

Essentials of disability studies, lecture 2

Objects:

Functionalist approach in practice

Interpretivist (humanistic) approach

Homework: *Whistleless* as an example of functionalist approach

Which moments of the film show following functions of whistle:

- Whistle as an instrument of social control
- Whistle as the array of competencies for being integrated (can you precise which competencies are mentioned)

Mapping the space of pink town

There are three main groups: birds, people, and mammals. Are they equal in terms of freedoms and the access to rights?

What is the main difference among them in terms of boundaries and frontiers?

Which definition is better in terms of recognising the social landscape of the town:

- they live together;
- next to each other;
- they share some common places, but live separately from each other

Methods of teaching

Who applies:

- Observation
- Modelling
- Imitation
- Other ways of teaching

Why do all teachers not have any doubts regarding the necessity to teach whistling?

General conclusions to the movie: the theory by Karl Polanyi

- Whistle is an economical value of individuals, his or her usability, its measure
- Two types of connections between people: reciprocal and redistributive. Who among film characters establishes each of the connections?
- The absence of market-focused instruments
- Preindustrial town or authoritarian society?
The apology of naturalness

Education&disability

Utilitarian vs. humanistic view on

- Children and childhood
- Education and the impact of teaching
- Disability

Main elements of approaches

- The notion of child (in terms of childhood, development, child participation, child being and child becoming)
- The mission of education (the conflict between the interests of authorities & society & public and the interests of individuals)
- The interpretation of disability (medical, social, cultural)

Functionalist approach: the notion of child

Theorised pre-sociological concept of child:

- Innocent child or child-angel
- Child as *tabula rasa* (blank slate)
- Child as a source of evil or child-devil
- Child as naturally developed

What do you think which of discourses were recruited by functionalist approach?

- *Introduction to childhood studies / ed.by Kehily M. J. London: Open university press, 2009*
- James Al., Jenks, Ch., Prout, Al. *Theorizing childhood*, London: Polity, 1998

The notion of developmentalism

- The focus on the transfer towards adulthood, independence, and socialisation
- The priority of development as utilitarian aim-centered process
- Teachers and helping professionals as main experts regarding the content and methods of education

The variety of theories and practices

- Behaviorism as the core scheme for motivating and keeping focus on learning
- Social learning by Bandura: observation, imitation, and modeling
- Psychoanalysis as the grounds for interpreting deviation

Functionalist approach: two main tracks of education, special education and quasi-special education

The mode of correction

- Education as an instrument of social control
- The universal set of competencies and strategies

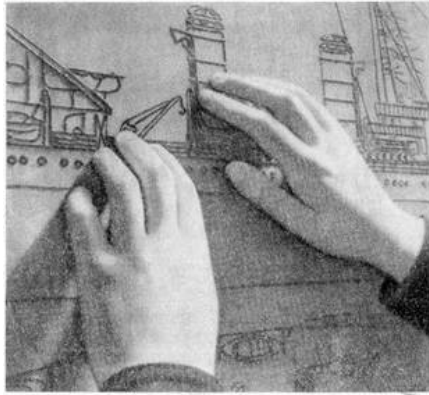
The mode of forming psychic

- The monopoly of external sources for forming psychic
- Individualization of education

In the terms of which discourse is the disabled child described:

“The psyche of a mentally retarded [‘oligophrenic’] child is completely different to that of a normal child ... immature higher intellectual processes in combination with extremely rigid behaviour create ... a distinctive type of mental development”

The school for multisensory deprived children in Zagorsk



Teacher as a demiurge of child development who takes all “leading reins” of child development



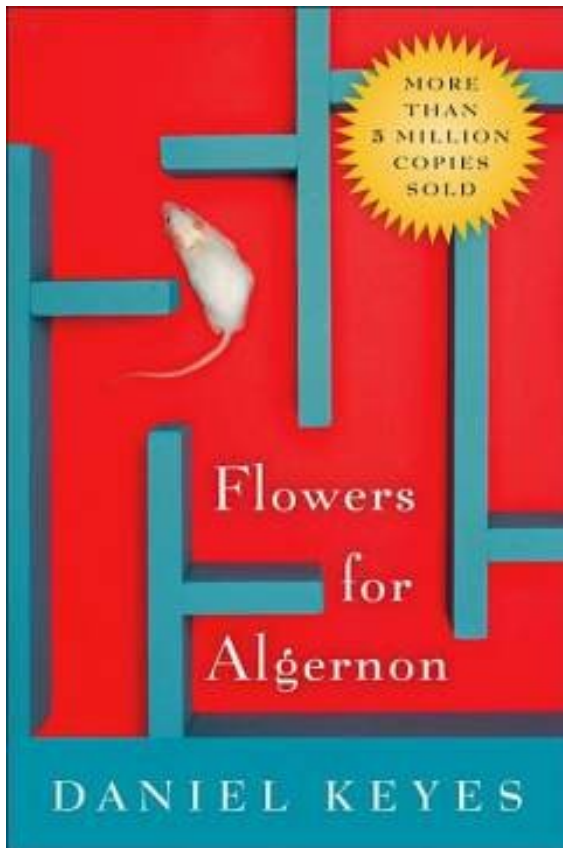
Consistent individual approach to teaching child

Effort to achieve the highest level of performance

Questions to the quotations

- How does the author define the child?
- How is disability constructed?
- Which educational methods are recruited?
- Further information the documentary movie by BBC *The Butterflies of Zagorsk*

The consistent critique: *Flowers for Algernon*



The eponymous Algernon is a [laboratory mouse](#) who has undergone surgery to increase his intelligence by artificial means. The story is told by a series of progress reports written by Charlie Gordon, the first human test subject for the surgery, and it touches upon many different ethical and moral themes such as the treatment of the mentally disabled

Three adaptations

Flowers for Algeron



Main strands of critique

- Utilitarian approach, predominance of usability as a main trait for evaluating people
- Ignorance of emotional life, its subordination to cognitive processes
- Overvaluing professional knowledge
- Obvious connotation between the level of IQ and the social status

Interpretivism or Person-centered teaching

- The child as an agent and participant, prioritising *child being*
- Disability as the neutral array of characteristics
- Education as a way to Self-concept, to learn to be in coherence with self

Sudbury schools' network



The task

- Arguments pro et contra of such approach in terms of integrating children with disability

Other examples of humanistic approach to education

- Waldorf education
- Storyline project
- St Trinian's school as a fictional example



Storyline project

- Storyline is a strategy and method for active learning, adapted education and partnership. The learning process is built up through episodes which form a story line. The process is directed by key questions and well planned activities focusing on learning experiences and outcomes.
- Further information: <http://www.storyline-scotland.com/tag/published-article/>

Shed light on the shadow of humanistic approach

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FYolwYkoWY>