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TOWARDS A FEMINIST PEDAGOGY OF EMPOWERMENT: THE MALE AND FEMALE VOICES IN CRITICAL THEORY

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TOWARDS A FEMINIST PEDAGOGY OF EMPOWERMENT:
THE MALE AND FEMALE VOICES IN CRITICAL THEORY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Tania Ramalho, B.S., M.A.

****

The Ohio State University
1985

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Richard N. Pratte
Adviser
Department of Educational Policy and Leadership
To my mother, Antonia Danuse de Castro Ramalho (July 4, 1921-December 25, 1984), who had all the knowledge but no voice.
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My gratitude is deep to many friends who supported me through this long passage in my life. To Mostafa K. Nosseir, who gave me the incentive and the support to come to the U.S. for the Ph.D. program. To Dr. John Logsdon, who brought me to the George Washington U. To Ines Gumiero and Donald Kurtz, who cheered me up when I was alone in Washington D.C. To Frank Buchanan and Desmond Cook, who helped me to transfer to O.S.U. To Donald P. Sanders, who let me pursue a course of studies of my choice. To my first friends in Columbus, Annette Oren, Marian Schwab, Gary Milczarek, and Louise Wasson. To the researchers and staff members of the Center for Human Resource Research, from whom I learned American ways: Nancy Baker, Michael Borus, Jody Crowley, Liz Dubravcic, Art Fletcher, Jeanette Frasier, Mary Gagon, Jeff Golan, Cliff Kelley, Ellen Kreider, Enid Lagesse, Frank Mott, Michael Motto, Ellen Mumm, Gil Nestel, Herbert Parnes, Joel Rath, Donald Ronchi, Pat Rotton, Lois Shaw, Alice Simon, Pam Sparrow, Anne Stathan, and John Thompson. To my sisters from the Center for Women's Studies: Sue Blanshan, Glynis Carr, Cathie Direen, Kris Dugas, Susan Dyer, Sigrid Ehrenberg, Lynn Fausa, Mary Margaret Fonow, Phyllis Gorman, Helen Fehervary, Terry Hartley, Lois Hembold, Suzanne Hyers, Donna Keuck, Beth Lewis, Judith Mayne, Kelly McCormick, Terry Moore, Susan Moseley, Mildred Munday, Laurel Richardson, Barbara Rigney, Claire Robertson, Leila Rupri, Vivian Schaefer, Chris Smithies, Donna Stark, Mary Sullivan, Verta Taylor, and Willa Young. To my friends Dennis Gray and Judy Cook, Linda and Lilian Tyner, Connie Gaib and Rod Moore, Suzanne Vaughn, and Mrs. Crea Ricca, who always gave me love and support. To my Brazilian friends—Auta Barreto (mother and daughter), Olga Bernardini, Sueli da Costa, Miriam Lea de Gouvea, Sonia Kenski, Luiz Claudio Leivas, Marta Pimenta de Moraes, Cynthia Rangel, Mary Lou Rebello, Teresinha Rodrigues, Juan Sandi, Clea da Silva, and Alina Souza, who always cared. To Beverly Nicholson, second mother to my son, who has been riding the roller-coaster of life with me holding my hand when I am scared. To my sisters-founders of the Serendipity collective, Theresa O'Brien and Virginia Wemmerus, who have been my core family for the past two years, and also to Sara Baker, Amy Girtin, and Kathy Nolan. T.O'B., in special, has shared her mind, energy, love, and resources with me. To Marlene Longenecker, one of my most important role models. To Bob Bargar, from whom I learned that I could believe in myself. To my advisor Dick Pratte, who believed in me, and guided me very patiently. To my grandmother Alody, father Enoch, sisters Mause and Penha, and brother Sergio, who sent me energy. To Dick Garner, who shared the process in every way, and whose care, kindness, and strategic support were essential to my accomplishing this task. To my son Gabriel, who sacrificed the most. Thank you.
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"The Magician is a mediator between two worlds—the inner, spiritual heaven, and the outer, physical earth. Faced with the task of discriminating and making choices, she must be responsible to herself as well as the larger organism of which she—and we—are a part. As toolmaker, the Magician symbolizes differentiation—that great moment of mental awakening when the human ego recognized itself, felt its power to discriminate, and began to reason. . . . The Magician dances on behalf of all life, a dance of the universal fire inherent in all beings." (Noble, 1983, pp. 29-33).
Figure 1. The Magician.

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1. Uncovering the valuations

At this point of the argument it should be stated most emphatically that the fault in most contemporary as well as earlier social science research is not in its lack of 'objectivity' in the conventional sense of independence from all valuations. On the contrary, every study of a social problem, however limited in scope, is and must be determined by valuations. A 'disinterested' social science has never existed and, for logical reasons, can never exist.

However, the value premises that actually and of necessity determine social science research are generally hidden. The student can even remain unaware of the door open to biases. The only way in which we can strive for 'objectivity' in the theoretical analysis is to expose the valuations to full light, make them conscious, specific, and explicit, and permit them to determine the theoretical research. In the practical phases of a study, the stated value premises, together with the data (established by theoretical analysis with the use of the same value premises) should then form the premises for all policy conclusions.

I am arguing here that value premises should be made explicit so that research can aspire to be 'objective'— in the only sense this term can have in the social sciences. But we also need to specify them for the broader purposes of honesty, clarity, and conclusiveness in scientific inquiry.

This quote in Gunnar Myrdal's Objectivity in Social Research made a profound impression on my thinking as a social scientist and educator. Myrdal, whose work on third world development issues I admired, was the first to sensitize me to the problem of objectivity in the social sciences.

Honesty, or transparency of purpose, is one of the most appealing reasons for bringing out the values underlying a study. Communication between author and reader is likely to be less distorted. The reader will have the opportunity to be fully acquainted with the researcher's
position in the field. The reader will know whose tradition the researcher is following, what interests she has, with whom she networks, and what her politics are like. Having to make these clarifications, the researcher remains conscious of the possible effects of the research process and results and becomes accountable to the participants of the study, to the community of researchers, and to humanity at large.

I would like to acknowledge how this dissertation has evolved from my consciousness, the consciousness of a Latin American woman, a Latina. My parents are white-collar working class Brazilians. They had enough to eat, to pay the rent, and for the kids' books, clothes, and Christmas gifts: the so-called lower "middle-class." My parents supported my interest in seeking an education. Their feelings were mixed, however, because they perceived disadvantages in the life of an educated woman who "later would have to change diapers anyway." Why waste energy in learning only to become "nervous" for doing it? My relatives frankly disagreed with my unconventional mode of thinking, fearing imprisonment, torture, or "disappearance"; having grown up under Getulio Vargas' dictatorship (1930-1946), they knew how to behave under the current one. Nonetheless, I received general support and admiration when I won a scholarship to study in the Estados Unidos. It was generally believed that my changes for improving in life would greatly increase with the opportunity of learning how to speak English well: bi-lingual secretaries receive "good" pay from multinational corporations.
Thus this dissertation by a working "middle-class" Latina will reflect a consciousness formed in the context of life experiences and intellectual traditions of two countries: Brazil and the United States.

I grew up in Rio de Janeiro after World War II when Brazil, an ally, was ready for an economic development "take-off." During this time there were democratic elections, and President Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira built Brasilia (1961), which aspired to be no less than the future capital of the world. His successors tried to look after the poor and control the size of the external debt incurred in the name of "development." Many found viable the Cuban model to eliminate poverty. In 1964, however, a military dictatorship decided for us that Cuba's option wasn't good, and for the next twenty years men trained in the Brazilian Superior School of War governed the country. I was then a young adult, returning from my senior high school year as an exchange student in the U.S.A., and soon to become a normal school-trained elementary teacher.

My practical experience as a teacher of the children of third world urban poor women sharpened my passion for wanting to know the whys of poverty? Over and over I asked myself what can be done to avoid human waste? How can we come up with a solution when it is dangerous to side with the poor? Under an authoritarian regime these questions brought immediate political action only from the most bold. I felt powerless. I did fear imprisonment and torture which were used against "misbehavior."
In the Latinamerican university of the sixties, Marxism was, as it still is for many, passion and dogma. Most students found that historical materialism sensibly explained the exploitive behavior of the national and international elites. By showing the direction of change for the construction of a more just and equal world, Marxism at the time satisfied my emotional and rational needs.

Graduate studies in the United States on the theoretical level exposed me to mainstream social scientific theories of individual, organizational, and societal development. I had read about them in college, but paid little attention since these "bourgeois" theories were considered inadequate and supportive of the establishment. They did not fit the Brazilian society. There was a generalized idea among students that most first world scientists, if unconsciously, subscribed to perspectives that supported the values and the life-style of post-industrial capitalist societies. In the U.S.A. and in Europe the theories did make sense for their reality, but the third world critique was valid and important.

On the practical level, in the United States I found Feminism. Through Women's Studies I got reacquainted with radical social theories, including Neomarxist theories such as feminist socialism. I also worked side by side with feminist women, and a few feminist men who were doing revolutionary action. They seriously and creatively study, discuss, teach, and engage in community work to promote better life conditions for women, children, and men. I have learned from them how to understand the dynamics of change, the importance of being strong with others who share the same world view, and the feminist
interpretation of the impact of the events of patriarchal society, no matter how seemingly trivial and inoffensive, on the lives of all women. I learned how to believe in the feminism I had carried buried in my unconscious, and to assert myself as a feminist.

My consciousness reflects a history of concern with the oppressed. As Gunnar Myrdal demands of scholars, I must state that my choice of Marxism and Feminism to provide the focus for this dissertation follows from that experience. These perspectives affect my values, the issues I address, authors I consult, and the language I use. I wish to contribute to the integration of the perspectives of men and women which critically address different aspects of relations of domination which must be overcome simultaneously: the economic domination of workers, the sexual domination of women, and the racial domination of non-whites. I also wish to add to the vision of a human society restructured according to an ideal of liberation and equality for all dominated groups: women, children, racial minorities, the people of third world countries, and workers everywhere. At this point in life, as an educator my choice is to concretize that vision in a workable theory of education to serve as a guide for eliminating domination from human experience.

I search for the contributions from man's and woman's critical theory to a theory of education educators could use, most especially feminist educators. Androcentric and feminist theories traditionally have been at odds, in mutual disrespect for what each other has to say. I look for compatibility and dialogue, and this is not at all an easy task. The Magician, whose picture precedes this introduction, is
a woman toolmaker who is responsible for herself, for her community, and for nature; she dances and looks at the Sphinx (who holds immemorial secrets) in order to create what she must create. The Magician inspires me, she is the perfect image to represent my attitude toward this work: one of responsibility towards myself and others in the search for "tools" to empower women.

2. Conceptual framework

The context in which this project originated introduces the conceptual framework of the study. In January, 1982, I observed Women's Studies classes for the first time in preparation for teaching introductory courses. The subject was interesting and controversial, the instructors were strong women with magnetic personalities who had the esteem and respect of the students, and the group engaged in enthusiastic and frank discussions of serious issues affecting everyone's life.

My interest in understanding what was happening in this Women's Studies class led me back to Paulo Freire, the Brazilian author of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed. The analogies between Freire's theory of education as practice for freedom—as "problematising" education, and the practice of Women's Studies were evident in my observations. For Freire, problems are topics for group dialogue in communion, co-laboration, and fusion, and the educative act elucidates the conditions of a dominated consciousness, thus setting it free. For feminist Women's Studies, education means the revolution that takes place when,
women, individually and together, hesitantly and rampantly, joyously and with deep sorrow, come to see our lives differently and to reject externally imposed frames of reference for understanding these lives, instead beginning the slow process of constructing our own way of seeing them, understanding them, and living them.®

It was due to this personal experience that I arrived at the idea of developing a feminist theory of education. I saw the project as an added chapter to Richard Pratte's book Contemporary Theories of Education,® an interpretation of the important theories of education that have influenced twentieth century American education.® As I developed this idea I became aware of parallels between feminist theory, Marxist theory, the critical theory school of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, and the work of the contemporary representative of that neomarxist tradition, Jürgen Habermas.

Originally the project was intended to cover all of the critical perspectives, but that proved too ambitious. I narrowed the focus to selections of Habermas' work, and to a limited number of feminists who addressed similar issues using the method of historical materialism.

Eventually, the project became to establish a feminist theory of education implicit in critical theory, but to do so by taking into account both the feminist and the masculine perspectives.® The subtitle of the dissertation, "contributions of male and female voices in critical theory," affirms the existence of these two equally truthful points of view about gendered human reality, a requirement necessary for dialogue to take place. The following sections provide an overview of the three areas covered by the study: critical theory, feminism, and theory of education.
2.1. The idea of a critical theory. Cataclismic events—the institutionalization of Nazism and the world war that followed Adolf Hitler's ascension to power—marked the history of the "Frankfurt School." This name is associated with a group of scholars who worked during the immediate pre- and post-war periods at the Institute for Social Research first opened in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1923: Max Horkheimer, director since 1930, Theodore Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Friedrich Pollock, Leo Lowenthal, Paul Lazarsfeld, Franz Neumann, Walter Benjamin and Erick Fromm. These men were among the associates who emigrated, with the Institute, to Geneva Switzerland in 1933. The Institute transferred to New York in 1935, and in 1941 it moved again to California. The Institute reopened in Frankfurt in 1953.

War-induced emigration to the United States affected these men in several ways. Personally they went through painful losses with separations from their families, friends, and home country. Given their first-hand experience with Nazi domination, the instability of their personal situations, and culture shock, it is no wonder that they are often found to be rather gloomy critics of society.

For these Germans, sharply conscious of the history of class differences and struggle, the pragmatism, empiricism, and optimistic attitude of their American hosts was initially difficult to cope with. Their host country, the land of individualism and capitalist enterprise, was still relatively unaware of the effects of its own neocolonial expansionism. Consequently, the German scholars had to tone down their perceived radicalism out of fear of harassment and deportation. The culture shock that was intensified by the
differences between continental and American intellectual traditions, also provided opportunities for new insight. Adorno, for example, advised students of human societies faced with contrasting perspectives not to take things for granted, neither general concepts nor methods of inquiry.  

Caution and flexibility were required during this time of dislocation and financial problems, and the scholars were required to compromise—sometimes by discontinuing or changing the direction or emphasis of a project. After the war, some of the Institute's members preferred to stay in America while others sailed home. Marcuse and Lowenthal, among others, decided to remain in the United States, where critical theory in some ways became influential theoretically and politically. In Germany, the work of Adorno, Horkheimer, and Pollock was challenged in the 1960's by both the Right and the Left. Though often criticized, the Institute for Social Research survived the deaths of Adorno in 1969, of Pollock in 1970, and of Horkheimer in 1973. The tradition of the Frankfurt School is now being rejuvenated by Habermas' reevaluation and redirection of critical theory.

In his inaugural address, Max Horkheimer reaffirmed and clarified the mission of the Institute of Social Research, its commitment to Marxist critique, and to the discussion of related theoretical and methodological questions. According to Horkheimer, a fruitful relationship between philosophy and the social sciences must be created. Neither philosophy's abstract interpretations nor science's ahistorical empiricist approach are able to provide an account of social reality favorable to human emancipation. An interdisciplinary
approach is required: the study of society and of the individual calls for collaboration among philosophers, economists, sociologists, psychologists, and historians. The theoretical common ground for the analysis of the development of human society is provided by an unorthodox version of marxism. This "neomarxism" is necessary to account for dramatic changes in the world since the days of Marx: for example, the increased spread of monopoly capitalism, the changing economic role of the State, the influence of the new "culture industry" (radio, cinema, and television) on the consciousness of the working class, and the deterioration of Marxist principles as applied in Soviet Russia.

Theory committed to the transformation of society should examine

the interconnection between the economic life of society, the psychic development of the individual and transformations in the realm of culture . . . including not only the so-called spiritual contents of science, art and religion, but also law, ethics, fashion, public opinion, sport, amusement, life-style, etc.  

Indeed, the members of the Institute wholeheartedly undertook the task of studying as many aspects of society as a diversity of interests allowed. In the process, they created a new version of marxist historical materialism that came to be known as "critical theory."

From a dialectical historical materialist perspective, critical theory brings together philosophy and science for the interpretation of society and of social ideological formations. The purpose of critical theory is to guide social change which actualizes human liberation. In order to be useful, critical theory must be put in
practice by those to whom it is extended; only practice that results in a liberating process determines whether critical theory "fits" or not. In consonance with this practical purpose, the guidelines for critical inquiry suggest aversion to closed or rigid philosophical systems or scientific methodologies. Critical theory is always "in the making," it changes as society changes, therefore its findings are considered tentative, not definite. Thus, critical theory is based on dialectical materialist assumptions, it is interdisciplinary, it is concerned with the critique of ideology, and its purpose is to guide and further the practice of liberation.

We may now turn to a brief examination of the critical theory of Habermas. In the tradition of the Frankfurt school, Habermas’ work is largely devoted to the critique of knowledge as an ideological construct, to the reconstruction of marxist historical materialism, to the establishment of a theory of universal pragmatics, and to the critique of contemporary advanced capitalist societies. Habermas extends the Frankfurt school’s critique of scientific positivism by elaborating the theory of interests of knowledge. Science, he says, serves only one of humankind’s interests—the instrumental interest in controlling objectified processes embodied in production—and we must not mistake this interest for others. The other human interests of knowledge, or adaptive mechanisms necessary to the survival of the species, are: first, our practical interest in communication that allows us to establish norms of social conduct, to solve conflicts, and to achieve consensus; and the interest in emancipation, of
extirpating oppressive power relations in society that lie behind social crisis and human unhappiness.12

According to Habermas, the problems posed in social practice today are largely related to meaning-making human consciousness and to social interaction. A scientific paradigm based on an interest in instrumental control for organizing social institutions and framing human interaction and communication cannot but bring tremendous costs to humanity: alienation, inefficient bureaucratization, and the reproduction of poverty among the oppressed groups. Habermas sees the need for interpretative and critical studies of conflict-ridden practical life, of language, meaning, and communication, each of which has a guiding role to play in the history of human liberation. He establishes his own program of research to disclose the conditions of nondistorted communication that can facilitate human liberation. Moreover, he discusses from a developmental point of view the cognitive, interactional, and moral consciousness competencies necessary for human individuals to be able to communicate effectively. From a historical materialist point of view Habermas discusses the evolution of society in terms of its normative development, showing the other side of Marx's perspective on society's economic structures. In light of his complex theoretical framework, Habermas discusses the present legitimation crisis of society, and makes it clear that we now face two paths to the future: one leads to emancipation, the other to further domination.

Critical theory sides with emancipation.
2.2. Feminism. The analysis of contemporary society developed by Frankfurt scholars (and especially by Herbert Marcuse) paved the ideological way for the American New Left, one of the roots of contemporary feminism. Perhaps, the task of feminism may be summarized in the following quote:

A very high proportion of . . . thinking . . . is androcentric (male-centered) in the same way as pre-Copernican thinking was geocentric. It's just as hard for man to break the habit of thinking for himself as central to the species as it was to break the habit of thinking of himself as central to the universe. He sees himself quite unconsciously as the main line of evolution, with a female satellite revolving around him as the moon revolves around the earth.13

This is not yet a fully understood view of the problem set for philosophy, science, and education by the feminist movement. Dominant knowledge has been created from a perspective that is uniquely male, and it has been disseminated in language associated with the masculine experience. The social context in which knowledge is created and disseminated has been marked by a sexual politics of male dominance over females. Consequently, women's points of view on the nature of reality, most especially on the conditions of their lives as women, have been systematically ignored, effaced, distorted, or appropriated by men. If this androcentric way of thinking is to be radically changed, the educational character of Feminism cannot be denied. The feminist educational mission aims to establish the legitimacy of women's points of view, to disseminate it in women's voices, to transform the conditions of knowledge, and of women's lives in patriarchal capitalist society.
This character is present from the start in the second wave of the feminist movement initiated in the 1960's. Participants of early consciousness raising groups created knowledge by disclosing and discovering the political dimensions of their personal lives. Celebrations of womanhood in music, poetry, literature, the arts, festivals, and political activity rapidly arose from the practice of the original consciousness raising groups. This expression of women's activism provided models for the resocialization of many women into feminist ideals, attitudes, and behavior.

In the 1970's formal Women's Studies programs, the branch of the feminist movement in academia, were founded and mushroomed across the country, and the 1980's promise increased interest in the subject among community activists, scholars, and students. Learning institutions are experimenting with ways to include in the curriculum issues raised by and about women. At the higher education level, for example, the debate on autonomous vs. integrated Women's Studies seems to pose important questions for the future of the field, such as whether Women's Studies should comprise a separate unit within academia, or permeate every subject of the curricula. Autonomous Women's Studies is without doubt one of the most important institutions for "infiltrating" capitalist patriarchal educational structures, one of those contradictions allowed by dominant systems which can—and hopefully will—affect its long-run stability.

Women's Studies is a "scholarly" branch of Feminism, a social movement's theory and practice. But, what is Feminism? One of the most respected feminist theorists, Adrienne Rich, provides a definition in many parts, three of which will be quoted:
Feminism means . . . that we renounce our obedience to the fathers and recognize that the world they have described is not the whole world. Masculine ideologies are the creation of masculine subjectivity; they are neither objective, nor value-free, nor inclusively "human." Feminism implies that we recognize fully the inadequacy for us, the distortion, of male-created ideologies, and that we proceed to think, and act, out of that recognition.17

Rich shows how feminism—and feminist theory—is born as critical theory and action, as a critique of "male" positivism, as a theory which searches for ideological distortion and corrects it from the perspective of women's experience and subjectivity. Feminism withdraws women's consent for men to decide for them what life is about. She continues with another aspect of her definition:

If we conceive of feminism as more than a frivolous label, if we conceive of it as an ethics, a methodology, a more complex way of thinking about, thus more responsibly acting upon the conditions of human life, we need a self-knowledge which can only develop through a steady, passionate attention to all female experience.18

In this passage Rich calls attention to the interdisciplinary nature of feminism, and more than that, to the critical nature of its theory: it brings together philosophy and science—a complex way of knowing about the lives of women, and thus also about men's lives. She concludes:

I cannot imagine a feminist evolution leading to radical change in the private/political realm of gender that is not rooted in the conviction that all women's lives are important; that the lives of men cannot be understood by burying the lives of women; and that to make visible the full meaning of women's experience, to reinterpret knowledge in terms of that experience, in now the most task of thinking.19
Feminism aims at changing the very definition of masculinity and femininity, the nature of relations between women and men, and at abolishing the distinction between the private and the political realms of society which separates them. Feminism assumes the importance of women and the superfluity of male domination; it becomes, for women, the task of their thinking, and the guidepost of their action.

Rich's, however, is a general definition. Feminists do not agree with details of the account of women's experience, for example, about the nature of oppression, and what should be done to eliminate it. In spite of this, they have managed to initiate a dialogue among themselves, and they have defined perspectives, or political philosophies, and defended them against conservatism. Feminist philosopher Alison Jaggar describes four feminist perspectives—liberal, marxist, radical, and socialist. Her method is to begin with a description of what all perspectives oppose.20

Before discussing Jaggar's four perspectives we must note that conservative thought is non-feminist, and in feminism's terms also anti-feminist. Conservative thought, to which the science of biology provides the guiding focus, gives the comforting impression that certainty and order in society are attainable. Society is regarded as an organism, and human processes are primarily determined by the dictates of innate genetic factors. A conservative carries biological determinism to most aspects of life and accepts without qualifications the Freudian slogan anatomy is destiny.21 Differences between males
and females are genetically given, therefore natural and right: men are aggressive, competitive breadwinners, and women are nurturing mothers and wives. Conservatives change their views with caution and hesitate to alter the delicate balance of society and the individual. The evolutionary interpretation of change accepts, for example, modernization and the incorporation of women into the labor market only insofar as their traditional roles as wives, mothers, and homemakers are not disrupted or altered. Conservatives do not see oppression in society—they see a set of unique individual problems. Feminism rejects the conservative attempt to justify sexism, racism, and other discriminatory practices, and its equating of what is natural with what is right.

From the point of view of the conservative, any sort of feminism is radical enough. But while not all feminists are radical feminists, radical feminism is perhaps the most uniquely feminist perspective arising from the 60's political activism. Its critique examines the assumptions behind major social institutions, from the family to the state, and makes the analysis of sexuality, and of sexual violence against women, central. Patriarchal institutions are oppressive to women, and patriarchy is misogynous: it is the expression of a contradictory hate-love feeling towards women in general. Under patriarchy women are seen as devils and angels, as temptresses and protectors of men, as mother/wives and prostitutes, each useful to men.

Radical feminism identifies the root of women's oppression in our own biology: we are oppressed because we are women. Because of our natural capacity to reproduce the species, we have been forced to
depend on men for survival. This first division of labor sets the model for all hierarchical and oppressive relationships and institutions known to patriarchal society. While humanity has been able to discontinue some oppressive practices, the oppressive nature of the relationship between males and females has remained alive and well throughout our histories.

Radical feminism suggests that technology should rescue women from the burdens of reproductive and productive labor. Technological changes will affect social relations; free from childbearing and childrearing duties, women, children and men will be able to share the right to self-determination. Reproductive and productive technology will create a sexually free society, where the need for institutions such as the family, or the set of gender roles, and even the state will disappear from the realm of human necessity.23

Though the future of freedom envisaged by radical feminism is similar to the Marxist's ultimate rejection of the state, Marxist feminists comprise a separate category. The tradition of orthodox Marxism is feminist because it accounts for the oppression of women. Women's oppression results from women's position in the productive and reproductive social order. The subjugation of women to men lies in the family, where women act as the domestic servants or slaves of their husbands and children. Women also represent a reserve source of labor which capitalists can draw upon when necessary and during wartime when there are shortages men in the labor force. Women's labor is cheap in the marketplace and "free" at home. Male dominance reinforces this situation by keeping the public and the private
spheres separate and by segregating women in both spheres with a divisive double standard. Marxists expect women to be liberated with the working class as the revolution abolishes the institution of private property and, with it, capitalist relations. With the demise of capitalism, economic democracy finally will attain the freedom and equality promised by political liberalism, and which is unattainable in the bourgeois state.

Liberal feminists disagree with "radical" Marxists and do not seek the withering away of capitalism and the state. They feel that there is still much to be realized in terms of women's equality through legal and educational reform. Liberal feminists wish to see men and women treated equally before the law, and they promote social traditions that do not discriminate against women. Women and men should have equal opportunities in education, training, and employment. Without sexism to hold them back, women will freely choose their social roles, which may or may not include marriage, motherhood, and a job in the corporate structure.

Socialist feminists are "radical marxist feminists" or "marxist radical feminists," who rely on dialectical historical materialism, but who oppose both orthodox Marxism and radical feminism, at the same time that they incorporate relevant analytical and practical aspects from both perspectives. From the point of view of socialist feminists, orthodox Marxism fails to consider fully the effects of patriarchal oppression on women's lives. This is demonstrated by the slow progress women have made (as well as the suppression of feminism) in contemporary socialist countries such as the Soviet Union, China,
and Cuba, and by the absence of analyses of women's issues from Marxism. On the other hand, they see the radical feminists as suffering from bourgeois idealism, and as failing to understand fully historical materialism and the contingencies imposed on society by its level of productive forces, and by the organization of its social relations of production and reproduction.

Radical feminism offers socialist feminists their central concern with the biological reproductive oppression of women, and their analysis of sexuality and the family. Socialist feminists, like their radical sisters, support the undertaking of extensive cultural action to change sexist society. The theoretical work of socialist feminists is patently neomarxist, and has been influenced by the tradition of men's critical theory as well. The feminist theorists discussed in this dissertation have either produced neomarxist feminist critical theory, as in the case of Nancy Hartsock and Gayle Rubin,\textsuperscript{24} or they have produced work that is especially relevant to the cause of socialist feminism, as have Joan Kelly and Caroline Whitbeck.\textsuperscript{25}

2.3. Theory of education. Most people, including children, who represent the largest group with vested interests in the subject, have a "theory" of education. Though a set of beliefs usually is not called "theory," people do share views about who is, and how one becomes, an educated individual in their societies. To bring an example from home, in Brazilian Portuguese the expression pessoa educada (educated person) implies the ideal of a person who is generally knowledgeable, but who above all is courteous towards
others, and refined in manners. This ideal encourages educated persons to treat others with respect and consideration, to learn the rules of civility, and to attend school. As an example of a derogatory expression, seu mal educado (you are badly educated; you are uneducated) is used when someone wishes to indicate another's unacceptable attitude of disrespect. However, the expression is never used to indicate a person's lack of accurate information; for that seu ignorante is the proper usage. In Brazil a person may be considered ignorant but not necessarily uneducated.

Like the popular ideal of the educated person, a more formalized theory of education offers a given society the values, attitudes and behaviors individuals must learn, know, and practice. This is thought to establish, at the same time, what society itself can become if all individuals are educated according to such an ideal. A theory of education proffers the knowledge and skills individuals must acquire to actualize the ideals of a good society. At the same time, a theory of education conceives the kind of education and educators society should provide in order to actualize the ideal of a good individual.

Theories of education, as theories, provide coherent, logically integrated and elegant pictures of what education must be like. They identify and describe characteristics and relationships between the basic elements involved in an educative situation: knowledge, in terms of its definition, choice of content, and methods of imparting it, and obtaining it; individuals, in their roles of teachers and learners; and society, which provides the environment where the individuals are going to use knowledge to communicate, and to act.
Commonly, theories of education are derived from comprehensive or
synoptic religious, political, and philosophical ideologies, or
systems of ideas, involving views of human nature, society, knowledge,
and values.

In his comprehensive overview of modern theories of education,
Pratte ascribes to theories of education a critical nature. He uses
the expression 'theory of education' instead of 'philosophy of
education' because the subject-matter of an educational theory draws
from science as well as from philosophy.

'Educational theory' is preferred because it connotes
the use of philosophical tools plus the relevant
findings of psychology, history, sociology, and other
disciplines, synthesized and applied to the problems of
education.26

Furthermore, educational theory is critical because it is supposed
to inform, and provide orientation for educational practice.

It is largely directive, consisting of principles or
directing ways of guiding inquiry in a situation
involving individuals, and has specific reference to an
educative situation.27

By identifying six major theories of education which have been
espoused in modern American history, Pratte shows the historical
development of the ideal of an educated person. He discusses two
versions of progressive education, natural selection and
experimentalism, essentialism, perennialism, reconstructionism, and
existentialism.

Progressive education I: natural selection.28 The first branch
of progressive education based its ideas on natural selection applied
to society. It arose from Nineteenth Century industrial society which
carried the Enlightenment's banner of scientific progress and exploited Charles Darwin's theory of natural evolution to explain the operations of the market in capitalist society. Known as social Darwinism, this extension of evolutionary theory is known today for its classist, sexist, racist, anti-semitic and colonialist implications.

Social Darwinism regards social reality as a continuous process of change. In this framework, the concepts of progress, growth, and development, but especially the concept of the survival of the fittest, become very important. The best individual is one who adapts promptly to changing circumstances. He struggles to compete with others to get the largest social rewards.

From this perspective, the aim of education becomes to promote adaptive survival skills. Teachers impart knowledge and skills to learners according to a curriculum designed to adapt students to current realities of life. Science and its applications are thought to lead to better health, greater job productivity, and improved parenthood, citizenship, and leisure. The teacher is supposed to minister to the students' natural growth-determined needs.

From a liberal point of view today, natural selectionist education is considered reactionary. It was, however, a progressive educational theory at a certain moment in history. It no longer viewed education as acquisition of formal bodies of knowledge, but as helping persons to develop and to adapt creatively to the environment. Where the traditional education focused on abstract ideas, this first form of progressive education centered on individual growth.
Progressive education II: Experimentalism. John Dewey represents the principal figure associated with experimentalist education, an application of the philosophy of pragmatism.

Experimentalism no longer regarded education as a process of adaptation of the individual to the environment, but stood for democracy, freedom, and social reform. The focus of experimentalist education was the individual engaged in practical inquiry aiming at finding solutions for the problems of society. The school was conceived as a miniature community where democratic ideals and scientific intelligence were nurtured. The classroom was transformed into a laboratory for problem solving. The teacher worked with the students' curiosity, awakening their interest in real problems they must actively solve. Learning was fostered through "hands on" experience.

Essentialism. The liberalism of progressive education which had dominated the scientific, industrial, and internationalist American society was called into question during the Depression and the pre-war years. Basic democratic institutions, such as freedom of speech, of assembly, and religion had to be defended against the threat of rising fascist and communist authoritarianism in Europe. This required the American people to be educated about the enduring truths of Western civilization so an intelligent understanding of social issues could be developed. In the view of essentialists, whose educational theory remains strong until today, progressive educators had failed at that.

Essentialism, appropriately conservative in the context of capitalist society, supports the disciplining of the imperfect human
nature. For the social contract to work, society's educated elites have the responsibility for guarding cultural traditions. The function of education is to transmit the heritage of facts and values embodied in the disciplines of knowledge. Students have to be effectively trained in the basics: reading, writing, and arithmetic. Centered on subject matter rather than on the student, the essentialist classroom demands respect for authority, and uses discipline to achieve high academic standards and to keep social change under control.

**Perennialism.** The perennialist ideal of education, broadly intellectual and highly theoretical, is summarized in a liberal arts curriculum. Its purpose is to educate for excellence, creating a person literate in the Great Books and eternal truths. With the tools of knowledge, the educated individual will face a range of life situations successfully. Not everyone is able to achieve an intelligent theoretical attitude, however. Elitist, perennialism aims at educating the best and the brightest for positions of leadership in a society committed to truth, beauty, and goodness.

**Reconstructionism.** Theodore Brameld is the spokesperson for this modern liberal theory of education with roots in both pragmatism and philosophical anthropology. Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict were also reconstructionists who believed that education, facing crisis in society, could direct the process of social change. Human beings are not evil or good, but culturally malleable. Everyone is entitled to an education designed to promote a new equalitarian society. Students must be taught to understand their personal connection with the whole
of society. Their creative potentials should be unleashed as they participate actively in community-building projects.

The basic principles of reconstructionist education are: first, the community is a laboratory for learning to deal with social problems such as alienation, de-personalization, conformity, and dependence; second, the teacher participates in projects as a member of the group; third, moral education clarifies values in individual and social decision-making processes; fourth, the education community must be persuaded to reconstruct society on a cooperative basis. According to Pratte, reconstructionism has not won much support in American educational circles.

Existentialism. This school of thought has roots in the nineteenth century philosophy of Kierkegaard, and it comprises the work of such noted philosophers as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Jaspers, Ortega y Gasset, Camus, Marcel, Buber and Sartre. Existentialists revolt against history and metaphysics. Historical revolt calls for revolutionary action on the part of individuals to change society. The metaphysical revolt calls for reassessment of the ultimate ends of human beings, and their absurd existence, their freedom, anxiety, and despair. Here existentialists declare the death of God, and focus on the concretely human; they question science and scientific objectivity; they reject rationality and accept the irrational aspects which influence human reason; and they replace reason with passion and choice, for which human freedom—through human action—is made directly responsible
Existentialist education is centered on the student who must learn to be responsible for making personal decisions in life. The curriculum must offer insight into the human condition, and the teacher, like the student, is also involved in coming to grips with her own being and becoming. According to Pratte, though existentialism is increasingly influential in American educational circles, the theory has not been accepted easily by educators.

Each of the theories of education just outlined still has its sphere of influence in America. For example, in capitalist society Christian essentialism has become a fashionable education theory promoted by the conservative elite. Each theory has a normative character, defending its unique conception of a good and proper education. Opposing these conservative and liberal educational theories, Marxists criticize mass education (in terms of schooling) in capitalist societies for reflecting the principles and demands of the capitalist mode of production and exchange: the function of education, at home as well as in schools, is to reproduce labor power and capitalist relations of production. As Marxist critic Michael Matthews explains:

The common school is the institution that developed within capitalist economic and social structure to prepare individuals for assuming various roles in those structures. Those who have the qualities most desirable by the economy and society—verbal ability, awareness of time, and the internalized responsiveness to extrinsic rather than intrinsic rewards—perform best in school. On the whole, schools reward those who are, in capitalist societies, most desirable from the standpoint of capitalistic economic, social, and political institutions.
Matthews also summarizes aspects of the Marxist view of alienated capitalist education and schooling. He indicates that students are kept ignorant of whole domains of knowledge and terminology, being exposed to partial analyses of reality, and imbued with respect for authority figures. Moreover, students learn to accept contingent circumstances as necessary, and are taught to accept as appropriate rationalizations and justifications of the prevailing social order. Schools reproduce the conditions of labor by effecting the following practices:

(i) The control of the learning process is largely outside the control of the learner.
(ii) The learning process is fragmented both socially (streaming, tracking) and technically (subjects).
(iii) Motivations and rewards for learning are in general extrinsic to the learning process—marks, grades, certificates, position in class, teacher approval.
(iv) Rewards are unequal; for someone to succeed others have to fail, and this has to be accepted as a necessary fact of life.
Competitiveness, rather than co-operation, is the basic type of relationship among pupils. Schools are one of the few social institutions where co-operation is called "cheating."
(vi) Rule conformity is highly valued.

These educational practices both reflect and reproduce what the hierarchical structure of capitalist social relations of production typically expects of workers.

Recent feminist analysis of women's education and schooling emphasize yet another view, the patriarchal ideological constructions of gender assumed by liberal education theories. Feminists develop a critical analysis making gender an analytical category separate but interconnected with the Marxist category of class. Rosemary Deem
contends that schools reproduce society's sexism and sex stereotyping. Michele Barret shows: first, that the culture of the school defines and constructs femininity and masculinity; second, that the educational system is organized along the category of gender (gender as a criterion for distinctions between schools, between classes in schools, between teachers, and subjects); third, that channelling (or tracking) into different curricula and courses of study occurs by sex (as well as by class); and fourth, that knowledge transmitted by the schools is androcentric.

The school provides an example of the contradictions inherent in capitalist society. The following statement refers particularly to the issue of individual development:

The social system under capitalism operates through a contradiction in that social settings like schools, family life or both promote and inhibit individual development, such contrary outcomes arising because these norms and values establish both necessary social constraints and possible individual rights. The cultural practices which arise under capitalism operate on a contradiction in that forms of cultural life whilst reproducing attitudes, activities and artifacts which support the particular arrangement of the social order in which they occur support the particular arrangements of order in which they occur also produce recognitions, reactions and responses which provide for the development of a critical and challenging stance towards that order.

Fortunately, this contradictory nature of the structure of social systems allows the emergence of creative educational settings such as Women's Studies programs. This dissertation aims at articulating the theory of education suggested by critical female and male voices, respectively represented by feminism, and by Habermas. This body of thought has all the necessary ingredients for a theory of education
which the experience of feminist education embodies in its challenge
to established patriarchal capitalist educational theory and
practice. Because they are basically committed to social change,
these critical theories are pedagogical by definition. They share a
common subject-matter, the explanation of distorted relationships of
power through domination, and they share a common objective, guiding
social change. A theory of education in this tradition is also a
critical theory with a liberation intent: a pedagogy of empowerment.

3. Summary

This dissertation concerns a theory of education guided by
critical theory established from man's and woman's perspectives. A
reconstructed view of historical materialism has recently been
attempted by Jürgen Habermas, an heir of the critical theory of the
Frankfurt School, and inspired by its mission to rescue the
philosophical basis of Marxism. More recently, feminists have raised
issues about sexuality which have not received much attention from
male scholars. The study of the sexual domination of women adds
invaluable elements to the critical view of society, but when this is
seen from a historical materialist perspective, we can begin to
understand the productive and reproductive processes of the species,
and to form a vision of a society free from domination.

Theories of education are typically derived from comprehensive or
synoptic religious, political, and philosophical systems of ideas
involving assumptions about human nature, society, knowledge, and
value. I have tried to develop a comprehensive critical view of society, the individual, and knowledge, by joining the critical theory of Habermas (the man's voice) with feminist theory (the woman's voice). With these contributions as my foundation, I attempt to develop a liberation-oriented theory of education, a pedagogy of empowerment.

Until the advent of the civil rights and feminist movements, mainstream theories of education have been both race and gender blind. Traditional educational theory and practice were, and to a large extent still are, uncritically operating according to white, male-centered ideological scripts. I will contend that a pedagogy of empowerment, now being developed in the practice of feminist education everywhere, is committed to the creation of a critical consciousness devoted to the abolition of expressions of sexism, racism and classism from society. Patriarchal capitalist ideologies sustain powerlessness among women, and among racial and ethnic minorities and economically deprived classes. Critical theory furnishes the structure, the method, and the content for the articulation of a pedagogy which is aware of gender, critical of oppressive ideologies, and totally committed to human liberation.

Hence, Chapter II explores the relationship between knowledge, historical materialism and critical theory as construed by Marx, by Habermas, and by feminist theorists Catharine MacKinnon, Audre Lorde, Nancy Hartsock, and Caroline Whitbeck. Habermas' critical theory combines a critique of positivism, a theory of cognitive interest of knowledge, and the attempt to legitimize critical theory itself. It
is with Habermas that I begin the project of developing a theory of education grounded on a sound epistemological underpinning.

In Chapter III, I discuss Habermas' essay "Moral Development and Ego Identity" and Carol Gilligan's In a Different Voice. Central to Habermas' theory of ego identity formation is the concept of moral consciousness development. At the highest stage of moral development the individual makes decisions according to the principles of what Habermas calls the universal ethics of speech. I contend that there are parallels between the characteristics of this stage and Carol Gilligan's morality of responsibility and connection. By transposing those views to the realm of social analysis and political practice, I demonstrate that a theory of education based on critical theory must incorporate its insights on the significance of self-reflection. Seen in this context, critical theory becomes a basis for pedagogy of empowerment aimed at individual development.

Chapter IV draws upon Habermas' Communication and the Evolution of Society, Mary O'Brien's Politics of Reproduction, and Gayle Rubin's classic article "The Traffic in Women." Habermas provides an analysis of modern society as he reconceptualizes historical materialism and reinterprets the evolution of society. Feminists bring in the analysis of sexuality and reproduction. The imperative to formulate a critical theory-based theory of education derives from the force of Habermas' analysis—which corroborates feminist theory—of the ideal of distortion-free communication in the evolution of society.
In Chapter V I discuss the framework of a theory of education—the pedagogy of empowerment—based on the previously developed critical theories of knowledge, of society, and of the individual. The goal is to establish guidelines for an educational practice conducive to human emancipation, especially the emancipation of women. Specifically, I will demonstrate how the ultimate justification of the theory of education presented here lies in its capacity to reveal and dissolve distortions of communication, to eradicate barriers to self-reflection, and to overcome educational structures which support such barriers.
FOOTNOTES


3 "To problematize . . . is not to create slogans, it is to exercise critical analysis of problematic reality" (Ibid., p. 198).

4 "Communion provokes co-laboration which leads the masses to 'fusion'. . . Fusion which only exists when revolutionary action is really human, thus sym-pathetic, loving, communicative, humble, to be freeing" (Ibid., p. 201.)


7 In his book Pratte also proposes an analytical philosophical approach to educational theory. Though grounded in that tradition, his thought has since evolved in the direction of historical materialist theory and method.

8 I would like to acknowledge that noted feminist author Sheila Ruth uses the word 'masculism' to represent the form of sexism practiced in our culture. Masculism "is in part the mistaking of male perspectives, beliefs, attitudes, standards, values, and perception for all human perceptions. Both the cause and result of women's social and intellectual disfranchisement, masculism is pervasive in our culture except for feminist challenge, and it is most frequently unconscious." Sheila Ruth, Issues in Feminism. A First Course in Women's Studies (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1980), p. 7.

Horkheimer to Habermas. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

10 Held, op. cit., p. 37.

Horkheimer, "Die gegenwärtige Lage der Sozialphilosophie und die Aufgaben eines Instituts für Sozialforchung" [The present situation of social philosophy and the tasks of an Institute of Social Research], Sozialphilosophische Studien (Frankfort, 1972), quoted in Held, op. cit., p. 33.


13 At the Ohio State University's Center for Women's Studies, for example, enrollments more than tripled between 1980-1984. Center for Women's Studies, office statistics.


16 Ibid., p. 207.

17 Ibid., p. 213.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.


23 See in particular Shulamith Firestone, op. cit.


26 Pratte, op. cit., p. 4.

27 Ibid., p. 11.

28 Ibid., pp. 72-102.


30 Pratte, op. cit., pp. 103-134.

31 Ibid., pp. 135-163.


33 Ibid., pp. 203-242.

34 Ibid., pp. 243-276.


37 Ibid., pp. 192-193.

38 Rosemary Deem, Women and Schooling (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). Sexism, according to Deem, is "a process by which certain kinds of phenomena and behavior are attributed to a particular sex" (p. 23). She quotes another more detailed definition by Frazier and Sadker: "a belief that the human sexes have a distinctive make-up that determines their respective lives, usually involving the idea that (1) one sex is superior and has the right to rule the other; (2)
a policy of enforcing such asserted right; (3) a system of government and society based upon it" [N. Frazier and M. Sadker, Sexism in School and Society (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) p. 2.]. Sex stereotyping "is related to the concept of sexism, and refers to a process whereby individuals are socialized into thinking that they have to act and think in a way appropriate to their sex" (Deem, op. cit., p. 24).


42 Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

43 Habermas, "Moral Development and Ego Identity," op. cit.


45 Gayle Rubin, op. cit.
"Judgement represents the return of Gaia, the Mother of Life, to earth. The Aeon ... is a symbol of the cycle of return, the time of healing and planetary regeneration. ... The life force, represented in the Motherpeace image by the Egyptian ankh symbol, will shine once more on Mother Earth and her children. A great healing force more profound than any one of us will make itself available.

Will we take advantage of it? Peace is our need above all others, because without it, in an age of holocaustic weapons, we can no longer count on the continuation of our species. Along with technical negotiations about how to 'control' weapons and how to resolve particular conflicts, the people of earth need access to healing energy. In the Motherpeace image of Judgement, the ancient symbol of ankh is also a symbol of Venus, Goddess of Love. A cicle of spirit balances on the cross of the earth's four elements, and a rainbow of peace pours out of the diamond center of the heart.

When human awareness is raised to the heart level, one enters an altered state of consciousness that heals and generates extraordinary power."

(Noble, 1983, pp. 139-140)
Figure 2. Judgement.

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1. Introduction

What is knowledge? What does it mean "to know"? What is the relationship between "knowing" and "doing," between theory and practice? In this chapter I address some of the answers to these questions provided by men and women from the perspective of critical theory. In the first section Karl Marx and Jürgen Habermas represent the male critical point of view; feminists Catherine MacKinnon, Audre Lorde, Nancy Hartsock, and Caroline Whitbeck represent the female side.

In the light of Marx's view of the relationship between labor, knowledge, and social change, I examine the concepts of dialectics, of alienation, and of ideology. Each of these concepts is an integral aspect of historical materialism, the method and theory that furnish the structure of a critical theory of society.

The outlines of the critique of the positivist's understanding of science, the theory of interests of knowledge, and the expanded version of historical materialism are discussed in Section Three of this Chapter. Feminist perspectives on the erotic interest of knowledge, and on historical materialism are presented in Section Four.

My most general objective in this Chapter is to clarify the concept of a critical theory of society formulated within a dialectical historical materialist method and theory. Our historical processes of knowledge acquisition occur in society as humans work, communicate, and relate erotically—sexually and reproductively—to each other. These aspects of knowledge are intrinsically connected, and critical theory looks at reality from this global perspective.

Critical theory is theory which examines the origins and traces the
evolution of distorted relations of power between individuals and
groups in society. Interested in liberation, critical theorists
provide a guide for the action of those oppressed groups who are part
of conflictive power struggles in order to liberate the oppressed.
The emancipatory interest, aiming at the dismantling of oppressive
power relations, is the cognitive interest or "the reason" of critical
theory. The insight and energy necessary for taking action to change
oppressive relations come from yet another source of knowledge—the
erotic dimension of being.

2. Karl Marx: the role of labor in historical materialism

Marx is an empiricist who believes that knowledge is never innate
or a priori. For him, the foundations of knowledge are seated in the
world of sensations, and the source of all knowledge is experience.
What is true and essential for Marx is given by the conscious action
of human beings in society, their lived experience in interaction with
each other in social labor activity. This uniquely human mode of
experiencing is called praxis or practice.¹

Human thought and action, connected in labor activity, create
products and services needed for survival. When thought and action
are disconnected, and when one's labor does not belong to oneself, the
result is alienation, a condition of separation between a person's
consciousness and real lived experience, between subject and object.
Alienation thus suggests a break in the link between two things that
naturally belong together, introducing elements of distortion into
individual and social life.² Such a condition must be extinguished in
practice through action necessary to rejoin thought and action: workers and the product which belongs to them. Overcoming alienation is a creative process in which human nature is dialectically realized and actualized.

2.1. Dialectics. The notion of a dialectical logic is the common thread linking the thoughts of Hegel and Marxist theorists. For Hegel, dialectic is not a method in the sense of a set of rules to guide inquiry, and it is not like the logic of mathematics. "Instead, dialectic is best viewed as a general conception of the sort of intelligible structure the world has to offer, and consequently a program for the sort of theoretical structure which could best capture it."³ Dialectic as a theoretical structure cannot be separated from a conception of what the world is like. The structure of reality is dialectical, and a dialectical theory is needed for understanding it.

As a 19th century philosopher, Hegel sought the ultimate metaphysical and absolute reality of things. He found the metaphysical absolute to be Mind or Spirit, a cosmic reason in a permanent dialectical movement of self-positing. Mind is an all-encompassing subject, a whole which manifests (or alienates) itself in particular objects in the world. The nature of particular objects compels them to restore subjectivity through a process of self-knowledge and of overcoming alienation. The dialectical structure of reality is equated with this process of self-expression, self-actualization, and self-knowledge. In the one, whole, god-like mind, subjectivity and objectivity are reconciled in Hegel.
Living organisms serve as models for Hegel's view of the mind's dialectical activity. Organisms, like objects posited by the mind-subject, are partial and imperfect manifestations of Spirit. The nature of the object is to evolve through stages in a process of reconciliation with its true spiritual essence. Thus living beings experience an analogous process of development marked by stages, and they may be seen as self-maintaining structures as well as structures in transition. An organism comprises elements which make up its present structure and those conflictive elements which will actualize its structures at the next stage. The potential structure of an organism exists today in the organism's present structure. Always, for Hegel, an organism is dialectical; it is what it is to become.

Hegel describes dialectic as a process of organic development, and thus a dialectical theory is a theory about processes of change. Dialectical study seeks to understand three aspects of reality in transition: the organism's stages of development, the role of contradictory structural elements undermining the present stage, and the process of conflict resolution which impels the organism to the next stage of development.

Marx accepts Hegel's dialectic but, committed to materialism, he denies the idealist metaphysical interpretation of dialectics as development of Spirit. In 1847 he wrote to his father:

I had read fragments of Hegel's philosophy, but I did not care for its grotesque and rocky melody. Once again I wanted to dive off into the sea, but with the firm intention of finding the nature of the mind as necessary, concrete, and firmly established as that of physical nature, for I wanted to stop fencing and bring the pure pearls up to the sunlight.4
Marx found the "pure pearls" of materialism untouched by the polished forms of metaphysics in Feuerbach's rejection of philosophy as religion. The key relationship is not Mind or Spirit, man-to-god, but that of man-to-man. Taking hold of this humanist and materialist insight Marx inverts the Hegelian dialectic.5

2.2. Historical materialism. For Marx dialectic is not the manifestation of the divine essence of a god's thinking but ultimately the manifestation of human social practice. He confronted the idealism of Hegel's philosophy with a materialist view of reality: historical materialism. Here dialectic is reconceptualized as human material activity, and is used to examine the history of the development of human industry. Labor and its correlate concept of alienation become two of the fundamental categories in the Marxist analysis of society. Labor, conceived as the creative connection of thought and action in social practice, is seen as the means of realization of human nature. Alienation, the disconnection between thought and action, is an oppressive condition that inhibits the expression of human nature.

From the historical materialist point of view, knowledge is constructed through labor activity—action and thought irrevocably connected in practice—on the base of the material conditions of social life. There is no knowledge outside human enterprise: concretely, we know what we think and do at a given moment in history.

As conceived by Marx, historical materialism focuses on the evolution of the productive aspects of human practice. Labor creates
the economic infrastructure that serves as a base for the reproduction of social life. An ideological superstructure "corresponds" to that base, embodying values, norms and institutions which regulate social relations. The dialectical relationship between the two structures of society—the material base, and the ideological superstructure—is the key explanatory principle of social change processes and of the evolution of society.

Social change results from imbalances (or contradictions) between the economic conditions of the material infrastructure or base and the normative conditions of the social relations of production, the superstructure. Simply put, as the forces of production develop and increase productive capacity they do not quite "fit" the established organized pattern of social relations. Such relations then experience a process of adjustment to the new characteristics of the economic base of society, which Marx identifies as increased technical capacity for production. The adjustment in social relations occurs as certain classes realize their unfavorable position relative to other classes, and do something to change their objective conditions. (For example, the labor movement is illustrative of class action for change.) Marx thus assumes that classes in society are polarized. According to the logic of dialectic, the gap or alienation between classes must be closed through conflict-ridden processes of negotiation. The Marxist concept of class struggle may be regarded as human action to bridge the differences between polarized social groups. In response to a society's increased productive capacity class struggle can also trigger social change and evolution.
Commonsense but revolutionary, historical materialism threatens the conditions of material privilege of the powerful elite. It also opposes old religions, and the philosophical idealist tradition in Western thought, both useful to the maintenance of the status quo. Religion teaches that knowledge is handed down from a supernatural Being situated outside the human realm. Idealism teaches that all that exists are ideas, that "ideas and concepts are the determining principles [of reality]." By contrast, the epistemology of materialism assumes that knowledge and action, and thus theory and practice, are interconnected.

2.3. Ideology and critical theory. "Historical idealism" is one of three senses in which Marx uses the concept of ideology. Ideology's two additional senses are the "functional sense," and "ideological illusion." In the functional sense ideology corresponds to ideas prevalent in society, including theories and beliefs that structure collective and individual consciousness. The existence of such ideas can be explained functionally with reference to the material base. Law, politics, religion, and philosophy are regarded as ideological expressions which make up the superstructure of society and which necessarily corresponds to certain material conditions in the infrastructure of society.

Not to understand how ideology is connected to the real material conditions of life is to fall prey to the spell of ideological illusion, a distorted view of reality. "False consciousness" results
from the belief in ideological illusion, an alienated knowledge without any real correspondence in fact.

The three senses of ideology, historical idealism, functional ideology, and ideological illusion are not disconnected in Marxist thought:

Marx and Engels apparently believe that historical idealism is a form of functional ideology, which serves the interests of ruling classes by diverting people's attention from the real causes of their alienation. If so, then historical idealism is also a pervasive, even paradigmatic form of ideological illusion, since in effect it promotes ideological illusion to a general principle.11

In the Marxist tradition, knowledge is not inert but is a product that results from an active process of critique and of transformation of ideology, and historical materialism provides a theory and a method for the critical investigation of ideological phenomena. Historical materialism focuses upon the material foundations of ideology by looking at history, tracing the origins and development of ideology. It identifies the moment in history when ideology emerged as a response to human needs. Further critique pinpoints the distorted relations of power between polarized social groups. In a positive sense, critical investigation creates a perspective for those who best could use it in practice to change oppressive life conditions. That is, from the point of view of the persons who would be better off if alienation were bridged and oppressive power relations eliminated.
3. Jürgen Habermas: interests of knowledge and the role of communication in historical materialism

Habermas' wide theoretical pursuit includes the reconstruction of Marx's historical materialism in the light of a theory of knowledge. It is not surprising that Habermas is critical of Marx. The two men are separated by about a century of scientific progress, most particularly in the social sciences. They are also separated by vast economic and political events of relevance. For example, the 1917 Russian Revolution was the first large-scale attempt to institutionalize a socialist state along the lines anticipated by Marx. Also, the rise and fall of fascism and nazism in Italy, and Germany raised the spectre of a possible victory of capitalist totalitarianism after World War II. Further, Habermas inherited the critique of science developed by Edmund Husserl\textsuperscript{10} and by the other Frankfurt scholars, particularly Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno.\textsuperscript{11} The main elements of this critique are summarized next.

3.1. The critique of science, and of instrumental reason. The Enlightenment or The Age of Reason is a broad designation for the period in Western history that roughly covers the 17th and the 18th centuries. This period coincides with the expansion of the capitalist system of production. The ideological model of the Enlightenment holds a set of principles generally subsumed under the headings of reason, nature, and progress. It promised to build a society where truly human conditions could be nurtured. Yet almost four centuries later, the prospects for a liberated society filled with free and happy human beings still seem rather dim.
The Enlightenment ideal asserts that the capacity to reason is a property of each person. An individual's training in logic and science, however, makes reason more keen; science and mathematics embody the ideal of reason. Through scientific reasoning humans learn to discard supernatural and false beliefs which were thought to lead to irrational behavior and unhappiness. The use of science to control nature would bring progressive expansion of economic production, a prerequisite for the construction of a truly human society.

According to Habermas, the Enlightenment failed to liberate society because its concept of reason, instrumental reason, presupposed the very idea of domination. Instrumental reason, used to organize observation, to understand and explain observable natural events, aims at technical control and domination of nature. Being part of nature, human society and individuals are subjected to objectification and control. The hidden agenda of instrumental reason makes domination possible and desirable. Its ethics, like capitalist ethics, is utilitarian. A neutral and disenchanted nature (which includes a neutral and disenchanted society) becomes an object to be manipulated by those who have the power of reason and of decision-making. Thus, instrumental reason reflects the oppressive attitude of the dominator.

The tradition of instrumental reason harkens to the beginnings of Western civilization. Greek myths are already "enlightened" interpretations of natural phenomena, and rituals to please goddesses and gods an expression of desire to control nature. In Judeo-Christian tradition, god has given men the right to dominate
nature (and women). In the wake of capitalist expansion, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment pave the way for a concomitant expansion of technical-instrumental reasoning.

Objective mathematization of Nature was first applied successfully to the study of strictly physical and biological phenomena. The resulting knowledge of natural phenomena and technological applications made possible the transition of European society from feudalism to capitalism. In the 19th century, the positivist movement advocated the application of reason to the study of social phenomena. It attempted to unify the sciences and to impose the method of the natural sciences on all investigation and explanation.

For positivism, the ultimate purpose of science is to calculate the most elegant mathematical formulation, and the probability of occurrence of all events. Subjective values, which are not objective empirical facts, do not count as knowledge. Positivists claimed that objective scientific knowledge of society is attainable when social facts are ascertained through systematic empirical observation. Critics show how untenable this claim is, for a scientist's consciousness unquestionably is formed in the historical context of social practice. A scientific community can reach an agreement concerning facts; this is possible because of historically conditioned and shared language, values, and beliefs.

Positivism is dogmatic when it defends empirical, objective, and scientific knowledge of social reality to the exclusion of other forms of understanding. Yet, ironically, the death of dogmatism was the precise objective of the Enlightenment. This is characteristic of the
"dialectic" of the Enlightenment—science becomes dogmatic in the process of overcoming dogma; an example of the contradictions inherent in the dialectical structure of reality.

Positivist social science cannot significantly change the conditions of violence and poverty in the lives of the majority of humans. Its theory alienates human beings from nature and presupposes domination. Moreover, positivist methodology eliminates relevant research questions that cannot be answered through scientific procedures; it can only answer the questions chosen from its theoretical viewpoint. Positivism constructs reality according to its own dogmatic values, its initial impetus for liberation becoming new chains of domination.

3.2. Science and the theory of knowledge. Habermas accepted the critique of scientific positivism begun by Husserl and the scholars of the Frankfurt school and developed a theory of knowledge. Knowledge is conceived as human psychological adaptive mechanism necessary for survival. For Habermas, the human capacity to learn, adapt, and develop is grounded in three cognitive interests of knowledge: the technical interest of instrumental reason, the practical interest in communication, and the interest in liberation. Each cognitive interest of knowledge calls for its own specific methodology and theory. However, the positivist scientific paradigm had been imposed on the problems concerning human practice and liberation. This mistake has to be corrected. Contemporary social institutions and patterns of interaction and communication among people reflect the
oppressive ideology of positivist science, and the cost is humanity's alienation.

The technical interest of knowledge refers specifically to instrumental action embedded in labor, that category of human experience central to the Marxist explanation of the self-constitution of the species. Knowledge about natural phenomena and its technical application is a fundamental human interest. Concerned with the understanding and the control of natural processes, the empirical-analytic sciences employ the hypothetico-deductive method to generate theories and to test hypothesis. Experiments are set for the observation of the covariance of events with the purpose of achieving their prediction and control.¹⁶

Concerning social relations that insure cooperation for production and other aims, the practical interest of knowledge refers to communication and to the normative regulation of social interaction. Here the historical-hermeneutic sciences provide the framework for inquiry, aiming not at control but at disclosing "a reality subject to a constitutive interest in the preservation and expansion of the intersubjectivity of possible action-orienting mutual understanding"¹⁷. Historical-hermeneutic sciences, interested in communicative action that facilitates understanding and mutual agreement concerning social norms, do not conduct hypothesis-testing experiments. Observations of human symbolic interaction, and the interpretation of literary texts are their prime methodological tools. The resultant description of meanings serves to clarify the
communicative action of individuals and groups, and to facilitate the achievement of consensus.

The interest in liberation appears in history as the species acquires the capacity to think about itself as responsible for its own creations. This is the most recent knowledge interest to develop. After the development of the technical and practical interests of knowledge, knowledge becomes interested in its own origins, development, and future; knowledge questions itself. Self-interested critical reason is able to anticipate a more autonomous and responsible future for the species as it regards the past.18

Human reason interested in liberation studies the relations of domination in society with the objective of liberating the expression of human nature. For Habermas, Freud’s psychoanalysis furnishes the epistemology of the critical social sciences. By way of analogy, in psychoanalytical therapeutic situation, an individual acquires self-knowledge with the help of the therapist who guides the process. The dialogue retrieves from the unconscious those crucial moments in the individual’s life history when events had been structured in distorted fashion. A healthy personality development is possible only after traumatic events are brought to consciousness and understood.

Like the therapist, the critical theorist searches for the tangled roots of social problems. Ideological distortions in society’s process of historical development can then be uncovered. Critical studies reveal the genesis and the developmental processes of social phenomena, probing the material and the ideological conditions which have affected the evolution of society. Especially, the critical
sciences address the relations of domination responsible for inequality, oppression, and plain misery for the dominated. Hopefully, oppressive conditions can be overcome in practice through action guided by critical theory. Thus, for both Marx and for Habermas, critical science, informed by historical materialism, uncovers ideological formations which pose barriers to the full expression of human nature.

3.3. From classic to modern political theory, a story of alienation. Continuing the analogy, Habermas, playing the role of a "shrink" critical theorist, examines the origin and subsequent "traumatic" historical distortion of knowledge dominated by a technical interest "complex." Critical knowledge, interested in itself or in liberation, questions the position of power enjoyed by the technical interest of instrumental reason and its related empirical-analytic sciences. Today the scientific method is the accepted paradigm of knowledge. At the beginning of Western civilization such interest was clearly separate from the practical and the emancipatory knowledge-constitutive interests. With the course of history the concern with prediction and control of natural phenomena was transplanted into practical (communicative) matters characteristic of social phenomena. The result has been a fundamentally alienating and disorienting path for human species to follow which eventually may lead to its extinction. Understanding the distinctions between the interests of knowledge brings to consciousness the limitations of the technical interest. In addition,
it points out the direction knowledge must take if the promise of the Enlightenment, the use of reason to create happiness, is to come true.

Habermas' discussion of the evolution of the dominance of the technical interest metaphorically refers to a "murder" that took place approximately over a period of two hundred years. The "victim" was the classical understanding of politics, also known as practical philosophy. The final culprit in this deed was Hobbes' Leviathan. Early "conspirators" included Thomas Aquinas, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Thomas More. The "crime" was undoubtably politically motivated, grounded in solid economic interests of expanding capitalist bourgeoisie. Its aftermath brought about a different manner of relating theory to practice, and a crisis of alienation in human knowledge, and in social life. Let us have a look at this "foul deed."

Politics, conceived by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) is the very extension of ethics. The life of politics was the pursuit of the good and just life for the citizens of the polis, a city-community of free and equal men. In that tradition, the good and just life could be achieved only in community. Community had a humanizing effect on its members: man is a "political animal," indeed.

City and home (oikos) were not equated. Unlike the city of property-owning men, the home included women, children, and slaves, beings whose position by definition was hierarchically below master citizens. The city also was not an assembly of home representatives who contracted with each other to guarantee economic survival and protection; the city was a community, not a society. The old politics of these city male peers taught prudence in acting on events
of community life. This attitude towards practical life resulted in a commitment to discuss in community how norms and policies could embody criteria to insure justice and happiness for the citizens.

Prudence (phronesis) is required for one to go about everyday life filled with the ordinary events of a community. In this sense, practical knowledge means political prudence, not political theory. Theoria was thought to be formed through a process of contemplation of the cosmos, not through day to day interaction with people. Theory furnished explanations about the truly eternal, about what always is, not about mutable events. The political role of citizen required vita activa (a life of action) and prudence: the theoretician's role required vita contemplativa (a life of contemplation), the condition necessary for theory to emerge. Furthermore, theory and practice were distinguished from techne. Technique was conceptualized as artful creation of objects resulting from the daily exercise, and making perfect, of skills in arts and crafts. Technique did not result from theoretical or practical acts. (It is interesting to note that technicians were excluded from Athenian citizenship.)

Reinterpreting Aristotle's politics for the new realities of the Christian state, the work of Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) transformed the community of the polis into the association of contractors, societas. With this transformation man the political becomes man the social animal. Just as the dominus or pater familias rules the household, a monarch rules the state. The concerns of the state are not only the virtue and happiness of its citizens, but the provision of conditions of economic welfare, and of peace (in its New Testament
meaning of "policing"). Machiavelli and Thomas More continued the transformation of the meaning of politics as they examined issues concerning the economic and protective roles of the monarch as the head of the state.

In *The Prince*, Machiavelli (1469-1527) describes what personality characteristics and intelligent behavior the ruler should display in order to acquire and maintain power. War is the reality of the state. The prince must use whatever means necessary to win power struggles and remain on top to protect himself and the state from war. Concern with ethical behavior is recommended only when appropriate. Survival must be guaranteed through the application of artful technical solutions to problems. The classical meaning of politics as prudent understanding and discussion of community issues deteriorates into power play and manipulation. The monarch is freed from the compulsion of satisfying citizens' desires for a just and good life. Politics is separated from ethics.

In *Utopia*, Thomas More (1478-1535) constructs a peaceful society assuming freedom from external aggression. He abolishes private property to eliminate the human tendency toward the exploitation of the majority by a handful of privileged groups. Thus he lessens the problems of internal social conflicts significantly. After holding constant the threat of conflicts, the function of the state becomes to provide economic welfare for its citizens. The economy is thought of as a matter that can be solved technically.

Machiavelli utilized technical means to assure freedom from war. For More, freedom from economic necessity also is achieved through the
technical organization of the means of subsistence. Here politics loses further ties with ethics as one after another realm of practical life is subjected to the technical recommendations (or administration) of experts. Prudent collective understanding and action by the members of a community is minimized and politics further loses its ties with ethics.

These constructs by Aquinas, Machiavelli, and More opened the path leading to the final slaying of classic politics in the Greek sense of prudent dealing with the affairs of community life. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) finally dismissed the vanishing paradigm by giving politics a new "scientific" foundation. The state should be governed according to the insights of political theory (social philosophy). Theory is now conceived as relevant to technique, a route to artful solutions to problems. By studying human behavior empirically politics sought to understand the essence of justice and welfare independent of place, of time, and circumstance. This meant independence from the necessarily mutable and conflict-ridden lives of people. It meant groups of experts determining what is the frozen truth about society and then artfully molding and controlling the norms of social intercourse to make it happen.

Hobbes lived at a time of intense social and economic transformation. Commerce and industry flourished. The European (mostly British) bourgeoisie profited and accumulated capital as geographical boundaries expanded to newly accessible and exploitable lands. Capitalist relations of exchange between individuals and its
correlate market-oriented mode of production came to dominate over the more organic relations of the home-based economy.

For Hobbes, the new economic order demanded a new political order. Power became centralized in the figure of the monarch, a *pater* of the swelling *families* of enriched bourgeoisie. A sophisticated bureaucracy to administer wealth within the state was as necessary as an army to protect it. War between nations and civil war were (as they have been) the order of the day.

Hobbes, the first political scientist, borrowed the views and the methods of the physical scientists, mainly his contemporaries Bacon and Galileo, to actualize Machiavelli's and More's perspectives on men and society. Three slogans summarize the new views: "Knowledge is (important to) power." "God created the world following geometry." "Motion is the law of the universe." Using physics and mathematics Hobbes' ideology envisioned man as a mathematically-engineered machine impelled by two motions: motion one, the desire for power; motion two, the fear of death. Power hungry man freely competes for what is common to all, taking the most he can for himself. He is perpetually engaged in war against his own kind. At the brink of destruction, out of fear of death man is saved by that side of his nature which can still make contracts. This life-saving side of his nature is not love, it is reason. Man is saved not because he can naturally cooperate with another for the benefit of both, but because he can exchange benefits with another. In such a society, mechanically regulated, absolute power over life and death is given to a monarch who can reason and be reasonable, one who can make sure that laws are
obeyed and justice is made. Laws are considered natural since they are based on man's very "nature."

There are two problems with Hobbes' thought, says Habermas. First Hobbes submits the state's liberal intent to the state's monopoly of physical force under the guise of protecting citizens' freedom. Second, politics intends to solve eminently practical community affairs with the help of technical and administrative knowledge which is based on a mechanistic view of individuals and of society. Habermas points out how technical control applied to nature is different from technical control applied to human beings:

Control over the processes of nature is essentially different from control over social processes: even if in the end the latter were to be carried out in the same manner as the former . . . a priori mediation through the consciousness of the citizens who discuss and act still is needed.21

Unlike human subjects, natural objects do not have consciousness, do not think, and do not voice views. An element of practice is unavoidably present in society. Giving social practice a technical treatment suppresses human thinking (and speaking), making aliens out of human beings, and contributes to distorted (or absent) communication:

The act of technical domination of nature is in principle a solitary and silent act—free from any negotiated agreement among active subjects who wish to control their social relations practically.24

Even if scientific technique could design the perfect normative order to regulate social intercourse, it could not bypass the ordinary, eventful, and mutable practice of individuals. A million techniques cannot make prudent decisions and help in the formation of
prudent attitude and behavior. Hobbes does not take that into consideration in his design for society, though later thinkers do try to resolve the problem. Habermas concludes on this point:

Hobbes' assurance that social philosophy insights only require methodological certainty to become, without any detours, the practical certainty of citizens endowed with political insight, only reveals the impotence of any thinking which abstracts away the distinctions between controlling and acting.²³

Hobbes' doctrine of a public sphere of politics was a development in response to the problem of access to human practice. A knowledgeable public opinion was supposed to give rulers insights into the laws of the natural order in the realm of practice. Public opinion,

is the enlightened result of the common and public reflection, guided by the philosophers as the representatives of modern science—a reflection on the fundamental bases of the social order; it comprehends the natural laws of this order in the form of the practical certainty of active citizens; it does not rule, but the enlightened ruler will have to comply with its insights.²⁴

Through the active engagement of public opinion, civil society could develop to realize the goals of economic and practical liberalism: welfare and justice for all. There was no realization about how public "opinion" would become itself a subject of study and of careful manipulation on the part of the dominant groups.

Habermas' criticism of the doctrine of the "public sphere of politics" (public opinion) underscores the misunderstanding of the difference between control and action. The technically-oriented method of scientific social philosophy results in imposed controls over the practical life from which its theories seek enlightenment.
This scientific way of understanding the social cannot bring back the classical understanding of the relation between politics and ethics. Science’s concern with methodological rigor and value freedom do not permit it.

In brief, Habermas traces the origins of the changing relationship between theory and practice to the beginnings of capitalism. Hobbes is identified as the first "ideologue" who suggests the application of the scientific method to the understanding of power relationships in society with the purpose of contracting a peaceful and productive normative order. The sphere of action was neither community nor home but society's marketplace. To enhance the conditions of capitalist society men contracted with each other. The scientific method was applied to the study of economic, and later to all facets, of social and individual life. The consequences of abandoning prudent political practice for technical social theory haunts us all today as oppression and alienation.

3.4. The reconstruction of historical materialism. Habermas' wide theoretical critique includes the reconstruction of Marx's historical materialism in light of a theory of interests of knowledge as well as the critique of the positivist's understanding of science. The Enlightenment, it will be recalled, had opposed "myth" with a "science" that promised the creation of a good and just human society. Not only had the promise failed to come true but crisis and alienation presently seem to be permanent conditions of the human species. Habermas set out to find out where we have "gone wrong," and
he claims that the lack of a distinction between human interests in
knowledge is part of the problem. The identification of those
distinct interests of knowledge serves as a critical tool for
reconceptualizing Marx's historical materialism.

Habermas acknowledges that labor is the central feature of the
self-formative process of reproduction of the species. He also
acknowledges the distinction between the two aspects of the structure
of society: the economic base which embodies society's productive
forces and the ideological superstructure which regulates the social
relations of production. Habermas agrees with the Marxist concept of
social change triggered by the interplay of the forces of production
and the social relations of production. However, he faults Marx for
paying attention primarily to the dynamics of the forces of production
and of disregarding the role of the social relations of production in
the structure and in the evolution of society:

Whereas Marx localized the learning processes important
for evolution in the dimension of objectivating
thought—of technical and organizational knowledge, of
instrumental and strategic action, in short, of
productive forces—there are good reasons meanwhile for
assuming that learning processes also take place in the
dimension of moral insight, practical knowledge,
communicative action, and the consensual regulation of
action conflicts—learning processes that are deposited
in more mature forms of social integration, in new
productive relations, and that in turn first make
possible the introduction of new productive forces.26

Habermas focuses on knowledge and learning as key elements in
social change and evolution. This concept may seem idealist at first
glance, but he conceives of knowledge as actually grounded in the
material context of society in which it is generated through the
practice of human beings.
From the standpoint of the three interests of knowledge, knowledge necessary for work and production is not the same knowledge that is necessary for communication and the establishment of norms that regulate social interaction.

Let us see how this distinction works. At the level of productive forces human action is instrumental, exhibiting the purposeful and rational action that labor typically expresses. Work requires control of means to achieve productive goals, primarily the control of the means of production (tools, machines, materials, processes, skills, etc.). Knowledge about natural phenomena is applied technically in the production of goods and the harnessing of services essential to the reproduction of life (for example, knowledge of plant growing and harvesting necessary to agriculture). Productive work also requires strategic action. In strategic action control translates into choice between alternatives that maximize the use of the means of production (for example, in agriculture the choice between crop rotation or monoculture). Learning or rationalization of instrumental action in its technical and strategic aspects generates increased forces of production:

In contexts of social action, the rationalization of means and the choice of means signifies a heightening of productive forces, that is, a socially significant implementation of knowledge with the help of which we can improve the technical outfitting, organizational development, and qualifications of available labor power.27

The forces of production are empowered as new knowledge is amassed about how to produce rationally for greater efficiency and efficacy.
The cognitive interest which underlies instrumental and strategic action consolidated in labor is the technical interest of knowledge.

Humans are not interested only in knowing about technical processes. Knowledge also develops concerning moral insight, and the development of norms regulating social relations of production. Here human action is communicative action involved in decision-making, conflict resolution, and in the establishment of agreements.

According to Habermas, when people communicate they establish reciprocal expectations, and they mutually recognize and observe shared norms. In his view, four aspects of communication comprise the validity basis of speech—comprehensibility, truth, sincerity, and rightness. The participants in communication implicitly or explicitly recognize these categories since valid communication (comprehensible, truthful, sincere, and correct with respect to norms) allows for consensual action.

Labor's instrumental or purposive-rational action always occurs in a framework of practice, of communication guided by norms. In communicative action learning is not the same as in instrumental action. Instrumental action calls for "better and more technical means available," as well as for "better strategies." Rationalization in communication involves personal intentions of participants becoming "better" in the sense of "more sincere," with no "hidden agenda," and rationalization of communicative action also results in norms that are "more correct." Consensus and agreement are achieved only in a context of non-distorted communication. When channels of communication are clear interested parties understand each other,
express sincerity when they talk, say what they believe to be true, and they respect shared norms. Imposition of one's point of view on the other cannot happen in this situation -- oppression does not enter the interaction. For Habermas, rationalization of communicative (moral and normative) action in society, means extirpating those relations of force that are inconspicuously set in the very structure of communication and that prevent conscious settlement of conflicts, and consensual regulations of conflicts, by means of intrapsychic as well as interpersonal communicative barriers. Rationalizations means overcoming such systematically distorted communication in which the action supporting-consensus concerning the reciprocally raised validity claims—especially the consensus concerning the truthfulness of intentional expressions and the rightness of underlying norms—can be sustained in appearance only, that is counterfactually."29

The acquisition of communicative knowledge results in diminished "relations of force," ordinarily present in situations of distorted communication. Communicative action with an insincere party who is not interested in listening but in imposing a point of view, cannot result in agreement. Agreement is possible only while the party is deceived and unaware of the distortions. More rational (thus less oppressive) norms presuppose capacity for undistorted dialogue. Dialogue demands an attitude of mutual respect in which personal interests are taken into consideration. The underlying cognitive interest of knowledge in this case is not a technical (how to do things better) but a practical one (how to communicate better).

The concept of rationalization in communicative action further implies consciousness of the barriers to better understanding. Personal handicaps like poor vocabulary and shyness, or mechanisms of
defense like fear, are personal barriers to communication. Some social norms have a similar effect in maintaining distorted communication. For example, the unwritten norms of sexism, racism, and classism, which sanction power differentials between people (men over women, whites over blacks, employers over workers, rich over poor), create a situation of domination that does not favor truly communicative interaction between people. Humans thus have a deep cognitive interest in understanding power relations of domination that must be overcome in the quest for a just society. This refers to the cognitive interest in human emancipation.

Habermas' reconstruction of historical materialism underlies the importance of the social aspect of production, calling attention to communication and the development of norms. He brings to the original Marxist view the distinction between the various knowledge-constitutive interests, in particular the distinction between the technical interest of instrumental action, and the practical interest of communicative action.

Habermas' "reconstruction" of historical materialism is not the same as "restoration" or "renaissance." Restoration "signifies the return to an initial situation that had meanwhile been corrupted," while renaissance "signifies the renewal of a tradition that has been buried for some time." Habermas does not wish to go back to an original historical materialism or to bring it back; he is "taking [historical materialism] apart and putting it back together again ... [so it attains] more fully the goal it has set for itself."
In Habermas' reconstructed historical materialism society has two interconnected structures, a technical structure, the original focus of Marxist theory, and a normative structure, to which he pays particular attention. Though ultimately related each structure has its own history and its own developmental logic. Each in its own way is a peculiar "motor" of development. Distinct cognitive interests of knowledge—the technical and the practical—correspond to the acquisition of knowledge (or rationalization) that occurs in each structural aspect. In order to understand society, and most importantly, social change, it is fundamental to distinguish these two realms that constitute the totality of a social system.

4. Feminist historical materialism:

the erotic interest of knowledge

Like Marxists, feminists believe that knowledge is created through conscious human activity in an intersubjective, interactional, and normative context. Humans know because of their social, communicative, language-mediated experience. Consequently, feminism is another critique of positivism's understanding of science and of scientific objectivity. Barbara Du Bois put it straightforwardly in the opening paragraph of her paper on feminist scholarship:

Science is not 'value free'; Science is made by scientists, and both we and our science-making are shaped by our culture. Science moves within culture, and only slowly expands the limits of its own vision.33
She suggests that scientists are humans whose knowledge and inquiry are not free from the biased assumptions and values of the group or groups in which they are socialized, from home to academia. This means that a net of factors woven in a dramatic and unique fashion affects a scholar's life-long work. Family dynamics, life opportunities, and the special qualities of one's relations with other human beings are some of these factors in a scientist's background. Curiosity, interests, tastes, and personality molded in historical socio-cultural contexts condition the paths of inquiry and methodological choices.

4.1. Androcentric and gynocentric knowledge. According to feminists, assumptions about gender, about men's and women's identities, their roles, stereotypical behaviors and attitudes, and their relative status in society are among the most important cultural beliefs that influence the construction of knowledge. This influence is major because assumptions about gender are largely unconscious and act "behind the scenes." The power of a gender ideology to mold perception and explanation is usually taken for granted. This ideology is systematically biased in favor of men's position of strength against women's position of weakness. The experience of women has been ignored and most of the time found irrelevant to the formulation of a theory of society.

The absence of women from theoretical formulations about society and the individual makes sense in the light of male dominance: society is "for males only," a warriorhood of men. Here one refers to
Habermas' account of Aristotelian politics, of Aquinas' society of contractors, and of Hobbes' conception of mechanical man to demonstrate that men's representations of themselves have been imposed on women as the only acceptable model.

The basic point made by feminists is that most of what we call human knowledge has been created or appropriated by men, serving to maintain and to expand male hegemony. Men posit this knowledge as the correct, the acceptable form, of expressing understanding about things, and of doing them. Furthermore, as a subset of this knowledge, science is self-serving especially in what concerns women. It fails to pay attention to what women themselves have to say about experience. Men have decided for women what it is all about! Thus, in the denial of women's contributions, knowledge upheld by men is androcentric or phallocentric. Du Bois describes this situation as an ideological fallacy in which:

the 'person' has been considered to be male, and the female, the woman, has been defined in terms, not of what she is, but of what she is not. Woman has been defined as 'not-a-man.' And things female have tended to be seen ... as anomalies, deviations from the male norm and ideal of the 'person' (viz. our language, with all of humanity subsumed under the pronoun 'he').

Androcentrism is, perhaps the feminists' first insight, and the feminists' task becomes to create and disseminate knowledge from women's perspective by inverting androcentrism and by interposing gynocentrism. Paraphrasing Du Bois, in woman-centered knowledge the person becomes female, and man is defined in terms of what he is not, a woman. Things male are seen as anomalies, deviations of the female norm and even of the ideal of the person. Humanity is subsumed under
the pronoun "she." This vision becomes what in feminist vocabulary is called woman-identified, woman-loving, or "lesbian."

From the gynocentric feminist perspective it is possible to detect the androcentrism of Marx's and Habermas' broken picture of reality. For Marx, social relations develop between people in the roles of capitalists and workers engaged in the productive process—their gender remains unspecified. The reproduction of the species is centrally the affair of producers who labor to extract from nature their means of survival: Marx gives more attention to productive relations taking place in public or communal (physical and psychological) spaces, in the "outside" of society, on farms, in factories, schools, and offices. Admittedly, in these places women are present, if at all, in fewer numbers than men; in addition, as a group they are subordinate to men. Habermas view is close to Marx's, though his focus is on the practical communicative and normative aspects, not on the technical aspect of productive activity. Habermas' dialogues take place in public in the voices of those who play a role production.

This male-constructed picture of reality is superior to the mechanical constructions of ahistorical positivist social sciences. It is not, however, complete enough. It leaves out the private spaces of the "inside" of society, where most women are engaged in specific forms of reproductive labor. Stereotypically characterized by informal relations in the home and in the family, the not-quite-public aspect of society also corresponds to one-to-one or small group relationships outside of the immediate kinship circles. The structure
of society can be approached from this perspective of personal and informal relations. Individuals in small groups are united by links of interdependence. Here women and men, women and women, and men and men of different ages experience physical and psychological intimate relations which constitute yet another material level of human practice, the reproductive base.

The actions and the dialogues which people engage in private are significantly different from those they engage in public. Feminist scholarship attends to private as well to public dialogues and actions. In feminist discourse the voice is female and women-identified. Feminism articulates the experience of a woman's life in the private realm and verifies the ways in which this experience resembles and affects women's collective and public experience; and vice-versa, feminism articulates the experience of women in the public realm and verifies the ways in which their public status resembles and affects a woman's personal and private experience. Thus the radical feminist slogan: "the personal is political."

If we are to achieve a more accurate, complete, and adequate picture of human society and to achieve the true goals of historical materialism, the understanding of women's perspective formulated by feminism will have to be taken into consideration. If we are to learn from our history about how we have developed, if we are going to rectify dysfunctional ways of behaving, we have to look at history more perceptively, and we must address the question of sexuality and biological reproduction as much as men have been addressing production
and distribution. This means addressing the strictly feminine form of labor, reproductive labor in childbirth, as well as its context of sexuality, and all aspects of women's labor directly associated (or not) with "wifing," and the rearing of infants or children. As Catherine A. MacKinnon affirms in her classic essay:

Sexuality is to feminism what work is to marxism: that which is most one's own, yet most taken away. Marxist theory argues that society is fundamentally constructed of the relations people form as they do and make things needed to survive humanly. Work is the social process of shaping and transforming the material and social worlds, creating people as social beings as they create value. It is that activity by which people become who they are. Class is its structure, production its consequence, capital its congealed form, and control its issue.

As work is to marxism, sexuality to feminism is socially constructed yet constructing, universal as activity yet historically specific, jointly comprised of matter and mind. As the organized expropriation of the work of some for the benefit of others defines a class—workers—the organized expropriation of the sexuality is its structure, gender and family its congealed forms, sex roles its qualities generalized to social persona, reproduction a consequence, and control its issue.

This powerful statement lays out the fundamental theoretical perspective for feminist critical theory: the examination of the conditions of life-giving, and life-making, the terrain of ordinary personal life which occur in community. Intimacy, sexuality, pregnancy, childbirth, the care and love of children, and other loved-ones, including friendship, are dimensions of the reproductive level. (MacKinnon reduces the erotic to its central aspect, sexuality.) This women-identified reproductive structure of human society is based on another interest of knowledge: the erotic.
4.2. The erotic interest of knowledge and the erotic sciences.

Habermas claims that crisis and alienation are unsurmountable conditions of the human species and that the promise of the Enlightenment to solve our problems using scientific reasoning still hasn't come true. Feminists claim that mistakenly men attempt over and over again to solve problems pertaining to community from a technical-instrumental perspective, method, and aim. Put differently, the mode of reasoning basic to quantification and control is androcentric. Ready-made social remedies or techniques prescribed by experts impose silence on the voices of the people most concerned with the problems since they impede dialogue and the search for prudent solutions. Technical solutions (including bureaucratic rules) which are not discussed in community, are ideological instruments of men's control. Alienated from need and truth, men represent and defend long-established ways of doing things which no longer may be the best. Feminism adds to Habermas' observations by pointing out that men's promise of enlightenment not only did not but really cannot come true. At least not while the technical/controlling interest of knowledge associated with male hegemony also rules over the erotic interest of knowledge.

The centrality that Catherine MacKinnon attributes to sexuality is viewed by Audre Lorde within the wider framework of the erotic. Women's sexual and reproductive labor represents one among many forms of manifestation of the erotic. According to Lorde, the erotic is identified as the foremost interest of feminist knowledge. Unfortunately the term carries a heavy load of historical
misinterpretation from the male perspective which cannot distinguish between the erotic and the pornographic.

The structure and the content of Lorde's conceptualization of the erotic is presented as a systematic theory of the erotic consistent with dialectical and materialist thought. Initially, Lorde describes what is and what is not erotic, its uses and abuses. She also gives reasons for the selective repression of the erotic among women in society. Furthermore, she shows the consequences for the individual and for society of the uses of the erotic, indicating the direction of feminist practice to correct distortion—the full use of the erotic as a source of power.37

The erotic is a valuable source of power and information which resides within each one of us. For Lorde "us" refers especially to women; men fear the erotic within themselves—they have it but are required by society to ignore it; thus eroticism is undeveloped in the male, according to this feminist perspective. The erotic is a depth of feeling which rises from our nonrational knowledge as our inside well of replenishing and provocative force. The erotic is located "between the beginnings of our sense of self and the chaos of our strongest feelings,"38 that is, somewhere between consciousness and instinct. The erotic, as knowledge, is our conscious expression of instinct.

The erotic comes from eros, the Greek personification of love in all its aspects, of creative power, and energy. It gives us an internal sense of satisfaction and completion which represents an internal requirement toward excellence. The erotic celebrated in all
endeavors makes us feel deeply in doing no matter what we do. Guided
by the erotic work becomes a conscious decision and its purpose
becomes to maintain personal and communal integrity: “The aim of each
ing thing we do is to make our lives and the lives of our children richer
and more possible.”39

Concerned with the enrichment and increased possibility of life
the erotic provides a gauge that can inform prudent decision-making:

'It feels right to me,' acknowledges the strength of
the erotic into a true knowledge, for what that means
is the first and most powerful guiding light toward any
understanding. And understanding is a handmaiden which
can only wait upon, or clarify, that knowledge born.40

The informative power of the erotic is taken away from women
because the oppressed must be kept de-energized in the conflict-ridden
process of maintaining the privileges of the oppressor. Men
"psychically milk" women’s valuable eroticism by appropriating women’s
bodies and reducing women to sexual objects to be used. The
superficially erotic is encouraged at the same time that it is used in
a contemptuous and suspicious manner to signal female inferiority.
Here the erotic is transformed into its opposite, the pornographic.
The erotic is misnamed to be (mis)used against women; it is confused
and made into a superficial—trivial, psychotic, and
plasticized—sensation.

Further, male ideology generates the belief about women needing to
repress the erotic impulse in order to be strong and decent members of
the community. This false consciousness is based on a male model of
power. According to this view, the ideal with respect to feeling or
emotion is little or no feeling at all; this state is perfectly
attainable in death. This model represses the erotic in men themselves and supplies women with distorted states of being such as suffering, self-negation, numbness, and powerlessness. These feelings result from learned distrust of profoundly felt eroticism which is not allowed to be expressed.

By severing the feelings of the body from its connection to the mind or spirit, men separate the erotic from the spiritual. The repression of the erotic puts knowledge in a ghetto: the mind. Rationality is praised, and the irrational instinctual domain of knowledge is kept under careful control. Furthermore, by alienating the erotic from the spiritual men also separate the spiritual from the political. The erotic represents the sensual bridge of feelings that mediates between them,

those physical, emotional, and psychic expressions of what is deepest and strongest and richest within each of us, being shared: the passion of love, in its deepest meaning.41

The rational technical-like control dominates the relations between human beings in society, including their deepest erotic connections, destroying the bridge between the spiritual and the political. Community, which is based on the erotic bonds between people who feel connected and care for each other, is destroyed in this process of alienation. Community must be reconstructed with the power of erotic energy and knowledge.

First the erotic provides power which comes from sharing deeply any pursuit with another person physically, emotionally, psychically, and/or intellectually. Sharing diminishes the threat of differences because it provides a basis for understanding what is not shared.
Second, erotic joy represents an internal sensor for the capacity of self-connection. The erotic is able to detect alienation by evaluating the aspects of existence and not settling for anything less than excellence (not impossible perfection). The erotic does not settle for convenience, the conventionally expected, nor the merely safe. When it flows the erotic colors one's life—it heightens, sensitizes, and strengthens experience. Eroticized, people become responsible for themselves. On the other hand, ignoring or repressing erotic guiding knowledge leads people to give up personal responsibility. They submit more easily to external definitions of themselves or they turn to narcissistic behavior, giving up responsibility for the community.

The third function of erotic knowledge comes from the increased power of sharing—not using—the erotic feelings of another person.

"When we look the other way from our experience, erotic or otherwise, we use rather than share the feelings of those others who participate in the experience with us. And use without the consent of the used is abuse."42 Consequently we reduce each other to the pornographic use of the erotic.

By pointing out the distortions of the erotic power as knowledge Lorde suggests the corrective task of feminist "erotica":

As women, we need to examine the ways in which our world can be truly different. I am speaking here of the necessity for reassessing the quality of all the aspects of our lives and of our work, and how we move toward and through them.43 . . . "Recognizing the power of the erotic within our lives can give us the energy to pursue genuine change within our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama."44
In summary, for Lorde the erotic is a deep feeling which informs human beings about what is right by signaling what feels right. Women's roles in society have been characterized by some sort of servicing the erotic needs of men. Dependent on women, men have learned to neglect their own capacity to develop such crucial feeling, and to impose on women their superficial and self-interested view of the erotic. Men do not share but use women's eroticism. They distort the erotic by making it pornographic. Pornography creates distorted states of being in women as well as in men. Lorde contends that erotic knowledge is a concrete basis of knowledge which connects bodily unconscious instincts to conscious knowledge of the mind. Consequently, the erotic is based on a cognitive interest and on an affective interest of knowledge.

This powerful literary imagery of the erotic becomes analytical categories in the voice of feminist Nancy Hartsock, who also proposes "to reformulate issues of sexuality under the heading of eros." As a third world feminist or "womanist" Lorde reads her own feelings in order to develop a theory of the erotic. Hartsock reads the male-established literature of psychology to do the same. We can learn from both feminists.

For Hartsock, the erotic also has three distinct but related aspects. The first aspect is revealed in Freud's definition of eros as the "aim of making one of many," a desire which may take genitally-oriented or sublimated forms. This category corresponds to Lorde's erotic sharing of activity. Sharing reflects the desire to unite, to do something with somebody else.
The second aspect of the erotic appears in the role attributed to sensuality and bodily concerns in the life of a society; in Lorde's words, it refers to the social importance of erotic joy. Thirdly, eros becomes generation and creativity, the pleasure in the "'effortfull achievement of purpose,'" which is the distinguishing mark of the human, and for Lorde, the distinguishing feature of erotic knowledge itself.

In this view eros also becomes distorted in a hostile and threatening world: "each aspect of eros can take a repressive rather liberatory form—one that points toward death rather than life" Thus the desire of connection and sharing with each other is replaced by a desire of dominanion of the other. Sensual joy can be denied, and creativity becomes alienated labor in general, including women's biological reproductive labor. Pornography, Hartsock and Lorde as well as most feminists agree, represents the abusive distortion of the erotic.

Yet another feminist, Caroline Whitbeck, discusses the ontology of feminist erosics as opposed to masculinist erosics. The male and the female perspectives both see eros as a desire for fusion or at least transforming contact with the other that brings one to a turning point ... or which takes one out of one's limited self, i.e. it produces an ex stasis. As such it is often taken as a means to the realization of one's deepest self, as an enlightenment.

However, the feminist perspective on the erotic relationship understands "other" as analogous to "self," the scope and limits of analogy to be found in each case. The masculist perspective oppose
"self" to "other." Feminist erotics is conceptualized as sharing conducive to the recognition of mutual similarities and differences:

"The other may genuinely possess the characteristics of the self that one sees in the other, one may simultaneously learn to love oneself (or an aspect of oneself) in loving the other. The experience of learning to love oneself in loving (as well as in being loved by) the other appears as a frequent vehicle for development or transformation among women.52

In dominant masculine erotics, on the other hand, the self projects its characteristics onto the other. There results a disconnection between loving and knowing the beloved, who is not recognized for who she or he is.53 Women regard male and female as analogous sexes which share common differences. Men regard male and female as opposites who cannot recognize, or know, each other. The dualist opposition presented by male ontology "make loving and knowing virtually contradictory."54

In summary, feminism is dedicated to the recovery of the affective interest of knowledge—the erotic interest. The erotic interest has been subjugated by technical-rational thought associated with male reason. What MacKinnon, Lorde, Hartsock, and Whitbeck suggest in their explorations of the erotic is an agenda for the erotic sciences—"feminist erotica"—which are interested in studying all facets of life-giving relations. This includes sexuality, biological reproduction, and the emotional labor involved in human relationships. Mother-child relations are paradigmatic here, but relations between husband and wife, between hetero and homosexual lovers, between family members, and co-workers are also part of the picture. The erotic sciences address, for example, the historical
construction of sexuality and of reproduction; the historical forms of expropriation of women's erotic services, and of the corresponding forms of constructing gender identity and gender roles.

The erotic sciences recover the affective interest of knowledge and it bring it à pari with the technical, the practical-moral, and the emancipatory interests of knowledge. In light of the erotic all three cognitive interests may be effectively regarded as connected. There is a technical dimension to the erotic in what concerns the relations of sexuality and reproduction, for example, the issue of contraceptive technology. (From the feminist perspective, as of today we have no safe and effective contraceptives except for celibacy or radical intervention in one's physiological processes such as tubal ligation and vasectomy).55

The practical issue of social control of fertility has been approached from a technical perspective.56 Public policy concerning population issues have a tendency to be reduced to oppressive sterilization campaigns when natality rates are found too high. Such campaigns have additional classist and racist twists when they aim at diminishing fertility among the poor and third world peoples.57 When natality rates are low, equally manipulative strategies are employed, such as antiabortion prohibitions and the peddling of the motherhood mystique through propaganda.

The list of practical issues—in its dimensions of communication, norm-formulation, moral insight, conflict and achievement of consensus—is quite long in what refers to sexual and reproductive relations. For example, rules concerning heterosexuality,
homosexuality, bisexuality, incest, sexual relations inside and outside marriage; and the related aspect of domestic and extradomestic sexual division of labor, including the assignment of responsibilities for childrearing.

Finally, the liberation side of the erotic refers to discovering and dismantling those relations of power that limit or suppress the emergence of the erotic as source of knowledge and power. As examples of those situations which do not feel right and are basically unjust we find the issue of sexual terrorism as a tool of political control of women by men—rape, genital mutilation, sexual harassment and abuse, wife and child abuse and neglect—and the all-encompassing issue of pornography as industry.58

4.3. Towards a tridimensional historical materialism. In a restricted sense the erotic is the human interest that pertains to sexuality or to sexual love, the realm of women’s lives which is the focus of feminism. Historically women have had a double relationship with the experience of sexuality. The first dimension of this relationship refers to biological contingency determining the potential consequence of the exercise of (hetero) sexuality for women to be conception, pregancy, childbirth, and nurturing of human life; these are dialectical moments of a woman’s labor for the species. The facts of biological reproduction, menstruation, the very possibility of "getting pregnant" and "having a baby" represent one aspect of a woman’s relationship with the erotic defined as sexuality. The second dimension of a woman’s relationship with the erotic is the culturally-
constructed assignment of a sexual division of labor. Women specialize in erotic labor, in the emotional labor of love. This form of labor also creates value, the value of emotional, sensual, and sexual pleasure fundamental to the survival and the reproduction of the species.

Women historically have been identified as creators of the many facets of erotic pleasure. This includes diverse but connected feelings. For example, the abstract aesthetically pleasing feeling associated with appreciation of female beauty; feelings of attachment, of affection and of commitment to another being, exemplified in the bonding between lovers and between mother and child; and more concrete physical and sensual pleasures associated with a woman's caresses and with orgasmic intercourse with a woman. Most human beings live off women's labor of nurturing at some point if not during most of their existences: infants whom women mother; children who women must look after, care and teach; men whose lives are intricately connected with women's lives at various levels; women themselves whom care for and love one another through life struggles.

For feminism the self-formative process of reproduction of the species depends upon human activity expressed in social labor, including the sexual and reproductive labor of women. Not two but three dimensions of the structure of society are identified: the economic, the sexual, and the ideological superstructure which regulates both the productive and the sexual-reproductive relations. Metaphorically speaking these three intimately related dimensions of the structure of society hold each other together, and what affects
one dimension also affects the others.

Marx and Habermas, as men, pay more strict attention to the productive dimension of society. From the point of view of the interests of knowledge, Marx focuses the technical interest in particular, locating the motor of social evolution in the development of society's technical capacity. Learning or rationalization in technical-instrumental action means achieving better control of means and of strategies regarding the productive process. Habermas focuses the social relations of production in their moral-normative dimension which result from communicative processes mediated by language. Learning or rationalization of communicative action implies greater comprehensibility, truth content, sincerity, and correctedness or the norms achieved by consensus. This knowledge results in higher levels of social integration and cooperation. Relations of force, oppressive relations, are diminished as humans learn in both realms of the interest of knowledge.

Feminist thought addresses the realm of the erotic, especially but not limited to the exercise of human sexual and reproductive capacity, and its associated feminine labor. Feminism sets out to discover the relationships between the productive and the sexual-reproductive aspects of society. As a critical social science, feminism is concerned with the connection between social relations of production, and erotic intimate relations, most particularly sexual and reproductive relations. A clearer picture of society cannot be drawn until all those relationships are uncovered from the partiality of men's perspective. Only when the technical, moral, emancipatory, and
erotic dimensions of relations of production and of sexuality and reproduction are considered together the complete mechanisms of social evolution will be fully disclosed.

5. Summary and conclusions

Examining the perspectives of Marx, Habermas, and of feminism, in this chapter I address some questions concerning human knowledge, historical materialism, and critical theory. From the Marxist perspective, humans create knowledge by "doing" and by "thinking" in the process of creating the means of our own lives. This material, dialectical, and evolutionary process is conditioned by the historical events of a society. Historical materialism is Marx's theory and method to study human society and its evolution. From his point of view, technical changes in a society's forces of production affect the way society is socially organized. Marx attributes to technical knowledge an important role in the social evolutionary process.

Habermas agrees with Marx's empiricism formulated within a materialist dialectical structure of reality. He disagrees however with Marx's historical materialism. When humans are doing and thinking in the process of satisfying necessities of life, Habermas adds, they are also interacting with one another. Communicative action, and the norms established through communication are dimensions that historical materialism cannot neglect. Changes in a society's organized social relations also affects social evolution. Practical knowledge, increased knowledge in communicative action which leads to
greater consensus, is an important part of the picture of social evolution.

Habermas' critique of historical materialism brings forth the issue of interests of knowledge. There are three cognitive interests of knowledge, the technical, the practical, and the emancipatory. It is necessary to distinguish among them to understand of the possibilities and limitations of their contribution to build a future of peace and freedom for humankind.

The technical interest of knowledge refers to instrumental, purposive-rational action to reach goals and to control events. Habermas shows how the technical interest of knowledge has been applied to understand and control objectified natural processes, and, in a historical distortion, it also has been applied to individuals and social relations. The empirical-analytic sciences pursue the technical interest of knowledge in its investigations aiming at control. The historical-hermeneutic sciences have acted like their interest is technical when in reality it concerns communicative action in social practice matters. Corrected, this interest should lead to enhancing the conditions of mutual understanding between members of society, not of establishing control over them.

Feminists agree with the masculine perspective about knowledge resulting from doing, thinking, and interacting. They contend that the most specific form of women's practice has been linked to emotional, sexual and reproductive labor associated with intimate relations between people in society. Feminists appropriate the theme
of Freud's psychoanalysis and claim the fundamental importance of the affective interest of knowledge, the erotic interest.

Erotic knowledge refers to the capacity of the human organism to feel deeply connected with nature, with each other, and with one's creative processes. As the technical interest of knowledge becomes dominant in society, the erotic interest is trivialized and suppressed. Male dominance and the dominance of the technical interest of knowledge coincide. Examining the lives of women under male-supremacy, feminism recovers the interest in the erotic and brings it to the scrutiny of historical materialism.

The interest in human emancipation is the guiding interest of the critical social sciences. Feminism and Marxism are critical social sciences which search for the historical material roots of oppressive social relations. These critical theories generate awareness among those who have a vested interest in social change, workers who want to overcome the domination of capitalist relations in society, and women who need to overcome patriarchal relations. The feminist task is to understand women's lives in a male-supremacist society, and the task of Marxism is to understand everybody's lives in a money-supremacist society.

The critical social sciences reconstruct the logic of development of society from a historical materialist perspective. Taking women's and men's views in consideration, critique addresses the structures of production, of sexuality and reproduction, and the normative structure of society which regulate both material realms. Historically critical thought starts when knowledge becomes interested in itself as humans
think about how they create knowledge and what they have been doing with it. This event can be traced to the idealism of Kant and Hegel and to its materialist twist given by Karl Marx. Recovering the Kantian and Hegelian roots of the understanding of materially-bound knowledge, Habermas distinguishes the three cognitive interests of knowledge. Though the objective of critique is emancipation from distorted power relations in society, it uses knowledge amassed by empirical-analytic and historical hermeneutic sciences. In other words, critique does not invalidate and discard technical and practical knowledge, but use it with the goal of human liberation in mind.

The erotic component of the critical social sciences has two sides. On one hand, the erotic validates the realm of intimate, sexual, and reproductive relations as a central area of investigation. Before Habermas, scholars of the Frankfurt school influenced by Freudian theory brought these relations under scrutiny (Marcuse in Eros and Civilization, for example). Feminists reclaim and continue the tradition not only as an object of study but as an integral part of the method of critical theory. For it is the erotic, the feeling of deep connection, and of love of achievement, that guides liberation. The erotic senses discomfort and calls for liberation from disease, for bridging the distortions of alienated life.
FOOTNOTES

1 Martin Jay discusses the concept of praxis: "loosely defined, praxis was used to designate a kind of self-creating action, which differed from the externally motivated behavior produced by forces outside man's control. Although originally seen as the opposite of contemplative theoria when it was first used in Aristotle's Metaphysics, praxis in the Marxist usage was seen in dialectical relation to theory. In fact, one of the earmarks of praxis as opposed to mere action was in being informed by theoretical considerations." The Dialectical Imagination. A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1953 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973), p. 4.

Karl Marx wrote the following passage which refers to praxis: "As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production." The German Ideology, in Karl Marx: Selected Writings, ed. by David McLellan (Suffolk: Great Britain, 1977), p. 161.

2 See Karl Marx's "Alienated Labour" in Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, in McLellan, op. cit., pp. 77-87.


4 Karl Marx, Letter to his Father, in McLellan, op. cit., p. 8.

5 See Karl Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy," in Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts in McLellan, op. cit., pp. 96-109

6 G.A. Cohen explains: "When Marx says production relations correspond to productive forces, he means the former are appropriate to the latter, and we may impute to him the further thought that the relations are as they are because they are appropriate to productive development." See further discussion in "(2) Assertions of Primacy by Marx: The Preface," Karl Marx's Theory of History. A Defence (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 136.
7 Woods, op. cit., p. 117.

8 Ibid., p. 118.

9 Ibid., p. 119.


12 William K. Frankena's defines utilitarianism: "in my use of the term, I shall mean the view that the sole ultimate standard of right, wrong, and obligation is the principle of utility, which says quite strictly that the moral end to be sought in all we do is the greatest possible balance of good over evil (or the least possible balance of evil over good) in the world as a whole. Here "good" and "evil" mean nonmoral good and evil. This implies that whatever the good and the bad are, they are capable of being measured and balanced against each other in some quantitative or at least mathematical way. Jeremy Bentham recognized this most explicitly when he tried to work out a hedonic calculus of pleasures and pains using seven dimensions: intensity, duration, certainty, propinquity, fecundity, purity, and extent. John Stuart Mill, partly in reaction, sought to introduce quality as well as quantity into the evaluation of pleasures; but, if one does this, it is hard to see how the utilitarian standard is to be stated, and Mill never did make this clear." In Ethics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), pp. 41-43.


14 When Adorno and Horkheimer used 'positivism', they referred to the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle; according to David Held, their tenets were: "All (synthetic) knowledge is founded in sensory experience. Concepts and generalizations only represent the particulars from which they have been abstracted. Conceptual entities don't exist in themselves—they are mere names; . . . Sciences are unified according to the methodology of the natural sciences. . . . Values are not facts and hence values cannot be given as such in sense experience. Since all knowledge is based on sensory experience, value judgements cannot be accorded the status of knowledge claims." Introduction to Critical Theory. Horkheimer to Habermas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 164.
A summary of this critique of positivism: "There are no social 'facts' which constitute the substratum of social theory, as the positivists believe. Every facet of social reality can be understood as an outcome of the continual interplay between 'moment' (phase of, aspect of, totality) and 'totality.' The structure of the social process conditions and determines both the place and function of every particular 'thing' and the form in which it appears as an object of experience. Any given object can only be understood in the context (and in the light) of its conditions and relations. These do not appear in immediate experience but are important in the understanding and explanation of 'things.' Positivists fail to comprehend that the process of knowing cannot be severed from the historical struggle between humans and the world. Theory and theoretical labour are inextricably intertwined in social life processes. The theorist cannot remain detached, passively contemplating, reflecting and describing 'society' or 'nature.'" Held, op. cit., p. 164-165.

Jürgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971) p. 308.

Ibid., p. 309.

Ibid., p. 310.


Ibid., pp. 67-76.

Ibid., p. 75.

Ibid.

Ibid., pp. 75-76

Ibid., p. 77


Ibid., pp. 97-98

Ibid., p. 117.


Habermas, op. cit., pp. 119-120.

Ibid., p. 95.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid., p. 94.
34 Ibid., p. 107.
37 With the purpose of fidelity to her naming in the summary presentation of Lorde’s thought I choose to use her words and expressions freely.
38 Ibid., p. 54.
39 Ibid., p. 55.
40 Ibid., p. 56
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., p. 58.
43 Ibid., p. 55.
44 Ibid., p. 59.
46 *Womanist* 1. From womanish. (Opp. of 'girlish,' i.e., frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, 'You acting womanish,' i.e., like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered 'good' for one. Interested in grown-up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another black folk expression: 'You trying to be grown.' Responsible. In charge. Serious.

47 Hartsock, op. cit., p. 166.

48 Ibid., p. 167.

49 Ibid., p. 168.


52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., p. 397.

54 Ibid., p. 398.


CHAPTER III

THE INDIVIDUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Primarily, a Shaman represents power over self, the conquest of fear and doubt, as well as mastery of the spirit realm. . . . Shamans imply competence and ability, authentic know-how. Whatever the suit, the Shaman has control of that element and knows how to use it for personal gain as well as world problem-solving. . . . The Shaman of Swords creates her own reality and takes responsibility for her thought forms and the power of the mind. The four-petaled flower below her head marks the four cardinal directions, the four winds, the elements. The point of union at the center usually hides the fifth element, which is 'ether' or spirit. In this card, the spirit or 'quintessence' is released into manifestation, probably through the voice. The red of the flower symbolizes passion and female power, the force of inner knowing that pushes one out into the larger world to act."

(Noble, 1983, pp. 217-219)
Figure 3. Shaman of Swords.

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1. Introduction

When in school we confront for the first time the unexpected events of an unfamiliar environment, we may feel anxious, proud, even fearful. However, few doubt that they are in school to get an education to make them "better." For some, "better" means more spiritual and pious. For others, it means developing understanding, the ability to reason logically and clearly. For still others, it means polishing skills and gaining knowledge about some art, craft, or scientific field. Deeply ingrained in each of us is a dream about who we want to become and an awareness that our gains in knowledge, independence, and power implies personal growth, or becoming.

Our parents and teachers also had ideals and expectations about who we were to become, even while realizing the limitations of our interests, motivations, and dispositions. Educators, whose business is to oversee change and to facilitate learning and growth, carry an ideal of humanity in mind, an ideal about what people should become. Religious beliefs, scientific theories, philosophical teachings, and experience help shape these ideals.

What does the tradition of critical theory, as it summarizes and evaluates the findings of the social sciences and philosophical perspectives, have to say about the nature of the individual and an ideal of individual development? What can we become as human beings? What tasks must we accomplish as we grow up, and which ones bring us closer to our ideal being? What barriers must we overcome to achieve our potential? In this chapter, I discuss an ideal of individual development from a critical standpoint, taking into consideration both
a masculine and a feminist perspective. On the masculine side, I focus on Karl Marx's view of the individual as "species being," and Jürgen Habermas' examination of ego development theory which pays close attention to the development of moral consciousness. On the feminist side, I focus on Carol Gilligan's study of moral development. The views of Marx, Habermas, and Gilligan will help us understand more clearly how individuals, male and female, learn to make moral choices that will guide their behavior in society. This view of individual development will inform the feminist theory of education presented in Chapter Five.

2. Marx on the individual

The concern for the individual is central in Marx's thought. His critique of society is built upon a view of human nature which he finds systematically distorted by the way the productive relations in society are organized. Though Marx wrote approximately at the time psychology was becoming an empirical science,¹ his vocabulary is philosophical, describing both what the person is and can become in a social context free from oppression.

*Gattungswesen*—species being—is the German term adopted to name the nature of the human individual. Humans are more than merely animals which are what their vital activity makes them. Humans make their vital activity into an object of their will and consciousness:

> The practical creation of an objective world, . . . is the confirmation of man as a conscious species-being, that is, as a being that relates to the species as to himself and to himself as to the species.²
Humans then, unlike animals, create themselves as a species as together they consciously create the means of survival. We are intimately connected with each other, and this connection is part of the essence of every individual as well as a characteristic of the species—consciousness. The necessary relation between self-consciousness and species-consciousness binds individual and collective identities for every human. Thus persons do not exist in isolation, and we are what we express in conscious activity.

As a species-being, the human individual creates her or himself in the practical creation of objects through labor activity. Labor is objectified in its products, and when these products are removed from the laborer, labor itself is removed. This is Marx's bidimensional concept of alienated labor: objectification and loss of the object. From the point of view of alienated labor, private property may be regarded as the appropriation of a person's labor and its fruits by another. Capitalism institutionalizes appropriation of labor, and thus it alienates humans from each other, from our sense of community, and from our species-being. Privately appropriated alienated labor makes the species-being of man, . . . into a being that is alien to him, into a means for his individual existence. It alienates from man his own body, nature exterior to him, and his intellectual being, his human essence.

When men is opposed to himself, it is another man that is opposed to him. . . . In general, the statement that man is alienated from his species-being, means that one man is alienated from another as each of them is alienated from the human essence.4

For Marx, the history of the species is the history of the progressive loss and the progressive reestablishment of the sense of
community. As humans critically reflect upon the conditions of
alienated life, they act to remove them. The struggle aims at
reaffirming species-being as we succeed in abolishing
institutionalized alienation—private property—which separates us
from each other, and hinders our true connectedness. In the process
of overcoming alienation, worker and labor, nature and society, and
woman and man are reconciled.

No longer motivated by idiosyncratic wants of isolated persons,
self-fulfillment will depend on the actualization of motives
concerning others. The worthiness of a person, and the meaningfulness
of her life will consist in achieving the common good, not as a means
to a private end, but as an end in itself. Marx may have seen his
effort in history as making Kant’s categorical imperative as a force
in history: "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own
person on in that of another, always as an end and never as a means
only."5

3. Habermas’ theory of the individual

Although references to the individual are found throughout his
work, in in the essay "Moral Development and Ego Identity"6 Habermas
specifically introduces a conceptual framework for ego identity
development theory, bringing together and elaborating findings from
diverse research traditions, but remaining faithful to the Marxist
tradition. There are three major coordinates for his conceptual
framework. First, like Marx he acknowledges the essential
relationship between individual and social development. Thus he
asserts the need for integrating psychological and sociological theory into a holistic body of knowledge. Second, he accepts the basic findings held in common by distinct theories of ego development. Third, in order to picture the process of ego development more clearly, he expands existing theories to include concepts from sociological theory of action,7 and from his theory of communication and consensus.8

Habermas insists that human emancipation is the fundamental concern guiding the formulation of all critical theory. Theories that articulate the possibility of human emancipation necessarily probe individual and societal dimensions of human life. The adoption of either an exclusive individual or exclusive social perspective leads to distortion and oversimplification of human life. With liberation in mind, Habermas calls for the integration of sociology and psychology in one science to guide human, social, and personal emancipation. He says that

basic psychological and sociological concepts can be interwoven because the perspectives projected in them of an autonomous ego and an emancipated society reciprocally require one another.9

Habermas is committed to this integration when he brings elements of the sociological theory of action4 to expand the findings of ego psychology. These findings from cognitive, psychosexual or motivational, and symbolic interactionist theories of ego development are in agreement on the following points:10
a) individual development results from integration of maturational (biological), and learning (cultural) processes;

b) there exist developmental stages of increasingly higher levels of complexity;

c) the passage from one stage to the other is crisis ridden;

d) the direction of development is that of expansion in autonomy;

e) the identity of the ego is consistent at each stage of development;

f) an important learning mechanism of ego development is the transposition of external structures (found in the social environment) into the internal structure of the individual.  

Human development takes place as the organism matures physically and internalizes cultural structures through learning mechanisms. These processes have not yet been fully disclosed by science. The stages of development reflect integrated cognitive, psychosexual (motivational), and linguistic (interactional, or communicative) aspects which become increasingly complex at each stage. Stages cannot be skipped, and a higher stage presupposes mastery of maturation problems of the previous stage. That successful problem-solving increases individual autonomy is demonstrated in increased ability to control natural and social (external) reality, as well as control of psychological and physiological (internal) reality. As the individual interacts with the social environment, her internally consistent ego identity demonstrates a certain level of competence characteristic of each stage of development.

Habermas sees limitations to each of the three ego development theoretical frameworks, cognitive, psychosexual, and symbolic interactionist. In order to contribute to the goal of formulating "a
theory that would permit a precise and empirically meaningful
determination of the concept of ego identity,"¹² he departs from what
he considers a central aspect of ego identity: moral consciousness.
His objective is to "show that ego identity requires not only
cognitive mastery of general levels of communication but also the
ability to give one's own needs their due in these communication
structures."¹³

The elements of his action theory are presented in two conceptual
schemes. The first scheme includes a general structure of
communicative action (the symbolic structure progressively acquired by
the growing child) and the qualifications of role behavior (skills
necessary for communication with others and for action in society). I
present the two components of Habermas' first scheme separately in
tables I and II.¹⁴ The second scheme unifies Habermas' and Kohlberg's
stages of moral development, completing a cognitive-linguistic-
interactional picture of the process of ego identity formation. This
scheme is presented in table III.¹⁵

3.1. Communicative action. Habermas identifies level of action,
action motives, and perception of actors as three aspects of the
structure of individual communicative action. The growing child
evolves through three stages of communicative action, mastering
stage-specific cognitive, linguistic, and social interactional skills
at each level.

In the first stage of communicative action the child's cognitive
capacity is, according to Piaget's classification, preoperational.¹⁶
Because she still faces the task of distinguishing herself from the natural and the social environments, she cannot be considered, as yet, a full participant in social interaction. Her actions are based on needs to seek pleasure and avoid pain, and her identity is still a natural identity.

In the following stage the child develops concrete-operational thought patterns. She is able not only to identify roles but to play them, she is able to follow norms, and regard other actors as role players. As she acquires this role identity, her ability to interact with the social environment is complete. Culture interprets her needs and imposes norms of behavior that she recognizes and to which she consents.

At Habermas' third stage, ego identity emerges when formal-operational thought enables the child to use principles. Here one assesses one's personal needs in comparison to social demands, one chooses roles to perform, and one follows norms deemed respectable. (See Table II, Qualifications of Role Behavior.)

At each stage of communicative action there are tasks that the ego must learn to perform. The child starts at a point on a continuum of reflexivity, or of awareness of norms that guide action, where she cannot identify the norms of her social group, and can only respond to the concrete behavior expectations of the group. At the next stage, she is able to understand the norms behind behavior requirements. And, later, she becomes able to establish the principles behind the norms. The child becomes more able to think about her experience, and about the requirements of society.
In a continuum of abstraction and differentiation, at first the growing individual knows only that her needs, and the demands of others have to be fulfilled. These needs, based on "wishes" (demands for concrete behavior), are then differentiated from needs based on "oughts" (norms). At the principled level, needs are autonomously evaluated by the individual.

In a continuum of generalization, at first the child perceives only what other people are concretely doing. She cannot think abstractly, therefore she is not able to perceive that people play different roles (mother, father, stranger, etc.). At the next stage of development, the child acts as a role-player and a norm-follower. Lastly, when she is able to overcome role-playing for the sake of society, and learns how to pay attention to and develop her own interests, she becomes an individual with a unique personal history.

3.2. Stages of moral development. Habermas' other scheme (Table III) establishes correspondence between the stages of communicative action, and Kohlberg's stages of moral consciousness. For Habermas, moral consciousness "signifies the ability to make use of interactive competence for consciously processing morally relevant conflicts of action." The link between the structure of communicative action and the structure of moral consciousness is provided by the concept of reciprocity.

Reciprocity, derived from the interactive competence of the individual, is not a social norm but a necessary characteristic of the individual's capacity for interaction with others. At each stage of
development, the individual interacts with others according to the kind of reciprocity she is able to demonstrate—complete, or incomplete.

Two persons stand in an incompletely reciprocal relation insofar as one may do or expect X only to the extent that the other may do or expect Y (e.g., teacher/pupil, parent/child). Their relationship is completely reciprocal if both may do or expect the same thing in comparable situations. Habermas describes Kohlberg’s stages of moral development (punishment and obedience, instrumental relativist, law and order, contractual-legalist, and principled—see Table IV) in terms of the reciprocity demonstrated by the subject.

At the punishment and obedience orientation stage of development, reciprocity between subjects in the interaction is incomplete. There is an obvious power imbalance between those who reward and punish and those who are subject to reward or punishment. Any toddler who has tried to cross the street by herself knows that. At the instrumental relativist stage, the requirement "you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours" obviously implies complete reciprocity. The level of action at these preconventional stages of moral consciousness is one in which concrete behavioral expectations alone are perceived by at least one of the parties.

When roles and norms are internalized, the individual is able to become a freely participating member in social interaction thus entering the conventional level of moral consciousness. Reciprocity, however, is incomplete in the unbalanced relationship between the individual and the reference group to which she conforms. At the
interpersonal concordance stage there is incomplete reciprocity between the nice girl/boy and her/his group of primary reference persons. At the law and order stage, incomplete reciprocity exists between the members of the political community and the good, law-abiding citizen who respects rules and authority in order to maintain social order for its own sake.

The postconventional, or principled, stage logically requires reciprocity. At this level, two substages of moral consciousness refer to how needs or motives for action are, or are not, symbolically structured. If needs are structured in terms of pleasure-seeking/pain avoidance, central principles (universalistic norms) become those promoting utility. Furthermore, legal norms institutionalize the pursuit of private interests, and moral consciousness acquires a contractual-legalist orientation. On the other hand, if needs are symbolically structured by culture and assigned to individuals as natural duties, ruling principles are general ethical principles, such as those of justice, equality of rights, etc. The stage of moral consciousness corresponding to this level is that of universal ethical principle orientation, the highest in Kohlberg's structure.

Habermas introduces yet another stage following the sixth in Kohlberg's scheme. At this stage, needs may be interpreted as needs to interpret needs. Personal needs are "what each individual thinks he should understand and represent as his 'true' interests" before indiscriminately following norms or taking on roles that have been culturally imposed. When moral conflicts are evaluated in such an individualized manner the corresponding moral consciousness is
characterized by a universal ethics of speech. The ethics of discourse embodies a set of procedures to redeem normative validity of claims through sincere and truthful debate. These procedures include the shared goal of arriving at a common understanding, which will bring about consensus and agreement between those who communicate. This consensus,

terminates in the intersubjective mutuality of reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge, mutual trust, and accord with one another. Agreement is based on the recognition of the corresponding validity claims of comprehensibility, truth, truthfulness, and rightness.23

Habermas' concern with communicative action, as it relates to moral consciousness and conflict resolution, raises many issues important to our understanding of human development from a gender perspective. For example, do the stages of communicative action and moral consciousness equally apply to males and females? Habermas seems to assume so when he does not mention a possible impact of gender on individual moral consciousness. As feminist scholars know, a blindness to gender differences is not unexpected from male-created interpretations of natural and social phenomena. Curiously enough, Habermas uncritically accepts the fact that Kohlberg's stages were derived from a study conducted on the lives of eighty-four men! Also, it did not strike him as peculiar that women have been frequently found not to score beyond Kohlberg's conventional stage.

Unlike Habermas, Carol Gilligan does not accept Kohlberg's generalizations and, especially, women's systematic poor performance in moral conflict resolution tests. Thus Gilligan's feminist theory
of moral consciousness both corrects and complements the theory proposed by Habermas.

4. Carol Gilligan's view of moral consciousness

Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* presents the theoretical implications of three studies conducted with the objective of understanding women's moral consciousness. Her study of college students focused on identity and moral development in the early adult years; the abortion decision study explored the role of conflict in development, and the relationship between experience and thought; the rights and responsibilities study explored conceptions of self and morality, moral conflict and choice, and judgments of hypothetical moral dilemmas. Her data lead Gilligan to distinguish modes of moral consciousness characterizing male and female experience and identity. In situations of moral conflict men tend to construct solutions according to a morality of rights while women's solutions reflect a morality of responsibility.

The morality of rights, which is conceived by Kohlberg as postconventional and of a higher order, centers upon the individual who exercises rights without interfering with the rights of others. This emphasis on the individual suggests separation from rather than connection with others. The morality of responsibility, on the other hand, takes relationships with other people—human connection—as primary. According to the morality of responsibility, moral decisions necessarily include obligations to self and others. Kohlberg regards this pattern of morality as conventional and does not account for it.
at higher stages of moral consciousness.

Gilligan illustrates these two aspects of morality by contrasting a boy's and a girl's answers to one of the conflict situations constructed by Kohlberg to measure moral development. In this particular situation, a man named Heinz considers stealing a drug he cannot afford in order to save the life of his sick wife. The druggist refuses to lower the price of the medicine. Should Heinz steal the drug? In the study, Jake, the eleven year old boy, constructs the dilemma as a conflict between the values of property and human life. He logically devises the solution, theft, by setting up an equation and choosing life over property. Jake recognizes both that the law is being broken and that the law contains mistakes.

Amy, also eleven, cannot accept either theft or the death of Heinz' wife. She considers alternative ways for the couple to obtain money. She gives due weight to the future impact of theft on the couple's relationship and the individual lives involved. Amy says that they should really just talk it out and find some other way to make money.

Gilligan interprets Jake's and Amy's responses according to Kohlberg's theoretical framework, and then follows with her own interpretation "in a different voice." From Kohlberg's point of view, she says:

While this boy's judgements at eleven are scored as conventional on Kohlberg's scale, a mixture of stages three and four, his ability to bring deductive logic to bear on the solution of moral dilemmas, to differentiate morality from law, and to see how laws can be considered to have mistakes points toward the principled conception of justice that Kohlberg equates
moral maturity. In contrast, Amy's response to the dilemma conveys a very different impression, an image of development stunted by a failure of logic, an inability to think for herself.25

Reinterpreting Amy's solution from the point of view of the ethics of responsibility, or care, Gilligan affirms:

Seeing in the dilemma not a math problem with humans but a narrative of relationships that extends over time, Amy envisions the wife's continuing need for her husband and the husband's continuing concern for his wife and seeks to respond to the druggist's need in a way that should sustain rather than sever connection. . . . [Amy sees] a world comprised of relationships rather than of people standing alone, a world that coheres through human connection rather than through systems of rules . . . .26

For Gilligan, two distinct and complementary conceptualizations of morality are evident in the male and female responses to the dilemma:

both children thus recognize the need for agreement but see it as mediated in different ways—he impersonally through systems of logic and law, she personally through communication in relationships. Just as he relies on the conventions of logic to deduce the solution to this dilemma, assuming these conventions to be shared, so she relies on a process of communication, assuming connection and believing that her voice will be heard.27

Amy's voice is not heard if it is to fit Kohlberg's theory. However, this same voice rings clear if Habermas' seventh stage of moral consciousness is taken into consideration. At this stage, needs posed by moral dilemmas are no longer monologically interpreted according to principles dictated by culture, and split into more or less legitimate needs, duties, and inclinations. Instead, needs are "drawn into the discursive formation of will."28 The needs interpreter establishes a dialogue between well-understood cultural traditions and the expression of her unique inner nature. The
interpreter regards herself and other individuals not only as private persons but also as members of the species ("fictive world society") who are connected to each other by links greater than cultural or symbolic ones.

In Habermas' view, the cognitive style demonstrated at this level of consciousness is field-dependent. The ego, in its voyage towards autonomy, overcomes this dependency and acquires field-independence which, once again, has to be surpassed. Habermas concludes by affirming:

Autonomy that robs the ego of a communicative access to its own inner nature also signals unfreedom. Ego identity means a freedom that limits itself in the intention of reconciling—if not identifying—worthiness with happiness.29

The studies by Gilligan suggest that women's inner nature is expressed in the concern for connection among human beings. This inner nature reveals itself as women develop their moral consciousness. Jake’s response to Heinz’ dilemma demonstrates elements of a morality of rights at the principled levels of communication characterized by universalized pleasure and pain and universalized duties. Humans beings are regarded as legal associates and private persons.

By contrast, Amy is puzzled by the druggist who is not sensitive to loss of life—loss of human connection—which may well be the consequence of his greed and inflexibility. Amy insists on dialogue between Heinz, his wife and the druggist; the needs of all involved are to be discussed and a solution is to be found discursively in ways that reconcile worthiness and happiness. By constructing in this
fashion the answer to the conflict situation, Amy demonstrates that she could reach the stage of morality characterized by a universal ethic of speech, an ethic of responsibility and care. Such a stage entails the perception of humans as private persons who at the same time are members of the species—Marx’s "species being."

5. The psychosexual dimension of ego development, and historical materialism.

Habermas acknowledges that his approach to the question of identity formation, by emphasizing the cognitive aspect of the process, sets aside the instinctual (or motivational) aspect which is an integral part of the process. Psychosexual motives affect moral consciousness:

The correlations between levels of interactive competence and stages of moral consciousness...means that someone who possesses interactive competence at a particular stage will develop a moral consciousness at the same stage, insofar as his motivational structure does not hinder him from maintaining, even under stress, the structures of everyday action in the consensual regulation of action conflicts.30

Here Habermas is especially concerned with the conscious resolution of moral conflicts which are not hindered by unconscious mechanisms devised by the ego. Ego identity thus has a dual status—cognitive and motivational—which reflects the interdependence of society and nature.

The motivational aspect of ego identity formation is the subject of psychoanalytical theory initially articulated by Freud and further developed by Erik Erickson, among others. Freud's psychosexual thesis poses the investment of sexual energy in bodily zones as the basis of
individual psychological development. This psychoanalytical concept is the basis of Erickson's epigenetic principle of maturation. According to this principle, there is a plan for the growing organism. In this plan, different body parts become central to the organism's life at decisive and critical times. A functionally integrated whole results as parts emerge, overcome the central position occupied by the previous part, until all parts have finally emerged.31

In the development of the human organism, a maturational code suggests the emergence and centrality of bodily zones in which sexual energy is invested. To each of the psychosexual stages corresponds a crisis characterized by a task the individual has to accomplish.32 At the oral stage, during the first year of life, the mouth becomes the erogenous zone and the question of confidence—trust—in the provider (vs. mistrust) becomes the first crisis a human being has to solve. The anal stage, from one to three years of age, poses a crisis of autonomy (vs. shame or doubt). The genital stage, from three to five years of age, sees the child ready for initiative and drive (vs. guilt or sense of transgression). During the so-called latency period, a sense of industry (vs. inferiority) develops. With full genital maturity, the early adolescent's identity crisis is followed by the young adult crisis of intimacy (vs. isolation). During adulthood, procreation, the ultimate goal of sexual development according to Erickson, brings about the crisis of generativity (vs. stagnation). Lastly, the decrease of sexual energy during senescence poses the
final personal crisis during which the individual may fall into despair, or may finally solidify an identity.

The dual status of ego identity—cognitive and motivational—reflects the interaction of nature and society. This becomes evident in the examination of Erickson's psychosexual stages and their corresponding task-related crisis. Successful resolution of crisis, which implies the removal of barriers to stage-specific moral consciousness, largely depends on the social environment of the individual.

From a historical materialist perspective, social environment can be defined as a set of relations of production, "those institutions and social mechanisms that determine the way in which (at a given stage of productive forces) labor power is combined with the available means of production." Social environment can also be defined as a set of sexual and reproductive relations. Every human being has a position within the set of relations of production, directly as independent individual workers, or indirectly as dependent from other workers. Every human being also has a position within the set of sexual and reproductive relations. Given these considerations, it is reasonable to state that the development of moral consciousness is related to the individual's position within the structure of relations of production, and of sexuality and reproduction.

Historically, sexual division of labor has assigned to women the primary responsibility for reproduction and for domestic production necessary to the survival and well-being of family members. Today, these activities are exercised by women within the private sphere of
the home, where the members of the relatively small family group
interact face-to-face. The primacy of bringing to life and nurturing
other human beings is congruent with women's tendency towards
connection, as identified by Gilligan. This primary reference group
is obviously very important to women and, by being the locus of birth,
it functions as a reminder of the necessity of biological reproduction
of the species.

Sexual division of labor has assigned males the role of
producers. Men's concerns are not primarily associated with
housework, and childrearing is left to the women. As economies of
scale are introduced in society, men are employed away from the home
environment. In factories, fields, and offices, the secondary group's
pattern of interactions, based on impersonal relations, is regulated
by rules which define the rights and obligations of each separate
individual. The tendency of men to act according to a morality of
separation and of rights, as pointed out by Gilligan, is congruent
with this practice.

If social interaction is taken into consideration in the
development of the moral consciousness of individuals, roles, norms,
and principles most relevant to the social environment become most
relevant to the individual. If the primary environment for women has
been the private sphere of the home, a moral consciousness that will
solve domestic conflicts and maintain connections among members of the
family who must cooperate seems to be in order. If the primary
environment for men has been the public sphere of the workplace and
politics, a moral consciousness that will solve conflicts between parties in competition is more likely to develop.

Habermas' theory poses that for females and males to develop their identities and moral consciousness fully they must achieve mastery of cognitive levels of communication necessary for interaction, and they must let their needs be known. Given these considerations, in situations of moral conflict, how do women learn how to give due to their own personal needs in communication when morality of connection and care for others apparently demands selflessness? In other words, how can women attend to their personal needs of separateness and individual rights when societal expectations have created a consciousness characterized by responsibility for others? Likewise, how do men learn to reciprocate, connect, and care in the process of communication when separation and individual rights are socially reinforced?

Gilligan addresses these questions in her discussion of women's rights and responsibilities. She sees that the morality of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation, traditionally advocated by patriarchal society as the ideal for women, has been changing throughout this century of feminism thought and activism. The first feminists who articulated and struggled for women's rights understood that education, and the use of reason, would affect women's consciousness. Indeed, Gilligan cites Elizabeth Cady Stanton telling a reporter to "put it down in capital letters: SELF-DEVELOPMENT IS A HIGHER DUTY THAN SELF-SACRIFICE. The thing which most retards and militates against women's self-development is self-sacrifice."
In her study of college women, Gilligan systematically found women's principled level of moral consciousness to have expanded responsibility to include not only responsibility for others but for oneself as well:

Questioning the stoicism of self-denial and replacing the illusion of innocence with an awareness of choice, they [the women in the study] struggled to grasp the essential notion of rights, that the interests of the self can be considered legitimate. In this sense, the concept of rights changes women's conceptions of self allowing them to see themselves as stronger and to consider directly their own needs. When assertion no longer seems dangerous, the concept of relationships changes from a bond of continuing dependence to a dynamic of interdependence. Then the notion of care expands from the paralyzing injunction to act responsively toward self and others and thus to sustain connection. A consciousness of the dynamics of human relationship then becomes central to moral understanding, joining the heart and the eye in an ethic that ties the activity of thought to the activity of care.35

Gilligan recognizes that women who are arrested at a lower stage of development are unable to express their unique selves. They act according to a morality of self-abnegation reenforced by patriarchal society. The moral development of men who only express needs in terms of rights formally construed by society is also arrested. In situations of moral conflict, this monological and impersonal interpretation of rights precludes communication of self-interpreted individual needs. It does not facilitate the dialogue necessary to reach understanding between beings who are intrinsically connected by humaneness, rather than by a set of established norms. Under the morality that Habermas calls a universal ethics of speech, dialogue as means to consensus is the procedural norm.
6. Summary and Conclusions

The study of individual development has established theories on psychosexual or motivational, cognitive, and social interactional aspects of ego identity formation. For Jurgen Habermas, though there are relevant points of agreement among these theories, they still represent partial views of human development which do not explain the process of ego identity in an empirically meaningful way. Habermas integrates and expands the theories by placing moral consciousness at the center of the developmental process.

Moral consciousness informs the choices individuals make when faced with conflict. The individual's cognitive, motivational and interactional capacities come into play when a choice of action is to be made. Habermas links abilities that are required of the individual at each level of communicative action to seven stages of moral consciousness, six previously identified by Kohlberg. At Habermas' seventh stage, the individual is able to face moral conflicts in a fashion that is both autonomous and open to dialogue with society. On one side, stand social norms and principles the person fully understands. On the other side, stand personal needs and motivations that the individual is also able to voice. The two sides are reconciled in the choice of action, or the answer to the conflict; the interests of the individual and of society supposedly achieve consensus.

Gilligan's research in moral consciousness, guided by a concern with gender differences, supports Habermas' contention about the existence of moral reasoning that differs qualitatively from the
sixth highest level of Kohlberg's scheme. Gilligan identifies two modes of moral consciousness that characterize males and females. Men see human beings as separate individuals whose relations are mediated by formal rights and obligations. In the same situations women tend to choose actions that preserve connections among human beings by establishing conditions for dialogue. Such solutions must take into consideration the needs of each contending party.

Gilligan identifies rights and responsibilities as modes of moral reasoning and language which are complementary, whereas Habermas, like Kohlberg, sees them as sequential. If sequentiality is assumed, an immediate corollary would be that women are more likely to reach a higher stage of moral consciousness than men. (Curiously, folk wisdom holds this to be true.) If complementarity is assumed, two issues are immediately raised. First, the need to understand the processes by which women and men develop the qualities of connection and separation that characterize their moral consciousness. Second, assuming the democratic ideal of a perfectly equalitarian society, one would expect individuals of both sexes to have access, in their behavior repertoire, to balanced connecting and separating modes of moral consciousness.

What is the relevance of these theoretical assumptions to feminist theory of education? It is important to bear in mind that a feminist theory of education based on critical theory's view of the individual must be concerned with education that both takes into consideration and facilitates the process of identity formation. Because it is feminist, such theory recognizes that women's identity has been
primarily constructed according to an ideology of male supremacy; women’s identity has been kept subsidiary to men’s. This patriarchal construction of gender identity represents an obstacle to dialogue and to "species being."

The ideal of the educated woman is that of a woman whose moral consciousness allows her a dialogical posture, listening to her transparent self and to the voice of the other. In the process of education, the woman learns how to identify societal and individual barriers to the development of her self-defined ego identity, how to voice her unique needs as an individual, and how to engage in dialogue when action is necessary.
Table I. General Structure of Communicative Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Stage</th>
<th>Level of Interaction with Social Environment</th>
<th>Level of Action</th>
<th>Motives for Action</th>
<th>Identity as Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Concrete-operational thought</td>
<td>Complete Interaction</td>
<td>Roles and norms: behavioral expectations became generalized norms and roles.</td>
<td>Need to follow recognized social behavioral expectations to attend needs interpreted by culture.</td>
<td>Role Identity: actors are rule-playing reference persons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II. Qualifications of Role Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Understand roles and norms.</td>
<td>Needs based on wants are distinguished from needs based on oughts (duties).</td>
<td>Normative action distinguished from concrete action. Actors as role bearers distinguished from concrete actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Understand principles for the evaluation of roles and norms.</td>
<td>Heteronomy (traditional, imposed norms) distinguished from autonomy (norms justified in principle) as sources of needs based on oughts (duties).</td>
<td>General principles of action distinguished from general norms of action; Actors as individuals distinguished from actors as role bearers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table III. Habermas' Schema 4: Moral Consciousness and Reciprocity Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Competence</th>
<th>Stages of Moral Consciousness</th>
<th>Age level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Communication</td>
<td>Recovery requirement</td>
<td>Men of the good life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Actions and consequences of action</td>
<td>Conversational planning/practise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Roles</td>
<td>System of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Principles</td>
<td>Unrelated to action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unrelated to action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table IV. Habermas' Schema 2: Elucidation of the Stages of Moral Consciousness (Kohlberg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive presuppositions</th>
<th>Stages of moral consciousness</th>
<th>Idea of the good and just life</th>
<th>Sanctions</th>
<th>Domain of validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIa. Concrete-operational thought</td>
<td>1. Punishment-obedience orientation</td>
<td>Maximization of pleasure through obedience</td>
<td>Punishment (deprivation of physical rewards)</td>
<td>Natural and social environment (undifferentiated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Instrumental hedonism</td>
<td>Maximization of pleasure through exchange of equivalents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIb. Concrete-operational thought</td>
<td>3. Good-boy orientation</td>
<td>Concrete morality of gratifying interactions</td>
<td>Shame (withdrawal of love and social recognition)</td>
<td>Group of primary reference persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Law-and-order orientation</td>
<td>Concrete morality of a customary system of norms</td>
<td></td>
<td>Members of the political community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Formal-operational thought</td>
<td>5. Social-contractual legalism</td>
<td>Civil liberty and public welfare</td>
<td>Guilt (reaction of conscience)</td>
<td>Legal associates in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Ethical-principled orientation</td>
<td>Moral freedom</td>
<td></td>
<td>Private persons in general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOOTNOTES

1 Psychology also has its roots in Germany, where it was "founded" in 1874 with the publication of Principles of Physiological Psychology by Wilhelm Wundt. See Duane Shultz, A History of Modern Psychology (New York: Academic Press, 1975), pp. 52-53.


3 Ibid., pp. 77-87.

4 Ibid., p. 83.


7 "The theory of action is a conceptual scheme for the analysis of the behavior of living organisms. It conceives of this behavior as oriented to the attainment of ends in situations by means of normatively regulated expenditure of energy. There are four points to be noted in this conceptualization of behavior. 1 Behavior is oriented to ends or goals or other anticipated states of affairs. 2 It is normatively regulated. 3 It takes place in situations. 4 it involves expenditure of energy or effort or 'motivation.'" Talcott Parsons and E.A. Shils, "Values, Motives, and Systems of Action," in: Talcott Parsons and E.A. Shils (eds.) Towards a General Theory of Action (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1951), p.53.


9 Habermas, "Moral Development and Ego Identity," op. cit., p. 71

10 Habermas cites the main representatives of these theoretical traditions as being H.S. Sullivan and Erik Erikson (analytic ego
psychology), J. Piaget and L. Kohlberg (cognitive developmental psychology), and G.H. Mead, Blumer and Goffman (interactionism).

11 Habermas, op. cit. pp. 73-74.
12 Habermas, op. cit., p. 75.
13 Ibid., p. 78.
14 Ibid., p. 83.
15 Ibid., p. 89.
16 Lasting from birth to approximately two years of age the preoperational or sensorimotor stage is considered a transitional stage between the organism biological and psychological organization. The child begins to know spacial, temporal, and causal characteristics of the world which she learns through sensorimotor, or bodily activities. The six substages of the preoperational stage are:
   - radical egocentrism (to about 1/2 months), when the child is unable to differentiate among self, self-activity, external objects and actions; anticipating and generalizing (1 to 4 months), in which the child begins to construct anticipatory signs, such as crying for an absent person who is the reference object, and repeating pleasurable activities;
   - static coordinating (5 to 8 months), characterized by integration of vision and grasping activity, and imitation of simple observed acts;
   - mobile coordinating and signaling (8 to 10 months), when the first manifestations of symbolic activity through vocal gestures and gestures of reference such as pointing;
   - experimenting (12 to 15 months), in which the child experiments with means to achieve personal objectives such as dropping objects to see what happens. Gestural representation is used more frequently to explore possibilities of a situation;
   - symbolizing (15 to 21 months), characterized by the development of mental operations or interiorized schemes of action. The child uses primarily nonverbal means of representation although she is moving towards verbalization. She imitates and is able to play symbolically pretending that nonexistent events are present.

17 At the concrete-operational stage (from 7 to 10 years) the child's mental operations are more flexible:
   1. His thought is no longer bound to the particular phenomenal state of events, but begins to take into account successive transformations ('detours and reversals').
   2. His thought can and does change from egocentrism to perspectivism and it becomes possible for him to perform
multiplicative operations. He begins to realize that the nature of things is not absolute but relative to the viewpoint from which it is considered. . . .

3. He begins to be capable of mentally performing transformational operations upon phenomenal configurations. He can mentally isolate the relevant variables of a display and can apply first approximations of reversible operations upon these variables. This is the mental source of the ability to form such concepts as conservation."


18 At the formal operations stage the child should have established the concrete physical properties (object, number, space, time, causal properties) necessary for the construction of a formal "logical theory" of events. "The transition in the child's mode of thinking from concrete to formal operations is dependent upon two necessary conditions, virtuosity, and conscious discovery of perturbations. In order for his reasoning processes to progress, his concrete mental operations must have developed to the extent that his system of mental operations is in equilibrium and is efficient. This is what is meant by virtuosity. . . .

Virtuosity and perturbation result in the emergence of a new attitude which characterizes the child's transitional phase between concrete and formal operations. This attitude consists of (1) certain observational and experimental procedures of verification, and (2) isolation of variables by negation, which allows him to understand that an event observed to occur in some instances does not occur in others." Jonas Langer, op. cit. pp. 145-146.

19 Habermas, op. cit. p. 88.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid. p. 81.

22 Ibid., p. 90.

23 Habermas, "What is Universal Pragmatics?" op. cit., p. 3.


25 Ibid., p. 22.

26 Ibid., pp 28-29.

27 Ibid., p. 29.


29 Ibid., p. 94.
30 Ibid., p. 91.


32 Ibid., pp. 247-274.

33 Habermas, "Toward a Reconstruction of Historical Materialism," *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.

34 Gilligan, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

35 Ibid., p. 149.
"The Sun represents rebirth—the emergence of the butterfly out of the cocoon. It symbolizes consciousness and the active, awakened understanding of, and appreciation for life. . . . In the Motherpeace image, human beings no longer insist that they are separate from each other and the rest of the planetary life. The Sun represents knowledge that we are connected by the eternal rays of the life force, each of us part of a vast organism called 'humanity' and the even greater body of the Earth itself."

(Noble, 1983, p. 134)
Figure 4. The Sun.

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1. Introduction

Most of us grow up with a fuzzy picture of society in our minds. For example, we tend to think abstractly about belonging to a country, and there is a feeling of pride in being an American or a Brazilian. We also tend to think concretely about what society is like. In our public school systems we are exposed to a few students who are rich, some who are poor, but the majority pass as neither. The bottom line societal belief is in the myth of success—whoever tries hard is likely to succeed. In the U.S.A. one succeeds by working hard, and having good luck. In Brazil success demands being a malandro (a "wise-guy"), having the right connections, as well as a measure of good luck.

To think about the nature of society and of social justice is usually a complicated affair. Traditional views associated with patriotic emotions weigh heavily. It takes time, effort, and education to understand the detailed construction of a clearer, though not necessarily more abstract, picture of society. Critical theory presents such a view of society designed from a historical materialist theoretical perspective. As a dialectical theory, historical materialism describes the structure of today's society, and the conflicting elements in it which bring about change. It also traces the evolution of society from its origins.

In this chapter I introduce some of man's and woman's critical theories of society. From man's perspective, the writings of Karl Marx and of those writers identified with Marxism, including Jurgen
Habermas in the tradition of the Frankfurt school, provide the most radical theoretical account of human society. We shall concentrate on Marx's discussion of the structure of society and its sources of conflict. Next, we examine Habermas' views of social evolution from the perspective of the development of world views and of norms regulating social action. He claims that social change occurs as humans learn how to solve crucial problems of survival which he calls "evolutionary challenges."

We will also consider several feminists who have applied historical materialism to the study of women's life conditions in society. They claim that a picture of society is not properly drawn until it includes a materialist analysis of the processes associated with the sexual, reproductive, and emotional labor of women. Mary O'Brien, Gayle Rubin, and Joan Kelly are the feminists who have contributed to a historical materialist interpretation of society.

2. Marxism

Labor provides the fundamental frame of reference for a Marxist perspective on society. Marxists view society as a group of people laboring to create the means to satisfy their basic needs. The individual is primarily a worker who contributes labor to social production, and whose personal needs are satisfied according to this process.

The concepts used by Marx to describe social phenomena are somewhat different from those of economics and political science, the traditional scientific accounts of social and economic life under
capitalism. These are uncritical in the sense that they tolerate, if not justify, the perpetuation of the capitalist system. Marxist concepts, at first sight seem complicated, but they are elegant analytical tools. They are useful in explaining the operation of society's collective effort to produce for survival, and in envisioning the possibility and direction of changing social organization for the better. Following G.A. Cohen's¹ account of Marx's theory of history, and Allen Wood's² interpretation of the philosophy of Marxism, I present a straightforward account of such basic Marxist concepts as "productive forces," "social relations of production," "mode of production," "economic structure," "fetishism," and "alienation." This work is necessary in order to establish the language of the critical perspective on capitalist society.

2.1. The productive process. The productive forces of society, or society's productive powers, result from the combination of such means as tools, raw materials, spaces, and human labor. Humans are endowed with labor power manifested in strength, skill, knowledge, inventiveness, and other qualities of the sort, with which we make a living out of nature. Human faculties and tools are combined in the process that creates products to satisfy human needs. The production process that guarantees the survival of the species is eminently social, fruit of a collective effort which requires the coordination of the labor of all able humans (not to mention other animals, and machines). Such coordination of labor establishes, or defines, how individuals and certain groups of people relate to each other. These
relations, institutionalized and socially transmitted, represent the very backbone of social life. Since an individual in isolation cannot survive as a human, social and sexual division of labor is a property of society as labor power and skills are a property of individuals.

The process of production consists of institutionalized ways in which individuals and groups relate to each other with the purpose of producing. These relations define the relative positions of individuals and groups within the extended network of production that arises from the social division of labor. Marx conceived these social relations of production between different classes in society in terms of effective power commanded over productive forces, that is, power over one's own or other people's labor, and over other means of production (tools, materials, spaces).

2.2. Social relations of production, social class, and economic structure. The concept of ownership is useful to clarify the idea of "effective power" which is at stake in Marx's understanding of the social relations of production:

To own an object is to enjoy a range of rights with respect to the use and situation of that object.

. . . Typical ownership rights are: the right to use an object o, the right to income generated by the use of o, the right to prevent others from using o; the right to destroy o; the right to transfer o, etc. 3

Applying this definition to ownership of labor and of means of production, it is possible to categorize four historical classes, dependent slaves, serfs, laborers ("workers"), and independent owners. Table 5 lists the rights of each class to the ownership of their personal labor power and of means of production:
Table 5: Ownership positions of immediate producers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>His labor power</th>
<th>The means of production he uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slave</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serf owns</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proletarian</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slaves, like animals, are owned by others. They have no rights to the disposal of their labor power nor to any property, tools, space, or materials used in production. They do as they are told, or else. Serfs have but partial rights to the fruits of their own labor, to property, tools and other means of production which they share with landlords. They have the duty to please and to serve their protectors. Under capitalism, proletarian (wage and salary) workers have the right to hire out their labor power to any capitalist, though they have no ownership claims to the capitalist’s means of production. But they too must learn the rules of the system and gratefully give what is demanded of them, or face the threat of losing their livelihood. Slaves, serfs, and proletarians are all subordinate producers. Their livelihoods depend on superiors for whom they produce and to whose authority they respond.

It is important to note that different types of relations of production between the classes may coexist simultaneously, though one type of relation is usually dominant. For example, in today’s society the relations between producers who work for wages (those who have to sell labor power) and capitalists (those who own means of production and
buy labor power) are considered dominant in Western society. Concomitantly, however, there exists slave and serf-like labor for many people. For example, the labor of women and children who perform productive tasks domestically without "pay."

The entire set of production relations, including admittedly dominant and less dominant types of production relations, comprise society's economic structure. A given type of economic structure, dominant during a period of time, characterizes historical social forms. Marx identifies slavery, serfdom, and capitalism as historical social forms in which the dominant social relations of production have been, respectively, that of domination of slave by master, serf by landlord, and proletarian by capitalist.5

Marx envisaged future social forms whose economic structures would not be based on relationships of domination, and exploitation of a class of workers by a class of owners. Workers could control the productive process with the objective of providing benefits to all members of society without class distinctions. Workers would be entitled to the fruits of their labor in the joint ownership of the means of production, and the just sharing of their produce—"to each according to his needs." In Marxism, in future socialist and communist economic structures, workers would not be dependent or independent but interdependent. To bring about that reality of interdependence is to actualize our species-being.

2.3. Mode of production: the example of capitalism While an economic structure "is not a way of producing, but a framework of
power in which producing occurs ... a mode of production is a way of producing." The mode of production has material (or technical) and social dimensions. The material aspect of a mode of production refers to the ways the forces of production are technically utilized—for example, which tools and machines are used when, how, and by whom in the process production. The social mode of production refers to the purposes of production, the form of the worker's surplus labor, and the mode of worker's exploitation.

Under the capitalist system, the purpose of capitalist production is the exchange of commodities for profit and capital accumulation. Surplus labor is important to capitalism because it is the key ingredient of the capitalist system. Simply put, surplus labor is work done by workers—usually unknowingly—for no pay. Surplus labor becomes gain—profit and capital—to the capitalist employer. Put differently, surplus labor is the worker's alienated labor which capitalists appropriate.

Under the capitalist mode of production, things are made and services are rendered with little or no thought of satisfying human needs. The fundamental value of goods and services for a capitalist enterprise is not its use value (how much utility a consumer may derive from it), but its exchange value (how much the product is worth when traded in the market). Commodities are produced to be exchanged for money, more money than the combined cost of the raw materials and the workers' labor. The essence of capitalism is to extract a profit from workers' alienated labor.
Under capitalism the exchange value of a commodity becomes relatively more important than its use value. Exchange value incorporates both the quality and the quantity of labor employed in commodity production. Thus labor is always "behind" a commodity exchanged in the market. Producer and consumer never meet at the market as members of a community; they have nothing to say either about the production or about the transaction. What the consumer sees in the market is a commodity and its price. The labor and the workers who produced the commodities "disappear" from the market. The commodity seems to acquire value by itself, a value that is independent of the labor put into it. Marx called this "magic property" of a commodity that appears to have what it does not have "fetishism." (Here Marx was drawing a parallel with religious artifacts believed to have special powers that in actuality they do not have.)

Commodity fetishism is but one form of fetishism characteristic of capitalism. Due to commodity fetishism the character of production in capitalist market society is not transparently or immediately social. Under primitive tribal communism, and in feudal or patriarchal family-based societies, for example, things are produced and services are rendered because they are destined to be consumed by a member of the community or by the group as a whole. There is primacy of the use value. Here, "the social relations between individuals in the performance of their labor appear ... as their own mutual personal relations, and are not disguised under the shape of social relations between the products of labor."
Social relations mysteriously disguised in commodities and represented in a quantified, abstract, exchange value—"prices"—are alienated social relations between equally alienated human beings. Hence the concept of alienation is of central importance to Marxist thought. Two words are used by Marx to indicate alienation: Entfremdung (estrangement) and Entausserung (externalization). The concept of alienation implies irrationality, separation, and the establishment of a relation of indifference or hostility between things that naturally belong together.

The capitalist mode and relations of production breed feelings of alienation. These feelings are real for individuals and widespread throughout society. First, workers hire out (alienate) their personally owned labor powers to the owners of the means of production. Further, workers have little to say about how production is to be done, or about what happens to the fruits of production, which are removed (alienated) from them and sold in the market for profit. Profits, of course, revert to the owners and organizers of production.

In this view, workers are used like instruments, like machines and materials. The capitalist production process disregards, appropriates, and distorts the worker's creativity, intelligence, character, pride in performance, pace, etc. as these fundamental human powers are subjected to the capitalists' organizational needs. The division of labor further separates workers into categories, each representing a unit of labor fragmented from the whole. There is among workers hostility towards the work environment, towards the work
performed, towards the owners/organizers of production, towards each other, and worse, towards themselves as individuals. Capitalists, on the other hand, are interested in diminishing costs of production, and in expanding markets and profits. These technical considerations leave little room for concern about the needs of workers, consumers, of other capitalists, and of society in general.

To Marxists, this separatist system is irrational. For the large majority of human beings it brings about the reality of domination, poverty, disease, ugliness, and insecurity. The task of understanding and overcoming capitalism requires raised consciousness to clear the ideological cloud asserting and maintaining capitalism's truthfulness and rightfulness. The task further requires action in practice with the objective of establishing relations among human beings that will reestablish their interdependence and equality. For Marx, the exploited class of workers will be in charge of this process of social change. Capitalists, of course, cannot be expected to cooperate once they are too entrenched in interests and privileges that constantly needs protection from other capitalists' greed, and from the meager demands of the working class.

3. **Habermas' social evolutionary learning**

Habermas examines the history of the species in the light of the theory of interests of knowledge. For him, the history of society is also the history of learning in the instrumental (scientific and technological) and the communicative (normative and institutional) dimensions of the productive process. Habermas knows that social
learning mechanisms commonly are "housed" in the psychology of the individual. In order for knowledge to be available to the members of society, a person has to learn and to share the learning with others. Individual learning, however, takes place within a social milieu. One learns in institutional environments such as the family, the school, the workplace, and the media—all institutions regulated by norms. In this sense, "there is a circular process between societal and individual learning," and "it is only in a derivative sense that societies 'learn'." The question Habermas raises is how privately available knowledge becomes public, that is, how individually acquired learning abilities are transposed into social learning processes.

Learning is a key mechanism of social evolution. It is stimulated by unresolved social system problems—"evolutionary challenges." Solutions for problems are found by individuals, but they only eliminate the problem when they are institutionalized—when they generate norms available to everybody. While it may take only one person to learn the answer, it takes groups of people mobilized in social movements to change the normative order of society.

Evolutionary challenges are "system problems" which "express themselves as disturbances of the reproduction process of a society." In the task of reproducing itself, society depends upon social integration, the consent and collaborative action in productive activity. If existing norms create barriers to the satisfaction of the needs of survival, the system problem and the accompanying conflicts become so serious that norms have to be changed. And indeed, drawing from collectively available knowledge, social
movements dramatize the nature of the social system problem, and struggle to bring forth "the institutional embodiment of structures of rationality," that is, newly learned normative solutions to regulate social intercourse.15

According to Habermas' model of social evolution, an evolutionary problem is posed at the level of the forces of production, representing a barrier to the reproduction of society—it creates difficulties for people's survival. This problem challenges the learning capabilities of those involved, stimulates the search for answers, and the organization of social movements that will struggle to implement solutions. If the movement does not succeed, and a proposed solution cannot be institutionalized, the problem remains. If the efforts do succeed, new norms replace old ones and create an institutional framework to support a new level of social integration. Social evolution occurs as the normative order is changed, as new modes of production replace old, problematic ones.

The institutionalized new mode of production increases the level of the forces of production, the chances for species reproduction, and the seeds of yet new needs, problems, and evolutionary challenges:

at every stage of development the social evolutionary learning process generates new resources, which mean new dimensions of scarcity and thus new historical needs.16

Habermas identifies four evolutionary challenges human society has had to face thus far in history. Each challenge is posed as a result of human experience in the previous historical period, and as it is solved, it nurtures the seeds of following challenges. The
evolutionary development of society is the process of answering these challenges.

3.1. Evolutionary challenges and stages of social development. In his model of social evolution Habermas, like Marx, sees change originating at the level of the forces of production. Somehow a technical or economic change holds a promise to increase society's level of output. The proposed change only comes to being, however, when it is institutionalized at the level of social relations of production. Unless change is implemented through social institutions, in some ways imposed on or accepted by the people as a desirable aspect of social intercourse, and put into practice, the potential for change is aborted.

If changes in the forces of production are not accompanied by changes in the relations of production, social integration is unstable. Society delays the use of its adaptive mechanism, facing a dangerous state of crisis characterized by arrested development. When the situation becomes sufficiently critical, society either "dies" from maladaptive adjustments or undergoes revolutionary transformation. Social transformation occurs at the level of norms which reflect the renegotiation of the social relations of production. When norms are renegotiated, however, new technological and economic potentials of the existing forces of production are put into action, increasing social welfare and decreasing oppressive conditions. Productive powers experience expansion under the more efficient social norms just rewritten.
A main feature of Habermas' view is the evolutionary problem itself, the challenge inviting reflection and the construction of solutions, motivating thought and action. The evolutionary challenge calls for a permanent solution, and for the elimination of the potential for conflicts which surrounds it. As problems are solved, society evolves. So, the existence of problems gives important clues to the recognition of society's unmet needs, and to the understanding of the direction of change that could (but might not) take place. Problems are clues to the developmental logic of the history of the human species.

Habermas identifies four sources of problems that humans thus far have had to address historically. As indicated, each problem solution brings the seeds of new problems. Today some societies are already dealing with a fourth generation of problems. Critical challenges are posed by a "condition" in which the material forces of production are not in balance with the social relations of production. Stimulated by these evolutionary problems society develops its world views, legal-moral structures, collective identities, and general structures of social action. In summary, human societies build their identities as they think and act to solve a central problem that puzzles them. The central social problems, or evolutionary challenges, that have demanded solutions from human society are the following: a) demarcation of society from external nature; b) self-regulation of the social system; c) self-regulation of the exchange of the social system with external nature; and d) self-regulation of society with internal nature.
A. **Demarcating society from external nature.** The first human beings faced the contingencies of nature endowed with a complex learning mechanism developed to insure survival and reproduction. Systems of communication allowed them to regulate social action through the establishment of norms. Symbolic reality referred to two separate but linked dimensions, that of action (doing), and that of interaction (rules for doing or norms).\(^{19}\)

Protection from bad weather, beasts of prey and other competing human groups, as well as the gathering of plants and the hunting of animals for food were necessities which made imperative the harmonization of society and the natural environment. Humans felt powerless in their confrontation with natural phenomena beyond their control. At the same time, they had to learn how to control nature if they were to survive successfully. Shared mythical world views emerged out of communication-based collective social action. Early myths, having explanatory power, may be considered as an attempt to control the natural environment.

Mythical world views, centered upon the social group organized the group along kinship lines, but did not distinguish properly between social and natural phenomena. This indicates a lack of separation between society and nature. The group's social action was directly woven into the mythological explanations. Ordinary in-group conflicts were decided according to a conventional moral consciousness perspective. More serious conflicts, which failed to respect institutionalized binding norms, were solved from a preconventional
point of view, with "assessment of action consequences, compensation for resultant damages, [and] restoration of status quo ante."\textsuperscript{20}

Habermas associates this stage with Marx's communal mode of production of the primitive neolithic societies. In these societies collective identity developed around the figure of common ancestors, and individual identity was given by the position of the person in the kinship group. The boundaries between nature and society were indistinguishable. The individual is one with nature and society.\textsuperscript{21}

B. Self-regulation of the social system. Once natural elements were somewhat under control, and survival not so seriously at stake, the problem of self-regulation of the social system became central to human groups. There rises to consciousness the scarcity of legal security, the protection of the rights of persons and groups in a society that has become diverse. Habermas is not very clear about the second stage of development when societies are first organized around a state. It is logical to interpret it as comprehending what he calls early civilizations and later developed civilizations associated with slave holding and feudal modes of production.\textsuperscript{22}

The state was formed around the figure of a powerful leader who was able to maintain order, and obtain needed cooperation between the people who had to share resources from common lands in a peaceful manner. The legitimation of the leader's domination over a common state was accomplished in the framework of rationalized world views. Under state organization, coexistence of several kinship groups required private ancient tribal traditions to change in order to
accommodate conflicting elements brought by alien beliefs and values. The emerging world views came to emphasize sociomorphic over animistic elements, and an initial syncretism of gods gave way to higher religions, to cosmological and philosophical theoretical systems. (For example, Christianity, which had its apogee during the medieval period, became the dominant world view of coexisting European groups.)

A theoretical attitude characterizes these rational explanatory systems which were available as sources for individual and social problem-solving. The evolutionary challenge was for society to regulate itself by providing some degree of legal security to its members. Unlike the faithful, the theorist does not take accepted truths for granted. A person who is able to theorize asks questions, seeks answers, and tests their adequacy. Through theory building, explanations of reality are amenable to becoming increasingly universal. The theoretical attitude allows humans to regard others as also human, as members of the same species.

According to Habermas, universal explanations embodied in rational world views of philosophy, cosmology, and higher religions are derived from the early mythical explanations. Societies organized in states attributed the powers associated with mythical entities to the ruler. All conflicts in the social order were conventionally solved with reference to the figure of this leader whose position of authority was legitimized through shared myths: the ruler, not an abstract system of rules, administered and represented justice. Actions were not judged on the basis of their consequences but from intentions,
punishment replaced retaliation, and individual liability was accepted in lieu of joint liability. 23

The final break with mythological thought occurred as rationalized world views brought about new ways to solve moral conflicts. Normal conflicts could already be solved from a postconventional moral consciousness perspective, while serious conflict was still conventionally solved, but from a new point of view. Conventions were now detached from the reference person of the ruler who made decisions and embodied in a system of justice based on tradition-bound but articulated legal codes. 24

Collective identity development at this stage is linked with the emergence of more universal world views which legitimized political domination:

The universalistic world interpretations of the great founders of religions and of great philosophers grounded a commonality of conviction mediated through a teaching tradition and permitting only abstract objects of identification. As members of universal communities of faith, citizens could recognize their ruler and the order represented by him so long as it was possible to render political domination plausible in some sense as the legacy of an order of the world and of salvation that was believed in and posited absolutely. 25

The external boundaries of such collective identity separated society from nature, as well as one society from another. Aliens, though subject to conversion and conquest, were regarded as less than human. Internally, collective identity acquired a more abstract feature when the state territorial organization became a dominant identifying factor over the kinship group. Unlike the communal societies of the previous developmental stage, in emergent class societies,
the integrating power of identity of the empire had to confirm itself precisely in unifying the evolutionary nonsynchronous structures of consciousness of the country, the aristocracy, city tradesmen, priests, and officials, and in binding them to the same political order.26

Various attitudes towards traditions coexisted among the various groups of a plural society, from beliefs in myth to rituals of faith. The universalistic potential brought about by an identity mediated through world views, however, cannot yet be fully realized because of the domination of a particular state. This potential advances a step in the next stage.

C. Self-regulation of the social system with external nature. This stage corresponds to the rise and expansion of capitalism. With the capitalist mode of production there rises an economic order which is autonomous from the political order—"[t]he capitalist principle of organization meant the differentiation of a depoliticized and market-regulated economic system."27 Here economic decisions are privately made according to purposive-rational principles of instrumental reasoning, with little or no concern for moral principles (which, by the way, are associated with practical knowledge). With capitalism instrumental reasoning becomes the paradigm for knowledge and the source of technical know-how; modern science assumes a central position in production.

Religious, cosmological, and philosophical world views were questioned by Reformation thinkers, and by Enlightenment philosophers. It was no longer possible to explain the world through
unifying principles such as the figure of a god, or a metaphysical being, or even nature. The unity of the world "could be asserted only reflectively, through the unity of reason." It was because humans now had learned how to reflect about reasoning—how to think about thinking—that new, scientific explanations about reality were obviously in demand.

Emerging world views had a special characteristic: they were concerned with linking theory (abstract design) and practice (concrete action). Man consciously was to use his reasoning powers to promote systematic change in the social and the natural world. Society somehow had achieved self-regulation, for larger numbers of humans were already able to coexist inside large and complex organized states. Society now needed to self-regulate its relationship with nature; it needed to produce, to extract from Nature, a livelihood (food, shelter, etc.) for an increasing number of members, many of whom were caught in the transition from a simple but reasonably well-fed country-peasant lifestyle, to a mostly unhealthy city-working class lifestyle. Wealth and economic growth became social imperatives: "Value came to consciousness as a scarce resource." Reason (instrumental and utilitarian) was going to be used to solve the new problem of economic insecurity once the problem of the past stage, legal security, had been solved with the institutionalization of civil law.

Under capitalism, production is no longer oriented towards the kinship group, or the local village. Instead, production is oriented towards the market, a universal, and therefore also a distant and
abstract entity. Politically and economically emancipated humans participated in the market as buyers and sellers who were private, autonomous, and legal subjects. The collective identity of capitalist society "developed under the highly abstract viewpoints of legality, morality, and sovereignty" which define individuals as,

(a) free and equal subjects of civil law (the citizen as private commodity owner),

(b) morally free subjects (the citizen as a private person), and

(c) politically free subjects (the citizen as democratic citizen of the state)\textsuperscript{30}

These ideals are more or less universal inside most states but do not hold between states. As for social integration, under the capitalist mode of production people interact according to principles set up by the capitalist enterprise regulated by civil law. Capitalist economic principles and political democracy represent a universalist (all-included) and utilitarian point of view. In tune with the separation between the political (public) and the economic (private) spheres, resolution of conflicts separates what is legal from what is moral. These do not need to agree, and it seems that they rarely do. Moral decisions, however, are made from this universalistic and postconventional perspective.\textsuperscript{31}

D. Self-regulated exchange of society with internal nature. In his modified theory of historical materialism, Habermas acknowledges that the theoretical design is just being laid. Further research is needed to fill in the details, and check out incongruencies. Habermas offers
little discussion about the fourth stage of development. For him, at this stage personal and social motivation, or meaning, comes to consciousness as a scarce resource. (Here Marx no doubt would have said that the challenge concerns the alienation of human individuals.) Habermas describes a possible picture of society at that stage:

Perhaps a new institutional core would then take shape around a new organizational principle, an institutional core in which there merges elements of public education, social welfare, liberalized punishment, and therapy for mental illness.32

This picture, though certainly not improbable, gives an impression of Huxley's *Brave New World*. The state-supported educational, welfare, and mental health (drugs for behavior modification or sedation?) "institutional core" would intensify and at the same time soften sociopsychological coercion through the manipulation of motives.33 If the world is to become as portrayed, it cannot be decided in advance, says Habermas with the function of critical theory and of universal pragmatics in mind: to show a direction to human liberation.

Habermas' idea of comparing and drawing relations between observed aspects of individual development, and aspects of social development is an interesting one. One wonders, again, why is he only concerned with cognition (world view), communication (legal and moral structures), and identity (collective identity)? The human individual is known to have sexual functions which mature with the passage of time. Habermas acknowledges this, but he does not discuss its implications. Because he operates within a Marxist tradition, but
maybe even more so because he is a man, Habermas fails to address the issue of sexuality, individual psychosexual development, and the evolution of sexual relations between men and women. Fortunately this task has been undertaken by feminists.
4. A Feminist View of Society

A feminist theory of society begins by establishing its legitimacy as a distinct view in the representation of women's social experience. Feminist theory is woman-centered, though not in the same way that men's perspective is androcentric. The historical experience of subjugation makes it imperative for feminist theory to account for women's relations with men, and in feminist theory this subject becomes a central theoretical concern.

Men's theories, including Marxism and neomarxism, have not given priority to an account of men's relations with women. By and large men have ignored the relations between the sexes, or relegated it to a secondary position in theory construction, and this is not unrelated to women's assigned secondary status in society. Men have explained subjugation of women as a natural state, as natural as their own superior intelligence and agency. In more recent interpretations (Mill, Marx, and Engels), men have conceded that women's subjugation results from historical political and economic conditions. In virtue of outdated laws and customs, and/or because of class differences, women lack the full rights of citizens and sufficient means to survive independently.

What distinguishes women from men is femaleness, the biological fact that women bear children. Associated to this sexual dimorphism of the species, the most fundamental form of subjugation of women is connected to sexuality, and to the associated functions of giving
birth and having the primary responsibility for rearing human offspring. A feminist view of society incorporates the analysis of the sexual, reproductive, and emotional relationships between women and men, the analysis of the social aspects of the process of reproduction, and the analysis of "mothering." Unlike androcentric social theory, the woman-centered perspective on society includes an equal concern for women, men, and children. Androcentrism is primarily concerned with the social expression of manhood, and with relations that men have among themselves.

4.1. A materialist perspective on the origins of male supremacy.
In her study of the reproductive process, Mary O'Brien, feminist, nurse-midwife, sociologist, and educator, contributes to the recovery of the origins of male dominance from historical obscurity and distortion. While Marx affirms that human consciousness is determined by labor activity, O'Brien affirms that gender consciousness is fundamentally shaped by the material conditions characteristic of the reproductive process. Affected by human consciousness, sexuality and reproduction can no longer be thought of as a purely biological process.

The aspects of O'Brien's theory presented in this section do not reveal the richness of depth and detail in her analysis, nor do they fully illustrate her delightful humour. Nonetheless, O'Brien's arguments are relevant to the explanation and understanding of the origin and the historical development of sex/gender systems and of male supremacy. She adds an important piece to the new picture of
society drawn from the feminist perspective by following Hegel and Marx.

Methodologically O'Brien acknowledges Hegel's insight about the dialectical nature of human consciousness, and applies this insight, from a feminist perspective, to Hegel's own analysis of the reproductive process. According to Hegelian thought, human consciousness is dialectically structured in that an individual's mind and the world are in opposition to each other. A person, a subject, is separated from the object he or she observes and reflects upon. The opposition between subject and object, for Hegel, is mediated through an ideal unity of reason and action. For Marx, however, this same gap between subject and object is mediated not ideally but materially in the unity of experientially lived action and theory. O'Brien extends and reinforces the theory of the dialectical nature of human consciousness. She argues that the two most primordial human experiences, production (the reproduction of self), and reproduction (the reproduction of the species), are indeed dialectically structured.39

Central to the analysis of a dialectical process is the concept of alienation. As discussed earlier, alienation can be described as separation, or consciousness of negativity. For Hegel, as for O'Brien and the Marxist tradition, "consciousness . . . resists alienation, the separation of the thinking object from the world and from experiences of the world and the negation of the self."40 It is in terms of alienation so defined that O'Brien rethinks the reproductive process.
From Hegel's masculine point of view, lovers experience a loss of self-distinction, they alienate themselves in the passion of the sexual embrace. The lovers' separatedness is overcome ("mediated") in the union of their seeds. The new seed is a potential self-consciousness which grows and "breaks free," in a process that affirms the continuity of the species. This process is not really that simple, says O'Brien. The Hegelian interpretation can be criticized along three dimensions. First, there is a question about the unity of the seeds and the nature of the separations involved in sex and procreative relations; second, problems arise in connection with the transformed seed "breaking free" from the mother's womb; and third, clarifications are required regarding the issue of genetic and species continuity, and the consequences of the reproductive process to the course of human history.

From the point of view of this Scotish feminist midwife, though in the reproductive act each heterosexual partner indeed contributes a seed, the unity of the seeds is experienced differently by man and woman. For man, conception is an abstraction in the sense that he will never hold the transformed seed. For woman, the experience is concrete. Her body will carry, expel, and again nourish the transformed seed. Maternity is a concrete experience, paternity an idea. Man's alienation of his seed negates him not as a lover but as a parent. In childbirth labor woman alienates the transformed seed, now a human being; she is not negated as a parent or as a lover. Woman's alienation from the race is mediated through her labor. She
knows that the child is hers; whereas the male can never be certain of this.

Therefore, women's reproductive consciousness is one of genetic and species continuity. Men's reproductive consciousness is one of genetic and species discontinuity. "The significance of the alienation of the male seed," says O'Brien, "lies in resultant forms of male reproductive consciousness. This is a consciousness of contradictions, a series of oppositions which must be mediated. Men are separated from nature, from the race, and from the continuity of the race over time." Resisting the alienation inherent in the reproductive process becomes an issue for men, as the imperative of consciousness is overcoming its negation.

What do men do to resist the uncomfortable alienation from genetic and species continuity? Men's response, says O'Brien, has been the ideological (and practical) affirmation of male potency. Potency "is the name men have given to their historically wrought success in mediating experienced contradictions in their reproductive consciousness." The concept of male potency was introduced in connection with the discovery of the participation of males in reproduction. Men (and women) had to discover paternity, a concept that required relatively advanced cognitive development before it could be grasped by humans.

O'Brien's thesis is that "the first and significant historical change in the reproductive process was not a biological mutation of some kind, but a transformation in male reproductive consciousness, which was triggered by the historical discovery of physiological
paternity." This change in consciousness is also at the root of the social construction of the sex/gender system, under the ideology of male potency. The potency principle legitimizes patriarchal rule, the rule of the fathers over women and children. As O'Brien puts it, "men do indeed attempt to resist alienation of their seed . . . by claiming superior procreative potential for a sanctified sperm."47

When physiological paternity is discovered, and reproductive consciousness is changed, men discover their inclusion in the reproductive process as well as their exclusion from it. This contradiction must be mediated practically. Furthermore, knowledge of paternity entails men's discovery of freedom. Men have freedom from and freedom to choose paternity. In the reproductive process men are naturally "forced" to be free while they also are separated from the continuity of the race over time. Such continuity must be insured. When discontinuity is perceived as alienation, men must make artificial modes of continuity. The ideological and institutional affirmation of paternity, and of male potency in general, represents the artificial, men-made system that guarantees continuity over time.48

Paternity implies men's ideological and institutional appropriation of children who naturally belong to women. For this appropriation to take place the cooperation between men must be insured. Potentially, every man could claim a child as "his," and conflict over women and children would be experienced daily. To avoid rivalry, there must be an agreement to regulate access to women. Paternity then becomes a right, the right to the child, and thus also the right to appropriate the woman's labor. For O'Brien, patriarchy
is a social system of forced cooperation between men forced to be
free: a system based on the need to enforce men's rights to the
appropriation of children and the work of women.49

From all the alternatives to insure paternity, the patriarchal
system—institutionalized agreements between men—arose as a viable
alternative in history. Theoretically, men and women could have
established relationships of trust between them to solve the paternity
question, men and women mutually helping men to bridge their feelings
and the reality of separation from genetic continuity. However, as
O'Brien points out, two factors militated against the establishing of
trusting relationships between men and women at that time in history.
In the first place, since there is little evidence supporting human
monogamy, men have been inclined to develop other arrangements to
insure paternity: "trust and lust make uneasy bedfellows." Secondly,
and more importantly, relationships based on trust are problematic
when the partners are not equals. In the reproductive process, the
relation is between a laborer, the mother, and a nonlaborer, the
father. The reproductive relation is established between a non-free
person, woman, and a free person, man. On the other hand, relations
between equal men "have a causal base: they are relations of those
who are forced to be free, a brotherhood of free appropriators."50

In summary, O'Brien presents a feminist theory of social change,
as well as a theory of the genesis of patriarchy. Social change is
triggered by changes in consciousness rooted in experiential, or
material, reality. The understanding of men's link to reproduction,
paternity, brought about a shift in reproductive consciousness. Men
perceived themselves as simultaneously included and excluded from reproduction, which was also to be simultaneously included and excluded from their own genetic continuity and from the continuity of the species. This alienated condition of men had to be mediated. An artificial system of continuity needed to be imposed upon the natural order. For that to happen a necessary cooperation between men was attained so that each men's rights to paternity could be legitimized. The patriarchal system, seen as institutionalized relations of property between men who are fathers, gives (free) men the right to be proprietors of (unfree) women's children, and to women's labor. "His" children (most especially male children) help guarantee a man's continuity over time, as carriers of his genes, heirs to his property and place in society.

The male potency principle represents the core of the ideological foundation of patriarchy. Expanded beyond its sexual and reproductive connotation, the potency principle attaches greater importance to all that it is associated with maleness and manhood over what is associated with femaleness and womanhood. The importance attached to paternity established in the patriarchal system represents a male victory over nature. In this system men become the masters of women and their children, and also of nature. As O'Brien puts it: "Patriarchy is the power to transcend natural realities with historical, man-made realities. This is the potency principle in its primordial form." Consequently, based on the changed reproductive consciousness imposition of the potency principle, the masculine gender assigns itself to a superior position of leadership and
protection with respect to the feminine gender. The feminine gender is assigned to an inferior position as weakling protegee, and follower in all matters pertaining to the masculine domain.

4.2. The "traffic" in women: key to the connection of the productive and the sexual-reproductive systems. The potency principle—symbolized by the phallus—represents men's capacity to create. Men's creative process is one of conquest, of possession, of domination, one which implies actual or potential presence of violence. Men, simply because they are males, are supposed to amass and exercise power over all aspects of social life to show their potency. As indicated, the male potency-affirming system of men who-have-the-right-to-be-fathers is called patriarchy by a significant core group of feminists today. According to this phallocratic system, women, as females, are impotent by definition. From the point of view that takes gender experience and stratification in consideration as a category of analysis, social reality is not one but two, interconnected, social realities, the reality of men, and the reality of women. And, women's reality is subordinated to men's.

Gayle Rubin, the feminist anthropologist, theorizes about the relations of subordination between "men's reality" and "women's reality" in society. For her, it is important to distinguish the concept of "sex/gender system" from "patriarchy." Patriarchy, is one type of sex/gender system. Rubin finds it necessary to "to develop concepts to adequately describe the social organization of sexuality and the reproduction of the conventions of sex and gender."
Pursuing that direction, and like O'Brien discussing Hegel's analysis of the reproductive process, Rubin undertakes Engel's unfinished task of examining systems of kinship.

Kinship systems are made of, and reproduce, concrete forms of socially organized sexuality. They are empirically observable sex/gender systems and, like language, they represent one of the greatest human inventions. For primitive humans the kinship system represented the very fabric of society. At that moment in the history of the species (which is today for the groups that still remain relatively independent from capitalist expansion), all aspects of life—socioeconomic, political, and cultural—take place in the context of a closely connected, and relatively small institutionalized network of kinship relations between people. A primitive society was (and is) like a "one big family."

Rubin draws from Claude Levi-Strauss in her analysis of the status of women in society, and indicates how his theory can offer elements to the construction of a feminist vision of society. Levi-Strauss conceives kinship as "an imposition of cultural organization upon the facts of biological procreation."

That is to say, he does not accept the reproduction of the species as a given, but as the fruit of human agency. Furthermore, Levi-Strauss is aware of the central position of sexuality in human society, which he described as composed of male and female beings. He does not assume, with traditional social scientific theory, a human group made up of genderless human subjects. Feminist analysis can benefit from Levi-Strauss' anthropology for his provision of a complex account of the structural
principles of kinship, from the logic of taboos, to the rules of marriage. According to Rubin, in the complex "chess game" Levi-Strauss builds, "two of his chess pieces are particularly relevant to women—the 'gift' and the incest taboo, whose dual articulation adds up to his concept of the exchange of women."55

According to the anthropological theory of primitive reciprocity, a marked characteristic of social intercourse was the giving, and receiving, of gifts, from pebbles to people, usually with no gain for any of the parties involved in the process. The process established, affirmed, or expressed a common link between members of society, holding it together through bonding. For Levi-Strauss, these gifts symbolize "exchange," and the particular institution of marriage represents a gift exchange of women. The incest taboo, a universal practice, serves to promote exogamous marriage, molding sexuality and reproduction to fit the need to connect people through social alliances. This taboo, whatever form it takes in its prohibitions, guarantees that women are exchanged. Kinship systems, then, are established through the mechanisms of the incest taboo, and of the exchange of women, and kinship structures result from the network of relations among people connected with each other.56

Rubin's insight is an important one in the feminist understanding of society: "If women are the gifts, then it is men who are the exchange partners."57 It is between men that the reciprocity of the exchange process counts. Women cannot benefit equally from a social organization that results from exchange between men. The oppression of women is embedded in the system of exchange between male partners.
because women are the object of exchange. She points out that history is filled with examples: "Women are given in marriage, taken in battle, exchanged for favors, sent as tribute, traded, bought, and sold."58. Though women and men can be exchanged as slaves, serfs, or as persons who have special skills, trades, or professions—men do dominate each other, after all—only women are exchanged as women.

Rubin affirms that the asymmetry of gender is the asymmetry between exchanger and exchanged, between men's and women's roles in society. Making a connection between Rubin's and O'Brien's insights, it is possible to draw further lines in this feminist picture of society. Gender asymmetry, the distinction between women's and men's lives in society, is grounded in the material reality of the reproductive process as described by O'Brien. Women are not naturally "gifts" or "objects of circulation"; women's condition has become like that of "gifts" or objects of transaction between men, as a result of change in reproductive consciousness brought about by the discovery of paternity, and the imposition of the potency principle.

The "gift" that circulates in society is, most particularly, associated with the sexual and reproductive capacity of women necessary to the genetic continuation of men and of the species. The "traffic" in women's capacity to provide sex, children, and different forms of labor, takes place only to the extent that the reproductive consciousness, and the material conditions that provide for this consciousness, determine its appropriation by men. This form of consciousness demands the regulation of the access to women so that men can become fathers, and establish dominance. The potency
principle demands that rules of social life are established between men with respect to women. Men are subjects, women are objects. Women have to provide what their exchangers demand, they are trained to do it unconsciously, while men are unconsciously trained to demand women's submission and exercise their potency over all Nature.

For Rubin, as for Levi-Strauss, a male-dominated society is a society of male exchangers—what O'Brien calls a "brotherhood of free appropriators." Appropriation and exchange are two aspects of production (of goods and services), and reproduction ("production" of people). For Rubin, kinship structures or sex/gender systems, are also systems of production:

A kinship system is an imposition of social ends upon a part of the natural world. It is therefore 'production' in the most general sense of the term: a molding, a transformation of objects (in this case, people) to and by a subjective purpose. It has its own relations of production, distribution, and exchange, which include certain 'property' forms in people.59

This picture represents an integrated view of society which takes into consideration the political economy of sex/gender systems. For feminists the personal is political, and the political is personal as well. Separations are false. In other words, that which has to do with the individual and the family is tightly connected with that which has to do with class relations in society. Rubin says, "kinship and marriage are always parts of total social systems, and are always tied into economic and political arrangements."60

Joan Kelly, a feminist historian and theoretician, also supports the integrated view of society.61
A theory of social change that incorporates the relation of the sexes has to consider how general changes in production affect and shape production in the family and, thereby, the respective roles of men and women. And it has to consider, as well, the flow in the other direction: the impact of family life and the relation of the sexes upon psychic and social formations.

Kelly suggests that feminist theory study the changes in sex/gender systems that are related to changes in the productive process, and the changes in the productive process that are connected with changes in the sex/gender system. What shapes the relation of the sexes "is the way the work of procreation and socialization is organized in relation to the organization of work that results in articles for subsistence and/or exchange." Here, the relationship between the "domestic" and the "public" spheres of activity is a key to understanding women's status in society. A pattern has emerged in history, says Kelly. Where the domestic and the public spheres are closely connected the status of women is as important as, or more important than, that of men. As the spheres separate, the subjugation of women to men increases.

In societies where the domestic and the private spheres are enmeshed, little is produced for exchange, private property is undeveloped, and class differences are not pronounced. Here women hold a variety of roles, even though gender differences are made. Women and men share power, exercise authority, and have comparable sexual rights and prestige. Women and men do their work, but the kind of work they do does not subsume women under men.

On the other hand, in societies where the domestic and the private spheres are rigidly separated, the opposite takes place:
Women continue to be active producers all the way up the scale (and must continue to be so until there is considerable wealth and class inequality), but they steadily lose control over property, products, and themselves as surplus increases, private property develops, and the communal household becomes a private economic unit, a family (extended or nuclear) represented by a man. The family itself, the sphere of women's activities, is in turn subordinated to a broader social or public order—governed by a state—which tends to be the domain of men. This is the general pattern presented by historical or civilized societies.

In this type of society two kinds of production are distinguished, production for exchange, and production for subsistence. Women become the "property" of men to produce and maintain new members of society, and these relations of production are worked out in the organization of kin and family. This dependent status of women cuts across all classes, because regardless of class, or of ownership, women have generally constituted "part of the means of production of the private family's mode of work."66

4.3. A feminist reinterpretation of the evolution of society. The task of describing the whole of social history from the integrated perspectives of production and reproduction is an ongoing task, but one that feminist scholars have begun to confront. Habermas' stages of social development corresponding to evolutionary challenges serve as a framework for an exercise in feminist reinterpretation of period characteristics in the light of sexual and reproductive intimate relations between women and men.

Feminists would contend that the first evolutionary challenge, the demarcation of society from nature, was solved during pre-patriarchal
times. The solution involved a shift in reproductive consciousness brought about by the knowledge of paternity. It resulted in the establishment of patriarchy—in male dominance.

Androcentric Western literature repeatedly identifies women with nature. Thus, when the boundaries between society and nature were established, so could have been the separation between men and women that generated male domination, the "victory" of "male" society over "female" nature. Most ancient myths (Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Indian, and Chinese, for example) reflect awareness of the differences between the sexes, of power struggles between men and women, and of male conquerors over defeated females.

The second evolutionary challenge, the need to self-regulate the social system recently separated from nature, corresponds to the establishment of relations between men regulating the access to women, and to property in general. Class dominance, due to citizens’ control of property, slave, and female labor is institutionalized in the norms of the primitive patriarchal state.

What Habermas calls "self-regulation of the social system" includes moral and legislative codes that break community into two separate spheres, the family and the state—the private and the public. From the adoption of the Hebrew creation myth of Adam and Eve, to misogynist Greek philosophers, to the later imposition of one male god and one church run by men (and serviced by women), the inferior, submissive position of the "second sex" in society was made very clear. Such patriarchal worldviews, and the values they serve,
still linger in society and pose an evolutionary challenge to women, the challenge of male supremacy.

The third evolutionary challenge, "self-regulation of the social system with external nature," extends male dominance even further. It is associated with the process of conquering and shaping nature to the benefit of men's society. During this period, men increased their knowledge of the natural world, they developed new techniques of control, and they discovered new lands and dominated their inhabitants. The scientific revolution and political ideals of the Enlightenment, and the corresponding revolution in art and religion—the Renaissance, and the Reformation—all lay at the base of the greatest system of dominance of (European) men over nature and people, capitalism. Exchange became the dominant paradigm in the market society affecting all human relations, from work to sex.

Capitalist expansion separates the public and the private spheres even further. Only the mechanical system of exchange connects them. The private sphere of the home is the ghetto of women. Women's isolation varies with class position, however. Working class women have experienced the most serious contradictions with respect to the separation of spheres. In order to survive they have had to work in both spheres, at serious costs to themselves and to their children. Wealthy women of the capitalist families, and more recently, middle class women, have been able to transgress somewhat the rigid boundaries between spheres. In doing so they are breaking the male-imposed alienation between the two worlds.
From the feminist perspective, the initial evolutionary challenges may be regarded as (1) the separation of men from women ("society from nature), (2) the institutionalization of a male-supremacist social order based on the subjection of women ("self-regulation of society"), and (3) the increased rational-technical control of society and nature to the exclusion of women ("self-regulation of the social system with external nature"). The fourth evolutionary challenge, "self-regulated exchange of society with internal nature," may signal women's need to regulate their "exchange" with men. The reorganization of the relations of sexuality and reproduction will bring about new sex/gender systems arrangements. At the same time, this will affect society's productive relations, and it will require sweeping rearrangements of class relations between women and men, and among men themselves.

The need of society to reconcile with itself is today's evolutionary challenge. Habermas does not see this need in terms of a reconciliation between women and men. His perspective is androcentric even when he rightly distinguishes among the interests of knowledge, the technical, the practical, and the liberatory interests. He fails to consider seriously the erotic interest of knowledge which lies at the core of the moral-practical issue of sexual and reproductive intimate relations. Habermas does not give up the unconscious power of the potency principle. The dominator, who only reasons and does not feel, and who acts instrumentally, cannot engage in undistorted communication. Habermas only sees male actors in the evolving society. He does not regard the "internal nature" of society as
comprised of dominated women who aspire and struggle to create, with men, a new society based human dignity and equality.

5. Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter we have seen that today the human species has at its disposal a theory of society and of social change that includes the perspectives of woman as well as of man. Production, sexuality and reproduction, intimately connected, are the fundamental elements (or structures) of the process of creating and maintaining the life of the species. Both productive and reproductive structures have a material dimension to which corresponds a normative order. Learning occurs in all dimensions. If knowledge and action ("theory" and "practice") are not balanced, social efforts are not put in motion to realize society's potential.

These are changing times, even if change is hidden under the appearance of a (temporary) reactionary setback lead by defenders of the status quo. Women and men have vested interests in changing their relations with each other. Workers of both genders have vested interest in changing the norms governing the state and industry. More adequate relations of sexuality and reproduction are at stake in the first case, and more adequate relations of production, in the second. Changes in each realm will affect the other significantly.

Through feminism women have started to voice systematically, and forcefully, the need for change. The sex/gender system of male dominance needs change, the dominance of capitalist relations between hierarchically organized classes needs change. The voices of the
Women's Movement call for less distorted communications with men as private individuals, with men as representatives of states devised by men for men, and with men as representatives of capitalist (including state-capitalist) economic enterprise.

Women demand to be heard. The right to contribute to social policy-making has been partially gained over the past hundred years. Formally, the right to vote was a recognition of the political status of women. Yet women still do not control the material basis of this status, their own bodies. This control cannot be achieved in the absence of the right to economic independence from men. In turn, the right to economic independence demands a change in the male-controlled system of productive relations.

Economic and political participation of women in society creates the conditions for their full humanization; they become their own persons and full members of the community, no longer subordinate servants of men in privatized homes and offices. This is the challenge of the "self-regulation of society with its internal nature," to transform a society that is androcentric, anti-nature, and misogynous. If the task is accomplished, collective identity will reflect the connection among all the peoples of the planet. Women cut across all classes in all nations. We are organizing ourselves internationally, unlike men who organized themselves in opposing states. If the feminist future, committed to sisterhood, to economic and political equality, and to non-violence, comes into existence, we will no longer identify ourselves as citizens of this or that state,
or as members of this or that class, but as citizens of the world—true cosmopolitans.

Critical theories of society will become more important as we learn to bring scientific, moral and erotic knowledge to the study and solution of oppressive social conditions. Legal and moral codes will no longer embody conflicts between what is legal and what is moral. Moral consciousness will be post-conventional, based on an ethics of rights and responsibilities. As patriarchal and capitalist relations are overcome, a new organization principle will characterize a non-hierarchical and equalitarian society.

The critical perspectives of man and woman must anticipate these changes if humankind is going to survive. The theory of education formulated in Chapter Five reflects the need to actualize such a vision of the species, and of our female and male species-being.
FOOTNOTES


3 Cohen, op. cit., p. 63.

4 Ibid., p. 65.

5 Ibid., p. 77.

6 Ibid., p. 79.

7 Ibid., p. 102.

8 Ibid., p. 103.

9 Ibid., p. 120.

10 Woods, op. cit., p. 3.


12 Habermas, "Historical Materialism and the Development of Normative Structures," in Communication and the Evolution of Human Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 120.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., p. 122.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., p. 165.

17 Ibid., p. 157.

18 Ibid., p. 165.

19 Ibid., p. 157.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., p. 111.
22 Ibid., p. 157.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid., p. 112.
26 Ibid., p. 113.
27 Ibid., p. 114.
28 Ibid., p. 105.
29 Ibid., p. 165.
30 Ibid., p. 114.
31 Ibid., p. 157.
32 Ibid., p. 166.
33 Ibid., p. 166.


38 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
39 Ibid., p. 38.
40 Ibid., p. 40.
41 Ibid., p. 28.
42 Ibid., p. 29.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., p. 53.
46 Ibid., p. 21.
48 Ibid., p. 52.
49 Ibid., p. 53.
50 Ibid., p. 54.
51 Ibid., pp. 54-55.

53 Ibid., p. 168.
54 Ibid., pp. 170-171.
55 Ibid., p. 171.
56 Ibid., pp. 173-174.
57 Ibid., p. 174.
58 Ibid., p. 175.
59 Ibid., pp. 176-177.
60 Ibid., p. 207.

62 Ibid., p. 10.
63 Ibid., p. 12.
64 Ibid., p. 14.
65 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
66 Ibid., p. 11.
67 Ibid., p. 13.

68 See Mary Briody Mahowald for a discussion of sexism in Plato and Aristotle, op.cit., pp. 43-70.

69. For a recent overview of efforts see Charlotte Bunch, "U.N. World Conference in Nairobi," Ms. (June, 1985), 79-82.
The Three of Wands signifies communication and the joy of self-expression. . . .

The !Kung raise their children with love and caring, including frequent communication and touch from both men and women. The children are encouraged from birth to be open, creative, and sexually expressive. Since ancient times, the !Kung have lived a life in harmony with the earth, and they are a happy people who do not practice war. . . .

Human culture grew up around mothers and their offspring, through language and the sharing of experience. In this image, a mother shows her children how to paint and allows them the freedom necessary to experience their own creativity without fear. Notice their tiny hands—pictures like those found in many caves and on rock walls from prehistoric times. The fire of the torches allows them the light to make art, like early "stone lanterns" found by archeologists. Through manifesting their visions, they learn about life.

Figure 5. The Three of Wands.

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1. Introduction

We have summarized what Marx, Habermas, and feminists say about reality. Now it is necessary to ask how the masculine and feminist critiques of knowledge, the individual, and society can be integrated so that we can learn from critical theory in order to educate ourselves and each other. In this Chapter I am concerned with this issue and its bearing on educational practice.

In the previous chapters it was clear that all is not well with the human species, with society, and with class, racial, and gender relations. In fact, even a quick look at history reveals that things have rarely been well. On the other hand, much has been learned since the dawn of civilization. Humans have accomplished astonishing feats in terms of knowledge gains regarding nature, ourselves, and society, and the technology of shelter, food, dress, medical care, education, the arts, entertainment, etc. Notwithstanding our great successes in knowing and doing, not all plants are roses. The abundant weeds in our garden today threaten to choke the flowers we have managed, with labor and luck, to nourish.

Rio de Janeiro, the thriving city by the sea, could be called the world's capital of humour. Its inhabitants, the cariocas, are known for making irreverent jokes about everything. One carioca story involves a priest (Catholic, no doubt) who was visiting a farm. At the sight of every well-groomed garden, field, or grove, the priest praised the good work of the Lord. Becoming indignant at the lack of respect for her efforts, the farmer took the priest to a
naturally-preserved woods by the side of the road, and said: "And here is what the Lord did without my help."

The story has obvious materialist implications. Undoubtedly the farmer hopes, or "prays" for rain, for the right weather, adequate weed and insect control, and general "good luck" with her work. The farmer knows she has to work hard to create the thriving condition of her farm, and of her life: she must irrigate when rain isn't available, protect the plants from inclement weather, and systematically combat destructive pests. Laziness does not bring good luck. We are what we do, and we do according to who we are; moreover, we can learn about it in the process.

This parable illustrates the story of humankind. We are like farmers who cannot quite determine whether our (mixed) good fortune flows from luck or our own hard work. Today we are learning to learn through reflection. Women's and men's critical reflections can point out—to the best of our knowledge—which are the conditions for nurturing our "garden," individuals in society, and society in nature.

Thus the purpose of this chapter is to develop a theory of education for action and reflection implicit in critical theory, which I choose to call the pedagogy of empowerment, in order to better nurture our "garden."

2. The nature of a pedagogy of empowerment

Male and female voices in critical theory call out for the end of oppression in all of its forms. For instance, Marx suggests a revolution led by the working class to overthrow the capitalist system
of relations responsible for economic oppression. Habermans suggests the processes of communication as a tool for changing the normative system—and thus society. Feminists hope to liberate erotic knowledge which connects three aspects of revolutionary practice—theory, communication, and action—to change capitalist, racist, and patriarchal social relations of production and reproduction. Hence, pedagogy of empowerment is implicit in critical theory. In order to defend this assertion and to develop a way of teaching and learning about the creation and the exercise of empowerment, it is necessary to examine the concept of power, and some of its related issues as commonly presented in the sociopolitical literature.

2.1. Power. Power is, perhaps, the least studied, least understood, and the most fundamental process in social life:

As with energy in the physical world, power pervades all dynamic social phenomena, yet it cannot be directly observed or measured. ...[Its] existence, nature, and strength can only be indirectly inferred from its effects on social activities.

Every instance of social interaction involves an actor affecting the other, and thus it always involves an expression of power. For Amos Hawley,

Every social act is an exercise of power, every social relationship is a power equation [sic], and every social group or system is an organization of power.

Organized social action results from the use of power, at the same time that it creates power. Power does not exist until people establish relations with each other. Thus power is not a "thing," it
is a dynamic process which can be defined as "the ability to affect social activities" or as "a capacity to overcome part or all of the resistance, to introduce changes in the face of opposition." An individual or an organized group who exercises power may influence and even control the outcomes of social situations.

The exercise of power requires the availability of resources, but it also depends on the extent of resources committed, and the degree of resistance encountered. Force, for example, one of the processes of power, demands the application of considerable resources if it is to maintain the power relation, and compensation, deprivation, and persuasion are three ways of imposing power through force.

Compensation, or utilitarian power, involves the giving of rewards to insure compliance; deprivation or coercive power, on the other hand, means withdrawal of rewards and punishment for noncompliance; and persuasion requires manipulation of information, emotions, status, values and norms for achieving compliance. Given the great amount of energy it requires, power maintained by force is usually unstable, and not sustainable over long periods of time, with the exception of persuasion which can change the relation of power from force to dominance.

Dominance is a more stable power process, which requires the actor to establish a role and a function in a system in which one performs steadily, and through which one exerts constant power. The crystalized role does not demand additional resources for power maintenance. If threatened, the dominant actor can always use force.
Authority is another of the power processes. The exercise of power through authority implies that others have given consent, thus legitimacy, to the power wielder at some point in time, in the past or in the present. An authority makes decisions that others accept as legitimate, and appropriate to the context of society. The sources of authority in human society have been traditional values, beliefs, customs; legal prerogatives; and special expertise or knowledge relevant to the situation in case. Authority is the most stable and reliable type of social power because its resource base is "free" voluntarily given legitimacy.10

A change in the power system of a society can come about through a redistribution of power, or through the increase or decrease of power in society. In the latter, a change in the redistribution of power may or not occur; that is, the distribution of power among the actors may remain approximately the same. These changes in the power system are called, respectively, distributive and developmental changes.11

2.2. Power development and redistribution according to critical theory. In light of the characteristics of power and its processes discussed in the previous section, we can examine the power redistribution and development that man's and woman's critical theory suggests. The aims and objectives of the pedagogy of empowerment will be based on this view of power.

If we accept the locus of power as embedded in social activity, Marx's concept of practice—thought and action connected—is power wielding; and alienation—thought and action disconnected—is power
yielding.\textsuperscript{12} To create power one must act and reflect about one's action. Further, one must communicate and join with others. To create additional power, the group must act and reflect about its own action. Power, a dynamic process that takes place in human relationships, is mediated by communication.

Habermas' ideal of nondistorted communication, enlightened by a universal ethics of speech, calls for comprehensibility, truthfulness, sincerity, and correctness within the normative context.\textsuperscript{13} In this view, the only acceptable force is the force of the better argument. Nondistorted communication is a tool for creating power because in this view the only acceptable force is the force of the better argument. In dialogue, greater comprehension, truth, and truthfulness enhance the achievement of mutual understanding, and of consensus. Thus it can result in increased resources for the exercise of power in joint action.

Feminist Audre Lorde\textsuperscript{14} calls for the recovery of the erotic as an exercise of power. The erotic, in her view, is the essence of power, a life-power exhibiting joy, excitement, and strength that comes with connection with others and shared action. The erotic as power is also an "internal communicator" which connects body and mind. The erotic 'sensor' detects losses of power enforced by alienation, as well as the increases of power when practice reflects the guidance of the erotic, and succeeds. A third aspect of the erotic as power is motivation for achieving change. The erotic senses that conditions must be changed, and the power of what feels good and right motivates
action. Life-giving erotic feelings do not settle for the "blah" feeling of apathy, or for inactivity.

The exercise of power—the exercise of the erotic—demands the availability of resources. That is why men appropriate the erotic from women, and use it as pornographic resources against women themselves. For example, the social images of the Mary-Eve dichotomy link sex to goodness only in the context of heterosexual matrimony with intentions of procreation; on the other hand, it links sex to badness in the context of a woman’s life independent from men. Both images de-eroticize women and eroticize men.

Men exercise their power through dominance. Their role in the system, the role which they have performed steadily since the beginning of patriarchal times, is the role of father, the giver or exchanger of the phallus for life. The father systematically appropriates women’s bodies and labor, the loci of power in all human beings. But from the point of view of women, the father is a taker, not a giver.

The dominance of men is still largely maintained by force through compensation, deprivation, and persuasion. Protection from sexual terrorism, and economic support, are the two major ways of "compensating women for complying with male dominance. The list of deprivations is long and deadly: from sexual terrorism in all of its violent forms, to many forms of economic and noneconomic neglect and abuse. Socialization in male-identified patriarchal values, attitudes, and behaviors, function as the most effective means of persuading women—through additional crippling—to give unchallenged consent to male power over society.
Critical theory also deals with the problem of empowerment, the problem of creating and exercising power. Power, in this view, is created in joint action and reflection to overcome alienation and powerlessness. The power coming into being, however, is not to be exerted through force in any of its dimensions of manipulative influence and control (compensation, deprivation, and persuasion). This controlling forceful power has been in existence from the onset of patriarchy, and represents the form of power which psychoanalysis and critical theory demonstrate to be alienating, and thus ultimately inefficient, de-eroticized, and power yielding. That is, except for where it rightfully applies: to problems of physics, and to MACHINES.

Critical theorists do not approve of power through dominance either, which is closely connected with resource-using power through force. Traditionally, when threatened, male dominance resorts to force. As a concept, female dominance has no logic, given feminist knowledge, values, and attitudes about power: nonhierarchical sharing, joy, and accomplishment. Moreover, to reverse the situation would mean involution, not evolution, or revolution. In the absence of a historical tradition of female imposition of violent death upon men (except in the rarest of individual cases, and usually in self-defense), it is quite unlikely that armies of women will ever be mobilized to bring men into submission.

The only form of power left is the one exercised through authority. This is the form of power that man's and woman's critical theory aims at establishing. Authority requires consent or legitimacy for the exercise of power. Tradition, legal status, and expertise are
three sources of authority. Marxism and feminism are not based on traditional values, beliefs and customs. Quite the contrary, they systematically oppose the ideological basis of the power-enforcing capitalist patriarchal system. The legitimacy of the authority of critical theory itself cannot be established through tradition because it needs to establish itself as a tradition of knowledge first. Nor will the legitimacy of critical theory be established through legal (normative) adoption. While present social norms still embody traditional religious and philosophical worldviews, what is considered knowledge largely embodies technical-instrumental scientific values. The norms of science are androcentric, as well as capital-centered. Critical theory evaluates the established system of scientific norms as much as it criticizes traditional values, beliefs, and customs.

The authority of critical theory will be established through the "force" of expertise convinced of its ability to convey truthful messages with the most sincere intention, to reach mutual understanding and consensus by opening a dialogue with opposing views. The process of establishing the legitimacy of one's position is a practical process which demands action, communication, and reflection. In this process women, minority groups, and the working classes, all of whom experience relationships of force, are potential expert speakers, doers, and thinkers. This process of establishing the legitimate authority of critical theory rests on a validation of one's experience as expertise, and of the expertise of a group to which one belongs; this, then, is an empowering process.
2.3. Towards a pedagogy of empowerment. Does a pedagogy of empowerment teach about power? "Teach," unfortunately, is one more word that has been derived from patriarchal vocabulary. Teach and teacher are intimately associated with the ideas of control and domination, in this case the control of information, of the process of giving it away, and of verifying its correctness. Paulo Freire calls the worst form of teaching/controlling "banking" education, a most appropriate name out of capitalist patriarchy. In "banking" education, the teacher:

appears as agent, as the real subject whose task is to 'fill' the students with the contents of his own narrative. These contents are but scraps of reality disconnected from the totality where they come from, and which gives them significance. Words in these dissertations are empty of the concrete dimension they should have, and they become empty words, alienated, and alienating. These words are more like sounds than signals, thus it's better not to say them.\textsuperscript{16}

The pedagogy of empowerment, however, cannot teach about power if to teach means to control and dominate. Rather, its job is best suggested by an analogy of "quilt-making." (This, perhaps, is another version of the Chinese proverb about teaching the hungry to fish instead of giving them fish).

Quilt-making is a useful metaphor for the pedagogy of empowerment because quilt-making has a technique and a history. Though quilts may be put up for sale, or auctioned, their value is largely use-value, not exchange value. Most quilts, in fact, are not for exchange, they are made for oneself or for the members of one's family, or to be given away in commemoration of a special occasion. A quilt shows appreciation, love and care for an individual or for a cause.
Commercial quilts are commodities, lacking the connections mentioned above: uniqueness.

Quilt-making, as practiced, is a traditional feminine art and craft. Its technique, like all techniques, requires good tools. It also requires expert training, and practice. Each stitch becomes better, each piece a more adequate addition to the whole. The process is usually slow. When finished, the project brings up the erotic feeling of accomplishment.

Quilt-making also has a history. Quilt-makers may or may not know the history of quilt-making in detail, but the sense of connection between all quilts, and all quilt-makers is present even when the quilt is only an idea in one's imagination. Knowing the history of quilt-making, however, can increase the appreciation for the art and craft, of "quilt-being," as well as for the possibilities of changing the world by recreating a pattern from the past, or creating a "crazy" pattern for the future.

How does the quilter's metaphor apply to the pedagogy of empowerment? We can look at it from two perspectives. From the individual perspective, the "quilt" to be made is the individual her or himself. The objective is to facilitate the individual to become whole, connected, and integrated. Though our knowledge of identity development is not complete, we know that a person's identity develops along cognitive, communicative, and social interactive dimensions according to learning and maturational psychosexual schemes. We have
an idea of the characteristics of moral consciousness in each phase, and of its organization. The objective of a "quilt-making" pedagogy of empowerment is to create the conditions for the individual to understand her or his personal development process through guided reflection. The method of psychoanalysis, analogous to critical theory, represents the ideal-type of a pedagogy of power's own method.

From the social perspective, the "quilt-making" of the pedagogy of empowerment suggests an integrated group of individuals who act together and reflect together about their own conditions. The group furnishes the grounds for the exercise of communication and for the pooling of resources which otherwise would be unavailable to the members of the group.

Thus to empower is much like quilt-making in that each person (piece of cloth) is connected to the larger fabric (society). (Alienated individuals are forgotten pieces in the old trunk, isolated, and powerless, likely candidates for dishrags.) Connectedness in practice, action, reflection, with oneself, and with others mediated by communication, is an empowering act since it establishes the link among "pieces," and forms a patterned social fabric, the community, which legitimizes each person and celebrates unity in diversity.

The pedagogy of empowerment thus issues from critical theory's content and method. It is through empowerment that people will effect changes and bridge the gap of alienation. Empowerment, an expression of life-affirming erotism, is the moment between critical consciousness and critical action. For Freire, critical action is "insertion" in the reality to be changed:
Critical insertion or action is one and the same. That is the reason why the simple recognition of a reality that does not lead to a critical insertion—(action now) is not conducive to any transformations of objective reality, exactly because it is not truthfull recognition.

Power, as erotic energy for action, is the necessary connection between the moment of reflection and the moment of critical insertion in reality. It is created simultaneously with practice but it can be seen as a separate analytical category because its existence can be inferred from that moment. Empowering is a process in which critical consciousness is exercised in practice through joint action. From man's and woman's critical point of view, critical consciousness involves knowledge and feeling about one's location relative to others in the economic and in the sex/gender systems. It means recognizing and changing the relations of power which are involved in these systems, especially the use of force, through compensation, deprivation, and persuasion, as well as the notions of dominance and authority based on a capitalist patriarchal tradition, legality, and expertise.

Empowering the individual and the group, always connectedly, means creating and expressing critical consciousness—the articulation of one's voice or narrative. Freire synthesizes this point:

Human existence cannot be mute, silenced, it can be nourished not through false words but through truthful words with which humans transform the world. To exist as a human means to pronounce the world, to change it. The pronounced world returns to the pronouncing subject in the form of a new problem, requiring from them a new pronouncement. It is not in silence that human beings make themselves, but in words, in work, in action-reflection.
As we summarize the general theoretical framework of the pedagogy of power, we see it as a dialectical process in which change comes about as a response to critical problems as well as a subjective process of creating one's voice or narrative, that is, an individual process of making "pronouncements." These processes do not occur in a vacuum but in a social context, a community of shared language, values, and experience created and recreated through communication. Empowerment thus necessitates improved communicative action which is accompanied by an improvement in erotic response (in the sense of identifying and respecting what is good and right in a social interactive situation.) Comprehension, truth, sincerity, and correctness, ethics of speech and thought, are the dimensions of communication that improves the group and the individual as they reflect about themselves, about the communicative process, and about the action required to change power relationships that contribute to their alienation from the larger body of society.

Feminist practice, which I shall examine next, will serve as an example of the application of the pedagogy of empowerment.

3. Feminist practice as pedagogy of empowerment

Feminists act, reflect, and communicate in practice in ways that reveal the empowerment of women. By examining feminist practice we can learn how women who have achieved critical consciousness go about creating the power necessary for the total transformation of capitalist patriarchal society. To undertake this task, I will resort
to a theoretical device, the "four causes" Aristotle proffered for philosophy.\(^1^9\) His concept does not correspond exactly with the current narrower concept of "cause," a reason or motive for producing a given effect. For Aristotle, causes are elements of a four dimensional reality, that is, four factors "responsible for a thing being what it is":

Everything that owes its existence and identity to a material cause, the stuff out of which it is made, in combinations with a formal cause, the blueprint or pattern that makes it the kind of thing it is. These two dimensions are brought together by an efficient cause, either a maker or an ancestor. And to understand things we must also look for the final cause of each: for artificial things, this goal or end is the use they are designed to serve; for natural things, it is a goal of self-realization which directs the stages of growth and maturity.\(^2^0\)

Further, employing Aristotelian "causes," I will then examine the rich metaphor of the artisanship of "quilt-making," looking at four separate dimensions of feminist practice which in reality are inseparable. Hopefully, this will give us a better grasp of a pedagogy of empowerment.

The feminist final cause is the elimination of sexism from society through the transformation of oppressive patriarchal social institutions. This can only happen as society is transformed as a whole, because the present structure in its economic, sexual-reproductive, and normative dimensions, reflects the experience and the needs of males, especially wealthy ones. Androcentric and aristocratic society grants privileges to males as it oppresses females; it grants privileges to privileged classes and racial groups,
as it oppresses each corresponding "other." Thus, the whole structure of oppression needs to be changed.

Human consciousness is the material cause that has to be "worked" with in the historical process leading to the revolutionizing of social institutions. At the present moment of its development feminism is particularly concerned with women's consciousness—alienated consciousness under capitalist patriarchal institutional arrangements. To the alienated consciousness feminist practice brings about an empowered, non-alienated form. Thus, in a feminist pedagogy of empowerment, consciousness raising is the efficient cause which results in reflective critical thought and principled action is the formal cause. In the next section I will examine in detail each of the "causes" of the pedagogy of empowerment which seeks in practice and theory the "solutions" for the fourth evolutionary challenge: the self-regulation of society with internal and external nature.

3.1. Sewing a new quilt: the elimination of sexism, classism, and racism as final cause. The more strictly feminist purpose is to change the nature of the prevailing sex/gender system, a sexist structure of male-privilege and female-disprivilege. A principled moral consciousness can readily identify the sexism to be found in social norms and social behavior. A sexual division of labor is at the base of these norms. An ideological system of roles embodying values, attitude, and behaviors identified as "masculine" and "feminine" is built on this system and serves to guide the
socialization of children. Socialization reproduces the sexual division of labor: men are free from childbirth (reproduction) and extend their freedom to freedom from childrearing; women necessarily give birth, and this unfreedom is extended to childrearing.

Paul Willis, a British sociologist of education, describes the nature of sexism among "the lads," working class school boys who were the subjects of an ethnographic investigation. Feminists describe the same picture which, in general lines, is applicable to all patriarchal cultures:

["The lads"] most nuanced and complex attitudes are reserved for the opposite sex. There is a traditional conflict in their view of women: they are both sexual objects and domestic comforters; in essence this means that whilst women must be sexually attractive, they cannot be sexually experienced. . . . Lascivious tales of conquest or jokes turning on the passivity of women or on the particular sexual nature of men are regular topics of conversation. Always it is their own experience, and not that of the girl or of their shared relationship, which is the focus of the stories. The girls are afforded no particular identity save that of their sexual attraction.

Three sexist themes can be found in this passage. First, there is one basic decision for 'the lads' to make— is a woman "for sex" or "for service"? In no way is it asked if a woman is "for respect" or "for reason," because in a sexist society women are predestined for sexuality and serviceability. Second, there is an essential restraining ambiguity, often contradictory, towards sexuality: women are permitted to promise but not to deliver sex. Finally, there is the theme of male arrogance, or super-esteem, in which the man's experience is central to social life to the neglect of women's experience. Willis continues:
Although they [women] are its objects, frank and explicit sexuality is actually denied to women. There is a complex of emotion here. On one hand, insofar as she is a sex object, a commodity, she is actually diminished by sex; she is literally worthless; she has been romantically and materially partly consumed. To show relish for this diminution is seen as self-destructive. On the other hand, in a half recognition of the human sexuality they have suppressed, there is a fear that once a girl is sexually experienced and has known joy from sex at all, the floodgates of her desire will be opened and she will be completely promiscuous.

The 'girlfriend' is a very different category from an 'easy lay.' Courship is a serious affair. A whole new range of meanings and connotations come into play during serious courting. Their referent is the home: dependability and domesticity—the opposite of the sexy bird on the scene. If the initial attraction is based on sex, the final settlement is based on a strange denial of sex—a denial principally, of course, of the girl's sexuality for others, but also of sexuality as the dominant feature of their relationship.

The model for the girlfriend is, of course, the mother and she is fundamentally a model of limitation. Though there is a great deal of affection for 'mum,' she is definitely accorded an inferior role. And within the home there is a clear sense that men have a right to be waited on by the mother.

The themes in this passage issue from the larger theme of the sexualized nature of women. Women are made into commodities for sexual consumption, and they are disconnected from themselves as complex human beings with complex needs. For the macho 'lads,' it is dangerous not to treat women as commodities; caring incapacitates or destroys manhood. Repressed womanhood becomes idealized in wifehood and motherhood, which translates into servitude, sexually and reproductively speaking. The most important theme, however, is limitation and inferiority associated with both the sexual and reproductive services.
Willis reports the solution women find for the schizophrenic problem set by men's expectations and requirements:

The resolution amongst working class girls of the contradiction between being sexually desirable but not sexually experienced leads to behaviors which strengthen 'the lads' sense of superiority. This resolution takes the form of romanticism readily fed by teenage magazines...

What 'the lads' see of the romantic behaviour they have partly conditioned in the girls, however, is a simple sheepishness, weakness and silly indirectness in social relationships: 'saft wenches giggling all the time.'...The contortions and strange rituals of the girls are seen as part of their girlishness, of their inherent weakness and confusion. Their romanticism is tolerated with a knowing masculinity which privately feels it knows much more about the world. This sense of masculine pride spreads over into the expressive confidence of the rest of 'the lads' culture. It adds a zest to their language, physical and boisterous relations with each other, humiliations of ear'oles and even to a particular display style of violence.

Romance is a form of false consciousness. This "solution" seems acceptable for both sexes to cover up the ugliness and to alleviate the pain associated with the conditions of alienation in relationships between women and men. The romantic image benefits men, allowing them to double-speak: men can be galant, authoritative and commanding of a sense of respect and protection toward women, while often displaying a forcefulness tinted by violence and deeply-ingrained misogyny.

Romance is a rationalization and an effective pain-reliever. As mystification, it encourages the pornographic and suppresses the erotic; as false consciousness, the romantic picture does not correspond to the reality of male arrogance, rudeness, and contempt for women.
Willis also points out that "contortions," "strange rituals," infantile "girlishness," "weakness," and "confusion" are all interconnected in "femininity." "Masculinity" is placed at the opposite end of the continuum: no frills, adult-like, unemotional, rational, and, resulting from all this erotic repression, strength interpreted as violence. Men then become the greatest show on earth, and women are the spectators in the audience at the circus:

'The lads' usually take the initiative in conversation and are the ones who make suggestive comments. The girls respond with giggles and talk amongst themselves. Where girls do make comments they are of the serious, caring or human kind. It is left to 'the lads' to make jokes, the hard comments, the abrasive summations and to create a spectacle to be appreciated by the girls. The girls are clearly dominated, but they collude in their own domination.26

Surrounded by their subordinate audience, men develop a voice, a narrative about themselves, and about how they regard women, which they herald over the loudspeakers of culture as the official "party-line" of society. Silenced and dominated, women unknowingly collude in the preservation of centuries-old acts of bad taste and of ultimate contempt for their own emotional, sexual and reproductive labor—as in war, for example.

The general picture of a nonsexist society contrasts with that of a sexist society. In the nonsexist society women will have achieved sexual and reproductive freedom, the right to control their own bodies and minds personally and politically. This means women's (and men's) access to complete information about sexuality and reproduction, and to safe contraceptive technology. It also means the elimination of
pornography and all forms of propaganda which portray women as sexual objects, and sexuality as a male prerogative.

Sexual and procreative freedom must necessarily be accompanied by a restructuring of the relations of production. The whole economic structure must be made to serve the needs of women and children as well as those of men. Freedom means the absence of restraint, so women must be economically independent from men. The nonsexist mating and marriage compulsions must be based on sexual, emotional, and procreative considerations alone; they must not be based on the fear of poverty, or on the related interest of having one's basic needs for food, shelter, and protection attended (on the part of women), or to guarantee continuity through the ownership of mother and offspring (in the case of men). A nonsexist society also requires the elimination of religious discrimination, and of racism, for women cut across all religions, and all racial and ethnic barriers. In short, a nonsexist society is not classist, not racist, and has no place for any sort of bigotry.
3.2 Quilt pieces: alienated consciousness as material cause. As we have seen, the dominant mode of production and reproduction in capitalist patriarchal society fosters classism, racism, and sexism. Feminist theory examines the particular forms of alienation engendered by sexism. The alienated consciousness of women becomes the material cause of a feminist theory of empowerment, and mediating such alienated consciousness in practice becomes its formal cause.

In capitalist patriarchal society women are alienated from men, from other women, from themselves, from their children, and from cultural and economic production. Femininity itself is alienated consciousness. Capitalist patriarchy in a very real sense "unconnects" women; their pieces are scattered. Hopefully, a feminist pedagogy of empowerment will enable us to sew the pieces back together. Let us see how this can be achieved.

It was evident from Willis' description of sexism presented in the previous section that the primary form of women's alienation is sexual alienation. Sexual alienation defines women as sexual objects for male enjoyment, ironically separating women from men instead of naturally reuniting them. Here the coercive patriarchal institution of compulsory heterosexuality depicts women as sexual objects for male use, and it makes them endure constant male sexual harassment, assault, and generalized violence.

Specifically, women are expected to be sexually pleasing to men at home as well as at the job. Much of women's paid work is sexualized. The "best" chance for achieving economic security is still marriage, where sex, reproductive, emotional, and other forms of service are
specified as part of the contract. Women's sexual expression is
mostly for men's pleasure rather than for their own, and it reflects
an often unconscious basic concern for economic survival.

Sexualization is thus the central pressure exerted from the
outside on a woman's life; an assault on her sexuality that often
starts at an early age with incest and abuse. A woman who
internalizes her sexual objectification becomes divided, alienated
from herself. Different parts of her body, fetishized, acquire
importance separate from the whole. Dismembered anatomical parts
(breasts, rear-ends, legs, feet, etc.) command special attention and,
as in the case of movie stars, sometimes come to symbolize the woman
herself. A common result of body fetishism is female narcissism in
which the body, a beautiful thing to be gazed at and decorated,
becomes the woman's primary object.28

Body split corresponds to mind split. The mind "houses" at the
same time a see-er and a seen, while it operates according to an alien
masculine criterion of appraisal. When a woman internalizes the male
point of view, her consciousness is not conducive to a woman's sexual
development, let alone to other nonsexual aspects of her existence.29

Sexual objectification not only alienates women from men and a
woman from herself, it also separates women from other women. Women
become competitors in a market for male attention and financial
support, so that more often than not they cannot identify their shared
interests and support each other.30

Women are further alienated as mothers.31 Motherhood as a
capitalist patriarchal institution alienates women from their children
and from the children's fathers. Compulsory motherhood has coerced many women into bearing unwanted children or more children than their health could stand. Today, in advanced capitalist societies, children are regarded as high-priced objects of consumption. A woman frequently cannot give life to as many children as she would like to have without creating sub-human conditions of need for her and her offspring. At the whim of dominant males, women are sometimes granted the right to have an abortion and sometimes not. Sometimes, unknowing, they are sterilized or their bodies are used for experiments in reproductive technology.

Not only the product but the control of the processes of reproduction—childbearing and childrearing—have been taken from women. Historically, women-midwives were directly involved in the delivery of children, and mothers (and the women of the extended family) were responsible for the education of children. Mothers are expected to stay at home and attend to the needs of their children. They are thus isolated from other adults, and spend most of their time in the company of children who demand constant attention and other forms of service. It is little wonder that women develop TMS—Tired Mother Syndrome.

All of a woman's muscles ache and they respond with further pain when touched. She is generally cold and unable to get warm. Her reflexes are off. She startles easily, ducks moving shadows, and bumps into stationary objects. Her reading rate takes a precipitous drop. She stutters and stammers, groping for words to express her thoughts, sounding barely coherent—somewhat drunk. She can't bring her mind to focus. She is in a fog. In response to all the aforementioned symptoms she is always close to tears.
This passage "recalls vividly Marx’s description of the alienated wage laborer’s conditions, whose work ‘mortifies his body and ruins his mind’."34

Sexual and procreative alienation both reflect and contribute to the alienation of women from cultural and economic production. As previously pointed out, the voice describing the world and the hands that build it have a characteristic male bias. Women’s labor is not labor, and their work in the home does not figure in computations of general wealth. Women’s art and scholarship only recently, in the wake of the women’s movement, have been receiving attention—but even then, most of the attention has come from feminists.

Women’s multifaceted alienation contributes to what Lois M. Greenwood-Audant calls "internalized powerlessness," the inability to control or direct change despite resistance.35 She explains that power has an objective as well as a subjective dimension. The objective dimension lies with the resources a person can effectively command—money, jobs, legitimacy, status, and physical force, for example. The subjective dimensions lie in a person’s motivation to achieve power which is influenced by a belief in being able to do so. A person with low self-esteem lacks confidence, and does not feel able to achieve—she sets ever lower goals, and continues to feel that they are unattainable.36

The subjective dimensions of power influence its objective dimensions. Women internalize powerlessness as "the structural constraints (the objective conditions) are translated into psychological constraints (the subjective feeling) though mediating
The experiences which mediate between the objective and subjective conditions of power are gender identity formation, work in the home (that usually implies financial dependence) and social norms.

Thus, femininity, the norms of compulsory heterosexuality, motherhood, and the limitation of women's access to cultural, scientific, and economic social production all contribute to women's subjective feeling of powerlessness, a feeling that is closely connected with alienation—from themselves, from each other, from men, and from children. As statistics on mental disorders and depression among women indicate, and as recent literature shows about drug and alcohol abuse among women, there are many reasons to believe that women do not judge living in our society a very easy thing to do.

I have described the general conditions of alienation surrounding a woman's life. Of course, this analysis is critical, since it locates for feminists a source of women's powerlessness in society, namely the tendency of capitalist patriarchal institutions to drain women of erotic knowledge and feeling. I have also characterized the alienated consciousness as the material cause of a pedagogy of empowerment—of feminist practice. But what does it mean to speak of alienated consciousness as the material cause in feminist pedagogy?

Feminists critically observe and interpret reality, capitalist patriarchy, and offer a view of society which includes a theory of women's consciousness formed in the context of this society. Theory guides the practice of feminists whose objective is to break the power relations that give rise to women's alienated consciousness, and in
the process to empower women. As power relations are brought to consciousness, they may be modified by action directed to changing the conditions of alienation.

The multidimensional alienated consciousness, the material cause, gives feminists a means of designing objectives to guide practice. The theory also provides feminists with a picture of the conventional woman who needs to be introduced to feminist ideals. Consequently, it gives feminist educators an approximate idea of how student consciousness is organized. Of course the theory is just theory, an ideal-type, and in practice it is likely that no woman will exactly fit the theoretical depiction of women's alienated consciousness. (Apparently, the woman who in fact represents the theoretical exemplar has committed suicide.) Nonetheless, like all critical theory, it must be validated in practice. The group of women, or the class led by the feminist educator, will have to reach consensus about who they are, and about what aspects of their alienated consciousness they should mediate in practice. (As this subject brings in a discussion of processes, it will be postponed until section 4.4 on the efficient cause.)

In summary, the material cause of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment is women's alienated consciousness formed according to the mold of capitalist patriarchal society. This material cause points out the objective of the pedagogy of empowerment: to change the consciousness of the conditions of women's lives from alienated to non-alienated critical consciousness, thus guiding women's actions to change the conditions that created alienation in the first place. In
the pedagogy of empowerment this objective is realized in the formal
cause, a critical critical consciousness, through its efficient cause,
the process of consciousness raising.

3.3 The Quilt pattern: critical consciousness as formal cause.
In quilt-making the material at hand inspires a pattern to be
followed, a blueprint of what the pieces sewn together will look
like. Similarly, in a pedagogy of empowerment the alienated
consciousness (material) suggests a form: the development of a
non-alienated ("together") critical consciousness—and in particular
of a feminist one. This is the "species-being" consciousness
discussed by Marx\textsuperscript{39} which Habermas\textsuperscript{40} and Gilligan\textsuperscript{41} have
operationalized in their respective theories of moral consciousness
development.

We have seen that identity develops as a result of the integration
of maturational and learning processes along cognitive, communicative,
and psychosexual or motivational personality dimensions. The ideal
direction of development is autonomy, the capacity for the individual
to acquire independence through successful problem-solving. Observing
the life of a woman in capitalist patriarchy it is obvious that the
conditions of sexual, reproductive, cultural, and economic alienation
do not favor successful problem solving and "healthy" development.
There are norms that women are expected to follow which do not favor
autonomous and independent behavior, rules that destine women to lives
of dependence on men—unlike men themselves, who are not supposed to
depend on women. Patriarchal norms create asymmetry and power imbalance between women and men.

Thus women confront a contradiction between the theory and the reality of identity formation in a social environment which precludes their development. This contradiction provides a first formal cause for the pedagogy of empowerment, the creation of conditions for the development of critical consciousness and the autonomous solution of problems. (The conditions for creating critical consciousness will be discussed in the section dealing with the efficient cause.)

In the early stages of individual development the individual is busy learning the symbolic reality of society, its language, roles, and norms. From an initial stage of egocentrism, the individual progresses toward a sociocentric stage and, ideally, attains an autonomous ego; to these stages of identity formation there correspond seven stages of moral consciousness. From the point of view of a feminist critical theory of society, a capitalist patriarchal organization of society significantly affects women's individual development. The girl as a child internalizes the scripts of femininity (weakness, softness, emotionality), which may lead to the development of internalized feelings of powerlessness. Assuming perfect socialization into the norms of society, at the sociocentric stage the preadolescent, or the young woman, will have internalized sexual objectification. This separates her from "masculinity" (strength, hardness, intelligence), from men, from herself, from other women, and from thinking seriously about contributing to economic, cultural, and scientific production.
Physical maturation permits the young woman to become a mother and/or a wife. This further alienates her, curtailing her chances for progressing toward autonomous identity. Another barrier to development at this stage is the possibility of regression to the previous egocentric stage through the development of narcissistic behavior. A woman's identity may be reorganized to serve the needs of her own body according to the prevailing capitalist patriarchal standards of beauty.

The second formal cause or blueprint for a pedagogy of empowerment extends from the first, the contradiction between the theory and the reality of women's identity formation. A pedagogy of empowerment has to create the conditions to nurture successful individual development, paying particular attention to the limitations imposed by the environment at each stage of the development.

Again assuming successful socialization, the most serious threat to women's development occurs at the passage from the sociocentric stage to the stage of autonomy. In moral consciousness terms, the woman may not acquire principled moral consciousness which permits her to understand and to evaluate the demands society imposes upon her, and the demands her internal nature requires, the call for growth and the realization of her fully mature species being. Depending on the circumstances of her life, a woman may make the transition to the sixth stage, thus acting according to the formal morality embedded in the norms of the capitalist patriarchal system of contract and exchange.
Feminist consciousness, however, requires the achievement of the seventh stage which lies beyond capitalist patriarchal consciousness, the achievement of a morality based on the ethics of speech. The ability to act following feminist principles, at least in this stage of the history of the species, seems to represent the maximum development which is required for the transformation of individual alienated consciousness into critical consciousness, and for the transformation of the relations of production and of reproduction in society.

The formal cause of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment suggests the efficient cause which will bring critical consciousness into being. According to Marxist male and female critical theorists, critical consciousness is "located" consciousness: the individual knows herself, her place in the community and in the species, and her acts are informed by erotic knowledge which enables her to weigh the external needs of the community and her own internal needs. Critical consciousness is formed through a process of consciousness raising, the efficient cause of the pedagogy of empowerment.

3.4. Quilt-stitching: consciousness raising as efficient cause. The efficient cause, the fourth dimension of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment, depicts the labor or activity invested in transforming reality. The material to be transformed, or mediated as the case may be, is women's alienated consciousness. Labor here is social labor, in the sense that only in a group situation can the process of consciousness raising take place. Thinking about traditional
"quilting bees," in which women got together to make quilts, to learn from each other, to share life events and duties, and to have fun, we can see that "quilt-stitching" is an appropriate metaphor for consciousness raising.

In the process of consciousness raising (CR) the pieces of women's alienated consciousness are put together as her individual experience is connected to the larger reality of society. CR stresses the examination and the understanding of a woman's experience, connecting personal experience to the structures which define her life. Perl and Abarbanell furnish the following definition of CR:

Feminist CR has one basic purpose: it raises the woman's consciousness, increases her complete awareness, of her oppression in a sexist society. To do so, it helps her break through the conditioning all women have received, so that she can see and fully comprehend how society has deliberately trained and prepared her to play certain roles, accept certain situations, feel certain emotions, within the fabric of the culture; above all, how she is trained not to question, not to challenge, not to upset the way things are.

CR is the core of the feminist method, and of the feminist movement. It is reflection and action together, communicative action which uncovers the relationships of power present in the course of a woman's life, and provides a framework for changing such relationships. The definition above is clear about the liberating effect of CR, the liberation from the walls of sexist conditioning which create artificial and abstract, but largely real subjective feelings of powerlessness. Through basic communication processes—understanding, truth, sincerity, and the search for agreement—women empower themselves, creating the voice of the newly
found authority of their experience as women. Being able to say—"this does not feel good," "this role is not for me," "I do not accept this form of abuse," is an important step in CR, which legitimates erotic knowledge and empowers women.

Nancy Hartsock shows how the feminist method of CR realizes in practice the ideal of the Marxist method to an extent that not even the (patriarchal) socialist movements in advanced capitalist countries have been able to realize. Like the method Marx had anticipated, CR emphasizes the everyday life. The subject under discussion is a woman's life itself, not alienated topics unrelated to what happens day in and day out. The framework for discussion is dialectical historical materialism, a framework of critical theory—feminism. Feminist theory connects a woman's personal experience to the larger structures of society, making them acquire a new meaning in a woman's consciousness which restructures her way of thinking and the way she acts. Further, CR integrates personal experience and political change. Personal experience makes a difference, it does not correspond to further alienation but indeed to a new integration in two dimensions, one internal to the person, and one external in the community to which the person is connected. The fact that reality is sensuous human activity, practice, is made clear, as well as the notion that activity most certainly is the channel for change. Feminist practice as pedagogy of empowerment makes CR the efficient cause that molds critical consciousness, liberating distorted relationships of power "housed" in a woman's material alienated consciousness: a step in the direction of changing society.
4. Implications for the classroom

Feminist practice discussed in the context of pedagogy of empowerment suggests a theory of education. This view is committed to investigate and articulate what is wrong with society, and to illuminate our actions for change. Feminist practice is pedagogical because it is a method of teaching and of learning through communication; because it is action—doing—it is more than a method, it is also a movement. This movement aims at creating new social relations in society.

In asymmetrical relationships of power, oppression is linked to the abuse and neglect of the other. If the oppressor does not listen to the oppressed, and if the oppressed does not summon her or his voice, speak out loud, and start to act, someone is in for trouble. Neither side can be genuinely happy, and the potential for mutual destruction is always present. The result is a somber atmosphere of fear in society.

The response of critical theory and of its intrinsic pedagogy of empowerment to this situation is simple: identify and learn about it, and then do something about it. But learning is not a simple cognition or even the restructuring of one's consciousness. Learning and doing—theory and practice—are deeply connected. As Hartsock points out, this type of learning—education—differs fundamentally from instruction:

Education—as opposed to instruction—is organically connected to everyday life. It both grows out of and contributes to our understanding of it.45
This is certainly an old theme in education theory, but feminism has given a new operationalization to the concept that may be applicable to classrooms at every level of schooling. Education means "located" consciousness. It means connecting one's life to larger structures of society that define it, and it means evaluating this connection according to a liberating perspective which guides action: doing something about the conditions in society which foster oppression. It is not easy to be educated to have such "located" consciousness and to act for change. The ideological and material barriers are great; the efforts of an individual, group, and movement require considerable energy which we have not yet learned to summon efficiently. However, the seeds have been planted, and we expect them to grow as we take care of the garden.

The Women's Studies classroom, the branch of the women's movement in formal educational establishments, serves as an example of the application of the pedagogy of empowerment in schools. The Women's Studies experience has happened in the U.S.A., a world-leader in the field for the past ten years. Though there are educators doing feminist education at the elementary and secondary levels, for the purposes of this discussion I will refer only to higher education. The objective is to encourage the application of the principles of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment in the classroom of other disciplines. More specifically, I will discuss briefly aspects of curriculum, of classroom interaction between teacher and student, and the particular concern with classroom language.
The curriculum. The curriculum for empowerment is critical of any scientific theory or method which proclaims separation between the knower and the object known, a primary form of alienation. When guided by technical instrumental reason alone, knowledge is reductionist, it loses its potential for illuminating practical (communicative), erotic, and liberating activity. Such knowledge is androcentric, and it takes males to be the norm for the species while purporting to achieve universal understanding of human society. A feminist curriculum for empowerment challenges these assumptions, and charges that they are used to justify a social order based on white, male, and money (class) supremacy.

The feminist curriculum reflects the task of thinking about, and of creating, the conditions for changing social relations, in particular for changing the lives of women (who cut across all classes, and races). Florence Howe, feminist educator, organized a list of themes for teaching, learning, and investigating, a helpful guide for planning feminist curricula for empowerment. Howe says that knowledge for and about women must include a crosscultural understanding of patriarchy; of women in education, in the arts, science, and literature; of women's domestic and market work; and of women's sexuality and psychological development—in summary, a new history of the species is ready to be (as it is being) written having women as SUBJECTS, not objects.

All disciplines are called upon to contribute to the development and the diffusion of such knowledge. Indeed, the curriculum of
Women's Studies in the future may become a paradigm for curricula of empowerment in all disciplines, including the "hard" male-identified sciences. A feminist curriculum is cross, multi, and interdisciplinary. As Gloria Bowles suggests, Women's Studies perhaps aspires to become transdisciplinary, going beyond the disciplines, seeing the world and human experience in universal terms. The first steps in that direction of universality are the critique of capitalist patriarchy, and the legitimation of women's authoritative view though a woman-loving feminist reinterpretation of reality.

Teacher-student relations in the classroom. The women-affirming perspective from which feminism voices the experiences of women escapes traditional patriarchal definitions of womanhood as secondary and unimportant. According to this construction of new ways of understanding social relationships, women engaged in CR seriously reflect upon their lives, and reveal their deeply political nature. Thus, the process and the product of the feminist pedagogy of empowerment are political. They embody the power to change society by shedding light on past and the present experiences under the multifaceted ruling of the oppressor.

The feminist teacher cannot accept the role of a hierarchically superior expert who objectifies the students—this is regarded as an unjustified internalized form of patriarchal power relations affecting educational practice. In the feminist classroom, teacher and student share an interest in understanding and changing various aspects of their lives. Their joint efforts at clarifying issues of power add to the knowledge of the kaleidoscopic patterns of women's lives. Because
subjects interact, the relations between teacher and student in the feminist classroom is based on intersubjectivity and on democratic processes. The feminist teacher acts as an investigator who facilitates the group’s actions in framing and studying problems which personally concern the lives of its members as part of the larger social collectivity. The teacher helps to establish a situation of nondistorted dialogue among participants with the purpose of exploring the issue at hand from a fresh feminist perspective. The feminist classroom is a political instrument for change because of its commitment to probing the relationship between knowledge, the individual, and society.

Language. Feminists have a special concern with language, which they criticize for its sexist, racist, and classist assumptions. Language is an instrument of oppression, and feminists agree on the need to develop a discourse free from domination. In this respect, feminism adds to Habermas’ concern with nondistorted communication seeking mutual understanding, agreement, and consensus—the discourse of domination must be radically changed.

Language is a fundamental factor in the socialization of human beings for it provides the structure of consciousness. As the mark of humaneness, language is one of the vehicles through which humans create culture and transcend nature. Verbal and nonverbal dimensions of language are used to transmit and preserve cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes; thus language is a political instrument.

The language of patriarchy, reflecting the world from the masculine point of view, depicts images of women’s subordination,
immaturity, and sexual serviceability. Common examples are the use of
the generic "man" to include men as well as women, and calling an
adult woman a "girl." A new vocabulary is needed, first, to restore
women's worth as autonomous and multidimensional human beings, and
second, to replace traditional masculine expressions denoting and
praising aggressiveness, competition, and domination over nature,
society, and women.

Feminists attempts to create the new language have met with
resistance, though reform is taking place. For example, some
publishers have adopted non-racist language codes. In the classroom,
feminists employ language with caution, avoiding sexist and racist
terms.

Feminist scholars are experimenting with new styles of
discourse, but the question posed by Jean Bethke Elshtain still
remains central to the task of a feminist construction of reality—how
do we set about a feminist discourse that rejects domination?
Elshtain's answer demonstrates loyalty to the fundamental
epipistemological principle of feminism, opposition to the separation
between knower and known. The new feminist discourse should be based
on a "philosophy of mind that repudiates the old dualism with which we
are still saddled in favor of an account that unites mind and body,
reason and passion, into a compelling account of human subjectivity
and identity." This concern for human unity, for connection, for
protecting and defending life over death—eros over thanatos—is the
driving force of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment expressed in
classroom discourse.
5. **Summary, conclusions, and recommendations**

In this chapter I outlined broadly a theoretical framework for a pedagogy of empowerment suggested by male and female voices in critical theory. This pedagogy "empowers" by creating erotic feelings of power. In opposition to learned and internalized powerlessness, empowerment becomes the objective, the method, and the product of an educative situation.

In recent centuries Western society has developed in line with elitist, property-oriented, racist, and sexist values held by males. These ideals were first set up when paternity was discovered, and society was organized according to a patriarchal needs structure. I do not espouse a conspiracy theory. Following Marx, I believe that relations in society form a totality; capitalist phallocentric institutions are oppressive and women, if unknowingly, participate in their own oppression.

The task of critical theory is to bring distorted relationships of power to consciousness. Through action, reflection, and communication, women and men can overcome these oppressive power relations and create new social relations of production, of sexuality, and of reproduction based on recognized mutuality and interdependence. A pedagogy of empowerment facilitates this process, and feminist practice serves as its exemplar. The final cause of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment is the transformation of capitalist, white male-supremacist society; its material cause is women's manifold alienated consciousness resulting from oppressive relations with men,
and with male-identified women; its formal cause is critical consciousness that reflects a moral consciousness based on the principles of the universal ethics of speech, aiming at increased understanding, truth, truthfulness, and correctness in communication; its efficient cause, the method of empowerment, is consciousness raising (CR), CR mediates alienation by connecting the lives of individuals to the larger structures of society which mold their lives. Feminist critical theory evolves from the process of consciousness-raising and it helps to create an anti-domination feminist language and discourse necessary for liberation. This discourse or collective voice of women arising from feminist practice creates power for women in society; legitimate, granted, power embedded in authority, and not based upon force or dominance. Women are the authorities in what concerns their own lives.

Women's studies is the branch of the feminist movement and the voice of critical theory in academia. The innovative curricula, the CR method, the non-hierarchical teacher-student classroom relations, and the language of Women's Studies could well become an example for all disciplines concerned with educating for empowerment and emancipation.

Professor Frank H.T. Rhodes, president of Cornell University, in a recent "Point of View" essay in the Chronicle of Higher Education lists the following educational objectives for college graduates:

Be able to to read and listen with comprehension and to write and speak with clarity, precision, and grace.

Have a sense of the context—physical, biological, social, historical—within which we live our lives.
Be able to reflect in an orderly way on the human condition and our beliefs, values, and experience.

Be able to appreciate nonverbal symbols, including the creative and performing arts.

Be able to work with precision, rigor, and understanding in a chosen discipline, so as to understand not only something of its content but also its premises, relationships, limitations, and significance.50

If professor Rhodes had been more aware of gender, he would have realized that these ideas exist in Women's Studies feminist education for empowerment and liberation, which aims at attaining all of the above objectives. Feminists, however, assert that only a critical theory of society, developed from the perspectives of men and women, and from the perspectives of different classes and races, can do the job of "locating" one's consciousness in the structure and in the history of society, and of the species. The president of Cornell, among other high-level officials of education in the U.S.A., calls for "liberal arts" education to be "useful in the most significant way of all, useful for the business [sic] of life."51 Feminist Women's Studies provides a useful critical theory and method to help students, in particular women, face the challenges of life dominated by androcentric, racist, and capitalist institutions.

Nevertheless, Women's Studies is an infant in academia, and a feminist pedagogy of empowerment is just in its initial stages of development. Many questions about this pedagogy suggest a program of interdisciplinary research. With respect to its material cause, for example, a feminist pedagogy of empowerment could gain insights about the nature of alienated consciousness in its various forms. We see
many symptoms of alienation, such as lack of motivation and passivity among students. What are the identity characteristics of our students from a perspective of alienation? With respect to the formal cause, inquiry into moral consciousness and moral education would add immensely to the knowledge of how consciousness is transformed, how it becomes autonomous, critical, and empowered. The efficient cause calls for inquiry into the complex process of consciousness raising which, of course, is related to the previous issue of moral consciousness education. Learning to identify good strategies in communicative action, and knowing how to relate strategies to consciousness transformations would help achieve the goals of a feminist pedagogy of empowerment. Problems of curriculum, student-teacher relations, the phallocentric academic setting, and questions concerning teacher, student, course, and program evaluation, all call for profoundly dedicated and helpful inquiry. Hopefully, this first outline of a pedagogy of empowerment can offer a contribution in terms of a theoretical framework and direction for further research.

In summary, the subject for a feminist pedagogy of empowerment is the everyday—past, present, and future—experience of women. The context of women's lives—capitalist, white-supremacist patriarchal society—has arrested women in the condition of the oppressed "other." One purpose of feminist education is the critical understanding of the many forms of oppression women are subject to, across societies, classes, and races. Another purpose is to guide liberation from domination: empowering women through action,
reflection, and communication. The articulation of a feminist discourse is a necessary condition for the joint construction of knowledge, society, and the individual free from domination. Through its pedagogy of empowerment, feminism offers a discourse of reconciliation and connection to women whose voices, so long missing from the human dialogue, are at last beginning to be heard.
1 Karl Marx, "Communist Manifesto," in Karl Marx: Selected Writings, ed. by David McClellan (Suffolk: Great Britain, 1977) pp 221-247.


6 Olsen, op. cit., p. 3.


8 Olsen, op. cit., p. 6.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p. 7.

11 Ibid., pp. 7-8.

12 See footnote 2 in Chapter II.

13 Habermas, op. cit.

14 Lorde, op. cit.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Female Stereotypes</th>
<th>Nonsexual</th>
<th>Sexual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serviceable</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Virgin Mary/Mother-Wife</em></td>
<td>chaste, pure, innocent, good</td>
<td>sensuous, sexually wise, experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>proper-looking, conservative</td>
<td>sexy, &quot;built&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nurturing, selfless, loving, gentle, &quot;mother of his children&quot;</td>
<td>satisfying, eager, earthy, mysterious, slightly dangerous</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>submissive, pliable, receptive</td>
<td>sexually receptive, agreeable, &quot;game&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>compromising, tactful, loyal</td>
<td>challenging, exciting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fragile, needful, dependent</td>
<td>independent, carefree, &quot;laid back&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feeling, nonrational, aesthetic, spiritual</td>
<td>bright, fun-loving, playful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>understanding, supportive</td>
<td>responsive, ego-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonserviceable</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Old Ball and Chain/Wif'nikids</em></td>
<td>frigid, sexually uninteresting</td>
<td>promiscuous, bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>frumpy or slatternly</td>
<td>coarse, vulgar, trampy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cloying, suffocating, obligating</td>
<td>tempting, leads one into sin and evil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>incapable of decision, changeable, scatterbrained, dumb, passive</td>
<td>undiscriminating; she's &quot;anybody's&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>nagging, shrewish, harping</td>
<td>bitchy, demanding, selfish; she &quot;asks for it&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>helpless, burdensome</td>
<td>immoral, makes trouble</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>over-emotional, irrational, unreasonable</td>
<td>thoughtless, sinful, evil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shrewd, manipulative, sneaky</td>
<td>immodest, unladylike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


28 *Ibid*.

29 *Ibid*.


32 Noted economist Gary S. Becker writes: "Since children provide pleasure to their parents, and since parents in developed countries make large outlays on their children, economists analyze family formation in developed countries primarily in terms of the framework provided by consumption theory. In particular, family size is said to be determined by the income of parents, by the cost of raising children relative to the costs of 'other' commodities [sic] and by preferences." *Economic Theory* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971) p. 160.

34 Jaggar, Ibid.


36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., p. 268.

38 "There is considerable evidence that females exceed males in incidence of various forms of mental illness. In one review of previous studies that used different methods of estimating the percentage of mentally ill men and women in different areas of the country over a period of about 15 years, all 17 community health surveys conducted since World War II found more women than men to be mentally ill (Gove & Tudor, 1973). Mental illness was defined in a general sense (e.g., as a disorder that involves personal discomfort and/or mental disorganization that is not caused by an organic or toxic condition.) Various methods of estimation produced similar sex differentials in incidence. Women outnumber men in rate of first admission to a psychiatric hospital by 1.4:1 More women that men receive psychiatric care in general hospitals in the United States for both functional psychoses (1.44:1) and neuroses (1.89:1). More women than men are involved in psychiatric outcare, and a larger percentage have contacts with psychiatrists in private practice. Women are also more likely to be treated for emotional and psychosomatic disorder by private practitioners than men are." Rhoda Unger, Female and Male Psychological Perspectives (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1979) p. 382. See also Phyllis Chesler, Women and Madness (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972).

39 See Chapter Two, in special section 2, "Marx on the individual."


41 Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).


43 Harriet Perl and Gay Abbarbanell. Guidelines to Feminist Consciousness Raising. By the Authors, 1979, p. 43

44 Hartsock, op. cit., p. 58.
an understanding of patriarchy in historical perspective; philosophically and sociologically; its relationship to the religions of the world, and to ideas of knowledge and power—hence, an understanding of what it means to be born "permanently" into a subordinate or dominant status; a knowledge of feminist theory.

2. an understanding of the complex, confusing, and still chaotic area of biological/psychological sex difference; the importance of null findings.

3. an understanding of socialization and sex roles, as well as of sex-role stereotyping; the relationships among gender, race, and class—all from a cross-cultural perspective.

4. an understanding of women in history, not only in the United States, but throughout the world; recognizing that such study includes legal as well as medical history—the history of birth control, for example, is essential to the study of women, even to the study of fiction about women.

5. an understanding of women as represented in the arts they have produce, some of which have been buried or ignored as arts—quilt-making, for example, or the pottery of North American Indian women; and as represented in the significant literature by women of all races and nationalities that never was included in the literary curriculum; as well as an awareness that the images of women portrayed by the male-created arts have helped to control the dominant conceptions of women—hence, the importance of studying images of women on TV, in the film and the theatre, and in advertising.

6. an understanding of the ways in which post-Freudian psychology has attempted to control women's destiny; an awareness that other male-centered psychological constructs like those of Erikson and Kohlberg are potentially damaging to women; and understanding of new women-centered theories of female development.

7. an understanding of female sexuality, including perspectives on both heterosexuality and lesbianism; special issues involved in birth control and reproduction.

8. an understanding of the history and function of education as support and codifier of sex-segregation and of limited opportunities for women; some perspectives on education as an agent for change in the past and present.
9. an understanding of the history and function of the family in the United States and cross-culturally; of the current variety of family structures, and of the conflict between beliefs and research findings with reference especially to issues surrounding childcare.

10. an understanding of women in the work force throughout history, in the present, and cross-culturally; the economy in relations to women; the relationship between money and power in personal interactions, in the family, and in society.

11. an understanding of the relationship between laws affecting women and social change; the history of women and social movements.


48 Gloria Bowles writes about experimentation with language among feminist scholars who contributed to Theories of Women's Studies, op. cit., pp. 18-19: "In their search to find out what we know about women, several of the contributors to this volume experiment with new ways of writing. Barbara Du Bois invents a poetic prose... she calls her essay 'notes' [denoting] thought in process: there is fluidity here, a sense that this is not final... Dale Spender's [essay] reveals associational thought, the sense of a writer working things out on the page, coming to know through various permutations of language... Marcia Westkott's piece is philosophical prose; there are echoes of the existential idiom in her lines... But the sentences are jarring precisely because the existentialists never talked about women. Westkott has appropriated this prose for women and thus at once provided a critique of the old tradition and put women at the center of a new one. Hers is an act of feminist revolt... A reinvention of language is one of the ways these authors withdraw consent [from the patriarchal construction of reality]."


51 Ibid.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


