certain vexed questions relating to social class and ethnicity.<sup>2</sup>

We begin with a brief description of our sampling and methodology because as far as we can ascertain from Anyon's published work, her sampling and methodology may have prevented her from finding out anything *other* than what she reports.

### *Sampling Differences*

First, our sample differs from Anyon's in that we studied thirty schools from two working class neighbourhoods in the suburbs of Otara and Mangere in the southern reaches of metropolitan Auckland. In-depth work was concentrated in eight schools selected from the original thirty during 1980 and 1981. These schools had in excess of seventy per cent of their pupils from categories 5 and 6 of the Elley and Irving socio-economic status scale. These two categories are mainly composed of unskilled manual jobs such as garbage collecting, freezing workers (meat packers), factory labourers, and non-owner truck and bus drivers. We did not include schools composed mainly of middle or upper SES groups as did Anyon.<sup>3</sup>

Second, whereas Anyon limited her sampling to elementary schools and appeared to focus on grades three and five, we included schools from primary (ages 5 years to 10 years approximately), intermediate (ages 11 years to 12 years) and secondary (ages 13–18+) levels, and covered all grades. All teachers, pupils, parents, members of the various agencies involved with schools (e.g., Psychological Service, Police, Social Welfare), and representatives of community groups were part of our sample.

Third, 85 per cent of Anyon's sample was white. By contrast our school population was predominantly Polynesian. Seventy-five per cent of the children identified themselves as being either Maori (the indigenous group in New Zealand) or Pacific Islander, such as Samoan, Tokelauan, and Cook Islander.

Fourth, and Anyon does not give specific figures on this point, twenty per cent of the teachers in our sample were upwardly mobile from the lower socioeconomic status groups. While comparative national figures are not available, other research suggests that this is beyond the average of five to ten per cent (Ramsay, 1978; Jacquiery, 1979). Moreover, more teachers in our sample were from Polynesian backgrounds (11.5 per cent) than is the case nationally (six per cent).

### *Methodological Differences*

An important methodological contrast with Anyon's research is that ours, while based in the principles of "grounded theory" (Glaser and Strauss,

1967), utilised ethnomethodological principles, and as well applied historical techniques and demographic surveys. From the ethnomethodological perspective we went to considerable lengths to outline our predispositions prior to commencing our research. Before the field work started the four person research team met for several days. Besides discussing our initial phase of data collection, the team considered what they thought they might find out, what they “knew” about the district and its schools, and the bases of their personal ideologies. While we were not so naive to believe that we could suspend, or even bracket, our predispositions, and while we were aware that our data would be filtered through what Berger and Luckmann (1967) refer to as the “inner self,” we made a deliberate effort to control an ontological approach. We discovered in this preliminary session that the team had a wide range of backgrounds—for example two were versed in the “new” sociology of education as expressed by *inter alia* Young (1971), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), Apple (1979) and Giroux (1979). One member had a socialist perspective, and another had a background in behavioural psychology. These were the dispositions which, amongst many others, we endeavoured to make explicit. The proceedings of this preliminary session were tape recorded and transcribed and, together with a written personal statement by each researcher, formed the first part of the “grounded theory.” Later in the research these predispositions were used by the team during debriefing sessions in an endeavour to assess their effect on the emerging theory (See Ramsay *et al.*, 1983 for an extension of this discussion).

We attempted to treat all phenomena as data, and especially alerted ourselves to investigate taken-for-granted assumptions to avoid tunnel vision. This approach may be contrasted with Anyon’s approach which began and ended with a notion of “class,” and which appeared to use observational, ethnographic and interview techniques alone.

Although Anyon is not clear on the point, it appears also that we spent more time in the schools than she did, which may have some bearing on our discovery of a constant dialectic as is outlined below. Researchers familiar with field work will know of the problems of “impression management”. We were well into our observational spell before teachers who did not agree with the mainstream philosophy gave us their views. Length of time spent observing is therefore crucial. Moreover, our approach was a team one. We have already outlined the differing views of the research team. One of the more interesting methodological points was the interplay of members of the research team at various debriefing sessions. Relativist stances were not accepted, and debate on the nature, extent and interpretation of findings was considerable.

Finally—and again Anyon makes no comment on this—our findings were fed back to the sample group. This was achieved in two ways—by seeking comment generally from the sample on interim findings, and by utilising a representative advisory committee to comment specifically on the grounded theory as it emerged. Again, this research loop created considerable reviewing of our major findings, and more particularly our interpretations of the findings. In essence we worked towards an agreed construction of reality.

The material reported in this paper comes from an investigation of why one group of schools seemed to be more effective than another, despite the fact that they drew on similar populations, were similarly staffed, and were supposed to be following the same state syllabus prescriptions. It is not relevant to this paper to spell out the differences relating to effectiveness—suffice it to state that originally these were in terms of fairly traditional measures (e.g., standardised tests of school attainment) but, in line with our “grounded theory” approach came to be more in terms of the schools transformational/reproductive styles. We will pick this point up later, but readers requiring finer detail are referred to Ramsay *et al.* (1983).<sup>4</sup>

It is important, though, to detail the structural similarities between the schools studied, for much of our discussion of Anyon’s findings hinges on this point. We matched four pairs of schools (4 elementary, 2 intermediates, 2 secondary) across the following variables: SES (as measured on the Elley and Irving scale which is based on income and level of education); ethnic group; family structure; level of parental education; teacher turnover rates; and teacher demographic variables such as age, level of experience etc. We recognised that some of these measures were gross and in a briefing session prior to the commencement of the observational work we discussed the following extract from the briefing notes:

Be aware that the gross variables we have matched schools under may conceal some important differences. For example ‘class’ is a summarising concept and has a range of definitions. The Elley and Irving scale is likely to hide important aspects of class differences *within* the broad occupational categories. We will need to see if there is, for example, stronger class identity in one group of schools than in others. Similarly with ethnicity. I hardly need spell out the problems in defining ethnicity in New Zealand especially relating to Maoris. We will need to assess degrees of acculturation in looking at differences between schools.

We were, therefore, aware of the possibility of intra class differences which may have existed in our schools, and which may have served to explain the differences in outcome.

We observed systematically in the eight schools for twenty-four weeks, pausing regularly for debriefing and assessment of the emerging data. We matched carefully the time spent observing at various grade levels, and in the various locations in the two groups of schools.

At debriefing sessions the research team developed further propositions which were then subjected to comparative sampling techniques utilising not only further observations but also interviews of pupils, teachers, parents, administrators, welfare workers, police, school psychologists, and community representatives. Comparative sampling continued until such time as the researchers were satisfied that “theoretical saturation” had been achieved using the procedures described by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In this way we were able to develop eight characteristics which, in our judgement, seemed to account for some of the differences between the schools under observation. While recognising the dangers of labelling schools (especially in the early stages of our study) we referred to one

group of schools as “successful” and the other as “less successful.” A full account of the characteristics and research procedures may be found in Ramsay *et al* (1981), and Ramsay *et al* (1983).

Our sampling and research procedures, therefore, differed considerably from Anyon’s approach. The extent which these differences may explain the dissimilarities in our findings is discussed below.

Before turning to a discussion of similarities and differences between some of our findings and those of Anyon, it is important to emphasise two important caveats. We have stated them elsewhere in this way:

[first] . . . the eight schools in our sample were highly idiosyncratic. They differed remarkably in their goals and aims; in their style of operation, in their forms of organisation, and in their decision making procedures. At times we, as researchers, wondered if we would be able to reach any tidy, general conclusions . . . Second, and related to the first, we found a dialectic operating in every school we investigated. For example, . . . one of the characteristics of “successful” schools was a clearly articulated policy carried into action by staff; however we would note that some staff members cavilled—usually privately—about the wisdom of such policies and in some instances were endeavouring to change them. Moreover in the “less successful” schools some teachers were trying to operate within frames of organisation and with similar goals to teachers in the so-called “successful” schools and were actively trying to change procedures in their schools. This is why the terms “successful” and “unsuccessful” are placed in inverted commas—our schools were not homogeneous, and a considerable range of practices were found *within* schools as well as *between* schools.

(Ramsay *et al*, 1983, p. 4)

We cannot underline these two points too emphatically, and shall return to them again and again in this paper. We turn now to compare and contrast Anyon’s findings with our own.

### *Anyon’s Findings on Working Class Schools in a Comparative Frame*

FINDING 1: THAT KNOWLEDGE WAS PRESENTED IN THE WORKING CLASS SCHOOLS AS A SERIES OF ISOLATED FACTS SOMEWHAT REMOVED FROM THE LIVING EXPERIENCES OF THE CHILDREN

We found considerable similarity between Anyon’s conclusions and ours in this respect, but *only* in the “less successful” schools. The classroom observations in this group of four schools demonstrated that 60 per cent of pupil time was spent on listening (or not listening) to the teacher talk to the whole class, copying material from the blackboard or work books, and completing simple exercises. Emphasis was placed in primary and intermediate schools on “basic skills” and rote learning. As one teacher remarked in School G “it’s no use working in the abstract with these kids, we hammer basic skills.” And in another school a staff room group of teachers agreed that “most [Polynesian] kids don’t want to learn; we only teach those who *want* to learn, and too many couldn’t care less. We know who will learn and who won’t, and we’ll concentrate on those who will, those who won’t can go their own way.” These attitudes were reflected

in social studies by teaching historical and geographical “facts” in isolation from social context; in mathematics by ignoring the extension work provided in the texts “because these kids won’t understand them”; and in reading by emphasizing vocabulary drills rather than comprehension or understanding of what was read. Our field notes are replete with classroom observations of routine information presented and the prescriptions followed slavishly and unimaginatively. Little attention was paid to individual differences, and teachers did not, *generally*, concern themselves with either extension or remedial work. We underline *generally* for reasons which will become obvious later. In short the data from our four “less successful” working class schools supported Anyon’s conclusions about the two working class schools in her New Jersey sample.

However, and this is the key point, major contrasts appeared with the schools designated as “successful.” Here we found that teachers—again *generally*—made considerable efforts to develop lively, integrated programmes related to the children’s perceived needs and interests. An extract from our field notes at School B illustrates the point:

The teacher has a lot of material, self made, designed for each pupil. Today she is encouraging the children to be creative. She has the children close their eyes and squeezes a wet sponge on the back of their hands. “What is it, what does it feel like?” she queries. The responses flowed quickly “Blood” “It feels silky and wet” “Slimy.” She quickly builds a vocabulary list of ten words and then discusses their meaning. The children settle to write a paragraph using the words. The teacher moves around the class and encourages different ethnic group children to incorporate words and concepts from their own cultural background into the story. She stops the class when she comes to Hemi and asks him to read the paragraph aloud—it has incorporated part of a Maori legend used yesterday in story time. As the children work the teacher sits with one child who is having difficulty and quietly encourages him to persevere and is quick to praise his efforts.

Later, in commenting on this classroom the researcher used such terms as “warmth,” “direction of purpose,” and “integration of ethnic values.”

In the four “successful” schools less than thirty per cent of the time was spent on teacher talk, copying, and sentence completion. Pupils spent more time than in “less successful” schools on individual and group projects (40 per cent of time versus 10 per cent) and on creative language-arts programmes. “Skills” were deemed important, but practice of them were provided in the creative language arts and social studies sections of the programmes and much more emphasis was placed on comprehension and discussion of ideas. Second and third order concepts, thinking creatively and in the abstract were stressed. In an intermediate school we observed a centre-of-interest programme based on “A trip to Samoa” in which mathematics skills taught earlier were utilised in a variety of ways (calculating fares, working out time to cover distance) which were of interest to the children. Art and craft in this classroom was cleverly used within the “centre” to provide the basis for language work. This kind of programme was reported in all four “successful” schools.

We also found that teachers in the “successful” schools devoted more



time to the development of their own teaching materials than those in the “less successful” schools, and had changed the content emphasised in the prescribed syllabuses to make the programme more interesting and, in our judgement, more meaningful to the pupils in the schools studied. We will return to this point under finding three. Our data indicated clearly that in terms of the presentation of “knowledge” major differences existed between two groups of working class schools, and in one group differed markedly from the picture of the working class schools depicted by Anyon.

**FINDING 2: THAT THE TEACHERS CARRIED NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES OF CHILDREN’S PRACTICE, VIZ. “THEY’RE LAZY; THEY DON’T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE U.S. SO YOU CAN’T TEACH THEM MUCH; YOU CAN’T TEACH THESE KIDS ANYTHING.”**

A further contrast appeared in respect of the attitudes of teachers towards the children they taught. Here again Anyon’s findings are very close to our observations in the schools we referred to as “less successful.” Teachers in these schools had low expectations of what they believed their pupils could achieve. They usually related poor performances to either ethnicity or home background. Staff room discussions and interview data were revealing; for example at School M we recorded:

Jane came in to the staff room late for lunch today. As usual she sat with the younger teachers on the staff. She was asked why she was late. “Tane again” she said, “she’s making no progress except backwards. Her reading is so far behind it’d make you weep.” The group made sympathetic noises, then Bill spoke. “Why do you bother about her so much. She couldn’t care less, you know that. And you know the background—solo Mum and frequent Uncles. Why expect her to learn? She’s like a lot of Maoris around here and will be on the streets in six months time, mark my words.” Noises of agreement from the group, conversation interrupted by the bell, Jane goes out on duty.

Field notes from the “less successful” schools revealed that when teachers discussed children’s low attainment or poor behaviour this was associated by the teachers with ethnicity or home background (solo parenting, criminal records, non-literary environment, etc.) on 82 per cent of the occasions observed; social class (e.g. belonging to the “working class”) accounted for 12 per cent. “Well, s/he comes from . . .” was a frequent phrase. When asked in interviews why the children performed poorly the teachers responded with terms like “. . . they’re lazy;” “they come from a non-literary background;” “there’s no push from home;” “Polynesians aren’t as intelligent as Europeans,” etc.

These findings stand in considerable contrast to those from the “successful” school where the opposite viewpoint was taken. The “Well s/he comes from . . .” phrase was replaced with “Have you tried . . .” The onus for succeeding was placed on the teaching staff or, put in another way, failure was attributed to the teachers failings and was not accounted for by the children’s shortcomings. Thus, rather than rationalising failure through labelling processes, the teachers endeavoured to create innovative strategies. One principal put it to us thus:

There is a great danger of underestimating what these children can do, and there is a need for a continuous high input of learning at all levels. There is no excuse for lack of progress except in a very few cases, providing the educational diet has been sufficient . . . this is the only way the cycle of social deprivation can be broken.

This kind of attitude permeated the “successful” schools. Staff room observations and formal and informal interviews with teachers revealed that problems raised by teachers were invariably met with positive suggestions for overcoming the difficulties. This point is illustrated in the following abridged extract from the field notes in School S:

It is obvious that X has had trouble in getting a good social studies programme going. The leader of his syndicate [teaching team] confided in me early on that X was a bit of a weak link in the chain and that extra help was needed here. On Monday afternoon X came in to the staff room early after school. In a small group he began bemoaning the fact that he just couldn't get some of the Maori kids interested—“were they just dumb?” he queried. The other teachers responded quickly—they're not dumb at all, you just have to work at getting through to them. Once they accept you they'll work like mad.” Soon after the syndicate leader came in. He had several articles from *Education* and *Social Education* which he gave to X. I heard him say “You must look positively on these kids. If you expect little that's what you'll get. Give them something they're interested in doing, capture their interest and you'll fly! Now look, in here there's a good idea that worked with me . . . let's get together tomorrow and discuss it after you've read this stuff.”

The overriding principle was that “successful” schools aimed to serve the needs of the pupils. In the great wealth of field notes and interview transcriptions from our four “successful” schools we could locate only five instances of children, their home backgrounds, or their ethnic origins being blamed for poor performance, and social class was not mentioned specifically at all. This emphasises the contrast between the attitudes and actions of teachers in our “successful” working class schools with those of our four “less successful” working class schools and the two schools described by Anyon.

### FINDING 3: THAT THE CURRICULUM DID NOT EMPHASISE THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL MEANING OF THE WORKING CLASS

This is one of Anyon's crucial findings, and much hinges on it. Her thorough analysis of text books used by the school is enlightening and we have no quibble with it. While we did not analyse the set texts used—and we would note in passing that it seems our schools in general placed less emphasis on textbook use than Anyon's sample—we believe that if such an analysis was performed it may well reveal findings similar to Anyon's.

Our observations indicated, in line with Anyon, that very little attention was given to the history of the working class, or the class struggle which has occurred in many nations. We have already noted that teachers referred to it rarely, which was also the case with the pupils. Our classroom observations showed that it was not dealt with in any systematic manner in any of our eight schools, except in one instance by a teacher with a

socialist background. In all of the schools, though, aspects of class relationships did emerge in current events discussions. During the course of our study we observed classroom discussions of union activities, the right to withdraw labour, and the effect of the closing of a large freezing works in the district in all eight schools. These were, though, *ad hoc* discussions. What did emerge more regularly was emphasis on ethnicity and this marks another significant difference between our data and that presented by Anyon. As this finding became central to our accounting for the differences between “successful” and “less successful” schools, it must be dealt with in some detail.

One difference between our two groups of schools was that the “successful” group adopted a “multicultural” approach while the “less successful” emphasised “socialisation” patterns based on a monocultural, nationhood principle. The aim of the “successful” schools was as far as possible to produce multicultural students. Teachers in these schools were not teaching *about* other ethnic groups in the sense of a “museum,” nor had they merely adjusted the environment to make ethnically different children comfortable; rather, they were attempting to produce learners who had competencies in and ability to operate in two or more different ethnic cultures. This task was begun in the primary school where children acquired significant understandings about a range of ethnic groups, were exposed to *marae* settings,<sup>5</sup> and in some instances, practised the rituals associated with the various groups. Visiting speakers were used, the *kau-matua* (tribal elders) were involved not only in informal instruction but also in curriculum development. As the children progressed through the school this knowledge was increased and deepened. In the intermediate school stress was placed on understanding the spiritual and political implications of rituals, and why certain conventions differed from ethnic group to ethnic group. At the secondary level we observed that the conceptual level deepened yet again, and that emphasis was on ethnic culture as “living,” made by people. We witnessed many lessons where lively discussions were under way as to whether certain forms of a particular ethnic group (e.g., the Maori practices at *tangihanga* or funerals) could be accommodated in a contemporary setting. Ethnicity was never frozen at one period of time.

The forms of knowledge deemed to be important had been determined in part by the parents, the teachers, and the children and hence they differed somewhat from the content laid down in the official prescriptions. The differences took two forms. The “successful” schools ascertained what their community wished to emphasise in respect to ethnic culture maintenance. Programmes were adjusted accordingly, using community personnel where necessary. While the most obvious changes were in social studies, they also permeated other curriculum areas. We found, for example, elements of Maori and Pacific Island ethnicity discussed in both science and mathematics. The second difference related to the language patterns of the students. Teachers in the “successful” schools had virtually abandoned the available texts and were translating literature into codes which were consonant with the children’s lived experiences. One secondary

school had set up its own printing works and was distributing this material in an effort to overcome replication of effort from school to school.

Teachers also altered pedagogical techniques to fit ethnic norms and to ensure that they did not offend pupils or parents through misunderstanding. For example, Pakeha [white New Zealanders] teachers, used to “eyeballing” people during verbal interaction, knew that Samoans viewed this as staring rudely. In addition teachers conducted trial-and-error approaches with alternative teaching styles; some interesting small scale experiments with peer learning, family grouping, and genealogy were under way.

By contrast the “less successful” schools focused on producing “New Zealanders.” They down played the ethnicity of pupils—except when excusing poor performance—and emphasised the development of nationhood. Two of these schools refused to collect statistics on ethnic lines, and a fairly typical view was expressed by a teacher at School U who said she was “. . . sick to death of all the emphasis on hyphenated New Zealanders.”

The point here, yet again, is that a range of behaviours occurred from school to school. Teachers in one group of schools were endeavouring to change the forms of knowledge to match the demands of not only the school clientele, but also the teachers’ perceptions of what is desirable in the New Zealand community at large. In contrast, teachers in the other schools in our sample emphasised the official syllabuses and examination prescription; in this respect it is paradoxical that the former group of schools had a better record on the official tests which arguably reflected the dominant ethnic group’s knowledge bases. The evidence is clear: teachers in some schools endeavoured to adapt the curriculum to the ethnicity of their students, and provided integrated knowledge consonant with the history of their ethnic group. Thus while the class background of children was not emphasised to any great extent, ethnic background was.

At this point we should note that many teachers in our “successful” schools were intuitively aware that education is a political act (Apple, 1979). By producing multicultural people in the sense defined above they were in the process of transforming a society composed primarily of monocultural citizens. Some teachers in these schools were subject to attacks in the media and via anonymous telephone calls, which demonstrates the political nature of their actions. Their goal was to sensitise colleagues and pupils in much the way suggested by Friere (1970) whose work was well known by many teachers in the sample group.<sup>6</sup> We reiterate, though, that the emphasis was on ethnicity rather than class.

Given the fact that two of our researchers operated from a sociology of knowledge framework, the emergence of this proposition from our data created considerable discussion within the research team. We decided that one of the weaknesses of the grounded theory approach was an over-emphasis on “presentism” and that major issues, such as the relationship of school knowledge and social class may remain submerged unless probes were undertaken. Schutz (1971, 1973) has observed that

it is not normal for people to reflect regularly on their everyday actions; indeed he has postulated that such actions are guided by a set of recipes referred to as “typifications” and that reflection (and change) occurs only when a person is “jolted” and s/he moves from one domain of meaning to another. The question we faced in debriefing sessions, therefore, was whether we should “jolt” the members of our sample group in order to establish whether or not class was a submerged or unconscious variable. We were also worried about the relationship of ethnicity and class, and wished to pursue this further. The upshot of our discussions was an agreement—in line with Lukes’ (1974) analysis of power—that it was dangerous to wait for issues to emerge, and that at times it is necessary for researchers to suggest alternatives. We took the step therefore of questioning a representative group of parents, teachers, and community representatives on their beliefs about class, ethnicity, and the relationship of such variables to schooling. Two predominant themes emerged from this enquiry—a concern with the maintenance of values arising from the ethnicity of groups, and the implementation of egalitarian ideas. A teacher in a primary school said this:

There are still plenty of opportunities in New Zealand, but our future lies in multiculturalism . . . we must recognize the rights of our [ethnic] minority groups, and cannot afford for them to be all manual labourers or drivers or waitresses. Somehow we have to get a better rate of achievement at school amongst these groups at school and to get a better spread of them in jobs . . . my view is that this can only be achieved by giving them a pride in their own race and its achievements . . . school achievement will follow.

A parent [an unemployed Freezing worker] commented:

We are a migrant people and in some ways I feel a stranger here, and sometimes a guest. It is dangerous to rock the boat too much—there are too many stirrers who cause strikes—that’s why ‘Down’ [Southdown Freezing Works] is closing. We must all look at this and say that we must work to help everyone . . . As a Cook Islander I can see that my kids need a better chance at school but Pakeha skills must be emphasised . . .

And another parent [a bus driver] put it this way:

Schools give my kids a chance I never had—to learn the skills which will get them a better job and better pay than I get. They will get a knowledge of technical skills I didn’t. It’s also important for the school to give them pride in being a Samoan. I’m not asking for anything to be watered down, you know, just let the school give them skills and also knowledge about our Samoan side too.

These views, which represented the majority of teachers and parents interviewed, reveal a “weak” notion of transformation. What is being mooted here is no change to the existing social *structures* but rather a *relocation* of individuals within the structures. The ideal—which is in line with much of the sociological and quasi-official views of the past decade (see Ramsay; 1975, New Zealand Educational Institute, 1980; New Zealand Department of Education 1981 for fairly typical views)—was a proportional spread of ethnic groups through the vocational structure and for

minorities to preserve aspects of their ethnic culture. However, a sizeable portion of our group of interviewees recognized that rather more fundamental changes may be needed before the lot of ethnic minority groups would be changed. Representative of this view was a teacher at School B who said:

At 'Varsity' I did some sociology courses and heard a lot of bull about social mobility. All social mobility—if we ever had it—means is that a few brown kids will move into white collar jobs. Society won't change—there will still be domination . . .

and again, a community representative said:

What is needed is complete social reform. Until the whole structure is shaken up and the rights of ethnic minority groups to be different recognized, and the need for *all* New Zealanders to be bicultural then we're only going to replace one form of oppression with another. What I'd like to see is a good look at the way we reward work—what *is* so rotten about manual work anyhow? And recognition of ethnic cultural rights. That's my Utopia!

Finally, another teacher summed it up by saying:

Sometimes I feel that [Principal and elite school named] and that kind of clique are saying "Look our group is in charge of this society. Sit exams that suit our type of people and if you don't measure up you deserve to sit at the bottom of society". To me this is a recipe for a divided society and greater friction.

The points we wish to emphasise here are that our probing revealed: (1) That many parents, teachers and community representatives did not recognise oppression; (2) That considerable faith was placed in the school as an equalizing force; (3) That where oppression was recognized it was usually considered in terms of ethnicity rather than class, and (4) An important minority did recognize that transformation involved more than merely altering the relative positions of various groups and saw the potential of the school as a counter hegemonic force.

These points are of course not entirely consonant with Anyon's findings. We take up reasons for the difference in our conclusions.

#### FINDING 4: CHILDREN SAW THROUGH THE FACADE AND "RESISTANCE" TO THE NORMATIVE PATTERNS EMERGED AS A DOMINANT THEME IN SCHOOLS

Another of Anyon's critical findings is that resistance emerged amongst pupils in working class schools which may therefore be unwittingly an agency of social transformation. Our evidence from "less successful" schools supports her position in regard to pupil resistance. The form of behavioural control was both hierarchical and repressive. At the secondary level suspensions and expulsions, as well as corporal punishment, were used freely. For example at School M during our research, five students were expelled, 78 were suspended and 19 exempted from attendance in a total roll of 890. At the elementary level a clear system of punishment had evolved in the "less successful" schools. Discipline was maintained in an overt and aggressive manner. Our field notes record many instances

of corporal punishment, but nevertheless also record frequent examples of teachers having extreme control problems. The children's reaction was much as that described by Anyon, although perhaps less passive. Many children voted with their feet and these schools had a very high rate of 'unjustified' absence (between 10 and 17 per cent daily). Graffiti were obvious, often protesting about the schools' rules and the characteristics of specific teachers. Verbal and physical confrontations were daily events in the majority of classrooms we observed. When asked about instances of teacher baiting students' comments were remarkably similar to Anyon's; "to get the teacher mad" was a commonly expressed goal.

Yet again, the contrasts with the "successful" schools are great, and demonstrate that the above findings need not be typical of working class schools. There was a marked contrast in styles of behavioural control between the two groups of schools. Expulsions and suspensions were not used by any of the four "successful" schools during the research period. School D did seek and obtain attendance exemptions for eight students, but were at pains to explain to our researchers why this was in the best interest of the children concerned. Influence was exerted in four ways. First, the "successful" schools had a well developed counselling structure.<sup>7</sup> Every teacher was viewed as an adviser, and senior staff were released specifically for helping to counsel children. In the larger schools full time counsellors were provided. Second, the organisation of each school was modified to suit pupil need. At the time of our observations three of the four "successful" schools were experimenting with forms of family grouping, drawing their rationale from the Maori extended family or *whanau*. Third, as has already been mentioned, the teachers in the "successful" schools viewed it as their *responsibility* to provide an interesting and meaningful programme. If discipline problems arose—and in our observations they did rarely—it was the programme that was investigated first. As a senior teacher put it at School A "I never think of discipline in the classroom but rather of programmes. If these work then there'll be no discipline problem." Typical of this approach is the following case:

The principal spent some time discussing the school's policy on discipline. He said "Pupil confrontation is not a great problem here as teachers are instructed to avoid it if possible. Not a great deal occurs because of the school programme which we design to keep the children interested." This policy seems to filter through into the classroom—very few control problems were noted and the teachers were most impressive in diverting and re-directing potential problems. Above all they kept their classrooms interesting and active. [Field notes then describe in detail events and procedures in a typical classroom, and conclude]. In all my time in this room (and in most of the school) there was no confrontation. This is due in large measure to the frequent change of pace, the use of individualised work sheets, and an imaginative use of a wide range of activities. The principal's point that keeping the programme busy and interesting means a reduction of behaviour problems seems to be reality.

We have already noted the teachers' efforts in altering content and pedagogical techniques in order to motivate pupils, and need not describe them further here. Fourth, our "successful" schools were quite deliberately rewarding desired activities and, as far as possible, ignoring undesirable

action. The reward structure was elaborate and involved the use of verbal praise, certificates (called “Happygrams” in one school) and tangible rewards. A typical instance was recorded in our field notes at School C:

After lunch the principal comes to talk to the classroom and singles out the children who have recently moved from Area A. He tells them that they are really growing up now. He has with him a girl from another area who has done some ‘lovely’ maths work, he shows this to the children and tells them she was in this area last year. He asks if anyone has been very good today and Benjamin—who is no angel—says “Peter helped me with the cleaning up at lunch time.” The principal takes Peter with him and returns beaming with a merit certificate to take home. Benjamin is pleased too!

Graffiti were much less obvious in “successful” schools than in the other group of schools, and where it did appear was seldom aimed at the teachers, but rather focused on pop stars and boy–girl relationships.

The data demonstrate, once again, support for Anyon’s arguments but also suggest that different schools in working class districts adopt differing procedures, and that a *variety* of both pupil and teacher behaviour was observed.

### *Conflict, Power, Tension, and Decision Making Procedures*

Some of our findings have no parallel in Anyon’s work, such as the dynamics of conflict, power, and tension as reflected in teacher decision making processes. These are outlined elsewhere (Ramsay *et al.*, 1983) and are not covered in detail here. However, we must give a brief account as this is the area where the dialectic mentioned in our introduction appeared. For example, in two of the “less successful” schools there seemed to be no procedures for involving staff in decision making. The principal and a small group of senior staff at Schools G and H brought down decisions but these were very frequently ignored by the rest of the staff. Eventually a variety of *ad hoc* power bases emerged, and a struggle for dominance was under way. In both of these schools during our observation period a group led by a long-standing staff member who was not a holder of a position of responsibility had achieved a platform from which they made most of the important decisions. In one instance the principal abandoned the senior staff group and tried to use the new group as a power base which signalled the onset of major conflict. In the other instance the principal attempted to delegate authority to the new group, which also caused considerable concern. In the remaining two “less successful” schools there was little professional leadership from the senior staff. Once again the result was the formation of a variety of decision making groups wrestling for power. The teachers in these four schools expressed dissatisfaction with the state of affairs, but were unable to work toward any clear articulation of goals. The dialectic was, therefore, clearly observable in these schools.

By contrast in the “successful” schools the decision making processes



were firm yet ostensibly democratic. Principals were prepared to make decisions, yet consultation occurred across a broad spectrum. An attempt was made to reach decisions by consensus rather than by fiat. However, teachers were prepared to accept (and indeed *expected*) the principal's decision after consultation had occurred. The response of a teacher at School B illustrates this point:

The principal runs this school in such a way that the staff feels valued and sure. Before a decision is made everyone is consulted. Nobody is ever put down or belittled but everyone knows that the principal is in charge.

Our researcher later commented that he observed major decisions being developed at this school through "informal chats," which while being a form of lobbying, also ensured a collection of a wide range of opinions before decisions were reached. The principal in School B worked very hard at developing a team spirit. Thus, on the occasions when arguments or disputes developed the team rather than an individual worked towards resolution of the problem. The staff as a whole tended to withdraw support from any individuals who weren't "fitting in" or who wished to develop programmes judged by the staff as being inappropriate. We would note, though, that in all four "successful" schools there were staff members who did not agree with the majority view and were working to change procedures and syllabus content. The point which must be emphasised heavily is that both "successful" and "less successful" working class schools had within them a dialectic. This explains why we have in this paper consistently underlined the term *generally* and placed "successful" and "less successful" in inverted commas. Even schools which had a clearly established policy, an agreed set of goals, and a consensus form of decision making had people within them who were opposed to the majority view and who were either working actively to get it changed or were attempting to operate in a different manner to the mainstream. For example, a teacher at School D who never cavilled publicly about his school's well publicised multicultural goal told us privately that he thought it worthless. Our observations in his classroom confirmed that he was emphasising monocultural goals. Moreover, in the so-called "less successful" schools there were teachers who were trying to operate within frames and styles of organisation, and with similar goals, to teachers in the "successful" schools. Our schools were never homogenous and a wide range of practices occurred *within* schools as well as between schools. The tensions and conflicts associated with the dialectic do not appear in Anyon's account, although some of her examples, such as the teacher using diacritic reading techniques hint at its presence. We would wish to emphasise that the schools in our sample were in the state of covert or overt tension and were subject to constant change.

## Discussion

Anyon draws three major conclusions regarding working class schools from her findings—first that schools are different, second that schools

were acting as a reproductive agency for society, and third, that schools may be performing an unwitting transformative role by alienating students and preparing them for a class struggle.

We have little problem with her first statement that schools were fundamentally different, as this was one of our major findings. However, it should be recalled that our schools were matched for structural similarity, were all predominantly working class, and were drawn from a common geographical neighbourhood, whereas hers were drawn from differing social class communities. It may be worth noting that the schools in one of our "matched pairs" were less than 500 yards apart, and that four of our eight sample schools could be seen from the site of one of the schools.

Our findings that schools which are structurally similar are, on close investigation, markedly different in operation is consonant with several studies which have appeared in recent years, such as those conducted by Owen (1975) in Australia, Wynne (1981) in the United States, and especially the much publicised study by Rutter and his associates (1979) in England. The results of the last named are similar to our own, although we would note that we have reservations about the highly functional approach they adopted and also that the curriculum and its associated forms of knowledge were treated by them as unproblematic (see Ramsay *et al.*, 1981, pp. 222–225 and Ramsay *et al.*, 1983 for a discussion). We also believe that, despite their vastly differing approaches and, we suspect, ideological underpinnings, both Rutter and his associates and Anyon have erred in describing schools in too tidy a fashion.

That Anyon recognized differences of opinions within schools and the non-monolithic nature of schools is undeniable—it is buried in footnote 13 on page 40 of her article. While we concur with her view that it is not possible to spell out all data and the most representative must be inevitably selected, even in the footnotes her examples of dissent are from students. In the body of the text (the diacritic reading teacher excepted) the impression is left, rightly or wrongly, that the teachers were uniformly oppressing students in working class schools. We would underline once again that we found a wide variety of practise operating in this respect, and would argue that this variety deserves consideration in a balanced report. The degrees of agreement and disagreement in the schools studied by Anyon remain unclear. As presented, her findings are far too orderly and fail to capture the essentially dynamic nature of all schools. Moreover our findings indicate very clearly the differences of approach between two groups of working class schools. If Anyon's sampling of working class schools had been larger, and even if more teachers, parents and pupils within the schools had been studied (and we recognize the problems of large samples in ethnographic studies) she too may have discovered greater diversity. For our own part we would reiterate that the "successful" schools in our sample had deliberately modified state school prescriptions, and were offering chances for their pupils not only to become multicultural individuals but also to become more aware of the reasons underlying the social differences between groups of people in New Zealand. While sampling may explain this dif-

ference between Anyon's findings and ours (given that we sampled older age groups), we would be interested in more details from her concerning *intra* as well as *inter* school differences.

In respect of Anyon's second conclusion our "less successful" schools were reproductive inasmuch as most teachers, (but not *all*) in these schools had decided that children would not become upwardly socially mobile, and that they should be "fitted into" the manual jobs in the community. The repressive, hierarchical organisations of these schools may well be a microcosm of the workforce as is suggested by Bowles and Gintis (1976), and the hidden curriculum we located was consonant with Jackson's (1968) three R's: "Rules, Regulations and Routines". Although the link between quiescent and oppressed school children and quiescent and oppressed workers requires longitudinal studies for confirmation, we find the argument reasonably plausible, and at least it is not inconsistent with our findings. Certainly, to use Bordieu's terms, the "cultural capital" being acquired by the children in these schools appeared to us to limit their life chances even within existing hegemonies. Our sample in "less successful" schools were learning like Willis's (1977) "lads" to be relatively quiescent manual, unskilled members. For one group of schools—and for some pupils in some classrooms in the other group of schools as well—our findings are in accord with those of Anyon.

Anyon's point regarding the possible transformative functions of working class schools is interesting, though once again there may be a gap between passive or even active school resistance and subsequent community behaviour. Most experienced educators can cite instances of incorrigibles at school becoming conservative pillars of society. Recently, the Department of Justice (1980) in New Zealand reported on a longitudinal study of all children born in 1960 and tested at 8 years of age. Their results demonstrated the extreme difficulty of predicting subsequent delinquency on the basis of either school behaviour or measures such as the Bristol Social Adjustment Guide.<sup>8</sup> Behaviour often changes according to context, and we have little basis for assuming that school behaviour will correspond exactly with workforce or adult behaviour.<sup>9</sup> Despite this reservation, there is some informal evidence that children who have been alienated by the schools we studied are likely members of Auckland metropolitan street gangs such as the Cobras, Black Power Sindi, the Rastafarians, or the Mongrel Mob. Jane Kelsey (1980) has gone, *ex post facto*, some way towards demonstrating this point in her study of Black Power Sindi. If these gangs become politicised then we may have just the set of circumstances described by Anyon.

During her discussion of transformative functions of schools, Anyon draws attention to the possibility of children, in rejecting school values and in not being exposed to the central U.S. ideology, being able to retain attitudes which are open to ideas. She goes on from this finding to suggest that ideological hegemony is far from being secure, and that class conflict in education is not dormant. The inference is reasonably clear—working class children will become conscientized and will take up with some purpose and willingness the class struggle. Interpretation of our data in New

Zealand is somewhat different and emphasises ethnicity as well as class. We would argue that the combination of two trends may heighten the prospect of change. First, we did identify—in line with Anyon—a group of children who had become alienated by the school system but who had also found their identity in belonging to a given ethnic group. Their solidarity and loyalty to these groups was strengthened by their opposition to the institutions of schooling, the economy, and the law. In the past such groups have lacked concerted leadership in New Zealand which for the most part has occupied middle ground and has sought “equality” through “positive discrimination.” Thus, many young members of the ethnic minority groups found themselves not only dissonant with the dominant groups (which in New Zealand are white, and of mainly British origins) but also with their own group leaders. Second, we would suggest—in line with Gramsci (1971)—that what is needed is the emergence of ethnic minority group leaders who are aware of the need to change the hegemony, and not merely to improve the relative position of their group’s members in the existing structures. This may be what the schools who had adopted multicultural goals could achieve—they may become the preparatory grounds for ethnic minority leaders aware of their past histories and willing to challenge the prevailing meritocratic ideology. This change could be deliberate and intentional, and not an accidental result of the hidden curriculum as Anyon suggests.

We have argued that the genesis of this movement is ethnicity rather than class. We are surprised that Anyon, whose sample must have contained Irish, Italian, and perhaps Polish as well as Black Americans, does not comment on this point. How can we explain the differences between her interpretations and ours? First we would argue that in terms of class formation, New Zealand is still in the position identified by Hogan (1982) as being typical of the 1930’s in the United States. Not only are the group of people who may be defined in Marxist terms as “working class” ethnically differentiated, they also, in our experience, have not developed the solidarity which marks the English working class. The reasons for this lack of solidarity or class consciousness are highly complex. They stem, in part, just as Hogan (1982, p. 42) suggests in the U.S. case, from the fact that working class people saw little need to develop a class theory of State power or to develop class based institutions. Even New Zealand’s well established unions were viewed with some suspicion by some of our sample; when they talked of the ‘Union’ they were referring to the union leaders many of whom were seen as acting against the workers’ interests, especially if they belonged to an ethnic group different to the respondent.<sup>10</sup> And, again following Hogan, there has not been a need in New Zealand to develop class based political institutions as historically the franchise was won elsewhere. There is an almost pathetic faith amongst New Zealanders relating to the power of political democracy. Many parents and teachers in our sample believed that the school was the place where opportunity would be equalised, where merit would prevail.<sup>11</sup> They also believed that the Vote gave people the opportunity to change the social order. Our findings showed that, in both sets of schools studied, there

were strong elements supporting a “positive discrimination” model—we can note, for example, the comment of the Principal cited earlier *viz* “[schooling] . . . is the only way the cycle of deprivation can be broken.” The current ideology in New Zealand is well entrenched in meritocratic ideals. Accordingly, class distinctions were not seen as a major problem, whereas ethnic differences were. Added to this is the fact that the multi-ethnic nature of the schools studied could not be ignored by parents, teachers, or the community, whereas class considerations could be submerged.

A further reason relates to the very powerful socialisation patterns which exist in small communities like New Zealand. Lukes (1974) has suggested that socialisation is the most insidious and effective form of power usage—when people are persuaded to believe that the established order is right and inviolable then existing elites become well entrenched. Many commentators, both satirical and serious, have averred that it is dangerous to be seen to be different in New Zealand. We have referred to the kind of attention teachers in multicultural schools have attracted, and to the care some of our migrant sample took in not wishing to “rock the boat.” Freedom of action is relative. In New Zealand, as in many other small societies, transgression too far from the norms of the dominant group brings rapid repercussions. However, despite the attacks on proponents of “multicultural schooling” mentioned above the climate in New Zealand at present makes it safer to depict oppression in ethnic terms than in class terms. Although the generalisation may be sweeping, New Zealanders believe class (particularly when depicted in Marxist terms) is an alien concept imported by foreign academics and developed by trade unionists. This explains, we believe, why so many of our sample were quite prepared to talk about ethnic oppression but not class oppression, despite the fact that New Zealand without question is increasingly a class-based society.

We cannot, of course, reject class-based interpretations simply because most of our sample wished to operate from a different basis. In fact, we would argue that while the genesis of the concern with oppression is ethnicity, it will be increasingly underpinned by class considerations. The majority of our pupil and parent sample *not only* belonged to ethnic minority groups, *but also* had working class social relationships with the modes of production. In short they sold their labour to capitalist interests. Elsewhere I have commented on these groups constituting a reserve army of labour who can be drawn upon in times of need and dispensed with in times of plenty (Ramsay, 1982), a point also made by Bedggood (1980) and Spoonley (1982). What we have, therefore, is a complex interaction of ethnicity and class. Because of these points, we argue contrary to Anyon’s U.S. findings, that the touchstone of transformation in New Zealand will be ethnicity and its relationship to class. This relationship is an issue which we believe is essential in the discussion of the transformation potential of schools and is one which Anyon barely engages. The possibility of the formation of an eth–class (McPherson, 1977) is a major lacuna in her paper, arising we believe from her preoccupation with over arching theories of class.

We would argue further that the vanguard of any transformation in New Zealand will be in the multicultural school movement. We are, of course, aware that there remains a danger of the graduates of our so-called "successful" schools becoming multicultural supporters of the existing hegemony especially if they join the middle income earning ranks. Transforming New Zealanders into multicultural people will not change the hegemonic nature of society. Something more profound and fundamental is needed. Conscientization of the working class ethnic minorities may be the something more, while conscientization of all New Zealand school children may be even more powerful. Praxis through thought and reflection may be the outcome, and the school may become a counter-hegemonic force. These are all points we believe should have been a focus of Anyon's discussion. The question which must be asked is not whether schools and teachers can or should initiate change, but to what extent and in which direction.

In this respect, we are also concerned that Anyon, like many neo-Marxists, is reluctant to talk about the nature of society which will arise from the transformation she so earnestly seeks. No doubt it may be argued that once people are freed from existing hegemonies, they must be left to create their own brave new world. For our part we find this a little Alice-in-Wonderlandish—we must travel down a road just because it is there and without knowing what the nature of the destination is. We are just as eager to seek transformation, but are happy to reveal our aspirations. Along with many teachers and parents in our sample we would argue for a redistribution of wealth, for a fundamental change in the reward structure, for the right to a free expression of values relating to ethnicity, and for greater access of individuals to political power. It is the last named which needs working out; it appears to us that better distribution of economic wealth in the U.S.S.R. and Communist China may have been realised at the expense of little or no gain in access to political power by the people. We would not expect these points to meet with universal acclaim but believe they are worthy of careful discussion.

## *Conclusions*

In summary, our study of working class schools does not support fully Anyon's conclusions. Specifically, we found far greater diversity both between and within schools than Anyon appears to allow for. We have also expressed some concern about her interpretations of the data, and have drawn attention to the different treatment of class and ethnicity in the two studies.

How can we account for the differences between Anyon's results and ours? Certainly the two studies represent two very different milieux. However differences may also be accounted for by methods and sampling. We have emphasised the steps we took to avoid operating from a narrow frame such as social class. In social research there is a major danger in developing a mirror effect arising from within the researchers themselves, from their personal ideologies. While we would agree that there is no

such thing as “value free” or objective research we would argue that there is a need to keep as open a frame of reference as is possible and to allow the data to generate the propositions. We would also emphasise the notion of comparative sampling implicit in Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) grounded theory approach. It appears to us that there were occasions when Anyon could have followed these principles with some benefit. For example, in debriefing sessions we looked for exceptions to the emerging generalisations and, if they appeared, we followed up on them. The diacritic reading teacher mentioned in passing by Anyon would have become the subject of further intensive investigation as they may have been the sign of an emerging dialectic. Recently Sirotnik and Oakes (1981, p. 167) have commented that learning settings which appear to be remarkably similar can prove to be remarkably different when contextual variables are examined. We believe that Anyon, in operating from an ontological position, has failed to examine the contextual variables closely enough and that her sampling and methodology have not allowed her to ascertain the major differences emphasised in the present study. The message is clear: people do differ and their differences will be reflected in classroom practice, in their emphasis on different forms of knowledge, and in the organisational structure they develop. The school is in all probability society’s most complex institution and no one explanation will ever account for this complexity.

None of the foregoing should be interpreted as an effort to debunk or lessen the importance of Anyon’s study. Her work is stimulating. She has provided empirical evidence to support Hogan’s contention that the school is not a “black box” devoid of internal cultural politics; it is rather “. . . an arena of tension between cultural production and reproduction as a locus of human activity . . .” (Hogan, 1982, p. 58).

We need much more research like Anyon’s following the path laid down by Hogan (1982, p. 61): “an account, first, of the process through which students construct a theory of the society, the school and of the relationship between the two . . . second, an account of the process through which children acquire the evaluation criteria with which they evaluate the character of the pedagogical and social exchanges offered by the school and society. And it requires, finally, an explanation of the acquisition of educational and social aspiration, and how for many working class children, the tension between their understanding of the world and their aspirations results in the gradual transformation of their aspirations into lowered expectations—and lower educational achievement.” In essence what Hogan is demanding is a thorough study of how “knowledge” is used as a form of social control, a study located firmly within the nexus of class production and reproduction, to which we would add, of course, the variable of ethnicity.

Anyon, then, is a trail blazer. While the present writer has expressed some concern about her sampling, her methodology, and the extrapolation of data in her interpretations, it is to be hoped that she and other researchers continue to probe the dynamics and operations of schools in order to lay bare the hidden motives and taken-for-granted assumptions.

We would note that our own research is, of course, open to some of the very criticisms regarding sampling that we have aimed at Anyon. We were not able to draw the valuable distinctions she makes between schools of different class composition because we had only working class schools in our sample. An ever broadening sampling in a wide range of contexts with carefully constructed methods free from ontological tendencies, is needed to build on Anyon's extremely important beginnings. For the moment we would caution that her sampling and methods do not permit wide extrapolation of her data, and that our own findings indicate that she may be only partially right.

## NOTES

1. The work of Sharp and Green (1975) and the several empirical contributions in Whitty and Young (1976) are also worth noting, although they are not as substantial as the ones cited in this paper.
2. The definitions of these terms is crucial. We distinguish between "socioeconomic status," which is a relatively objective index related to such variables as income, occupation, and level of education, and "social class" which indicates the relationship between a person and the modes of production. In this respect we follow Erik Olin Wright who has demonstrated that carpenters, for example, can belong to a number of different classes, depending on their relationship to capitalists (Wright, 1980, p. 178). While we commenced our research by matching schools according to SES, later we considered class groupings according to a more sophisticated analysis of the members of our sample. Ethnicity we defined initially as belonging to and identifying with a particular ethnic group. Again, in our more sophisticated analysis we looked at degrees of acculturation within the various identifiable ethnic groups.
3. We would note that while Anyon adopts a Marxist definition of "social class" (viz. a person's social relationship with the modes of production), she distinguishes between her schools (working class, executive elite etc.) on the basis of the quasi-objective measures of occupation and income.
4. It is worth noting, though, that we were aware from the outset that the criteria used for setting apart "effective" from "non-effective", or "successful" from "unsuccessful" ran the risk of merely conforming with values embedded in the existing hegemony. We used the initial measures as indications only, and added to them, and deleted from them as the research progressed. Anyon gives no indication of the procedures adopted after initial identification.
5. A *marae* is the strip of ground in front of Maori meeting houses. It is used for decision making meetings and on ceremonial occasions. It has deep spiritual significance for the Maori people.
6. A widely read journal, *The Multicultural School*, was edited by a group of teachers in the district. It contained comments and reviews of the work of Friere, M. F. D. Young, and Illich amongst many others.
7. The style of counselling was important. It was seldom of the *status quo*, fit the system style found by Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963). Rather, it took the form of a sounding board for the children and students and often led to structural and organisational changes within the school and, less often, to curriculum reform.
8. The point here is that the Bristol Social Adjustment Guide is based in large part on teacher reports of present pupil behaviour and their predictions of subsequent behaviour. That the correlations were slight may indicate that past be-



haviour is not a good predictor of future behaviour especially when the context is changed.

9. The best known piece of research—Willis's *Learning to Labour* does suggest a correspondence theory:

For no matter what the larger pattern of working class culture and cycle of its continuous regeneration, no matter what the severity of disillusion amongst 'the lads' as they get older, their passage is to all intents and purposes irreversible. When the cultural apprenticeship of the shopfloor is fully worked out, and its main real activity of arduous production for others in unpleasant surroundings is seen more clearly, there is a double kind of entrapment in what might then be seen, as the school was seen before, as the prison of the workshop. Ironically, as the shopfloor becomes a prison, education is seen retrospectively, and hopelessly, as the only escape.

[Willis, 1979, p. 107]

The "lads" spent time on the shop floor "messaging about" and "skiving off"—but as they acquired responsibilities (e.g. children, financial commitments) this behaviour lessened. Nor did they become the kind of worker who endeavoured in any systematic or deliberate way to break the hegemony. Indeed the salient part of Willis's research is that he found that working class culture acted to support existing structures. He concludes, as we do, that a politicisation of culture is a precondition of longer term structural change.

10. As I write an interesting inter-union struggle is taking place in New Zealand. We depend on gasoline supplies from one oil refinery, at Marsden Point in Whangarei. A small group of riggers at the plant, reacting against the firing of one of their members, added to a long line of stoppages. The government reacted by threatening to bring in draconian measures available to them under a 1932 piece of legislation. Most interesting though, are the reports filtering through from Marsden Point which suggest strongly that members of other unions reacted quite violently to the strike, and even "hung" an effigy of a rigger at the plant. This does not suggest strong worker solidarity.

11. Again as I write the annual debate on the discriminatory nature of the School Certificate examination, which is taken by 15-16 year olds, is under way. The Auckland Committee on Racism and Discrimination (ACORD) has criticised the English paper for its bias against Maoris, and has pointed out that 75 per cent of Maoris who sit will fail. They argue for a change from "standard" English to "communication" English. However Safiole Iaone, a Samoan community leader stated on public television that his . . . wanted no such concessions and were prepared to compete with the white population on their own grounds. Watering down of the paper, or separate examinations for different ethnic groups, he is reported as saying, would not help the Samoan people in New Zealand.

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