

Paulo Freire in his words

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http://www.talbot.edu/ce20/educators/catholic/paulo_freire/

Freire, P. (1996). Macedo, D., Macedo, Q., and Oliveira, A. (Trans.) *New York & London: Routledge. dissertation*

Because I had experienced poverty, I never allowed myself to fall into fatalism; and ... because I had been born into a Christian family, I never accepted our precarious situation as an expression of God's wishes. On the contrary, I began to understand that something really wrong with the world needed to be fixed. (p.14)

During the 1970s, in an interview in Australia, I told some greatly surprised reporters that it was the woods of Recife, refuge of slaves, and the ravines where the oppressed of Brazil live coupled with my love for Christ and hope that He is the light, that led me to Marx. The tragic reality of the ravines, woods, and marshes led me to Marx. My relationship with Marx never suggested that I abandon Christ. (p. 87)

One of the advantages I have had over intellectuals who intellectualize is that certain ideas were never poured into me as if they came from nowhere. On the contrary, my knowledge came from my practice and my critical reflection, as well as from my analysis of the practice of others. Because of my critical thinking abilities and my profound curiosity, I was led to theoretical readings that illuminated my practice and the practice of others and explained the level of success or confirmed the level of error that took place.

On one hand, my progressive perspective has an implied ethical position, an almost instinctive inclination toward justice and a visceral rejection of injustice and discrimination along the lines of race, class, gender, violence, and exploitation. On the other hand, my character also tends to reject knowledge that is antibook or antitheory. I prefer a knowledge that is forged and produced in the tension between practice and theory. (p. 85)

What progressive educators need to do is bring life itself into their classrooms. They need to critically read day-to-day life and analyze, with learners, the shocking facts and disjunctions of our democracy. They need to expose learners to examples of discrimination taken from daily experience (race, class, and gender discrimination), and examples of disrespect for public things, examples of violence, examples of arbitrariness. These examples should be analyzed to reveal their aggressive contradiction of what I have been calling men and women's orientation toward being more, which has been constituted as our nature throughout history. Also, they contradict the authenticity of democratic life. In fact, a democracy where discrimination and disrespect occurs without punishment still has a great deal to learn and to do in order to purify itself. (pp. 155-156)

Freire, Paulo. (1994). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Educators need an understanding of the meaning their festivals have as an integral part of the culture of resistance, a respectful sense of their piety in a dialectical perspective, and not only as if it were a simple expression of their alienation. Their piety, their religiousness, must be respected as their right, regardless of whether we reject it personally (and if so, whether we reject religion as such, or merely do not approve the particular manner of its practice in a given popular group).

In a recent conversation with Brazilian sociologist Professor Otavio Ianni, of UNICAMP, I received a report from him of some of his encounters with young activist of the Left, one of them in prison, in Recife, in 1963. Ianni not only made no effort to hide his emotion at what he had seen and heard, but approved and endorsed the way these militants respected popular culture, and within that culture, the manifestations of their religious beliefs. "What do you need," Ianni asked the young prisoner.

"A Bible," he answered.

"I thought you'd want Lenin's *Que fazer?* (What is to be done?), said Ianni.

"I don't need Lenin just now. I need the Bible. I need a better understanding of the peasant's mystical universe. Without that understanding, how can I communicate with them?"

Besides the democratic, ethical duty to proceed in this way, incumbent on the progressive educator, such a procedure is also demanded by requirements in the field of communication, as the young person in Recife had discerned.

Unless educators expose themselves to the popular culture across the board, their discourse will hardly be heard by anyone but themselves. Not only will it be lost, and inoperative, it may actually reinforce popular dependency, by underscoring the much-vaunted 'linguistic superiority' of the popular classes. (pp. 106-107) What is altogether impermissible, in democratic practice, is for teachers, surreptitiously or otherwise, to impose on their pupils their own 'reading of the world,' in whose framework, therefore, they will not situate the teaching of content. The battle with authoritarianism of the Right or the Left does not lead me into that impossible 'neutrality' that would be nothing but a cunning way of seeking to conceal my option.

The role of the progressive educator, which neither can nor ought to be omitted, in offering her or his 'reading of the world,' is to bring out the fact there are other 'readings of the world,' different from the one being offered as the educator's own, and at times antagonistic to it.

Let me repeat: there is no education practice without content. The danger, of course, depending on the educator's particular ideological position, is either that of exaggerating the educator's authority to the point of authoritarianism, or that of a voiding of the teacher's authority that will mean plunging the educand into a permissive climate and an equally permissive practice. Each of the two practices implies its own distinct manner of addressing content. (111-112)

In 1960, I wrote, for the symposium, 'Education for Brazil,' sponsored by the Recife Regional Center for Educational Investigations, a paper entitled, 'A Primary School for Brazil' ... I shall cite a brief passage from the text ...

'The school we need so urgently [I said in 1960] is a school in which persons really study and work. When we criticize, on the part of other educators, the intellectualism of our schools, we are not attempting to defend a position with regard to the school in which the study disciplines, and the discipline of studying, would be watered down. We may never in all of our history have had more need of teaching, studying, learning, than we have today. Of learning to read, write, count. Of studying history, geography. Of understanding the situation or situations of our country. The intellectualism we fight is precisely that hollow, empty, sonorous chatter, bereft of any relationship with the reality surrounding us, in which we are born and reared and on which, in large part, we yet feed today. We must be on our guard against this sort of intellectualism, just as we must be on our guard against a so-called ant traditionalism that reduces schoolwork to mere experiences of this or that, and which excuses itself from performing the hard, heavy work of serious, honest study, which produces intellectual discipline.'

It is precisely the authoritarianism, magical comprehension of content that characterizes the 'vanguardist' leaderships, for whom men's and women's awareness is an empty 'space' waiting for content—a conceptualization I have severely criticized in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. And I criticize it again today as incompatible with a pedagogy of hope. (pp. 113-114)

Freire, P. (1984a). *Education, liberation and the church*. *Religious Education*, 79 (4), 524, 544-545.

The prophetic church, like Christ, must move forward constantly, forever dying and being reborn. In order to be, it must always be in a state of becoming. The prophetic church must also accept an existence which is in dramatic tension between past and future, staying and going, speaking the Word and keeping silence, being and not being. There is no prophecy without risk. This prophetic attitude is accompanied by a rich and very necessary theological reflection ... the theology of liberation—a prophetic, utopian theology, full of hope. (p. 524)

Thus ... education must be an instrument of transforming action, as a political praxis at the service of permanent human liberation. This does not happen only in the consciousness of people but presupposes a radical change of structures in which process consciousness will itself be transformed. (pp. 544-545)

Freire, A.M.A., and Macedo, D. (Eds.). (1998). *The Paulo Freire reader*. The Paulo Freire reader. New York: Continuum.

'Donaldo, I don't want to be imported or exported. It is impossible to export practices without reinventing them. Please tell your fellow American educators not to import me. Ask them to re-create and rewrite my ideas.' (p.6)