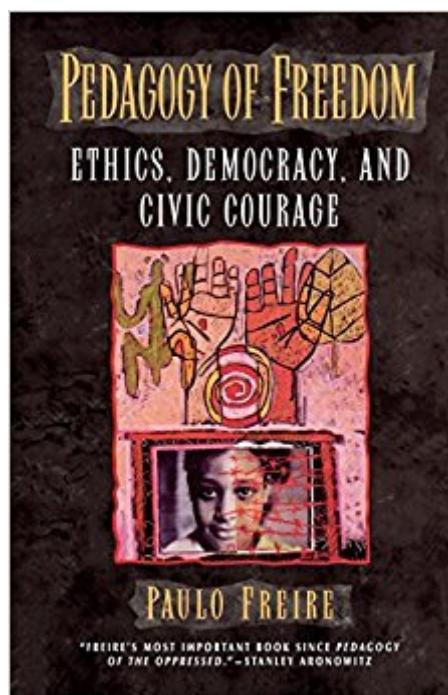


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# Pedagogy Of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, And Civic Courage (Critical Perspectives Series: A Book Series Dedicated To Paulo Freire)



## Synopsis

This book displays the striking creativity and profound insight that characterized Freire's work to the very end of his life—an uplifting and provocative exploration not only for educators, but also for all that learn and live.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this work from a new publisher of scholarly books, the late Brazilian educator argues against "progressive" liberalism and its passive acceptance of a world where poverty and hunger coexist with affluence. The book is read by Julius Wong Loi Sing, a theology professor at Moody Bible Institute. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Pedagogy of Freedom, Paulo Freire's last will and testament, is his best book since Pedagogy of the Oppressed. (Stanley Aronowitz, CUNY Graduate Center, author of From the Ashes of the Old: American Labor and America's Future) Pedagogy of Freedom is a stirring culmination of Paulo Freire's life work. It is in no way a conclusion or a summation: it is a text that urges its readers to become, to reach towards still untapped possibility. The themes of Freire's earlier writing are extended here into thoughtful explorations of ethics and democracy and the ways in which they may release a sense of agency in the long exploited and cruelly silenced. Moreover, he has new things

to say about ideology and freedom in a world marked by a threatening 'globalization' and an unprecedented manipulation by media. As before, he speaks of 'passion,' 'love,' and 'caring;' and, each time he does so, it is as if his hand grasps each one of our shoulders, urging us on and on. (Maxine Greene, Columbia University)

Braiding bold vision with precision, Freire, in his brilliance, allows us to imagine a tomorrow of democracy and freedom. Insisting on the 'incompleteness' of us all and on a 'dreamer's right to dream,' *Pedagogy of Freedom* reminds us that our work is never done; that change is always possible, always essential, always unfinished. (Michelle Fine, The Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York)

With *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Paulo Freire enriches the dialogical perspectives with a call for universal ethics that establishes a better foundation for education in the next century. (Ramón Flecha, University of Barcelona, Spain)

At the threshold of the twenty-first century, we face the need to learn a new and more communicative way of constructing educational theory. With *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire contributes a unique guide to such a mission. . . . While social sciences are witnessing the revival of the idea of deliberative democracy (Elster, 1988), as well as the possibility of transforming social positions through dialogue (Giddens, 1994), we now have a book that discusses how to develop such dialogic democracy in education. In *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire defends a universal human ethic that extends not only to schools but also to teachers' training. (Harvard Educational Review)

This book is a repository of Freire's wisdom, the wisdom that informs his philosophy of education and his educational approach. . . . I would recommend this one as very important. (Studies In The Education Of Adults)

*Pedagogy of Freedom* is almost an elegy. In looping around themes that have run through his work, Freire's book is a reminder of his fundamentally optimistic vision of the radical possibilities for education. (College English)

Paulo Freire is one of the ideological giants. . . . In this book, Freire remains passionately idealistic and inspirational, without denying the complexity of the work or the difficulty of creating real change. It is one of the rare tomes to which one can return again and again... (What On Earth)

Lifelong education activist Paulo Freire rejects any notion of education as "objective" or "impartial". Such education cannot exist. Any pretense that it does is an illusion that serves to mask and advance the agenda of those whose interests are served by the status quo - the moneyed, the powerful and the dominant culture. Instead, Freire argues for embracing the subjectivity of education and teachers' roles as advocates and activists. Education is inherently the subjective encounter of two or more human beings, each with his or her own social and historical context - gender, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, ability, and historical experiences. It is only within that context

that education can happen, so one of the first and primary roles of education is to explore and understand that context. Issues of injustice, discrimination, exploitation, oppression, poverty and social class are not to be politely side-stepped as if we are in fact all equal. It is only through confronting social constructs and power structures as they exist that we can begin to approach equality. Therefore, as such issues arise and exist, it is the teacher's responsibility to take sides - to favor the oppressed and the exploited and to stand up to such injustice. Anything else does violence to the subjectivity of the other and, thereto, to one's own. Teaching is not merely the pouring of information into the empty vessel that is the student. It is rather the meeting of two (or more) active subjects in slightly different places on the learning path. The teacher too needs to be open to learning (and specifically, learning from the student). This means that the teachers needs to respect the experience and worldview of the student. There is no teaching without learning, and there is no true learning that is passive or forced from above. Both the teacher and the student are unfinished, and it is that unfinished state that allows for further education. Much of Freire's work - this book included - is a protest, indeed, a rage, against the seemingly unstoppable forces of global neoliberalism. The future, we are told by and through our leaders, is one of global capitalism. There is no other alternative. We may rail against the growing inequality and injustices all we want, but in the end, all we can do is train students to adapt to it as best as possible. Education, then, is to prepare students to take their places - however low or high - in the ever-expanding corporate/consumerist structure. Freire rejects all of that. The poor, the exploited, the oppressed, the "ragpickers" must get organized and struggle to overcome the injustices which are thrust upon them. Education is one such vehicle for accomplishing this. Promoting literacy, improving health, sanitation and infrastructure, and raising awareness through protests and peaceful action are all avenues that can and should be taken, not least by teachers. Failing to take sides and engage on behalf of the oppressed makes the teacher simply another minion of the corporate structure. At heart, Freire is talking about tearing off the mask that too many of us wear too comfortably. For those of us who are part of the dominant culture, we benefit from the privileges that accrue to the dominant culture, and we turn a blind eye to the cost of such privilege to those who do not share in it. Most of us want to "help" or to "do good", but only if and to the extent that we can do so without threatening our own position in the dominant culture. Such "helping" is paternalistic, the missionary zeal of one who refuses to see his or her own role in the very problem s/he is trying to help. But as ethical human beings, we are confronted with choices. We must choose to act ethically - not to choose is itself a choice. We must confront many of the assumptions we take for granted and upon which our system of inequality rests. For instance, what is "profit"? Whose profit? Is profit strictly an

economic term, or are there other ways to profit? Is profit always a good thing? Must society be hierarchical and unequal? If so, what is the basis for that hierarchy? Birth right? Meritocracy? How should people be ranked and sorted (if at all) in order to determine who deserves or is entitled to what? Is there a way (and a will) to make the world more equal and more just? Every choice we make confronts these ethical dilemmas. To the extent we truly want to "help", we might have to fundamentally risk ourselves and our positions in society to do so. But then again, at the rate that neoliberalism is advancing, most of us face that threat anyway, whether we realize it or not. Many at this point may be crying "socialism!" or "communism!". Freire was indeed an unabashed supporter of Marx. He would agree that there is an unsustainable disconnect between labor and capital that is unhealthy for both. What is needed is maximum subjectivity - and mutual recognition of subjectivity - for both rich and poor, the capital class and the working class. There can be no true democracy without all voices heard and respected. Such mutual respect and subjectivity benefits all - the oppressor and the oppressed. Equality does not mean sameness, it means equal freedom to explore and experience our individual human subjectivity in relation to the subjectivity of others. If this is socialism, so be it. And perhaps it's idealistic or even utopian, but that sounds a lot better than the dystopian worldwide system of mass poverty and exploitation that we are headed for now.

We need to understand in the U.S. that our education system is outdated, and no longer serves the purpose of preparing it's citizens for full participation in our society. This book really completes Sr. Freire's philosophy of education, and is a great book to read if you want to consider how we in this country need to get our heads out of the sands of the 19th Century pedagogy and realize that standardized curricula, standardized testing, and all the other outdated attempts by politicians to formalize public education cannot stand the test of time and will ultimately result in the failure of this country to keep its place of prominence in the world. If you want proof of the failures of our current system, just observe how our media work, and how our politicians running for office have not one scintilla of wisdom about how to lead this country forward. We need a revolution in education.

First and foremost the book is about love; for life, people, students and self. It is less structured than I'm used to and I found it refreshing. It begins with the "Scourge of neoliberalism, with its cynical fatalism and its inflexible negation of the right to dream..." It moves on to the critical relationship between a person's theory and practice. Continuing on with the theme of the teaching-learning relationship and process from his first book. He talks about the permanent condition of becoming. The necessity of ultimate respect for all people, understanding of their plight from their perspective

and duty to speak out where they cannot."It is fundamental for us to know that without certain qualities or virtues, such as a generous loving heart, respect for others, tolerance, humility, a joyful disposition, love of life, openness to what is new, a disposition to welcome change, perseverance in the struggle, a refusal of determinism, a spirit of hope, and openness to justice, progressive pedagogical practice is not possible. It is something that the merely scientific, technical mind cannot accomplish." pg 108

My favorite Freire book! This is why i am in education! I recommend you struggle through Pedagogy of the Oppressed first, as it is the Freire starting place, but no graduate education degree is complete without this book. It is so much easier to read and digest, and the content is phenomenal.

Those interested in justice and truth must take the time to digest this book, Freire's last before his death in 1997. As his most accessible text, it should be experienced BEFORE his most widely read book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed." People of every profession who believe in democracy for dignity and decency of the human experience should read "Pedagogy of Freedom" if they want the vocabulary to push such a dream from the womb of our minds into the raw funk of reality.

#### Must read

A beautiful exposition on the essence of humanity and teaching. The insight concerning our unfinishedness is dynamic and productive. The power of acknowledging its significance in compelling our curiosity, pursuit of learning, and relations with others is essential for a democratic, educative process and project. The observation that teaching is a human endeavor that dwells in the richness of care for the other provides fertile ground for continuous reflection and reflexivity. If you desire to teach or have taught for years Freire will inspire and invigorate.

To those who are buying this for a class, this book is dense. I had to look up more than a few words in the dictionary. Also had to read a bit of it out loud to get it. It is translated into English, and that causes some of the words to be reused, or repeated. "Epistemological Curiosity". Look it up, as you will need to know what it means. (I am just preparing you for what is ahead.)With that said, Freire's views are worth reading and understanding. Brilliant and relevant to today's society.

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