

# STUDIES IN SOCIALIST PEDAGOGY

Edited by

Theodore Mills Norton and Bertell Ollman

Including essays by

Theodore Mills Norton . V.I. Lenin . Mao Tse-tung  
Antonio Gramsci . Paulo Freire . Leo Huberman  
John McDermott . Ira Shor . Michael Meeropol . Louis Kampf  
Norman Rudich . Joan Landes . David Jhirad . Al Weinrub  
Bertell Ollman . Martin Sklar . Bruce Rappaport  
Jean Elshtain . Brent Harold . Alan Soble

*Studies*  
in  
*Socialist Pedagogy*

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and do act against their own interests. Admit boners. Use "New Left" to show how, in Marx's classic phrase, the past weighs like an Alp on the living--how hard it is to be a Marxist in the basic sense of not applying nineteenth-century analyses to twentieth-century developments.

4. Define the era under discussion and review alternate analyses and interpretations--fairly and without direct or indirect putdowns. If you don't have enough confidence in a Marxist analysis to play it straight with other approaches, then Marx will spin in his grave.

5. Develop a Marxist analysis and interpretation of the era under consideration.

6. Explore the question of whether or not the present projections (or the present per se, if that is the subject) is a revolutionary situation. If not, then discuss what Marxism suggests as the relevant and consequential approach to it all.

Examples. Here one could go on forever. There *is*, after all, a great body of damn good work--either pre-Marxist or Marxist. But, for starters:

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| E. H. Carr   | W. E. B. DuBois  |
| L. R. Graham | M. Rogin         |
| K. S. Karol  | H. Cruse         |
| J. T. Main   | C. D. Darlington |
| C. A. Beard  | S. Avineri       |
| J. Weinstein | G. Lukács        |
| L. Baritz    | Frankfurt School |
| W. Sussman   | C. B. MacPherson |
| D. F. Dowd   | Yourselves       |

From *Raya Dunayevskaya*

Marxism, as the dialectics of liberation, does not allow for any separation between philosophy and revolution, subject and object, theory and practice, economics and politics, an analysis of capitalism and action against it. This does not

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Laya Dunayevskaya

ics of liberation, does not allow for  
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nd action against it. This does not

mean that only those who are ready to "make" the revolu-  
tion can "teach" it. Marx was much too firmly convinced of  
the spontaneity of revolution and the need for intellectuals  
to comprehend *its* dialectic to hold either that it can be  
"made," or that it can fully blossom without theory. It does  
mean, first, that teaching cannot be done "from above," on  
a platform separating educator from the one to be educated.  
As Marx put it in his *Theses on Feuerbach*: "The educators  
must themselves be educated." This requires that (1) some  
of the lectures be given "from below," not only to give the  
students "experience," but so that the teachers can learn;  
and (2) where possible, at least one of the lectures (say on  
the class struggle), be made "in the field" either by a tour of  
a factory or visit to a picket line. (There is sure to be one  
somewhere if eyes and ears are turned to the production  
line.) As for learning from students, it is not only a question  
of the dialectical principle Hegel articulated, that "Error is a  
dynamic of truth," but also a fact that even when a student  
commits errors, the teacher can discern where his or her  
presentation failed to communicate; failure to project an  
idea is every bit as wrong as failure to "know."

Second, distinct from the alleged neutrality claimed by  
non-Marxist interpretations of capitalism, Marxists openly  
state that their interpretations lead to a transformation of  
existing society, holding that their objectivity, far from ex-  
cluding subjectivity, is proven by the subject, i.e., the prole-  
tariat, becoming the "gravedigger of capitalism" *because*  
that is both force and reason of the opposite to capitalist  
exploitation. That, at once, separates independent teaching  
of Marxism from teaching by the so-called orthodox (actu-  
ally, statist professors in state-capitalist societies calling  
themselves communist), who attempt positivistic interpreta-  
tions of "scientific" analysis of the functioning of the objec-  
tive law of value irrespective of the will of humans, as if that  
applied to all societies instead of to capitalism only, as Marx  
never tired of emphasizing.

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Third—and most important—is methodology. Here I must frankly admit that I was amazed that the announcement of your project on “how to teach Marxism” included not a single mention of dialectics. It isn’t that those who constantly utter the word dialectic *practice* it. If that had been so—and that includes not only “us lowly teachers” but such great *practicing* revolutionaries as Lenin—it wouldn’t have taken a world war and the collapse of the existing Socialist International to have made Lenin realize that none (himself included) had understood *Capital* (especially Chapter I), because no Marxist since Marx has understood the whole of Hegel’s *Science of Logic*. But Lenin’s *Abstract of the Science of Logic*, having finally appeared in English (by me in 1947 in mimeographed form, and in 1957 in publication of *Marxism and Freedom*, and in Moscow in 1961) contained more challenges to today’s teachers of Marxism than those of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. I did not expect that Western teachers would help the Russian-Chinese et al. re-bury dialectics in such a mishmash as the official publication, including all that Lenin wrote from the 1890s on, as if there had been no Big Divide.

Methodology, then, must be a new beginning, that is, a projection of future study and action so that no one, teacher or student, should feel that teaching has “ended” when the last lecture of the course is delivered. Everyone must experience the lifeblood of the dialectic—continuity, a continuity that arises daily from the objective situation, both in the class struggles at the point of production, and through every layer of society.

From Kai Nielsen

To me the greatest obstacle to teaching Marx and Marxism is that to a large number of students Marxism is an unrealistic

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