ABSTRACT
          This assessment of the politics of education is an
attempt to clarify the kinds of political commitments of educational
agencies through discussion of labels, concepts, classificatory
schemata, and general conceptual frameworks which allow a person to
bound his experience so he can organize it in a manner that is
coherent with his physical environment and his social milieu. The
approach rests upon three intellectual traditions which are conjoined
in a model of the politics of education. The first comes from the
linguistic analysis tradition in contemporary philosophy, the second
is a version of the sociological conception of social control, and
the third is the concept of ideology which has a basis in several
intellectual disciplines (political science, philosophy, sociology,
and anthropology). A framework for evaluating the labels employed in
education and the conceptual commitments to which these labels are
attached is developed. (Author/SHM)

SOCIAL CONTROL IDEOLOGIES AND THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

Michael J. Shapiro

Department of Political Science
University of Hawaii
May 16, 1971

(Draft not for quotation: prepared for delivery at conference on
social education, East Lansing, Michigan)

I. THE PROBLEM

Decisions about both the organization of educational set-
tings and the content of instruction confront a seeming paradox.
Despite the variety of positions on what education is and how edu-
cational processes evolve, there is some agreement that the con-
cept of education connotes a commitment to engendering, in those
that are being educated, classificatory schemata and rules for
processing information through these schemata so that persons
can increase their control over themselves and their enviroment.
What this implies (leaving aside for the moment educational
philosophies which explicitly opt for models which maximize
other rather than self control i.e. some models of indoctrination)
is that the concepts, classificatory schemata, or frames of refer-
ence within which educational information is produced and exchanged
should be regarded as tentative, subject to revision, and consi-
dered in the context of criteria which are, themselves, less than
apodictic.

Yet, if one considers what it is that makes a person an
efficacious agent in the world, it is a working familiarity with
and commitment to labels, concepts, classificatory schmmata, and
general conceptual frameworks which allow a person to bound his
experience so that he can organize it in a manner that is coherent
with his physical environment and his social milieu. The ability
to act decisively in the midst of a welter of social and physical

stimuli is based upon habituation to a system of categories that give the world meaning and the individual criteria for action and rules for translating perceptual discriminations into effective actions or behaviors which have fairly clear personal and social meanings.

In short, the process of education in a society involves the institutionalization of uncertainty, the lack of ultimate closure on ascribing meanings to a person's transactions with his environment, but, at the same time, it also involves the institutionalization of modes for achieving closure, conceptual frameworks with unambiguous categories which provide for individual and collective decisions. Clearly, effective action on the part of a person requires, in any instance, closure at various stages of a decision process that leads to action. Perceptual discriminations, the creation and evaluation of action alternatives and the selction of modes of action implementation all require the prior firming up of categories.

This dilemma has achieved some recognition in the writings of academicians and practitioners concerned with education, but, it seems to me, the frame of reference within which the dilemma has been addressed is decidedly infelicitous. The relevant debate has been focused on the desirability of "labelling" both the participants (i.e. students) and the phenomena (i.e. the content of a social studies course) involved in the educational

process.   The problem is not one of either labelling or not
labelling but rather one of the significance attached to
the labels that are employed. The problem exists at a higher
level of abstraction than is usually considered in the "labelling"
debate.   The important question centers around the cognitive
status of the labels that are attached to actors and subject matter
in the educational process. Do the categories utilized describe
reality, are they rough approximations of a reality that is
imperfectly apprehended, or are they pragmatic strategies to be
evaluated on the basis of their usefulness rather than their
correspondence with the world (whatever that might mean)?

To label something is to give it a designation which indicates
where it can be assumed to fit in a conceptual scheme. Among the
implications of momentarily delimiting and describing phenomena
by using labels is that, as I have suggested, it then becomes
possible to respond to that phenomena i.e. to fit it into some
action strategy. Labelling is thus an essential part of any
decision process. It is the mechanism by which conceptual enti-
ties (concepts, constructs, ideas etc) are assigned observational
equivalents so that the overall conceptual structure of which
these entities are a part can be apllied to the world of exper-
ience. One can, however, label well or badly, and the labels
can represent conceptual structures which function well or
poorly. What is needed is not a moralistic attack on or defense

of labelling per se but rather a framework for evaluating the
labels employed in education and the conceptual commitments
to which these labels are attached. The way out of the labelling
dilemma is the way out of most dilemmas in the form of apparent
paradoxes. The solution to the now classic psychiatric notion
of the double bind is a case in point One must make distinctions
at more than one level of abstraction. One can be committed to
labels at the level of their concrete application while, at the
same time, remaining loosely allied to them with regard to
their ultimate efficacy in organizing experience.

The frame of reference I will introduce to assess the politics
of education is based on the assumption that, implicit in the
labels developed and used in the educational settings, is a poli-
tical process. This is not a new idea, but I hope to characterize
this political process in a way that clarifies, more fully and
usefully, the kinds of political commitments of educational
agencies. The approach rests upon three intellectual traditions
which will be conjoined in a model of the politics of education.
The first comes from the linguistic analysis tradition in contem-
porary philosophy, the second is a version of the sociological
conception of social control, and the third is the concept of
ideology which has a basis in several intellectual disciplines
(political science, philosophy, sociology, and anthropology).

II. THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM

One of the primary contributions of contemporary philosophical
analysis has been the elucidation of the evaluative components
of simple descriptions. The work of Wittgenstein, for example, (1953)
has disabused us of the belief that the categories we use derive
their meaning by virtue of their correspondence with reality. We
look now at the way in which categories function in discourse.
What, then, is the significance of utterances which appear to be
simple descriptions? In making such an utterance, for example,
"France is a hexagonal," one is not making a statement whose truth
or utility can be determined by simple observation. This statement's
validity must be determined in the context of the purposes for which
it was uttered. This statement, as John Austin pointed out, may
be true for an army general planning military strategy but not for
a geographer (Austin, 1962). Similarly, as John Searle has shown,
the statement, "Brown hit a home run," is not a simple description
(Searle, 1964). Following Anscombe (1958), Searle distinguishes
between "brute" and "institutional" facts. To show that Brown
hit a home run, one is required to do more than merely describe
what was observed. The set of institutions which make up the
game of baseball contribute to the meaning the this seemingly
simple descriptive statement.One must know the rules before the
act e.g. hitting a home run, can be given a meaning.

The significant point to be noted here is that simple designations

or so-called descriptions are based on prior evaluations and
institutions or conventions. One cannot, as C.I. Lewis put it,
"validate any conviction as to objective matters of fact without
antecedent presumptions of the validity or normative principles"
(Lewis, 1949). Hitherto, over-simplified notions of what descrip-
tion is have led to rigorous fact-value distinctions, on the basis
of which it has been assumed that statements are value free
descriptions unless they contain explicit evaluative language
(words like should, ought, good etc.) Contemporary philosophy
has disabused us of this simple fact-value distinction while,
at the same time, impugning the old model of the nature of sense
experience upon which the objective-subjective dichotomy is based.
Man is not a passive agent surrounded by objects whose emanations
cause him to see them as they are.. Rather, as Austin (1962a) and
others have shown, he is a conceptually active agent whose mental
activity helps to shape the structure of social and physical
reality.

These changes in our philosophical frame of reference provide
a basis for analyzing problems in any collective enterprise,
whether one is concerned with a nation, a local community or
a school. There are no concepts which are intrinsic to parti-
cular social and political processes. Problems do not emerge
unmixed with human perception and the projection of human purposes.

"To term something
a social problem,"as Seeley has perceptively put it, "is...to enact a
reclassification of some part or aspect of the common life in order to
alter the response it will receive or the relation it will stand to
other parts of the common life." *(1964)* ⋀ The selection of concepts in the defini-
tion of a problem is a political process, then, for this selection
determines what is to be changed, what is to be ignored, and , in some
cases, who the change agents and who the status quo defenders are to
be.

When a problem is identified in any social domain, a search for
an explanation or theoretical overview ensues. The explanation generated
will be based upon the concepts evoked in the definition of the problem.
There are a variety of grounds for assessing the value of a particular
explanation. When we invoke the norms of science, for example, we
ask whether a particular explanation is valid i.e. does it meet the
truth demands associated with inductive and deductive inference? There
are, however, pragmatic and political grounds for evaluating explanations.
These grounds are involved with the question, what is the explanation
good for, who can use it to do what? For any given problem domain, there
are a number of 55 explanations, which are valid on scientific grounds,
that are potentially relevant to a problem. The selection among expla-
nations will turn on the definition of the problem. This definition

involves a procedure(which is often disguised as an objective acceptance
of things as they are) of value selection whereby the concepts
selected for an explanation enfranchise some persons and disenfranchise
others. Problems of order maintenance are particularly enlightening
ones for viewing the "politics of concept selection." Consider the
illustration I have developed in another context.

> Teachers in primary school classrooms frequently find
> that their attempts at communicating with groups of children
> are frustrated by the students' differing attention spans.
> They have found (much to their delight in many cases) that the
> attention span of a child is markedly influenced by body
> chemistry and that drugs prescribed by physicians frequently
> "calm down" what are referred to as "hyperactive" children to
> a point where they no longer create classroom disturbances
> by leaving their chairs and moving around while instruction
> is being attempted. On scientific grounds, the empirical
> explanation employed (in this case a bio-chemical one) is
> valid. There is good evidence that the classroom activity of
> the child is related to his body chemistry. The use of such
> an explanation, however, takes as given that children should
> learn while sitting together in groups on a schedule chosen
> by the school or the teacher. The hyperactive child concept,
> is an arbitrary one in that the criterion for calling a child
> hyperactive is social not biological. The fact that a chemical-
> biological type of explanation is often relied upon for a
> "deviant behavior problem," is a consequence of the educational
> value premise suggested above. From an alternative frame of
> reference, one could regard the teacher's problem as a stra-
> tegic one. One could take as given the fact that children
> have differing interests and attention spans and ask how
> one might educate large numbers of them nevertheless. If
> .the question is posed this way, the kinds of empirical explana-
> tions sought would probably not be chemical-biological. One
> relevant explanation, for example, would be oriented toward
> understanding why teachers feel that all the children in the
> classroom should have the same daily learning schedule. The
> concepts in such an explanation would probably be something
> like past training, current role expectations, etc. Once
> again the validity of the explanation would be determined
> upon scientific grounds, but the choice of the type of ex-
> planation to be employed and the concepts contained in it
> would derive from the value premises which precipitated
> the inquiry. (Shapiro, 1971).

As I have suggested in the same context, one might profitably
view the classroom as a political system with an order problem. With
such a frame of reference, a decision to deal with different metabolic
rates of children ~~æ̃X̃X̃ẽ̃Ĩẽ̃X̃æ̃X̃X̃ẽ̃~~ the order problem is a commitment to
_{in order to cope with}
a particular kind of social control. The choice of such a social
control mechanism would probably be justified within a value framework
placing a high priority upon controlling noise and movement but
not within one in which a priority is placed upon building a flexible
environment to cater to differing interests and potentials in school
children.

Most significant political processes within a society take place
in a context of different definitions of problems which relate to
different images of man and diferent models of collective relations.
~~Thẽ̃æ̃X̃Ĩm̃æ̃g̃ẽ̃æ̃X̃æ̃ñd̃X̃m̃õ̃d̃ẽ̃Ĩæ̃X̃d̃ẽ̃æ̃ẽ̃æ̃m̃Ĩñẽ̃X̃Thẽ̃X̃æ̃ãñg̃ẽ̃~~ the distribution of
these models and images determines the extent of agreement on
problem definition in a number of areas. Clarice Stoll has pointed
(1968)
out, for example, that police and welfare agencies frequently clash
over social control techniques because they entertain different images
of man, the former employing a purposive behavior model and the latter
a social environment model. Thus when an instance of deviance occurs,
the police are prone to viewing the problem within the framework of
an individual acting out his intentions while welfare workers might
view the same incident in terms of the social forces narrowing the
kinds of responses that the individual could make.

It should be evident that the definition of a problem involves
decisions about welfare outcomes. It determines, among other things,

the kind of adjustment th.t should be m de to reeestablish the
equilibrium of the existing process or to bring about a new process.
Inevitably, those who are disproportionately in control of the
problem defining mechanisms are in a position to minimize their
own adjustment costs while, at the same time, selling their
adjustment model as the one appropriate to the public as a whole.

SOCIAL CONTROL IDEOLOGIES

The relationship between much of contemporary philosophy's view
of the relationship between mental activity and the world of experience
and the sociological concept of social control has already begun to
emerge in the discussion thus far. The categorization of collective
experiences is brought about not simply by something intrinsic to
the experience but as a result of interpretations generated out
of ideological frameworks. Sociological approaches to social
control exemplify the kinds of ideological frameworks which are
relevant to the politics of education because differing approaches
to devi nce in society by sociologists reflect differing commitments
as to where the problems in a society inhere and thus where adjust-
ments should be made. Similarly, the identification of problems in
schools is most often framed in terms of deviancy problems and
adjustment conceptions and techniques. Before considering the
school as a political arena, then, let us look at sociological
models of social control.

Recently, a student of social work categorized, quite efficiently, both the social work professions' and various sociological models of deviancy and their concommit_nt social control approaches (Kirk, 1972). The dominant social work model he calls the "welfare model." Within this model, the deviant is seen as a different type of person than "normal" persons in the society. There is a commitment to regarding this differnce as a public problem requiring remedial and rehabilitative action which is directed toward changing or "correcting" the attributes of persons who are deviant.[2]

In contrast with social work's "welfare model" are three sociological models. The first is referred to be Kirk (and Lemert, 1964) as the "structural model." This approach, whose origin is usually traced to the work of Durkheim, focuses on the social structural reasons for the emergence of deviance. The structural model, which employs concepts related to social structures (e.g. opportunity structures) rather than individuals (e.g. maladjusted person), assumes that problematic structures rather than problematic persons are the causes of deviance.

The second sociological model Kirk calls the "functionalist model." Those who employ this model (including Durkheim in his discussion of crime - see Wolfgang et. al.eds., 1962 - and Erikson - in Becker ed., 1964) argue that deviant behavior

[2] This model and the subsequent ones that Kirk discusses are all public models in that they assume the need for public, institutionalized responses as contrasted with the early American, Christian charity model which eschewed public, institutional responses (see Rothman, 1971).

is stability or boundary maintaining and thus functional for the
society. Deviancy, according to functionalists, helps society
to specify its norms and, as such, should not be entirely elim-
inated. The obvious imperative in functionalist models is thus
one of avoiding intervention strategies aimed at totally elimi-
nating deviance.

The third sociological model is the most politically cognizant
of the four we are discussing, and , I shall argue, the most
useful framework to use for the elucidation of the politics of
education that is reflected in approaches to deviancy in the
schools. Kirk refers to this model as the "societal reaction
model," but it is perhaps best known by sociologists as the
"labelling theory" approach to social control and deviance theory
(see Schur, 1971). In this model, the reaction of the society
to persons is seen as a major ingredient in the identification
and institutionalized recognition of deviant behavior. It should
be noted that this is not a traditional causal model which assumes
that the societal reaction is causing something called deviance
but rather the belief that deviance is what the society calls
                                              for
deviance, and that social propensities ∧ calling a particular type
of behavior by a particular person deviant are a function of
political processes and ideological commitments. The "societal
reaction" model, according to Kirk, focuses on "a fundamental
fact - that social meaning is created through the interactive
process in which shared definitions of reality are forged (Ibid., p. 27)

The political orientation of this model and its relevance
to the labelling controversy in education c .n be explicated.
The act of labelling a person as a deviant in any collective setting
is a political act which exemplifies who the rule m kers are
and who are to be the targets of social control agencies which
are employed to enforce .djustments when rules or norms are
violated. Moreover, the use of functionalist, welfare, and even,
to some extent, structural models of deviance is, itself, a
social control strategy because the use of one of these models
focuses attention primarily upon those who are labelled as deviants
and neglects the role of and thus possible adjustments by those
who do the labelling of deviants To be a labeller rather than one
who is labelled is, among other things, to possess political power.
A major consequence of such power is, as I have suggested above,
that one is in a position to define problems in a way that allows
the definer to avoid adjustments on his own part and direct enforced
adjustments on others. If an urban riot takes place in the U.S.,
to use Kirk's example (Ibid., p. 28), those with power are in a
position to have the incident defined as either a political act or
a criminal act. The label that is selected will determine the fate
of those involved in the riot i.e. it will mobilize the relevant
social control agency and determine upon whom the agency will focus
its energy. Similarly, if factory workers in Yugoslavia go on
strike against the elected factory managers, those in power
can define the act as either a loss of confidence in factory

14

leadership or as counterrevolution. Once again, the targets of
the social control mechanisms employed and the nature of those
mechanisms will be determined by the label selected and applied
to the incident.

The groundwork has now been laid to begin constructing a frame-
work for social control ideologies. A social control ideology
applied to any collective enterprise is a persistent orientation
toward whom or what should be adjusted when goals are unfulfilled
or deviations from expected patterns are discerned. Such ideologies
are reflected in the definitions of problems and the concommitant
explanations employed as to why the problematic situation arose.
Most persons carry social control ideologies around with them.
These ideologies coordinate and direct their beliefs about and
attitudes toward not only major public policy problems to which
their own actions are only tangentially related related but also
toward their own, everyday encounters.

Consider an example of an encountered I have suggested elsewhere
(Neubauer and Shapiro, 1971). A person gets on a bus and remarks
to the bus driver, "Gosh you sure are right on time as usual," to
which the driver responds, "Hey schmuck! Can't you read? The
sign says don't talk to the bus driver." Assuming that the
person would find this to be a problematic encounter (one he
would wish to avoid in the future), we can speculate about how
he might try to remedy the situation (short of extreme strategies
like shooting the bus driver or having his vocal cords removed).

While coping with the situation, he will select some categories
to help identify his problem and coordinate these categories within
an explan·tion of his problem. In so doing, the person h₋s several
options, and the option he selects will be a function of the
social control ideology he applies to his own encounters. He
may ·ssume, based on this ideology, that this unpleasant encounter
was his fault or hi₋ problem and start searching for an explanation
of why he is so careless in not reading signs or why he cannot
control his impulses to speak when it is inappropri₋te or illegal
to do so. He could assume, rather, that the problem is one of
matching his inclinations to speak with modes of transportation
that permit it. He could then speculate about how it was that he
had happened to be in the wrong place and could go about seeking
to alter his travel patterns rather than his attentiveness or
impulsiveness. He could, finally, embrace a more interactionist
social control ideology and assume that the problem is at least
equally shared by the municipal transit authority and/or the
bus driver. He might, in the spirit of the "societal reaction"
model of social control seek an explanation as to why rules are made
which require him to adjust his greg·riousness or travel pattern
to avoid unpleasantness. This kind of social control ideology would
provide a frame of reference for speculation and perhaps action on
the person's p·rt to change the rules or the rule m·king process
that governs bus travel.

SOCIAL CONTROL IDEOLOGIES AND THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

a) Classroom settings

I have already suggested one example above of a social con-
trol ideology operating in clasrooms when I quoted my past remarks
on the"hyperactive child" concept. Subsequently, In remarks which
expanded upon that same quotation I noted,

> We can view the primary school classroom
> as a political system...and then ask about
> the range of choice we have in character-
> izing the political process. If we decide
> to consider the differing metabolic rates
> of students we are, by implication, selec-
> ting a particular range of social control
> mechanisms relevant to manintaining "order,"
> just as a consideration of student's inter-
> ests makes relevant a different range of
> social control mechanisms. Thus, a rational
> choice of concepts to be employed must rest
> upon an extended assessment of the indivi-
> dual and collective consequences one might
> wish to engender. If, for example, the
> most desirable feature of the classroom
> is to be the maintenance of a minimum of
> noise and movement, a set of bio-chemical
> concepts might well be the ingredients of
> a very useful explanation. If, on the
> other hand, one considers the classroom in
> terms of the engendering of a particular
> kind of self-concept in the students, bio-
> chemical explan tions would rpobably not be
> very useful. (Neubauer and Shapiro, Op.Cit.)

The dominant social control ideology operating in American
classrooms is based, it seems, om a preoccupation with order and
control and a presumption that violations of order in the form
of public, unsolicited (by the teacher) rem rks and what is re-
ferred to by educationists as "out of seat behavior" requires
adjustments on the part of the student violators. As one text

for classroom teachers (revealing entitled Managing Student Behavior) puts it, "There is probably no one connected with a teacher educ tion program who has not reached the conclusion that the topmost cpncern of the prospective teacher is classroom order and control. Other topics, including the subject matter to be taught, the general area of the nature of the process whereby learning tokes place, or the quality of the situation or situations within which learning occurs, do command interest on the part of the prospective teacher. But repeatedly, he returns to the topic in which he invests most of his concerns, namely classroom order and control." (Amos and Orem, 1967, p. vii).

This text, and most others I have examined, goes on to assume that order problems originate in the school children and suggests explanations and frames of reference for adjusting children's behavior. For example, "If the teacher has a student who is not conforming to the regulations, she may try a number of teachniques to modify his behavior : a look of disapproval, a touch on the arm. an extra task to occupy him, the changing of his seat, a quiet talk - these are just a few of the possible actions." (Ibid., p. 39). Or consider the language of another text on classroom discipline, "...approximately 30 percent of elementary school pupils present some problems of maladjustment," and "about 10 percent of the elementary school children give evidence of problems that are sufficiently severe to justify clinical

attention." (Clarizio, 1971, p. 2). Note the causal models
operating here. The pupils <u>present</u> the problems of maladjustment
and the elementary school children <u>give</u> <u>evidence</u> of severe
problems. Note also the casual descriptive style , employed
as though maladjustment and severe problems in children can
be discerned with simple observation. As labelling or societal
reaction social control theorists have pointed out, someone has to
provide a label and apply it to someone before they can be iden-
tified as deviants who require adjustment.

Theorists and technicians of classroom discipline and the
teachers they train seem to regard their models of classroom
problems as a combination of simple descriptions and unproblematic
causal inferences rather than as ideological commitments whose
major premises are political. In the case of the use of extreme
social control teachniques like drugs for modifying behavior,
school officlad regard their choice as a medical matter, oblivious
of their role in making a political decision about who is to adjust
and what costs are to be borne by whom in the process of adjusting.
(Ladd, 1970). The use of drugs for children labelled as "hyper-
active" is perhaps the most telling indicator of the political
model that school authorities apply to the classroom, while
disguising the desire to exact conformity under the rubrics of
medical and scientific teachniques to improve learning. As the
columist von Hoffman has pointed out, "For many a school authority
the model student is one who persists in apparently useful behavior

over prolonged periods but who may be interrupted and set
compulsively to work on new, non functional tasks. This is
called concentration." (quoted in Hentoff, 1971).

The social control ideology that provides the framework
for techniques ranging from subtle disapproval cues from
the teacher to tranquillizers and amphetamines is part of an
ideological framework that comprehends more than behavior
within the classroom. Teachers and other school authorities
see behavior in the classroom (the students' behavior primar-
ily) as related to the school's role as a socializing agent
that prepares students to conform to the values of the Ame_ican
society. It is thought, for example, that children will learn
to control themselves in the future only if they are kept under
tight control in the classroom (Ladd, Op Cit., p. 82)

The tight control model is reinforced by the American
form of the classical liberal ideology which has been imported
into the classroom unaltered. This ideology suggests that all
significant achievements are individual rather than collective
enterprises. Within such an ideological context, social inter-
action and group learning by children is eschewed. Children are
separated in rows of individual seats and discouraged from inter-
acting while learning. This atmosphere is maintained under
the rubric of protecting students rights. Two student management
specialists cited above, for example, describe discipline as
follows: "Disciplined students respect the right of fellow

learners to the privacy needed for concentration and task completion." (Amos and Orem, Op. Cit., p. 18).They go on to make their classical liberal model of individual freedom in the classroom (which is seen as freedom from sociability) explicit. "The individual's liberty should have as its limits the right of others - due concern for the common good. One manifestation of this concern are the 'social graces,' such as courtesy and good manners, making possible the interaction of many people with a minimum of friction." (Ibid.) It is clear that when social interaction is regarded as a necessary evil to be kept at a minimum and that the consummatory task, learning, is a wholly individual matter, one is going to be preoccupied with discipline because destroying natural sociability and frustrating cooperation is bound to be a full time job.

These commitments to tight control combined with the belief by school officals (which they share with proponents of structural models of social control - see Lemert, Op. Cit.) that there is one dominant culture with a set of values which are reflected in our institutions, results in the illusion that no political choices need be made by the school. They must simply mold students to conform to the expectations of the culture. This ideological commitment and its application in the schools is particularly destructive for children of ethnic minorities who represent part of what is, in fact, an enormously diverse American culture. We have, as Lemert has lucidly shown (Op. Cit.),

21

many value sub cultures, not one culture. Our institutions
do not reflect the institutionalization of a general univer-
sal value pattern but rather the ability of some sub cultures to
have their value patterns instutåd as public policy. Our
schools, like our other institutions, reflect, then, political
victories by the few, yet they operate as though their choices of
models of order and curriculum are a function of scientific
and technological rather than ideological commitments. "Why
are our educational programs," asks one writer, "continuing
to direct their energies toward a mythical central culture
that does not exist anywhere? And why do our schools thus continue
to be the agents of degradation and shame for so many youngsters
who are made so acutely aware of their differences from the
'norm.'" (Charnofsky, 1971).

Faced with their overwhelming failure to educate students
from the Black ghettos, school authorities resort to an explanation
that, once again, suggests adjustments by someone else. They in-
voke the "culture of poverty explanation" (Leacock, 1970) or
become concerned with, "diagnosing and correcting what is
'wrong'with the disadvantaged child," (Wilkerson,1970) suggesting
that the failure of these students has nothing to do with the
way the school is run.

b) The content of instruction

The politics of education inheres not only in the mode of

classroom management but also in the approach to the subject

matter of education. Labels are attached to the phenomena or

subject matter of instruction just as they are attached to

the actors in the classroom. Labelling and conceptually

integrating phenomena, just like labelling studnnts involves

political commitments. Here again, students are given models

which suggest that they are not in control. Again they must

adjust, this time to absorb rather than being quiet and keeping

still. In courses ranging from mathematics to social studies,

students are treated as receptacles into which information is

placed. Freier designates the dominant mode of instruction as

the "banking concept of education." "Education becomes an

act of depositing in which the students are the depositories and

the teacher is the depositor." (Freier, 1970). The categories

and the frameworks of which they are a part are imparted

to students as though the world was being described rather

than strategically classified. As I suggested in my discussion

of the philosophical dimension of the problem, what appear to

be simple descriptions are actually complex, convention and

insitution laden interpretations. The categories one uses

to apprehend experience are strategic commitments which should be

employed as long as they are useful and abandoned when

they cease to function in behalf of the user. Yet students are

taught Euclidean geometry as though it were a true description

of the structure of the physical worl and are taught the his-

tories of the U.S. and other countries as though they have

been told unequivocally what has actually happened. There are many geometries and there are many histories. Riemannian geometry and Lobachevskian geometry can claim the same truth as Euclidean (they are equally internally consistent), The choice among geometries is a matter of what geometric strategy proves most useful in the context. Housing contractors are well advised to embrace Euclid while astronomers are usually better off of they employ Riemannian assumptions.

I recall my seventh grade social studies course in which we were taught that the Soviet practice of rewriting history is conclusive proof of the deceit they practice in almost every aspect of their social and political life. After all, history deals with facts, and if you rewrite it, you must be dealing in falsehoods at some point in the process. The idea that a change in social and political patterns might change the relevance and thus interpretation of past events and that the nature if "facts" and "events" is a function of the conceptions employed was never considered in my classroom.

The explanations and frames of reference employed to deal with the subject matter of education are no less political, i.e. slected because of their pragmatic significance, than the explanations employed to deal with classroom order. By being presented with models of classroom order as though they are mere descriptions of the situation, students are required to djust as though there is no choice. In like manner, the proferring of models of

history, mathematics, physics, economics, etc. as though they
are descriptions of what the world os like again tells the
student that he has no choice, that he is a passive receptor
whose mental activity has no role in structuring the meaning
of his social and pshysical environment. He is taught that
learning is a matter of absorbing material rather than of
making cconceotual decisions.

Most disciplines learned in the schools have potential
relevance to students, but the appraoches of many disciplines
disenfranchise many students by the selections they make.
Capitalist economics is a useful apprcach for children of
the white midlle and upper classes but not for children from most
Black, Puerto Rican and Chicano families. Yet all are taught the
same economics as thiugh it were a description of what exchange
systems are and must be. The situation is the same for other
disciplines, history, literature etc. The choice of curriculum,
coupled with the "descriptive falacy," the disguising of in-
terpretations and evaluations in statements in a descritive.or_
observational mode is, itself, a social control mechanism. It
disenfranchises the student from his rightful purchase on
his own experience, the recognition that the labels he attaches
to phenomena have strategic significance, that they operate in
someone's behalf and that he would thus be well advised to con-
sider them in this light.

Conclusion

Much of the politics of education is disguised in the
labels utilized for both the actors in the educational process
and the subject matter of instruction. Discussions by edu-
cationists about whether it is a good idea to label things, animate
or inanimate, are banal in the extreme. The world of persons
and things takes on meaning only by being labelled. To the extent,
however, that labels are regarded as unproblematic descriptions,
the political process which operates in educational enterprises
will be elusive. The relevant political questions turn around
the labels or concepts employed in education. These questions
involve the control implications of the labels and the broader
conceptualizations of which they are a part. Labels used to
stipulate the model of order in the classroom have implications
for who is in control of that setting. and for who must adjust
when problems are identified. Labels used to identify the
subject matter of education have similar control implications.
If a student is to achieve maximal cognitive control of his
environment, to understand, in short, his predicament, he must
be taught to use labels not to find or accept them.

REFERENCES

Amos, W.E. and R.C. Orem (1967) Managing Student Behavior
    (St. Louis Mo.: Warren H. Green, Inc.)

Anscombe, G.E.M. (1958) "Brute Facts," Analysis

Austin, J.L. (1962) How to Do Things with Words (Cambridge,
    Mass.: Harvard University Press)

Austin, J.L. (1962a) Sense and Sensibilia (London: Oxford
    University Press)

Becker, H.J. (ed.) (1964) The Other Side: Perspectives on
    Deviance (New York: Free Press of Glencoe)

Charnofsky, S. (1971) Educating the Powerless (Belmont,
    California: Wadsworth)

Clarizio, H.F. (1971) Toward Positive Classroom Discipline
    (New York: John Wiley & Sons)

Freier, P. (1970) Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York:
    Herder and Herder)

Hentoff, N. (1971) "Dealing with Drugs and Children,"
    Current, February.

Kirk, S. (1972) "Clients as Outsiders: Theoretical Approaches
    to Deviance," Social Work, 17 (March), 24-32.

Ladd, E. T. (1970) "Pills for Classroom Peace," Saturday
    Review, November 21.

Leacock, E. (1970) "Education, Socialization, and the 'Culture
    of Poverty'" in Annette Rubinstein (ed.) Schools Against
    Children: The Case for Community Control (New York: Monthly
    Review Press).

Lemert, E. M. (1964) "Social Structure, Social Control, and
    Deviation," in Marshall Clinard (ed.) Anomie and Deviant
    Behavior (New York: Free Press of Glencoe)

Lewis, C.I. (1969) Values and Imperatives John Lange (ed.)
    (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press)

Neubauer, D.E. and M.J. Shapiro (1971) "Meta-advocacy in Com-
    parative Political Analysis," Paper delivered at National
    Conference on Comparative Administration, Syracuse, N.Y.
    April 1-4.

Rothman, D.J. (1971) The Discovery of the Asylum (Boston:
     Little, Brown & Co,)

Schur, E.M. (1971) Labeling Deviant Behavior (New York:
     Harper & Row)

Searle, J.R. (1964) "How to Derive and 'Ought' from an 'Is',"
     Philosophical Review, 73., 43-58.

Seeley, J.R. (1964) The Americanization of the Unconscious
     (New York: International Science Press)

Shapiro, M.J. (1971) "A Theory of Race Attitudes," Paper
     Delivered at Conference on Political Theory and Social
     Education, East Lansing Michigan, February 5-6.

Stoll, C. (1968) "Images of Man and Social Control," Social
     Forces, 47 (Dec.), 119-127.

Wilkerson, D.A. (1970) "The Failure of Schools Serving the
     Black and Puerto Rican Poor," in Annette Rubinstein (ed.)
     Schools Against Children: The Case for Community Control
     (New York: Monthly Review Press)

Wittgenstein (1953) Philosphical Investigations (New York:
     MacMillan)

Wolfgang, M.E. et. al. (1962) The Sociology of Crime and
     Delinguency (New York: John Wiley & Sons)