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Title: The Class-Blind Approach to South African Schooling: A Reappraisal.

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This paper's primary endeavour is to redress partially a pervasive tendency in analyses of South African schooling. In this tendency involves deemphasizing or neglecting the crucial role that social class plays in shaping the pedagogical process and academic achievement in the schools. This deemphasis takes two forms: either social class is ignored and the emphasis is placed solely on the racist structuring of the educational system or alternatively social class is taken cognizance of but is conflated with race. The main argument of this paper is that both approaches seriously hamper our ability to understand the dynamics of schooling in the South African social formation and that to understand the pedagogical processes operating in the schools cognizance has to be taken of social class as a central factor interacting with, but concomitantly distinct from race.

An alternative theoretical approach schematically outlined

The conflation of race and class when examining schooling in South africa is illustrated in the following statement:

CNE and gutter education are the institionalised forms for ensuring the specific amounts of know-how attained by specific groups and also for ensuring that each is provided with an

^{1.} This paper focuses only on schools falling under the 'white' (WEA) and Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) educational authorities. The Department of Education and Training (DET) schools have not been included because when I started doing this research I was drawing a substantial amount of information from in-depth interviewing and as very few Sociology students had attended DET schools there were not enough ex-DET students to interview. Besides drawing on archival material this paper is based on the in-depth interviewing of 50 students, 14 teachers and 5 principals. For heuristic reasons the classifications 'white' and 'coloured' will be written without quotation marks from this point on.

^{2.} The pedagogical process refers to the way the syllabus is conceptualised by teachers and pupils, the way the syllabus is taught, the frequency, intensity and level of discussion and debate, the social relations between pupils and teachers, and the way knowledge is conceptualised and transmitted.

ideology which suits the role it has to fulfil in society (Chisholm, 1981: 136).

This conception does not take cognizance of the fact that these 'groups' are made up of different social classes that have different interests, resources and ideologies. Furthermore, my research indicates that these different classes generally attend schools dominated by their respective social class. Another implicit implication of Chisholm's account of schooling is that schools have no relative autonomy and thus the state determines the pedagogy practised. Although the state does have a substantial influence on the pedagogy practiced it is crucial to recognise that schools do have some relative autonomy. This relative autonomy gives teachers and pupils scope to influence significantly what happens in the school. As a principal on the Cape Flats has written

In our centralised system the curriculum is a book of what it is intended should happen in a subject in a school and teachers are fearful of deviating from these prescriptions. But there is still some scope for innovation in the method of instruction. Teachers should assign to students active roles in the learning situation rather than passive ones. (Joubert, 1981:47)

A crucial argument of this paper, however, is that it is not only the state and the teachers who shape the pedagogical process but also the pupils. As will be elaborated on, the ways in which pupils determine how the pedagogical process unfolds is linked to their class origins.

Bernstein (1981:50) has developed the concept 'frame' to help in the conceptualizing of the pedagogical process and how it can vary:

Frame refers to the specific pedagogical relationship of teacher and taught... frame refers to the strength of the boundary between what may be transmitted and what may not be transmitted in the pedagogical relationship. Where framing is strong there is a sharp boundary; where framing is weak there is a blurred boundary, between what may and may not be

transmitted. Frame refers us to the range of options available to teacher and taught... Strong framing entails reduced options; weak framing entails a range of options. Thus frame refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization, and pacing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship.

It is clear that in South African schools "the degree of control over the selection, organisation, and pacing of the knowledge" received is rarely great; however, what my empirical work shows is that the degree of control does vary substantially and is an important aspect distinguishing schools. Furthermore, it shows that the degree of control is in turn generally linked to the social class composition of the school's pupils.1

This stress on social class concurs with Bourdieu's (1976:110) argument

that each family transmits to its children, indirectly rather than directly, a certain cultural capital and a certain ethos. The latter is a system of implicit and deeply interiorized values which, among other things, helps define attitudes towards the cultural capital and other educational institutions.

Although Bourdieu is not very clear what he means by cultural capital/heritage besides the attitude held towards "other educational institutions" (which I presume means higher education and more specifically university) it includes "mastery over language ('linguistic capital')...style, taste, wit... ideas,... (and) knowledge" (Bourdieu, 1976:113,114,115). This cultural capital or 'cultural heritage' which Bourdieu argues is shaped by 'objective conditions' has serious implications for pupils as

the cultural heritage, which differs from both points of view according to social class, is the cause of the initial

^{1.} It is important to note that no school is a perfect representation of a specific type of school. However, the crucial point being made is that a specific school will have a predominance of characteristics associated with schools with the class/ colour composition in question.

inequality of children when faced with examinations and tests, and hence of unequal achievement (Bourdieu, 1976:110).

As can be seen, Bourdieu relates the different cultural heritages transmitted by the family to social class. Thus,

the attitudes of the members of the various social classes, both parents and children, and in particular their attitudes towards school, the culture of the school and the type of future the various types of studies lead to, are largely an expression of the system of explicit or implied values which they have as a result of belonging to a given social class (Bourdieu, 1976:110).

Bourdieu's conclusion that social class has a crucial influence on how parents and pupils perceive their schooling and on schooling achievement is certainly not unique. A great deal of empirical studies have been done which have illustrated the pertinence of social class and culture in the realm of schooling.

Thus in their 'classic' study of 88 working class children and 10 middle class children in a Northern England industrial city, Jackson and Marsden (1962:189) found

that very few working class children stayed in the grammar schools to pass their final examination at 18...on the other hand the proportion of middle class children who did so was very high.

They explain the success of the middle class children in the following way:

We saw that they began school with an educational inheritance. It was not just that their parents had often had secondary education... but rather that their families had interpenetrated state education... from its earliest days. It was for families like this that grammar schools were conceived and built; it was by men and women with similar habits of evaluation that they have been directed and staffed. To the middle-class child the prevailing grammar school tone was a natural extension of his home life. (Jackson and Marsden, 1962:189 and 190).

The few working class children who completed grammar school generally came from a home milieu which was not characteristically working class. Thus, the successful working

class children

were usually born into small families. Over one-third were only children. Often they also lived near to a successful primary school where the pace and tone were influenced by middle class parents. Further, over a third of the parents (of the successful working class children in the sample) had connections with the middle class themselves, and shared many of its aspirations - if not its secure knowledge and modes of communication. Most of the remaining two-thirds of the homes also came from the uppermost of the working class (Jackson and Marsden, 1962:190).

Another influential study worthy of note and which reaches similar conclusions to that of Bourdieu's and Jackson and Marsden's is Willis's (1978) study of working class 'lads' who do not succeed academically. Willis concludes that a large part of the reasons for the failure of most 'working class lads' is due to their own choice. This choice is formed through their 'class culture':

...it is their own culture which most effectively prepares some working class lads for the manual giving of their labour power. We may say that there is an element of self-damnation in the taking on of subordinate roles in Western capitalism. (Willis, 1978:3)

Within the school this generally involves "a certain resistance to mental work" (Willis, 1978:103). Willis' explanation for this anti-intellectualism is worthy of note:

Resistance to mental work becomes resistance to authority as learnt in the school... Mental activity for 'the lads' is not only barred because of their particular experience of the institution of the school, but also because it is regarded as effeminate... Despite their greater achievement and conventional hopes for the future, 'ear 'oles' and their strategies can be ignored because the mode of their success can be discredited as passive, mental and lacking a robust masculinity (Willis, 1978:103, 149 & 150).

All three authors place little emphasis on how these different cultures, shaped by their respective social class origins, affect the schools. What this paper argues is that the cultural capital transmitted by the family is a crucial factor differentiating schools. The cultural capital brought into the schools by the

pupils plays a central role in differentiating schools. Pupils with similar cultural heritages generally go to similar schools. A school is almost always characterised by the dominance of one or other class. Furthermore, schools that have mainly working class pupils have a different dominant pedagogical process to schools composed predominantly of the upper petit bourgeiosie and bourgeoisie. This is illustrated in the following pages.

 In this study the petit bourgeoisie is divided into three categories, the lower, middle and upper petit bourgeoisie. To an extent this differentiation has been influenced by Wright's (1983) conceptualisation of the petit bourgeoisie. also been influenced by the material gleaned from the in-depth interviews. These revealed that substantial differences exist within the petit bourgeois as regards attitudes towards schooling, university achievement and career. For example, the lower petit bourgeois pupil is generally less aspirant then the upper petit bourgeois pupil. Although Wright is not very clear in his defining of the petit bourgeoisie, a central thrust of his argument is that many members of this class occupy "contradictory class locations". Examples of occupations that occupy "contradictory class locations" are "managers and supervisors...(who) occupy a contradictory location between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (and) certain categories of semi-autonomous employees who retain relatively high levels of control over their immediate labour process (and who) occupy a contradictory location between the working class and the petit bourgeoisie (and) small employers (who) occupy a contradictory location between the bourgeoisie and the petit bourgeoisie" (Wright, 1983:63).

The concept of "contradictory class locations" is important for our purposes. Implicit in this conceptualisation is the notion that certain members of the petit bourgeoisie will be closer to the working class and others will be closer to the bourgeoisie. This is measured, mainly, in terms of the degree of control over the labour process and the amount of autonomy the employee has. A central problem with this conceptualisation, which will not be explored in this paper is how you measure this autonomy. When does an employee gain enough control over the labour process to become a member of the petit bourgeoisie?

A person whom I have termed lower petit bourgeoisie will generally have far less control and autonomy in his/her work situation (and I would add will generally have a far lower income) than a person who is a member of the middle or upper petit bourgeosie. He/she will be bordering the working class. The middle petit bourgeoisie generally are more skilled and earn more than the lower petit bourgeoisie. The upper petit bourgeoisie border the bourgeoisie and there is a good possibility that at some point they will enter the ranks of

White (WEA) schooling and social class

White schooling is generally viewed as an homogeneous entity catering for the dominant classes (see Kallaway, 1984). Both historically and presently this conception is erroneous.

The fact that the class composition of white schools in the late nineteenth century and in the early part of this century varied

the latter. They have high incomes and substantial control, responsibility and autonomy within the work-place.

Although Wright (1983:77) does not use the terms upper/middle/lower petit bourgeoisie he does imply a similar view. For example, he states that "the contradictory class location closest to the working class is that of foremen and line supervisors (the lower petit bourgeoisie). Foremen have little real control over the physical means of production, and while they do exercise control over labour power, this does not extend much beyond being the formal transmission belt for orders from above... At the other end of the contradictory location between workers and capitalists, top managers (upper petit bourgeois) occupy a contradictory location at the boundary of the bourgeoisie." From this point, when using lower/middle or upper petit bourgeoisie, petit bourgeoisie will be represented by PB.

In this study the bourgeoisie are viewed as those positions involved in the appropiation of surplus value through their ownership of means of production. Also included in this class are top executives who might not necessarily own stock in the company concerned but whose incomes and decision-making powers are considerable. Another component of the bourgeoisie are those members of the state apparatus who wield substantial power and are highly remunerated. They are generally in "positions which involve control over the creation of state policy..." (Wright, 1983:97).

The working class following Wright (1983:97) "can be defined as those positions which... occupy the working class position within the social relations of production i.e., wage labour which is excluded from control over money capital, physical capital and labour power." Thus an employee does not have to produce surplus value in order to be a member of the working class. A crucial defining characteristic would be the level of control the individual has over the labour process and I would add the income he/she earns. One could argue that some domestics have a great deal of control over the labour process this does not, however, make them members of the petit bourgeoisie.

1. The stress of this paper is on the more recent period. The historical investigation is thus purposely brief.

substantially and that this had a significant influence on educational achievement is clearly revealed in the study done by Malherbe (1932) for the Carnegie Commission on 'Education and the Poor White'. In his study Malherbe (1932:35) reproduces a table representing white schooling in the Cape in 1878. The table distinguishes between three "types of schools". The labels given are 'lst class', '2nd class' and '3rd class' schools. In the 1st class school 49% of the pupils were above Std III, in the 2nd class school 30% were, and in the 3rd class school 17% were. The third class schools "were attended by the poor section of the European population..."

Ross, the Inspector General of Education in the Cape, in his 1883 report stated that

the good schools are a drop in the ocean compared to the large mass of inferior work in the lower strata of schools and the large number still outside the system...third class schools with their inferior teachers and low standard virtually shut out the most important section of the community (the farmers) from the blessing of real culture. (Malherbe, 1932:36&37)

In 1892 this sentiment was repeated by Dr Muir (the chief inspector of schools) who stated that "the circuit schools (which) aim at reaching the neglected poor of European descent...are the least satisfactory" (Malherbe, 1932:xxv).

In a study done by Malherbe in 1929, white schools were grouped in three categories, according to the economic condition of the majority of parents whose children attended those schools: "A - more or less affluent and well to do: B - economically average; C - economically weak, or indigent." Malherbe (1932:75) found substantial differences between the different types of schools in terms of the "percentage of pupils who left school at different stages of their primary school course up to and including Std VI". He established that

there is a decided difference between the holding power of schools in a more prosperous environment (A), and of those in a poor environment (C). In the first case about 40% ended their school education at some stage within the primary school, and the remaining 60% proceed further. In the second instance, more than 90% ended their school education in the primary school and only 10% studied beyond Std VI. (Malherbe, 1932:75)

He also divided high schools (Std VII to matric) using similar criteria and found that

in the schools of class (C) more than half the total number of children in the school are to be found in Std VII, but in the richer schools it would be a little more than one third. (Malherbe, 1932:83)

It is clear that from the mid-nineteenth century white schools differed considerably as regards the class origins of their pupils and that this had a significant effect on the educational achievements of respective schools. It would appear that it also shaped the pedagogy practised. An indication of this is the case of the South African College (SACS) where Latin and Greek were taught from 1829 onwards. The Commercial Advertiser's reporting of the prize-giving at SACS in 1830 is worthy of note:

Master Frankel, on being presented with a prize which he had won in the Dutch Latin class, returned thanks in a Latin speech, which took about fifteen minutes to deliver, and Master Faure, a son of the Rev. A. Faure... also expressed his gratitude in Latin... (Ritchie, 1918:67)

It is unlikely that Latin and Greek were taught in those schools composed mainly of children whose fathers were workers and/or poor farmers and that even if it was the way Latin was viewed and used would probably have been very different.

As regards the contemporary period, it is apparent that almost no research has been done in white schools on the influence of social class although its influence is still crucial. Although the 'poor white problem' has by and large been solved, the section of the population classified white is still by no means homogeneous and significant class divisions remain. It will be

shown that social class is still very pertinent in shaping the pedagogical process and academic results in WEA schools. 1

Two studies, both worthy of attention, have been done on a

1. A major methodological problem in this study was to establish the class composition of a school. For example how to establish whether a school was composed predominantly of upper and middle PB pupils or lower to middle PB pupils. Various indicators were used. Firstly, and most importantly the locality of the school was noted, as a school generally reflects the class composition of its locality. Thus, there are no schools composed of working class to lower PB pupils located in an area like Rondebosch. The average monthly income in Rondebosch in 1980 was R1164,93 for males and R522, 74 for females and only 4% of the economically active males were classified as production workers (Patel, 1984:98). On the other hand there is no middle to upper PB school in Observatory where the average monthly income in 1980 was a third that of Rondebosch (1984:87).

As regards DIA schools the situation is more complex. This is often directly related to the Effects of the Group Areas Act. Residents have been removed from certain areas but the schools, for example Harold Cressey and Livingstone, have remained. The schools composed of predominantly petit bourgeois pupils thus often do not draw on their immediate locality. Because of the paucity of lower PB to middle PB DIA schools petit bourgeois coloured pupils will commute from all over Cape Town to attend these schools. It can be argued that the mere fact that pupils do commute to these schools indicates that they are composed of petit bourgeois pupils. The working class cannot afford to commute and there is thus little doubt that schools in working class coloured areas are composed of predominantly working class pupils. Thus the schools in Mannenberg are unlikely to be composed of pupils whose origins are petit bourgeois. In 1980 the average monthly income in Mannenberg was R177,39 for males and R111,79 for females (the average monthly income for coloureds in Cape Town in 1980 was R438,11 for males and R226,05 for females). 57% of Mannenberg's economically active popuplation in 1980 were classified as prodution workers, this would generally be factory workers, and a maximum of 14% fell into the lower or middle PB (1984:103). It is highly unlikely that a working class family in Mannenberg would be able to afford to (or want to) send their children to schools outside of the area.

The 65 in-depth interviews I conducted were another crucial means of obtaining a profile of the class composition of respective schools. Interviewees were generally able to give a reasonably clear portrayal of their school's class composition. They could tell me where and how the pupils at the school lived and what a common occupation of the parents was. Finally, my school-teaching experience (I taught for three years) and residence in Cape Town were extremely important in giving me a sense of the class composition of various schools in the Cape Town area.

predominantly white working class school in Cape Town. The first study was done in 1960 (the study was only published in 1970) and the second study was done in 1981 (Watson, 1970; Gilmour, 1981). Both studies will be recounted in some detail as they graphically illustrate the influence of social class in WEA schooling.

As regards the class origins of the pupils, the 1960 study found that at the school in question

a small proportion of parents fall into categories typical of poor whites (e.g. railway workers, bus conductors,..) but a very much larger proportion of occupations reported are skilled or semi-skilled manual occupations. Among the actively employed, 67,4 percent of the fathers and 73,9 percent of the mothers are engaged in such occupations.

He concluded that "the whites of Colander, (the name of the school) then, belong to the working class..." (Watson, 1970:6)

Watson then examined the aspirations of the pupils at the school. His findings are worth quoting at length:

The sons intend following in their fathers' footsteps. Almost all the boys chose occupations which fall within the skilled trades category - they want to be mechanics, fitters and turners, print compositors, electricians; most think their wishes will be realised; all believe - and in this they are encouraged by their parents - that they will in fact become tradesmen of some sort. As for the girls, there are those who wish to be air hostesses, nurses, models, or hairdressers, but most want to become - and almost all think that in fact they will become - typists or office workers of some kind. In the entire school only two children hope to pursue a professional career, neither of them expects his wishes to be realised. (Watson, 1970:63)

The boys reject bus-conducting ('overcrowded', 'awkward hours'), and other non-trades ('because when you've got a trade nobody can take it away from you'). By far the most numerous and vociferous hostile remarks are, however, reserved for middle-class occupations - clerk ('stuffy'), teacher ('don't like school'), doctor ('works his whole life through'). The girls are even more class-conscious in their responses. The most commonly rejected occupations are factory hand, salesgirl and book-keeper...Next in order of unpopularity come the middle-class occupations of teacher, doctor, nurse and librarian (1970:63).

Those occupations which are rejected by the children are rarely recommended to them by parents (1970: 63-64).

It is clear that the social class origins of the pupils had a dramatic effect on their occupational aspirations. There was little or no desire to go to university. Jobs that involved intellectual/mental activity were generally rejected. The occupational desires indicate that an anti-intellectualism was dominant amongst the pupils.

The effects of the social class origins of the pupils was revealed in various ways in the classroom. Watson portrays the relationship between pupils and teachers as one of enmity, the enmity being strongly related to the class origins of the pupils. He expresses this in the following way:

With teachers and parents at loggerheads in such crucial matters as the goals of education, it is inevitable that the war that pupils wage upon their teachers is tinged with deep-seated animosity (Watson, 1970:67).1

This animosity revealed itself in different ways. According to Watson (1970:67), it was "no better evidenced than in the type of leader that the class throws up. These are the toughs and repeaters...".

The observation about classroom leaders is important as it reveals the reverence of qualities that are anti-intellectual and those associated with masculinity. Teachers are generally viewed with disdain:

When older pupils were asked what type of pupils teachers liked they responded in the following order: 'goodies', 'squares', and those who are 'intelligent', 'wealthy', 'well-mannered', 'neat', and 'quiet'. Nothing makes them quite so pleased as 'creeping'... and, to a lesser extent, 'laughing at

^{1.} The differences between the parents and the teachers as regards the goals of education are clearly related to their different class locations. Thus the teachers are concerned with "the development of character and (felt that) the recognition of spiritual values is of as much importance as the acquiring of factual knowledge" (Watson, 1970:66). The parents had a more utilitarian, pragmatic view of the goals of schooling. They saw their children's schooling in the light of how it affected their potential earning capacity.

their jokes'...'keeping quiet', and 'doing as you are told', and lastly, 'working'...The older boys singled out for attack 'prefects',...'teacher's pets'... and they wax caustic at the expense of 'creepers', 'hangers-on', 'ratters', 'nickers', 'squirts' and 'moffies' (1970:70).

This anti-intellectualism, appears to be a crucial aspect of the predominantly working class school and its surrounding context. At Colander H.S. academic achievement was not admired and there was generally little or no desire to be successful academically: "while it is little disgrace for a boy to be near the bottom of his class; the well-behaved and obtrusively studious boy is rejected by his peers as a 'sissy!'" (Watson, 1970:72).

This pervasive anti-intellectualism had a profound influence on the pedagogical process:

A teacher cannot afford to allow ever-present hostility to break out into classroom disorder by permitting the expression of spontaneity and independence: his technique is therefore confined to drilling, to the teaching of mechanical skills, to the maintenance of rigid standards of conduct: these maintain hostility and therefore the need for further drilling (Watson, 1970:77).

The pedagogy practised was thus devoid of creativity or innovation. It is noteworthy how the anti-intellectualism of the pupils virtually ensured that a strong frame was dominant in the classroom. At this point it is worth noting how remarkably close the scenario sketched by Watson is to more contemporary studies such as that done by Willis (1978) and furthermore how the empirical observations of Watson serve to substantiate the theoretical writings of Bourdieu.

Watson's study was re-evaluated 21 years later by the present principal of the school in question. The findings are different in some realms and similar in others. An examination of the class composition of the fathers revealed that most pupils were

still of working class or lower PB origins. Thus 24% of the fathers were fishermen, 24% skilled or semi-skilled artisans, 9% were pensioners or unemployed, and a further 9% were possibly in white-collar jobs-clerk, quality controller, supervisor. "The remainder included such diverse occupations as crane-driver, caretaker, barman, shop-owner...security guard" (Gilmour, 1981:3). Gilmour's (1981:3) conclusion is interesting. He concludes that

it would appear, then, that there are now fewer 'qualified' tradesmen among the fathers - i.e. it can be argued that jobwise, the inhabitants of Woodstock are even lower down the social ladder than they were 20 years ago.

In comparison to the earlier working class of Woodstock its present white working class appear to be less skilled.

In his study Gilmour (1981:4) found that pupils did not have particularly high occupational aspirations: "30% of the boys wanted to do a trade and over a quarter sought white collar jobs" (Gilmour, 1981:4). Although not stated by Gilmour, it seems that very few if any of the male pupils wanted to go to university. Interestingly there seemed to be little direction from parents. Thus "many pupils stated that they did not know what jobs their parents wanted them to follow". The aspirations of the girls were also low. 27% wanted to become typists and "jobs like air/ground hostesses and teaching (were) quite frequently mentioned as desirable jobs." (Gilmour, 1981:5)

Interestingly, there is seemingly a substantial disjuncture between the job desired and the job eventually obtained. Thus Gilmour (1981:5) states:

It is my view that many of the pupils have, in fact, false expectations. During the past eight years many boys have gone in for jobs within the skilled and semi-skilled trades category; and the majority of girls have gone to office jobs.

It would seem that the majority of pupils have not been able to escape their class origins. This tendency undermines the notion that white schooling necessarily perpetuates or serves to create a middle or upper PB. Gilmour's findings indicate that social class origins still play a key role in determining the future social class locations of white pupils. They illustrate that the massive discriminatory allocation of resources to white education does not necessarily result in white pupils of working class and lower PB origins escaping the social class into which they were born.

The class composition of the school in question is still playing a crucial role in shaping the type of pedagogy practised. Thus in 1974 a 'Practical Course' was introduced. Its clear attempt to cater for and reproduce the predominantly working class composition of the school is illustrated by Gilmour's (1981:6) description of its aims and the type of student who joined:

The object of the course was to provide an alternative to the more academic course in which the curriculum would be more weighted towards 'practical' (vocational) subjects - Industrial Arts/Woodwork, Housecraft, Typing, Business Methods, Accountancy - and the approach in the academic subjects would be of a more 'concrete' or applied nature, rather than abstract or theoretical... The type of pupil who qualified for admission to this course were those who would normally have been expected to enter the trades or perform office jobs of a routine nature - typing, filing, etc. Those pupils who aspired to higher things continued with the academic course.

Gilmour (1981:7) agrees with Watson that much of what constitutes the academic syllabus is viewed as irrelevant by the pupils "because it assumes a middle-class culture, with attendant values, experiences and goals". Unfortunately Gilmour does not draw out the implications of this view of the syllabus by pupils.

^{1.} In 1981 13 matric pupils wrote the normal Cape Senior Certificate and 15 wrote the practical exam (Cape of Good Hope (Province). Educational Statistics: White Schools, 1981:25).

One implication that is clear is that these pupils do not achieve academically. In 1981 only 3 of the matriculants who wrote the normal Cape Senior Certificate exam obtained matric exemption.

An in-depth interview I conducted with a teacher who taught at Colander H.S. and is presently teaching at another predominantly white working class to lower PB school served to further confirm the findings of Watson (1971) and Gilmour (1981). He stated that

the pupils are locked into expectations about what kind of work they should do. They are limited by their expectations and by their families' expectations of where they should get to, and by economics... Long term gains are not seen as relevant. The university is a mystical place... I in 30 matriculants go to university every year. The pupils are clearly alienated from the dominant culture of the syllabus. Not only the syllabus, but school in general is viewed with disdain....

He indicated that the cultural (and economic) capital of the pupils has a direct effect on the pedagogical process:

It acutely affects the way you teach. The kids just want the bare minimum required for the exam. There is no question that you are teaching for tertiary education. Standard ten is the goal.... Only in the A-class do you get some kids who start viewing the pursuit of knowledge as good.

We can conclude that the two studies reviewed and the material from the in-depth interveiw graphically illustrate the centrality of social class in any analysis of white South African schooling. The fact that the school in question (Colander H.S.) is dominated by pupils whose origins are predominantly working class or lower PB clearly has a crucial bearing on the pedagogical process within the school. If the social class origins of the pupils were not taken into account we would not have been able to understand the pedagogical process operating within the school and why this school obtains such poor matric results.

There appear to be no sociological studies of white schools composed predominantly of petit bourgeois to bourgeois students.

The few studies that have been done are generally historical, tracing the history of a particular school from its formation to the present (see Peacock, 1972; Ritchie, 1918). However, the interviews I conducted revealed important aspects of these schools. A crucial finding is that due to their social class origins the pupils in these schools are generally more educationally and occupationally aspirant and thus have a stronger commitment to doing well at school. This is also clearly indicated by the number of pupils these schools send to the UCT, the proportion of these schools' pupils in matric and by the matric results these schools obtain.

Those schools composed predominantly of students of upper petit bourgeois and bourgeois origins have the highest number of expupils at UCT. Thus in 1983 SACS had the largest number of expupils (359) at UCT, followed by Rondebosch (346), Herzlia (312), Westerford (279), Diocesan College(Bishops) (257), and Rustenburg GHS (221). In sharp contrast schools composed predominantly of pupils of lower petit bourgeois to middle petit bourgeois origins had far fewer ex-pupils at UCT. Plumstead had 81 pupils and Cape Town HS had 80 (University of Cape Town Careers Office, 1983:1). Schools composed predominantly of pupils of working class and lower petit bourgeois origin had very few ex-pupils at UCT. Thus Muizenberg and Queen's Park had fewer than ten ex-pupils at UCT.

As stated another indicator of differences between schools which I suggest is related to social class is the percentage of pupils in matric. It can be surmised that the middle to upper PB school would have a greater proportion of its pupils in matric. This would in turn indicate a lower drop-out rate and a greater degree of educational aspiration. In 1981, 16,7 percent (115/688) of

Rondebosch High School was constituted by matrics, at SACS the percentage was 18,2 (119/652) and at Rustenburg it was 16,2 percent (98/606). In sharp contrast only 12,4 percent (28/225) of the pupils at Queen's Park, 10,3 percent (26/252) of the pupils at Muizenberg, 12 percent (30/249) of the pupils at Rhodes and 10,1 percent (36/355) of the pupils at Ysterplaat were in matric (Cape of Good Hope (Province). Educational Statistics: White Schools, 1981:25).

Another illuminating indicator of the pertinence of social class in white schooling is matric results: there are significant differences in the matric results obtained by schools composed of pupils from different social classes. Thus those schools dominated numerically by pupils of middle/upper PB and bourgeois origins (MPB-UPB) outperform those schools whose pupils are predominantly lower and middle PB (LPB-MPB) and outclass those schools whose pupils are predominantly working class and lower PB (WC-LPB). This is illustrated in the following table that displays the matric results obtained in 1981. 1981 was selected as this is the latest year in which the number of matriculants in The schools listed are a selection each school is obtainable. of schools in and around Cape Town. They were selected on the basis that they almost certainly represent the social classes attributed to them in the table and they all wrote the Cape Senior Certificate exam. Schools whose class composition is unclear were not included. Unfortunately there are very few WC-LPB schools in the sample. This is due to the small number of schools in Cape Town with this class composition.

Table 1. Cape Senior Certificate matric results by social class

Name of school	Class composi- tion	No. of matricu- lants	No. of passes	No./% matri exempt	c fail		No. A's
•					8		
Westerford	MPB-UPB	134	134	110	83	0	11
SACS	MPB-UPB	119	· 115	85	71	4	3 7
Herzlia	MPB-UPB	107	107	94	88	0	7
Rustenburg	MPB-UPB	103	103	95	92	0	10
Rondebosch	MPB-UPB	115	112	9Ø	78	3	7
Rhenish	MPB-UPB	53	53	43	81	0	0
Total		631	624	517	82(ave)	7	38
Fish Hoek*	LPB-MPB	148	143	80	54	5	3
Milnerton	LPB-MPB	110	106	67	61	4	ī
Plumstead	LPB-MPB	134	127	62	46	7	ī
Cape Town H.	LPB-MPB	100	97	39	39	3	ī
Muizenberg	LPB-MPB	26	25	10	38	1	Ō
Simonstown	LPB-MPB	34	31	12	35	3	0
Total		552	529	270	49 (ave)	23	5
Rhodes**	WC-LPB	19	19	o		0	0
Queen's	WC-LPB	13	13	3		ŏ	Ö
Park		•					
Total		32	32	3		0	0

^{*} There is little doubt that the proportion of middle petit bourgeois pupils at Fish Hoek and Milnerton will be higher than the proportion at Plumstead, Cape Town High, Muizenberg and Simonstown high schools. It is interesting how much better the matric results of these two schools are.

The percentages with matric exemption for the three groups were compared using the Kruskal Wallis test (a non-parametric rank test which makes no distributional assumptions) because of the small sample sizes (Siegal, 1956:184-193). It was found that there were significant differences between the 3 groups (H=12,15; df=2; p<0,01). Pairwise comparisons were then made using the Mann-Whitney U test (a non-parametric test for comparing two groups) (Siegal, 1956:116-127). Since there are 3 possible pairwise comparisons we must use a significance level at 0,017

^{**} At Rhodes 11 pupils and at Queen's Park 15 pupils did the practical matric course. These pupils are not included in the statistics.

^{1.} I am indebted to Debbie Bradshaw for her invaluable assistance in the realm of statistics.

for each comparison to give an overall level of significance of \emptyset , \emptyset 5. The MPB-UPB was significantly higher than the LPB-MPB (U=0, p=0,001) and the LPB-MPB was significantly higher than the WC-LPB (U=0, p=0,012).

The matric results obtained graphically illustrate that the social class composition of a school has a crucial bearing on the achievements of its pupils. The distinction does not lie in the proportion of pupils who fail (because the numbers are so small) but rather in the proportion who obtain university exemptions. Thus in the six MPB-UPB schools selected approximately 82% of the pupils obtained matric exemption. In the LPB-MPB schools selected, approximately 49% of the pupils obtained matric exemption and in the WC-LPB schools focused on approximately 9% of the matrics who did the academic stream obtained matric exemption. The average for all the white schools in the Cape in 1981 is worth noting. 92% of the matric candidates passed and 44,58% obtained matric exemption (Cape Times, 24 December 1981). As stated, 82% of the pupils in the MPB-UPB schools in the sample obtained matric exemption. These results once more suggest that the social class origins of pupils is a crucial factor in shaping the pedagogical process within the schools.

The in-depth interviews I conducted with middle and upper petit bourgeois and bourgeois pupils and their teachers. further illustrated how the social class origins of a school's pupils shape the pedagogical process. Interviewees who had gone to middle to upper PB and bourgeois (MPB-UPB) schools noted that

^{1.} A very brief synopsis of the extensive and rich interview material obtained is given in this paper. For a fuller account see my 1984 ASSA paper: 'Schooling, culture and class: A sociological analysis of 'white' and 'coloured' schooling and the potential effects of this schooling on performance in Sociology.'

generally pupils entered these schools with a cultural capital that is very achievement and university-orientated. This cultural capital is strongly reinforced by the school.

You were told you had to do well... the traditions of the school reinforced this. In the hall, for example, the cups, pictures of businessmen, Springbok rugby players, etc. created this climate of expectations. We had a mania for doing well. The school had hundreds of competitions... (ex-MPB-UPB school pupil).

There are instances where the cultural capital which dominates a MPB-UPB school results in the prevalence of a liberal pedagogy. In these schools pupils initiate and are encouraged to question and debate and a weak frame is dominant. There is a relatively strong desire by most teachers and a sizeable proportion of the pupils to pursue knowledge for its intrinsic worth. This is illustrated in the following statement by an ex-MPB-UPB school pupil:

The teaching methods used were dynamic... A lot of extra stimulus material was provided... The school was permissive in that we were strongly encouraged to engage in debate. There was a very high level of participation. We were taught to analyse ... There was a lot of free speech, and political discussion... The school was trying to produce people who could make choices in life... The school was not regimented and there was a lot of freedom, therefore you were prepared for university.

However, the interviews clearly indicated that most white MPB-UPB schools are dominated by a strong frame. In these schools the syllabus is competently transmitted but rarely questioned or strayed from. Academic achievement and university is very strongly encouraged. The pedagogical process that dominates the majority of MPB-UPB schools is captured in the following extract of an interview with an ex-MPB-UPB school pupil.

The school was conservative, nothing controversial was allowed to be discussed. The teachers were generally conservative, they just stuck to the syllabus. They give you everything you require for the exam and that's that... A lot of notes were given out...

A crucial aspect of all MPB-UPB schools is that they interpellate their constituency as members of the dominant class and give them all the means required to ensure that they retain their membership. This is reflected in the following statement by an ex-MPB-UPB school pupil:

The school was always telling us how fortunate we were to be here and that your future, if you worked hard, was virtually assured because you were at A... The school was outstanding in the sense that it gave me a tremendous amount of self-importance... I knew I was going to be successful and that I was going to have a profession.

In the WEA LPB-MPB school a different cultural capital predominates. The interviews indicated that within these schools the large majority of lower PB pupils have little or no desire to, nor are they expected by their families and peers to go to university. This ethos also affects a sizeable proportion of the middle PB pupils at these schools. The lower to middle PB class composition leads to the predominance of a cultural capital which can be labelled as relatively anti-intellectual (this is certainly not as strong as the anti-intellectualism operating in the WC-LPB school, see pages 10-16). A teacher from a LPB-MPB school expressed this in the following way:

University is not really stressed...the school is not academically inclined. There is resistance to people doing well. There is a lot of peer group pressure. You must not ask questions.... There is definitely an anti-intellectualism operating in the school. It affects the aspirations of the pupils. Very few of the pupils go to university.... The atmosphere is reasonably relaxed as there is not intense pressure on them to perform. Some homework would be given but one wouldn't expect it to be done.... The kids don't take things seriously.... There is not a strong internalised drive to succeed.

He had a note from a student in the A stream class which stated that

I have decided to dissociate myself from anything academic and I am not going to try and get high marks anymore. I am just trying to be normal and to get rid of nicknames like brainy.

What clearly emerges from the preceeding portrayal is that the social class origins of pupils at WEA (white) schools play a central role in determining the pedagogical process, the academic achievements and general ambience of the school.

Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) schooling and social class

There is no doubt that DIA schools vary considerably in their class composition. Thus, it is generally accepted that a school like Harold Cressy is dominated numerically by pupils whose origins are petit bourgeois and that Mount View in Hanover Park is predominantly working class. These significant class discrepancies are not a new phenomenon.

The first coloured high school, Trafalgar, was established in 1925. The available evidence suggests that this school was dominated by the petit bourgeoisie. At this time most coloured pupils left school before standard IV, as

in addition to the cost of keeping the children at school, there was the often compelling need to use the children in large families as early as possible to augment the small family income... (Maurice, 1966:239).

It would appear that generally secondary schooling was feasible only for the children of the petit bourgeoisie.

Maurice (1966:424) describes Trafalgar H.S. of 1925 in the following way:

It was equipped with facilities for the teaching of Domestic Science and Manual Training and laboratories for science, and was thus able to offer a variety of courses and a range of secondary work comparable to the best equipped High School for European pupils.

There is little doubt that its facilities were far superior to those in coloured working class schools.

Moving to the present period certain statistics point to substantial differences among DIA schools. There is little doubt

that these differences are primarily related to the varying social class composition of the respective schools. Thus in the three year period 1980 to 1982, only five out of the approximately 220 UCT students classified coloured who did Sociology came from schools that are dominated by pupils of working class origins. Harold Cressy was the tenth largest supplier overall of students to UCT. In 1983, of all the students at UCT 148 had completed their schooling at Harold Cressy and 138 at Livingstone. The latter is also generally recognised as being composed of predominantly petit bourgeois pupils. Both these schools had more ex-pupils at UCT than some white schools with roughly equivalent pupil enrolments. 1983 Bergvliet H.S. had 125 ex-pupils enrolled at UCT, Milnerton 123, Settlers 120, Fish Hoek 112 and Plumstead 81 (University of Cape Town, 1984). All these schools probably have a similar pupil composition in terms of social class origins. figures again illustrate the pertinence of social class and graphically display that colour is not by any means the sole determinant of the achievements of pupils or the 'quality' of schooling obtained.

The importance of the social class composition of a school is again illustrated by the very substantial differences in the matric results obtained by different DIA schools. It is dramatically clear, as is illustrated in the table below, that DIA schools dominated by pupils whose origins are lower to middle PB (LPB-MPB) obtain significantly better matric results than schools dominated by working class to lower PB (WC-LPB) pupils.

Table 2 displays the 1983 matric results (the number of pupils who failed was unfortunately not obtainable).

Table 2. DIA matric results by social class

Name of school	Class Composition	No. of passes	No./% of matric exempt.	No. of A aggregate pupils
Harold Cressy	LPB-MPB	102	% 59 58	3
Livingstone	LPB-MPB	116	57 49	4
South Penin- sula	LPB-MPB	82	46 56	1
Belgravia	LPB-MPB	129	39 30	1
Spes Bona	LPB-MPB	90	30 33	1
St Columbus	LPB-MPB	33	12 36	
Immaculata	LPB-MPB	33	18 55	0
Trafalgar	LPB-MPB	59	22 37	0
Total		644	283 44(ave)	11
			8	•
Manenberg	WC-LPB	21	5 24	o `
John Ramsay	WC-LPB	57	8 14	0
Arcadia	WC-LPB	32	7 22	0
Bonteheuwel	WC-LPB	54	8 15	0
Heideveld	WC-LPB	57	8 14	0
Crestway	WC-LPB	71	14 20	0
Elsies River		63	13 21	0
Crystal	WC-LPB	40	2 5	0
Mountview	WC-LPB	11	0 Ø	0
Modderdam	WC-LPB	35	1 3	0
Lavender Hil		46	8 17	0
Bishop Lavis	WC-LPB	69	7 10	0
Total		475	81 15(ave)	0

The results show that there is a significant difference between the LPB-MPB and WC-LPB school on the basis of the Mann-Whitney U test (U=0; p<0,0001). 44% of pupils at LPB-MPB DIA schools who passed obtained matric exemption versus 15% in WC-LPB DIA schools.

What is very worthy of note is that the results of the DIA LPB-MPB schools sampled are similar to the results of white LPB-MPB schools in table 1. Thus 44% of pupils at the DIA LPB-MPB schools listed obtained matric exemption compared to 49% in the white LPB-MPB schools listed. These statistics once more point to the crucial role that social class plays in determining the academic results of schools.

The in-depth interviews I conducted with DIA teachers and principals and ex-DIA school pupils provided further evidence that the differing class compositions of DIA schools result in substantial differences between schools within this educational authority.

The in-depth interviews indicated that the WC-LPB DIA school has a cultural capital and pedagogical process that is similar to its white counterpart. These schools are dominated by an anti-intellectualism and the large majority of pupils are not aspirant: A principal from a DIA WC-LPB school expressed this in the following way:

Very few working class kids make it to matric or university. The whole culture of the working class doesn't encourage kids. The attitude toward intellectual pursuit, discipline, towards teachers and towards school is different. Middle-class kids will do their work. The parents will help. Working class kids do not do the work, the parents also can't help... Most teachers being middle class can't understand this... The working class kids are totally removed from the school...

University is a very remote entity. One of the few ex-DIA students of working class origins at UCT stated that

It is not part of working class culture. University is a total mystery. There are incredible illusions about the university. People think that to go there you have to be the most intelligent person in the world.

The pedagogy practised at these schools is generally very syllabus bound. This is not only due to state policy but is directly linked to the culture of the teachers and pupils at these schools. A teacher at one of these schools expressed this interrelationship in the following way:

The teachers want good results, therefore they spoonfeed ...

^{1.} In a questionnaire survey I conducted I found that of the 303 Sociology students who responded to the questionnaire only 3% (8/303) were of working class origins and 9% (29/303) were of lower PB origins.

The way they teach is a legacy of their teacher training courses. They get spoonfed and they transfer their training on to the kids... Also the teacher is expected to play the classic authoritarian teacher role otherwise the kids don't listen. If you don't behave in this way then they don't respect you... They often don't take material outside the syllabus seriously.

The DIA WC-LPB school has a very different dominant cultural capital to that operating in the DIA LPB-MPB school. At the latter the cultural capital held by the pupils (and their parents) and teachers strongly encourages university education, and related to this academic achievement: "If you went to A... it was taken for granted that you would go to university or Hewat teachers training college." (an ex-DIA LPB-MPB school pupil)

The pupils are driven to achieve in these schools. This is graphically illustrated by this portrayal given by a teacher in one of these schools:

The kids are given a lot of homework and they get beaten if they don't do it.... Kids often complain about the intense pressure put on them. E... (the top pupil) got an ulcer because he was constantly 'hassled'. He was made to feel a failure because he obtained a C for Maths in June....

This drive to achieve has dire implications for the pedagogy practised in these schools. They are dominated by a very strong frame. Social relation between teachers and pupils are usually rigid and not much initiative is given to pupils. An ex-DIA LPB-MPB school pupil expressed this in the following way:

In class everything is very prescribed, you must do the work that is given otherwise you are punished. The teachers were generally very authoritarian...not much thinking was done, everything was bounded.... There was alot of spoonfeeding at the school....

A principal of a DIA LPB-MPB school stated that

the kids are very spoonfed and very regimented. The teachers are highly conscious of the fact that we have to get the kids through the exam. The exam is everything, alternatives are not really possible....

He placed part of the blame for the 'spoonfeeding' on the lack of facilities and the inadequacy of the teachers in DIA LPB-MPB

schools

The teacher is generally sitting with a mixed group, higher grade and standard grade in one class. The teacher has to cater for both. We cannot split the classes as there are not enough facilities. The teacher has to pander to the weak group. strong group is not really encouraged to think innovatively. Most teachers are not capable of catering to both groups and will rather just stick to the syllabus.

A lower PB coloured parent who has university aspirations for his child will generally send his/her child to a DIA LPB-MPB school. On the other hand a lower PB white parent who wants his/her child to go to university will probably send his/her child to a MPB-UPB At this stage it could be safely argued that a DIA MPBschool. UPB school does not exist.

The interviews suggested that within the coloured lower PB the aspiration for university education will generally be greater than it is within the white lower PB. This is a complex and uncharted terrain but it would seem that for a large part of the coloured lower PB university education has become a central part of the culture, since the obtaining of a degree is a definite way of facilitating class mobility. The racist nature of the social structure results in university education being less sought after by the white lower PB as the racist structure historically has facilitated to a far greater extent the upward mobility of the white lower PB. This is most evident in the realm of state employment where the racist structure has ensured that the state bureaucracy is dominated by whites (see Davies, 1979).

^{1.} This hypothesis is to some extent substantiated by the everincreasing enrolment at the University of the Western Cape. In 1964 there were 389 students (Survey of Race Relations, 1964:291). In 1971 there were 934 students (Survey of Race Relations, 1971:289). In 1984 there were 6068 full and parttime students (Hansard, col 1 question 10, 5 July 1984).

The few interviews with coloured lower PB students to some extent confirmed this argument. The kind of culture referred to is captured in the following statement:

My parents strongly encouraged me. They felt that university is the best thing that can happen to you. They viewed it as a means of social mobility...A degree would in a sense ensure my class (his father is a computer operator).

This portrayal of the coloured lower PB is in line with Bourdieu's (1976:110) view that

it is understandable that the lower middle class - a transitional class- lays more emphasis on educational values (than the working class) as the school offers them reasonable chances of achieving all they want by mixing the values of social success and cultural prestige.

I would argue that the racist structure historically has in itself given the white lower PB the 'social success and cultural prestige' required without them having to go to university. The same cannot be said for the coloured lower PB.

The DIA LPB-MPB schools have thus historically developed as schools whose primary task has been to facilitate the 'social success and cultural prestige' of the coloured petit bourgeoisie. For many members of the coloured petit bourgeoisie university education is seen as the primary means of attaining this 'social success and cultural prestige'. A university education, besides facilitating social mobility, proves the adequacy of the coloured petit bourgeoisie within a racist structure that has interpellated them as second class.

CONCLUSION

This paper has illustrated that in order to understand schooling in South Africa it is essential to take account of social class. Concomitantly, it has shown that it is essential that we move away from a mechanistic view of the state as regards schooling and recognise that the schools do have some relative autonomy.

This relative autonomy allows schools to be dominated by different pedagogical processes. The form the pedagogical process takes and the academic
results obtained are shaped to a significant extent by the social class origins
of the pupils entering the school.

The conclusions reached have significant implications. They illustrate that a restructuring of the educational system that results in its racist discriminatory structure being revoked and the syllabus rewritten will not necessarily substantially change the pedagogical process operating within the schools. The pedagogical process will remain dominated by a strong frame unless the cultural capital with which most teachers and pupils enter the school changes.

This study reinforces Willis's conclusion as regards working class pupils, that it is also working class culture with its strong anti- intellectualism combined with its rejection of academic achievement that makes it difficult to restructure the pedagogical process. As illustrated, a weaker variant of this anti- intellectualism is also characteristic of a sizeable section of petit bourgeois and bourgeois pupils. The way the pedagogical process unfolds is thus not only determined by the state but is intrinsically bound up with the class structure and social relations of capitalist society.

There are no easy solutions to these predicaments. However, recognizing their existence and establishing their nature is the first step towards the development of solutions both within the confines of capitalist social relations and beyond.

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