The communicative networks of public spheres generate *communicative power*—the positions and viewpoints developed through discussion will command the respect of participants not by virtue of obligation but by the power of mutual understanding and consensus. Communication in public spheres thus creates legitimacy in the strongest sense—the shared belief among participants that they freely and authentically consent to the decisions they arrive at.

Public spheres do not affect social systems (e.g. government and administration) *directly*; their impact on systems is more *indirect.* In public spheres, participants aim to change the climate of debate, the ways things are thought about and how situations are understood. They aim to generate a sense that alternative ways of doing things are possible and feasible—and to show that some of these alternative ways actually work or that the new ways do indeed resolve problems, overcome dissatisfactions or address issues.

Public spheres frequently arise in practice through (or in relation to) the communication networks associated with *social movements*—that is, where voluntary groupings of participants arise in response to a legitimation deficit or a shared sense that there is a social problem that has arisen and needs to be addressed.

Conclusion

CPAR is a practice-changing practice. It aims to form communicative spaces—public spheres—in which people involved in and affected by practices can transform their understandings of their practices in the interests of more clearly understanding the character, conduct and consequences of their practice and of overcoming irrationality in their current understandings. They form these public spheres not only to change their understandings but also to transform what they do in the practice: to transform the activities that constitute their practices, especially wherever what they do has consequences that are unsustainable for the people involved or the wider world. And they form these public spheres to transform how people relate to one another and to the world, to overcome conduct and consequences that are unjust. To transform their practices, they do not rely solely on changing themselves: They also transform the practice architectures that enable and constrain their practices—practice architectures that tend to hold their practices in place and to reproduce existing ways of doing things. Changing these practice architectures means transforming the language they use, the ways they use physical space-time and the social arrangements that enable and constrain how they relate to one another and the world. Transforming themselves turns out to be not just a task of looking inwards, individually or collectively (as a group); it is also a task of

transforming the arrangements that exist in the intersubjective spaces in which we encounter one another—cultural-discursive arrangements in semantic space, material-economic arrangements in physical space-time and social political arrangements in social space.

CPAR is thus not primarily a research 'methodology' or a set of research techniques. It is an approach to research that aims to open up communicative spaces in which participants in social practices can explore the nature and consequences of their practices and consider whether their practices need to be changed. In CPAR, participants explore their practices through research conducted by them as members of a critical community, often with the assistance of others who join the community to help with the research. The purpose of CPAR is not so much to make contributions to knowledge, especially if that is understood to mean publication in academic books and journals, as it is to make a contribution to history: transforming the work, lives and situations of people in the interests of rationality, sustainability and justice.

Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart

See also critical theory; Frankfurt School

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CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Critical pedagogy is a cross-disciplinary field that recognizes education as an essentially political practice

that should be utilized to advance democratic ideals and to end oppression. Specifically, critical pedagogues look at how education itself can be an oppressive force and how outside oppressive forces, such as neo-liberalism, shape the purpose and function of education. Critical pedagogy supports the empowerment of culturally marginalized and economically disenfranchised students and calls upon teachers to recognize how schools have historically embraced theories and practices that serve to unite knowledge and power in ways that sustain asymmetrical relationships of power and maintain the status quo. Critical pedagogy recognizes that all knowledge is created within a historical context, that all decisions about pedagogy and education are inherently political decisions and that schools can actually work against the interests of those students who are most politically and economically vulnerable within society. This entry will address the development of critical pedagogy as a branch of knowledge, introduce a number of key concepts used in discussions of the field, review the major intellectual influences on scholars working in this area and finally consider some of the challenges to critical pedagogy and how they might be addressed.

Development and Details

While Henry Giroux is generally credited with first using the term *critical pedagogy*, the work of Paulo Freire has had, inarguably, the greatest influence on this body of scholarship. Freire was a Brazilian educator best known for providing literacy education to peasants. His first, and most influential, book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published in Portuguese in 1968, was written after a 15-year exile following his arrest for his work in education. This book was a response to the poor living conditions he found in the cities and countryside of his home country and challenged readers to consider the danger of oppressive elements in society and education. He focused specifically on the problem of what he called the banking model, a commonly used pedagogical model in which teachers make 'deposits' of what they consider to be true knowledge into the minds of students, which are assumed to be empty or without valuable knowledge of their own. Freire argued that the problem with the banking model is that it indoctrinates students to accept what the powerful class accepts to be true or valuable. Instead, students should be taught to be critical thinkers so that they can fully participate in democracy and become their own liberators. This critical thinking and liberation can be achieved, in Freire's view, only through the process of *conscientização* (or 'conscientization' in English), which encourages students to become deeply, socially aware and empowered through acknowledging

the social, economic and political realities that affect their lives. The end goal of conscientização is for students to realize that they have the power to change their own realities. Freire posited that conscientização can only be reached through dialogue, an educational strategy that requires humility and the exchange of ideas. The influence of his work on the work of the critical pedagogues who followed him cannot be overstated.

Giroux first published the term *critical pedagogy* in his 1983 book *Theory and Resistance in Education*, though he admits that he cannot remember exactly who first used the term and that Roger Simon may have used the term before he did. Giroux's work, as well as that of others who have written since the 1980s about emancipatory education, is greatly influenced by the work of Freire. In fact, Giroux and Freire collaboratively decided to call this field of inquiry 'critical pedagogy', rejecting terms such as *radical pedagogy*. Giroux began his work in critical pedagogy by first theorizing critical pedagogy and the work of Freire through critical theory, linking personal experience with public work and theorizing critical pedagogy through social movements. He advocates for what he calls 'public pedagogy', a concept that urges critical educators to reach beyond the boundaries of the classroom, into communities, workplaces and public arenas. He endorses educators' involvement in union and political activity. Giroux's work recognizes the complicated relationship between neo-liberal forces that aim to dismantle teachers' unions, reduce teachers' work to that of a technician rather than that of an intellectual and replace smart, creative, engaged teaching that stresses critical thinking with the oppressive policies of high-stakes testing, common core standards and other political education policies that stress the ability to obtain high scores on standardized tests. He has shown how these complicated relationships are at work in programmes in the USA such as President George W. Bush's 'No Child Left Behind' and President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's 'Race to the Top'.

Important Concepts in Critical Pedagogy

Most scholars who are now critical pedagogues came to the discipline after experiencing some kind of struggle in the classroom; critical pedagogy gives educators a language with which to talk about challenges in education and pedagogy, especially when those challenges are linked to oppression and injustice. Just as most critical pedagogy scholarship is based on the foundation of the work of Freire, critical pedagogues share a common lexicon with which to speak about education. Some of these terms include *praxis*, *problem posing*, *teacher talk*, *performance*, *banking*, *dialogue*,

dialectal theory, *hegemony*, *counter-hegemony*, *cultural capital* and *performance strike*. The term *praxis* is used in critical pedagogy to emphasize that a truly emancipatory education must be informed by a combination of theory and practice. Critical pedagogues believe that education should emphasize question posing or problem posing, because truth is always subject to critique and these critiques are best mediated through interaction and dialogue. Problem posing, according to Ira Shor, is in opposition to what he calls 'teacher talk', the habit of some pedagogues to 'talk knowledge at students' and the opposite of critical dialogue. Shor's concept is closely related to Freire's concept of *banking*, a term widely used to describe oppressive pedagogical practices that assume that students bring nothing of use to the classroom. Shor writes that the all too common and devastating result of teacher talk (or banking) is a student performance strike which motivates students to settle for low achievement, act out in violence or leave school altogether. He and others argue that this practice contributes to the schools' part in the school-to-prison pipeline model—the idea that, more and more, schools resemble prisons, criminalize students or prepare students for the reality of prison life with constant surveillance, suspicion and harsh punishment.

Peter McLaren explains dialectal theory as a concept that reveals connections between history and current meanings, so that one can understand both sides of a contradiction. For example, educators can make use of this concept to understand how a school can be both oppressive as well as a route to empowerment. *Hegemony* is another term commonly used by critical pedagogues to explain that dominance is not obtained through coercion but through wilful submission of the oppressed, often through infiltrating dominant values culturally through institutions like school. This term is useful for critical pedagogues to question how educational practice may be, in fact, oppressive, even if the motives are good. Augusto Boal's concept of the 'spect-actor' is one example of resistance or counter-hegemony to hegemonic forces. Not long after Freire published *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, his contemporary Boal published *Theatre of the Oppressed*. In this text, Boal put forth his theory for liberatory theatre, where actors stop a performance and invite the audience to become part of the performance by either participating in the production or making suggestions about what should happen next in the story. Boal referred to this role of the audience as spect-actor in opposition to a spectator. Boal created this model as an answer to what he saw as coercion present in theatre. He wanted participants to have agency in their experience at the theatre rather than act as passive receivers of the messages playwrights prescribed for the audience.

Critical pedagogy also regularly makes use of a term that originated from Pierre Bourdieu, namely, *cultural capital*. Bourdieu argued that general knowledge and experience are passed on to each new generation and are often informed by class. As a result, the dominant class pass down more—or what is considered more— valuable knowledge to their heirs, thereby maintaining power and the status quo. Some scholars have shown how this practice can be used to maintain oppression, while others, like E. D. Hirsch, have argued that it is the responsibility of educators to pass along 'cultural literacy' to all students so that they have access to the same knowledge as the dominant class.

Influences on Critical Pedagogy

While critical pedagogy was most prominently influenced by Freire's work and was ignited by Giroux's work, these scholars were, of course, influenced by the thinkers who preceded them. Freire spoke often of the influence of scholars like Karl Marx, Friederich Engels, Georg Hegel, Georg Lukács and Jean-Paul Sartre. Giroux theorized critical pedagogy through members of the Frankfurt School, including Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse and Theodore Adorno. A major intellectual influence on critical pedagogy was progressive educators like John Dewey, who contributed a 'language of possibility'. Dewey utilized his concept of community to explain the purpose of education in a democratic society and championed critical engagement in education. He and other social constructivists like Lev Vygotsky argued that whenever a student learns within a culture, that student is learning, on many levels, how to be a member of that culture. This theory is extended by Vygotsky into his concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, the space between what a student can accomplish on his or her own and what the student can accomplish in a more social situation with the help of a peer.

Scholars who wrote about the role of racial oppression in the American education system or society in general have also had a noticeable effect on critical pedagogy scholarship. W. E. B. Du Bois's 1903 *The Souls of Black Folk*, for example, focused on the impact of racism on minority race populations and especially the detrimental effects of segregated education on African American children. Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black history, wrote in *The Miseducation of the Negro* (2010) about the destructive effect of mainstream education on African American children. Giroux refers in his texts to speeches made by James Baldwin in the 1960s, when he asserted that educators were living in a 'dangerous time', and Giroux shows that the danger has not passed. Myles Horton, co-founder of the Highlander Folk School, later known as the Highlander

Research and Education Center, wrote that for education or institutional change to be effective, that change has to begin with the people themselves. This idea is a tenet of critical pedagogy. Freire argued that a critical pedagogy must be designed, in part, by the oppressed population it serves.

Further Examples

Many of the texts commonly associated with the study of critical pedagogy predated the work of Freire and Giroux but still applied the principles of emancipation, hope, consciousness and praxis found in their work. For example, in the 1960s, Herbert Kohl popularized the alternative school movement in the USA, which advocated for progressive schools and community involvement in schools. During the 1970s, Ivan Illich wrote about the Deschooling Movement, which sought to remove institutional control and values from schools. Born during the year the loudspeaker was invented, he saw schools as an institutional loudspeaker that could be used to propagate oppressive ideas among students. Maxine Greene, the 'mother of aesthetic education', has argued that reflective theories of knowledge, human nature, learning, curriculum, schooling and society have influenced the practice of progressive educators for over 30 years. She has made compelling arguments for the continued inclusion of the arts, physical education and music education in schools, arguing that educators must recognize the interconnectedness of the body, mind, emotions and spirit, so that the 'whole' student is educated.

Shor, a friend and co-author of Freire, also took on the large questions of critical pedagogy in his book *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change* (1992). This book addresses what Shor sees as the major questions of education: Why do schools limit students? How can this be changed? What helps students become critical thinkers and strong users of language? What kind of education can develop students as active citizens concerned with public life? How can teachers promote critical and democratic development among students who have learned to expect little from intellectual work and from politics? Shor argued that there is no such thing as apolitical education and all decisions made about education are inherently political decisions. He proposes what he calls 'empowering education', a critical-democratic pedagogy that is student centred and aims towards individual growth and social change.

Another important topic taken up by education scholars that finds its roots in critical pedagogy is that of high-stakes testing, common core standards or other standardized programmes like the No Child Left Behind legislation enacted in the USA during George

W. Bush's presidency. One of the most well known of these critics is Diane Ravitch, a former assistant to Lamar Alexander, President George H. W. Bush's Secretary of Education. While Ravitch worked for Alexander, she was responsible for creating many of the administration's state and national academic standards. She has since questioned the effect of these standards and points to the Finnish education system as an ideal model with well-prepared and supported teachers who all belong to a union, no standardized testing system and no privatized schools. Jonathon Kozol also writes about these programmes, especially in *Shame of the Nation* (2005), where he illustrates how these for-profit programmes from the highly profitable testing and test-prep industry often conceptualize the children of economic and racial minorities as having different needs from the children of the middle class and therefore more in need of strict discipline, basic phonics-based instruction and constant assessment. This book also shows how racism, racial apartheid in public schools, inequality in public funding and school inequalities have worked together to create a two-tier public schooling system in the USA that allows politicians and corporations to appear to want to fix problems in the school system while actually profiting from a broken system.

Critiques of Critical Pedagogy

While there are many proponents for critical pedagogy, there are, of course, critics as well. Feminist scholars like Elizabeth Ellsworth, Jennifer Gore and Carmen Luke have asserted that critical pedagogy's challenges of patriarchy have been superficial at best. bell hooks, for example, wrote that even though she found a kindred spirit in Freire, she was bothered by his sexist language. Many feminist pedagogues, however, do recognize that there are many similarities between feminist pedagogical practices and critical pedagogy; both are focused on issues such as empowerment of students, the power relationship between students and teachers, building communities, challenging traditional values, honouring the dignity of individuals and respecting diversity.

Language usage and language learning have been at the centre of other criticisms of critical pedagogy. Some scholars have condemned critical pedagogy's failure to engage scholarship on language, culture and oppression, especially concerning language learners. Others have accused critical pedagogues of using elitist and inaccessible language in their texts, thus creating a new form of oppression and exclusion. Indeed, Giroux discusses this problem at length and urges scholars to think of their scholarship as a public service.

Other critiques have drawn attention to the fact that most of the famed critical pedagogy scholars are White

men. Some scholars have addressed this issue by bringing feminist and critical race theory into the conversations surrounding critical pedagogy. Some scholars and thinkers who have been utilized in this conversation are James Baldwin, Frederick Douglas, Du Bois, Woodson, Martin Luther King Jr. and Derrick Bell, a critical race theorist with a legal background, who argued in texts like *Faces at the Bottom of the Well* (1992) that people of all races are victimized by racism and that the first step in sweeping changes regarding race is to acknowledge that racism exists. Similarly, critical pedagogues have made use of Gloria Anzaldua's argument that the races must work together to end oppression.

Finally, ecological pedagogues have criticized critical pedagogy for its failure to fully address the planet's ecological deterioration. Ecological scholars have raised concern that critical pedagogy supports the further alienation of human beings from nature. Ecological pedagogy requires that scholars and teachers abandon anthropocentrism, or the idea that human beings are at the centre of the planet, and instead focus on helping students to become prepared to be not just citizens in a democratic world but also citizens of Planet Earth and all the problems associated with Planet Earth, including pollution, global warming and decreasing amounts of water. This approach is interdisciplinary and looks at how humans oppress non-humans. Freire, too, took up issues of the environment in *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1973) with his concept of the 'agronomist-educator', with which he argued that the agronomist as an educator must be aware of the worldview of peasants, so that their technical training is not reduced to non-existent neutrality.

Critical pedagogy is a field of inquiry that examines how oppressive forces like business, neo-liberalism and capitalism interfere with education in negative ways. Critical pedagogy has provided a lens for analyzing problems in schools and in educational policies for many scholars interested in social justice. Thinkers have used this branch of knowledge to address questions such as who has power over what happens in classrooms and why that power is desirable, what forces affect conditions and practices in the classroom and to what end and how we can best teach students to be active participants in a democratic society. Though critical pedagogy focuses largely on teaching and conditions in schools, this branch of knowledge cannot be reduced to a methodology for teaching because, as Freire showed, the oppressed must participate in their own liberation.

Tabetha Adkins

See also conscientization; dialogue; empowerment; Frankfurt School; Freire, Paulo; Highlander Research and Education Center; praxis; social justice

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CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Although born of two distinct academic worlds, critical race theory and action research are natural bedfellows. Critical race theory originated in the legal academy to expose the ways in which American law and its analytical paradigms create, reproduce and maintain hierarchical social status regimes, particularly those based on race and ethnicity. The term *critical race theory*, or CRT for short, has been in existence since the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the first identifiable CRT articles and essays were published in several leading American law journals. Those first pieces focused their critiques on American constitutional and civil rights jurisprudence as it had developed in the post–*Brown v. Board of Education* era (from the 1950s through the early 1980s), but its reach has broadened significantly since then to encompass a broad range of legal subjects,