

Second, Gow does not recognize that these core moral precepts cannot be simply transmitted by the teacher if one wishes, as Gow seems to, to produce rational, responsible children with internalized values. Gow seems to be walking a tightrope concerning the issue of how to "teach" such issues. While she endorses teacher advocacy (indeed at times she demands it), she also warns against it and suggests open discussions in the context of the universal values. How are teachers to meet both conflicting ends simultaneously? Gow does not seriously consider the principles of child development. She never acknowledges that children do not immediately understand what adults may advocate and certainly do not internalize such values merely because they are asked to. Furthermore, Gow does not recognize developmental differences between children of different ages. The child's possible lack of comprehension of an adult's value position is more likely a problem at earlier ages of childhood and the lack of spontaneous internalization is more likely a problem at later ages.

A third and final problem with Gow's analysis is the very concept of MVE. It certainly is true that moral/values education is a phenomenon that must be reckoned with. It is also certainly true that the three approaches she has highlighted are the predominant forms it currently takes. And finally it is true that they do share some common features. However, they do not all agree on the issue of relativism. Gow presents two models for "moral education in a pluralistic society": "Type A", which she feels represents all three forms of MVE and which she rejects; and "Type B", which she proposes and feels resolves the problems of MVE. Unfortunately Type A is most descriptive of VC and Type B is a close approximation of current Kohlberg and Beck forms of MVE.

What Gow does provide is a strong argument for developing safeguards in MVE which will protect the rights of children from invasions of their privacy. She succeeds in making the reader take seriously the "morality" of moral education. Furthermore she challenges MVE to move beyond the preoccupation with the issue of indoctrination to consider the problems of privatism and alienation which so threaten our society. She makes clear that MVE must improve its communications with the community outside the school, and make its goals and methods more accessible to public scrutiny and debate. There are many indications that MVE is developing along lines which Gow would approve and those wishing to have a more current assessment of the "state of the art" in MVE would be well advised to consult other recent publications in the field.

Clark Power
Harvard University
Marvin W. Berkowitz
Marquette University

Reason to Believe

Abstract

Two recent books by Richard Pratte use the methodology of philosophical analysis in the development of a framework for the critical analysis of the belief systems of educational practitioners. *Pluralism in education* (1979) is addressed to practitioners themselves. It identifies the criteria for a rational understanding of cultural diversity and identifies past and present ideologies of cultural pluralism. Pratte argues that past ideologies of pluralism tended to emphasize common interests among minorities while present ideologies tend to emphasize divergencies; both kinds of perspectives contain distortions. *Ideology and Education* (1977) is addressed more to philosophers of education. It attempts to develop a general theory of the relationship of belief to action in education that accounts for the history, structure, and function of ideology in American education. Pratte is criticized for an overemphasis on the arguments for an ideology and a failure to attempt to account for sociological data on how the beliefs of educators are constitutive of their actions.

Richard Pratte, *Pluralism in Education: Conflict, Clarity, and Commitment*, Springfield Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1979, pp. 201, \$15.75 cloth, \$9.75 paper.

Richard Patte, *Ideology and Education*, New York: David McKay, 1977, pp. 305, \$7.95 paper only.

A recent book in the sociology of education includes detailed transcripts of interviews for the job of school superintendent in a small town in Midwest America. One interview includes the following exchange:

Board members: What is your philosophy of Education?

Reynolds: The superintendent's job is to work with, within, and be part of the community. The school should take a kid and prepare him to the best of our ability in the community for a vocation so he can earn a living and be a productive citizen or go to college. We should prepare him for the recreational activities he'll take part in.

Board member: How do you feel about nongraded schools?

Reynolds: Lots of people have tried it. It's good in philosophy but is very difficult to organize and administer. We should worry about moving kids and materials where they should be and not worry about nongraded business.

Board member: What's your philosophy of discipline?

Reynolds: Pretty rough. A teacher needs control of the classroom; that's first and a must. There should be respect for the teacher. Order is necessary for learning to take place.¹

Reynolds got the job, but that is not what this review is about. Instead, please notice that the word "Philosophy" appears three times in the above exchange. Now the problem: does the above exchange have anything to do with the subject called "philosophy of education" that is slowly disappearing from the curricula of colleges of education in the United States? Some philosophers would say NO; they argue that the problems of philosophy constitute a specialized discipline that has little or no relationship to the decisions of ordinary people². At the other extreme are those educators who seem to believe that every educator already *has* a "philosophy of education" and that the primary problem of the practitioner of philosophy of education would be to assist in the development of a basis for the classification and identification of the various philosophies so that, for example, school board members might have an additional source of data.³ From this latter viewpoint, the study of philosophy of education would *also* be of little value: I might change my philosophy through psychoanalysis or as the result of some traumatic experience, but *certainly* not on the basis of sound reasoning!

This is where Richard Pratte comes in. Pratte — a Professor of Education at Ohio State University and President of the (North American) Philosophy of Education Society — frankly addresses his new book *Pluralism in Education*⁴ to the educational practitioner in an attempt to supply the practitioner with a framework for rational decision-making in the face of the increased variety of pressures from ethnic and cultural minorities. *Pluralism* is not a textbook on philosophy of education; it is a collection of essays that uses the methodology of philosophical analysis to clarify such concepts as "diversity," "pluralism," "relativism," "conspiracy," and "bilingual-bicultural education," and to identify the components of ideologies as Assimilation, Amalgamation, Insular Cultural Pluralism, Modified Cultural Pluralism, and Open Society. *Pluralism*, also draws heavily on an earlier book by Pratte called *Ideology and Education*⁵ — a volume that "may with reservation be described as a theory concerning the relationship between ideology and education" (p. 7). *Ideology* seems more addressed to students and specialists in philosophy of education than to the practitioner since it urges a *prior* familiarity with the tools of philosophical analysis (pp. 10;14). While *Pluralism* serves as an *example* of the rational philosophical analysis of the philosophies — Pratte calls them "ideologies" — of educational practitioners with respect to ethnicity, *Ideology* deals with the more complex matter of appropriate criteria for the analysis and evaluation of "belief systems" and their connection with human action (pp. 26-67). I hope to show that Pratte's analysis of the problems of pluralism has much to recommend it but that difficulties in the theoretical framework developed in *Ideology* and in the argument against relativism in *Pluralism* (pp. 167-175) give substance to the standard cliché objection to the arguments of philosophers that Reynolds expresses above: "It's good in philosophy but is difficult to organize and administer." In short, I wonder if it is possible for an individual to hold her ideology open to the sort of rational clarification that Pratte urges; I even wonder if it is possible for a teacher to hold her conception of herself as *teacher* open to that kind of analysis.⁶

To illustrate the utility of Pratte's analysis, let us imagine that the largest minority in Reynolds' district consists of Mexican-Americans, many of whom do not have an adequate command of English. For a number of years, the curriculum has prescribed Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as required reading in the high school. Many of the English teachers are convinced that the Mexican students are not capable of understanding *Hamlet* and have suggested that *Hamlet* no longer be required reading. For Pratte, the question is not "What should Reynolds do?" but "How should Reynolds interpret the situation?"

At bottom, Pratte would insist that Reynolds recognize the *fact* of cultural diversity (*Pluralism*, pp. 3-24). This simply means that the students are not all the same! But once this is acknowledged, there must be a further recognition that the attribution of differences is not simply a "brute fact" but requires a judgment — cultural diversity is something that people *attribute* to each other. So it becomes more than an objective judgment of what cultural differences *are* relevant to the problem, but what differences the people involved *regard* as relevant. Further, *cultural* diversity involves differences between groups that have *significantly* different outlooks that have their origins in a historical community. In the case of the Mexican-Americans, this will not be just Mexico or the local community, but the historical convergence of all these factors together with the immediate results of interaction with the groups with which they must co-exist on a day-to-day basis. While Pratte emphasizes cultural groups, I think that Reynolds could also consider this interaction in *institutional* terms, eg.: teacher-student. Finally Pratte emphasizes that a preoccupation with the characteristics of groups may blind us to the characteristics of the individuals within those groups.

The discussion of bilingual and bicultural education in *Pluralism* (pp. 178-198) bears directly on the problem of the English teachers and *Hamlet*. Responding to a paper by Joseph J. Pizzillo, Pratte raises objections to Pizzillo's position that bilingual education is necessary for bicultural education. Pratte points out that the more basic question is the efficacy of any method or curriculum for producing cultural understanding. In the course of this discussion, he raises the question of the result of attempting to teach a concept such as "authority" in one language to students to whom the concept has a different meaning in *their* language. When Pratte remarks that "The way one teaches the concept of authority, the constraints on teaching, helps shape the way children learn and use the concept" (p. 196), he raises a problem that he does not develop. Given that some principle of authority is *constitutive* of schooling itself⁷, it may very well be that teaching the wrong conception of authority may be destructive of the teacher's ability to perform her role. This would be the case of the teacher who subscribes to the "rough" conception of authority in Reynolds' district or for the teacher in a free school who subscribes to an open conception.

Pratte rejects the relativistic view that there can be "no objectively valid rational way of justifying basic ethical or value judgments" (*Pluralism*, p. 174). This view, he holds, is the basis of recent sentiment in favor of a "retribalization of politics and a 'refeudalization' of society" (p. 175). In short, we cannot accept as a principle that "All ethnic demands are legitimate" (pp. 172-173). Pratte's alternative to relativism seems to rest on an assertion by Michael Scriven that "There is an objectivity of fact — not a perfect objectivity of knowledge — on which ethics must be built, or rot away" (p. 170). Given Pratte's conception of ideology, I want to argue that the only possible basis for this objectivity of fact can be the actual constitutive principles of the institution in which the decision-maker must operate. If Reynold's ideology actually *is* descriptive of the constitutive principles of his own authority, then those principles must be regarded as the factual basis for his judgment!

Pratte analyzes the concept of "ideology" by means of a comparison of the definitions of the term by several authors with the intuitive "ordinary language" use of the word (pp. 52-60; *Ideology*, pp. 14-49). He argues that there are a variety of intelligible uses of "ideology," some with pejorative connotations and some with laudatory connotations. Each of these definitions is inadequate by itself but, Pratte argues, the comparison of definitions culminates in insight: an ideology can be used as an instrument of deception *or* as the source of a more enlightened viewpoint. But the more neutral definition of ideology as "belief system" is too vague: Pratte holds an ideology is a *type* of belief system that is subscribed to by some social group and functions as a link between individual belief systems and collective action.

To show how this linkage occurs, Pratte draws upon B. Paul Komisar and James E. McClellan's notion of a "slogan system."⁸ This "slogan system" dimension of an ideology seems to be a way of representing the (logical?) structure of an ideology. The elements of the "slogan system" are summarized in what Pratte calls the MKVICER model. The MKVICER model represents: metaphysical, knowledge, and valuational assumptions (M, K, & V) which are interpreted (I) by means of particular slogans, definitions, and metaphors in the context of some "class of situations" (C) so that the advocates of the ideology see specific empirical evidence (E) as related to an outcome or intended result (R_i) that is regarded as desirable. Pratte remarks that "Ideology has the same kind of consistency that a person's aesthetic and artistic preferences have: it expresses a particular range of beliefs, an organization of empirical data, and an interpretation of these as applied to certain human endeavors" (*Ideology*, p. 59). He is *not* suggesting that ideology (or aesthetic preference) is "just a matter of taste." Even an ideology can be held evidentially. Even an ideologue can be alert to the possibility that his most cherished beliefs may be incomplete or inadequately supported. Even an ideologue can be sensitive to the relevance of evidence to deciding the truth or falsity of his beliefs, Pratte holds.

But Pratte's account of the ideologies that people actually have held about education and pluralism casts doubt on his optimism about the capability of human beings to hold an ideology *as a whole* open to critical evaluation. In the past, talk about cultural pluralism in education was dominated by the "melting pot" metaphor (*Ideology*, pp. 244-273; *Pluralism*, pp. 25-48, 61-81). The *ideal* of the melting pot was expressed by the ideology of amalgamation which called for the schools to teach common democratic values to all citizens. The *myth* of the melting pot was that this amalgamation had actually taken place and had produced a distinctive American culture. But the *reality* is that the advocates of the melting pot actually attempted to assimilate white immigrants to an Anglo-Saxon ideal with other races regarded as outsiders. The dominant ideology was assimilation, but it was not even regarded as applicable to everyone. But Pratte adds that the myth of the melting pot dominated American thinking for many, many years. As a result of the recent shattering of the myth of the melting pot, ethnic and cultural minorities are developing distinctive educational ideologies and demanding special treatment on the basis of ascribed characteristics rather than achieved characteristics.

This resurgent emphasis on group characteristics in the policy-making process is not only detrimental to the individual young Mexican-American who might *prefer* to become a Shakespearean actor (as opposed to opening a taco stand, for example); it is also detrimental to tolerance between groups. This ideology — termed both Insular Pluralism and Political Pluralism by Pratte — promotes a "paranoid style" and a tendency to attribute a group's disadvantaged status to conspiracies on the part of other groups. An interesting essay entitled "Conspiracy and Political Pluralism" (*Pluralism*, pp. 86-119) points out that "all sectors of society, especially a capitalistic one, are dominated by systems of belief which are self-serving, for each different system of ideas necessarily represents the standpoint, interests, aims and outlook of that segment of society, though often under the guise of speaking for

society as a whole" (p. 111). Ethnic and cultural minorities — including women — must "grasp the fact that their exploitation results not so much from a conspiracy but from systemic causes within American institutions" (p. 113).⁹ In short, "Insular/Political Pluralism", which asserts that an adequate policy can be based on an inevitable balancing of interest groups is also a myth: exploitation can be traced to "systemic causes," not conspiracies. Pratte points out that this talk of conspiracies and covert action is present in the writings of such educational reformers as John Holt, Everett Reimer, and Ivan Illich.

Given the perceptive understanding that Pratte demonstrates of the crucial misunderstandings that are built into the traditional "melting pot" ideologies of assimilation and amalgamation and both (classical and resurgent) versions of "insular (political) pluralism," his failure to develop any systematic critique of either Marx and Engels's *The German Ideology* or Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia* — the former is never mentioned in either *Pluralism* or *Ideology*, the latter only in passing — is puzzling. The pejorative sense of the word "ideology" is, after all, the dominant sense of the word historically (whether we base our claim on the historical record of the appearances of the word — as Raymond Williams does — or on the use of the word in theoretical and philosophical discourse — as David Braybrooke does).¹⁰ And when Pratte discusses the ideological foundation of American education as a social institution — the viewpoint to which our friend Reynolds subscribes which Pratte calls the "Ideology of Social Purpose: Noneducational Benefit View" — his failure to develop the MKVICER model in appropriate ways deprives the reader of a basis for valuable understandings of the ways in which someone like Reynolds would see his beliefs as the basis for action. And let there be no misunderstanding on this point: taken as making an *empirical claim*, Reynolds is much closer to the truth about "the system" than adherents to either melting pot or insular pluralist ideology. To see why, let us turn to the "Noneducational Benefit View" (*Ideology*, pp. 137-152; cf. 68-123).

For Pratte, any educational ideology can be characterized by the purpose that it would prescribe for schooling. The Noneducational Benefit View is the predominant view of education in the United States. It prescribes a social and economic purpose: the value of schooling is to be assessed in terms of how well it achieves a noneducational purpose such as social selection. Moreover, schooling is not assessed according to its value for each individual, but according to its value for society as a whole. So, if "society" deems a certain amount of unemployment to be acceptable and schooling "selects" people for a spot on Skid Row by handing them a credential that classifies them as pariahs, the advocate of the Noneducational Benefit View simply *would not see that as a problem*. Pratte's discussion of the Noneducational Benefit View draws heavily on some unpublished work by Thomas F. Green.¹¹ But Green's work is not a discussion of ideology; it is a discussion of the constitutive and regulative *operating principles* of educational systems. So when Pratte abandons the MKVICER model in favor of the tried-and-true philosophical tool of argument analysis (*Ideology*, p. 30), his decision results in a major Prattefall. An application of the MKVICER model to sociological data on the actions of individuals in the context of the constitutive principles of educational institutions *could have* provided his readers with a more useful basis for understanding the relation of belief to action in education.¹² Since the MKVICER model *can* show how beliefs serve as the constitutive and regulative bases for action (*Pluralism*, pp. 54-55), we can only express our frustration at his failure to develop his analysis in that direction.

While the Noneducational Benefit View continues to be constitutive of the educational system, Pratte acknowledges in *Ideology* (pp. 169-186) that in recent years educational rhetoric has been dominated by the "Ideology of Humanistic Purpose: Person-centered view." As you can probably guess, from this perspective schooling is to be evaluated according to its capacity for the development of empathy, compassion, love, and trust in the psyche of the individual. But what is the actual result of attempting to act on this belief in the context of a system that is constituted by a conflicting ideology?¹³ Pratte might reject this question on the grounds that it is a sociological question and he is a philosopher, but I would suggest that the strength of the MKVICER model is that it can provide an interpretive framework for an understanding of *empirical* questions about the relation of belief to action. If Pratte is to establish "interface" between the practical interests of school administrators and teachers and the theoretical concerns of philosophers, a possibly fruitful line of inquiry might be to show how a conceptual framework like the MKVICER model can provide a basis for understanding the interrelationships among the constitutive principles of institutions and the philosophies and actions of individuals.

One last point. In *Ideology* (pp. 152-169) Pratte discusses an ideology called the "Educational Benefit View" This view, which seems to claim as its adherents only a handful of philosophers of education, urges that schooling should have as its purpose the development of the capacity for critical thinking in the individual. Pratte dismisses this view with the observation that "common sense tells us that only a handful of teachers and administrators are capable of a manner of teaching required in the education benefit view of individual schooling purpose" (p. 178). This rather cavalier dismissal of any talk of educational benefits ignores the continued presence of the term "education" as an "essentially contested concept" in the discourse of educators.¹⁴ While I sympathize with Pratte's criticisms of attempts by such philosophers as R. S. Peters to identify a particular conception of education with the concept of education *itself*,¹⁵ I still think that Pratte can be faulted for failing to even address questions like: In what sense is an ideology of cultural pluralism an educational ideology *at all*? and Would an ethnic group that advocates indoctrinating children with nationalistic ideals be actually espousing an *educational* ideology? A theory of educational ideology ought to enable us to distinguish an educational ideology from an ideology that uses

educational rhetoric to advocate something other than education.

Michael A. Oliker*

*Michael A. Oliker is a Lecturer in Educational Foundations at Loyola University of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

Résumé

Pluralism in Education (1979) s'adresse aux enseignants eux-mêmes. L'ouvrage identifie les critères de compréhension rationnelle de la diversité culturelle et les conceptions passées et présentes du pluralisme culturel. L'auteur pense que les idéologies du passé mettent l'accent sur les intérêts communs des minorités tandis que les idéologies actuelles accentuent les divergences. Ces deux perspectives contiennent des erreurs.

Ideology and Education (1977) s'adresse davantage aux philosophes de l'Éducation. L'ouvrage tente d'élaborer une théorie générale de la relation entre la croyance et l'action qui soit valable pour l'histoire, la structure et la fonction de l'idéologie de l'éducation en Amérique. On reproche à Pratte d'avoir trop insisté sur l'idéologie et de n'avoir pas réussi à tenir compte des données sociologiques et de n'avoir pas réalisé combien les croyances des éducateurs déterminent leurs agissements.

Footnotes

¹Alan Peshkin, *Growing Up American* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 77.

²G. J. Warnock, *English Philosophy since 1900*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 111-120.

³See, for example, Floyd Boschee, Donald R. Prescott, and Dennis D. Hein, "Do Cooperating Teachers Influence the Educational Philosophy of Student Teachers?" *Journal of Teacher Education* 29 (March-April 1978): 57-61; P. D. Jersin, "What is Your EP?: A Test Which Identifies Your Educational Philosophy," *Clearing House* 46 (January 1972): 274-278.

⁴Richard Pratte, *Pluralism in education: Conflict, Clarity, and Commitment* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1979), xxviii + 201 pp. \$15.75 cloth. \$9.75 paper.

⁵Richard Pratte, *Ideology and Education* (New York: David McKay, 1977), viii + 305 pp. \$7.95 paper only.

⁶Edward G. Rozycki, "Are We Free to Choose Our Values?" *Educational Theory* 29 (Winter 1979): 67-69; Maury Silver and Daniel Geller, "On the Irrelevance of Evil: The Organization and Individual Action," *Journal of Social Issues* 34 (#4 : 1978): 125-136.

⁷Sal C. Kapunan, "Why Schooling Cannot Be Any Different," *Educational Forum* 43 (March 1979): 299-313.

⁸B. Paul Komisar and James E. McClellan, "The Logic of Slogans," in B. O. Smith and R. H. Ennis, eds., *Language and Concepts in Education* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1961).

⁹Cf. David Hogan, "Capitalism, Liberalism, and Schooling," *Theory and Society* 8 (November 1979): 387-413.

¹⁰Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), s. v. "Ideology"; *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s. v. "Ideology" by David Braybrooke.

¹¹Thomas F. Green, *Predicting the Behavior of Education Systems* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, forthcoming).

¹²See Burton R. Clark, *The Distinctive College: Antioch, Reed and Swarthmore* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing co., 1970), pp. 233-262.

¹³See Edward F. Pajak, "Schools as Loosely Coupled Organizations," *Educational Forum* 44 (November 1979): 83-95.

¹⁴Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Essential Contestability of Some Social Concepts," *Ethics* 84 (October 1973): 1-9.

¹⁵Richard Pratte, "Analytical Philosophy of Education: A Historical Perspective," *Teachers College Record* 81 (Winter 1979): 159-161.