

## ARTICOLI

## Honouring the stories of losers: using cinema to show students the dark side of neoliberalism

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**Abstract.** Teaching work pedagogy should mean giving university students the competences to assess the quality of the choices already made in the training of young people for work, and to design and implement training paths that are more and more capable of contributing to the building of a democratic and equal society. This sentence has its roots in almost three theories: Van Manen's concept of pedagogy as a set of reflections to assess the quality of past educational experiences and to better plan new ones; Pratt's perspective of education as a form of social reform, and Adorno's concept of democracy as the only social project in which men and women can become human. The chosen of these theoretical perspectives are convenient to the critical pedagogy approach, which highlights the reflections of this contribution that aims to present a didactic experience in a university class of work pedagogy realised by the means of a film. "Daniel Black" by Ken Loach was chosen as the film best able to honour the losers of our neo-liberal society and, in the meantime, make students aware of their limits and strengths in conceiving the complexity of the market logic.

**Keywords.** Work pedagogy - critical pedagogy - cinema - neoliberalism - welfare privatization

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### 1. Introduction

Teaching work pedagogy should mean giving university students the competences to assess the quality of the choices already made in the work training while designing and implementing new training paths able to the building a more equal work market<sup>1</sup>. The

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<sup>1</sup> This sentence has its roots in almost three theories: Van Manen's concept of pedagogy as a set of reflections to assess the quality of past educational experiences and to better plan new ones (see: Van Manen, M., *Pedagogical tact: Knowing what to do when you don't know what to do*. Routledge, New York-London), Pratt's perspective of education as a form of social reform (see: Pratt, D. D., & Collins, J. B., *The Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI)*. "Adult Education Research Conference", 2000. [https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2000/papers/68test=">https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2000/papers/68test=">theme.id eq '2020'](https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2000/papers/68test=) (last access 02/08/2024), and Adorno's concept of democracy as the only social project in which men and women can become human (see (see Adorno, T., *La crisi dell'individuo*, Diabasis, Parma, 2010).

neo-liberal concept of the economy and the market, which has spread throughout the world since the end of Fordism, which can be dated back to the 1970s, has been characterised by the constant innovation, from a scientific and technological point of view, of the means of production in order to produce more and more personalised goods, which can gain an added value thanks to the cultural background of the new educated consumers. This new form of production has two different consequences: firstly, an increasing economic polarisation between multi-skilled and unskilled workers and, together, a decline in national or industrial collective bargaining. In a world in which labour flexibility has been presented as the natural way for industries to compensate for the fluctuations of the market<sup>2</sup>, many workers are exposed to unemployment. However, if the most skilled workers can quickly find another job thanks to their educational qualifications, the unskilled workers with few qualifications on their back or the older workers are often unable to reintegrate themselves and are exposed to poverty because of the contemporary increasing privatisation of all the welfare services, from the health care services, to the social insurances. The logic of competition and the spread of individualism leave those who leave the market on the margin, while the others go on with their lives, trying not to see or remember what has happened to some of their peers<sup>3</sup>.

According to Baldacci, in the last thirty years the Italian school has changed its pedagogical formula in order to respond to political demands, becoming both a human capital factory (to provide future workers with the competences useful for the labour market) and a training ground of social competition<sup>4</sup> (in a sort of reminiscence of the social Darwinism)<sup>5</sup>. As for the school, also for the university these considerations can be made<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, schools and universities themselves, now conceived as autonomous enterprises, compete within a training market<sup>7</sup>.

The critical approach to the pedagogy of work states that schools and universities shouldn't prepare workers capable of punctuality, adaptability and obedience to authority but persons by promoting the development of personal characters and dispositions, which in turn are the conditions for choosing a profession and maintaining professional motivation over time<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, training workers and training industrial leaders should not differ if the focus is to build persons and democratic citizens, as Gramsci stated<sup>9</sup>, because democracy is the condition of everything, including work and good market.

Italian university students, especially those from the rich north of Italy, often don't acquire in their previous studies the means to understand the complexity of our society:

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<sup>2</sup> S. Clarke, *New utopias for old: Fordist dreams and post-Fordist fantasies*, in "Capital & Class", 199014(3), 131-155.

<sup>3</sup> J. B. Mijs Jonathan, *The unfulfillable promise of meritocracy: Three lessons and their implications for justice in education*, in "Social Justice Research", 2016, 29, pp.14-34.

<sup>4</sup> M. Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio. Mercato o democrazia? Vol. 1.*, FrancoAngeli, Milano, 2019, p. 155.

<sup>5</sup> L. A. Rudman, L. H. Saud, *Justifying social inequalities: The role of social Darwinism*, in "Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin", 2020, 46 (7), pp. 1139-1155.

<sup>6</sup> Bobbo, N., *Between Academia and Work, the Chance of a new project for a human society*, in *Proceeding Acts of the "Learning, Life, Work - San Francisco Conference*, San Francisco, June, 10-12 2024, in press..

<sup>7</sup> M. Baldacci, *La scuola al bivio*, cit., p. 155.

<sup>8</sup> H. Giroux, *Preface*, in I. R. Simon, D. Dippo, A. Schenke (eds.), *Learning work: A critical pedagogy of work education*, in "The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education", Toronto, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> A. Gramsci, F. Rosengarten, *Letters from prison*, (Vol. 2), Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, pp. 162-182.

for this reason it can happen to hear someone of them talking about the excellence of Made in Italy (ignoring that most of the fashion production is delocalised in the East and Far East of the world), as well as thinking that the flexibility of the labour contracts could be an opportunity for the growth of young people. Coming from a rich or middle-class background, they often don't know what poverty is. Born in Italy, where a public health system is still available to all, they don't know what it means not to have access to health care. Living in safe houses, they don't know what it means to live on the street. Buying anything online and searching for the lower price, they fall in the trap of the "terrific deal"<sup>10</sup> not understanding that the best price for them means an exploitation of someone else. For these reasons, it can be no easy to let them understand the real consequences of an economic system that can butcher the lives of those who fail to stay afloat in this arena of competition. Nevertheless, having to teach pedagogy of work in a bachelor's degree course of future work trainers, it seemed to be necessary to give students the chance to understand the dark side of the neoliberal economy and to learn to honour the stories of who in this system lose. To do that, a vicarious experience, through cinema, was used.

## 2. Cinema and pedagogy

The link between pedagogy and cinema is very old, but still very strong. Films, series and short videos are often used by teachers to help students gain knowledge that cannot be gained in any other way: subjects such as affective relationships, but also complex biochemical dynamics, are well suited to being understood through video exemplifications. Frequently used even in medical education, film and video are also useful to let students learn about the human body functions, as well as the better attitude to have with patients. Besides the simple means of learning contents or habits, film and video can give students also the opportunity to live a vicarious experience<sup>11</sup>. A vicarious experience, according to Bandura<sup>12</sup>, allows people to learn about the world, and above all about themselves, by seeing another person facing a problem or a challenging situation: the act of observing the vicissitudes of others becomes for everyone an indirect way of understanding what they might do in the same situation as the other person is in. So, beyond hard skills, video can become the tool by which students learn something about the complexity of the world and, at the same time, of their inner world, the meaning of life and the human condition. Human experience is a form of narrative and human agency is teleological, not casual, for these reasons we can find ourselves in the narrations produced by others who dare to propose their own vision of reality<sup>13</sup>. Moreover,

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<sup>10</sup> W. M. Sullivan, *Vocation: where liberal and professional educations meet*, in "Paper at the fourth annual conversation on the liberal arts", (2004), last accessed July 22, 2024. [https://scholar.archive.org/work/fabhp-k7g5jh3fnjs6s5kvpzale/access/wayback/http://www.westmont.edu:80/institute/conversations/2004\\_program/pdfs/Sullivan.pdf](https://scholar.archive.org/work/fabhp-k7g5jh3fnjs6s5kvpzale/access/wayback/http://www.westmont.edu:80/institute/conversations/2004_program/pdfs/Sullivan.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> S. H. Abidi, S. Madhani, A. Pasha, S. Ali, *Use of cinematic films as a teaching/learning tool for adult education*, in "Canadian journal for the study of adult education", 2017, 29 (1), pp. 37-48.

<sup>12</sup> A. Bandura, N. E. Adam N. E., J. Beyer, *Cognitive processes mediating behavioural change*, in "Journal of personality and social psychology", 1977, 35(3), p. 125.

<sup>13</sup> D. Carr., *Moral education at the movies: on the cinematic treatment of morally significant story and narrative*, in "Journal of Moral Education", 2006, 35(3), pp. 319-333.

cinema is a metaphor of our life, with all its contradictions<sup>14</sup>, and young people can see what is happening in other countries, or has happened in other times in the past, or even what might happen in the future<sup>15</sup>: film, often, represents a time-space of possibilities, of fantasy as well as of provocation about the way we live our life<sup>16</sup>.

Young people who too often think that cinema is just a way of entertaining and distracting them from the unpleasant things in life<sup>17</sup>, but who see video communication as a privileged way of communicating<sup>18</sup>, can have a very dissonant experience when they see a film that does not entertain them, but rather makes them think about the injustice of our society. This kind of experience, being the perception of images an active process and being cinema a very complex experience from a sensorial perspective, stimulates connection of the rational and emotional channels<sup>19</sup>. The vision of a dramatic film can force one's emotions while living a vicarious experience by trying to understand what would happen to the spectator if he/she were to experience the same events as the protagonist<sup>20</sup>. The logical rationality is maximising with the affective elements, triggering an empathic connection that the observer can't avoid<sup>21</sup>. But when the vicarious experience is too difficult for the viewer, and the tragic events the protagonist is facing are too harsh, the viewer must accept the silence and try to explore the unspeakable<sup>22</sup>.

So, some films are able not only to let people to explore their inner world, but also the human condition itself. They can make explicit some cultural structures and symbolic meanings that are always latent in our hurried existences, raising in this way some questions of sense about life<sup>23</sup>. According to Baranova and Duoblienè, "The inscription of one's own life story in a mimetic plot – for example, provided by a film – leads to the question of what the place of identity is: bound to a solid origin or challenged by the fluidity of an increasingly absence. This question requires mimetic imagination that leads to a catharsis"<sup>24</sup>. Catharsis is the name given by the ancient Greeks to a rite of purification, but in recent psychology it can mean the cleansing of the soul from the anguish

<sup>14</sup> C. Schumann, T. Strand, *Cinema, Philosophy and Education*, in "Studies in Philosophy and Education", 2021, 40(5), pp. 453-459.

<sup>15</sup> A. Poli, *Cinema and digital technology as resources of teaching and learning*. in "ECQI 2018 Proceedings. Nomadic Inquiry", NQRL, 2018, pp. 311-317.

<sup>16</sup> A. Agosti, *I cinema per la formazione dell'operatore socio-educativo*, in P. Malavasi, S. Polenghi, P. C. (eds.), *Cinema, pratiche formative, educazione*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2005, p. 132.

<sup>17</sup> M. T. Soto-Sanfiel, I. Villegas-Simón, A. Angulo-Brunet, *Youngsters and cinema in the European Union: A cross-cultural study on their conceptions and knowledge about cinema*, in "International Communication Gazette", 2018, 80(8), pp. 714-745.

<sup>18</sup> P. G. Blasco, G. Moreto, M. G. Blasco, M. R. Levites, M. A. Janaudis, *Education through Movies: Improving teaching skills and fostering reflection among students and teachers*, in "Journal for Learning through the Arts", 2015, 11(1).

<sup>19</sup> M. Knight, M. Mather, *Reconciling findings of emotion-induced memory enhancement and impairment of preceding items*, in "Emotion", 2009, 9(6), p. 763.

<sup>20</sup> A. Khusumadewi, Y. T. Juliantika, *The effectiveness of cinema therapy to improve student empathy*, in "2nd International Conference on Education Innovation" (ICEI 2018), Atlantis Press, 2018, pp. 566-569.

<sup>21</sup> C. B. Jara, *Cinema and Education: a history of the discourses in favor of cinematography in schools*, in "Educação & Realidade", 2023, 48, e121475.

<sup>22</sup> J. Baranova, L. Duoblienè, *Multimodal Education: Philosophy and Practice*, in "Council for Research in Values and Philosophy", 2021.

<sup>23</sup> P. Malavasi, S. Polenghi, P. C. Rivoltella, *Introduzione*, in P. Malavasi, S. Polenghi, P. C. Rivoltella, (eds), *Cinema, pratiche formative, educazione*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2005, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup> J. Baranova, L. Duoblienè, (2021) *Multimodal Education: Philosophy and Practice*, cit.

caused by the vacuum of our lives. So, some films can give young people the opportunity to read the text (the plot of the film) and to read the context (the social environment in which the film is set), while trying to understand their identity and their role in all this. In this way, young people can reach a better awareness of the complexity of human life and at the same time trying to build their intentionality in that complexity<sup>25</sup>.

Nevertheless, the students need to be guided by the teachers, because the rapid flow of film sequences, which stimulate many emotions, exposes them to an irrational flow<sup>26</sup>. For this reason, the teacher must plan the cinema experience carefully and provide some tools to help students at the end of the projection to reflect on what they have seen<sup>27</sup>. Illustrating, reviewing and orienting the attention of students on the film fragments or scenes that are very meaningful, is another way to help students to capture the deep sense of the film<sup>28</sup>.

Cinema is an art, a vibrant art according to Baranova and Duobliene<sup>29</sup>, that are able to affect people personally, letting them understand the caducity and vulnerability of human conditions, as well as its strongness and ability in facing the injustice of our world, becoming in this way a tool to teach active citizenship<sup>30</sup>. So, according to Stocchetti<sup>31</sup>, film can become an educational opportunity if it is seen together with others (and not alone in a sofa of our house), and if at the end of projection people can discuss about what they have seen, interpreting and sharing the different meaning each of them have perceive or understand, with a critical attitude which let people became active citizens and not passive viewers.

### 3. The didactic experience at the course of Pedagogy of Work: the story of Daniel Black

According to Bourdieu and Grass, “the power of the dominant order is not only economic, but also intellectual, and lies in the realm of beliefs”<sup>32</sup>. If the two authors are right, it is through changing beliefs that real change in our social inequalities can be achieved. In order to make the students of a course in pedagogy of work understand the complexity of the neoliberal market and the consequences lived by those who are exploited and excluded (even just because they fall ill or have not correctly followed all the rules of the social system), a film seemed the best way to catch their attention and to penetrate their common-sense security, that is Ken Loach’s “Daniel Black”, Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016.

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<sup>25</sup> P. Malavasi, *Interpretare il testo filmico tra fascinazione e riflessione pedagogica*, in P. Malavasi, S. Polenghi, P. C. Rivoltella, (eds), *Cinema, pratiche formative, educazione*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano, 2005, p. 60; J. Baranova, L. Duobliene, *Multimodal Education: Philosophy and Practice*, cit.; M. L. Powell, R. A. Newgent, S. M. Lee, *Group cinematography: Using metaphor to enhance adolescent self-esteem*, in “The arts in psychotherapy”, 2006, 33(3), pp. 247-253.

<sup>26</sup> P. Malavasi, *Interpretare il testo filmico tra fascinazione e riflessione pedagogica*, (cit.), p. 57.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 59.

<sup>28</sup> C. B. Jara, *Cinema and Education: a history of the discourses in favor of cinematography in schools*, cit.

<sup>29</sup> J. Baranova, L. Duobliene, *Multimodal Education: Philosophy and Practice*, cit.

<sup>30</sup> P. Malavasi, S. Polenghi, P. C. Rivoltella, *Introduzione*, cit., p. 13.

<sup>31</sup> M. Stocchetti, *Critical Pedagogies & Film Education*, in “Neoliberal Times: Notes for Educators who Haven’t Given Up” in “Critical Pedagogies in Neoliberal Times/Cinema Journal Teaching Dossier”, 2015, 3(2).

<sup>32</sup> G. Grass, P. Bourdieu, *The Progressive Restoration*, in “New Left Review”, 2002, 14, p. 63.

Daniel Black is a widowed 59-year-old carpenter who has suffered a heart attack. While waiting for his doctors' permission to return to work, he tries to claim unemployment or assistance benefit, but the complexities of a privatised social security system, where all paperwork must be done digitally, leave him without an income. It is only during one of his futile visits to the insurance office that he meets Katie and her two sons: Daisy (7) and Dylan (5). Katie is trying to claim unemployment benefit because she has been forced to leave London for the smaller town where Daniel lives. Katie left high school after becoming mother at a very young age. Now she is lonely with two children, no job and little chance of being employed anywhere without any qualifications. At the end of the film, while Katie finds only a way to feed her children (she prostitutes herself), Daniel dies of another heart attack few minutes before he has the chance to defend his rights in the Court of Appeal. The film shows the harshness of the situation of the main characters, describing very well the feeling of powerlessness lived by Daniel who can't have access to his rights, Katie's hunger as she fasts to give what little she has to her children and her suffering in choosing the only way was offered to her to take money, as well as the rigidity and indifference with which the insurance officials manage the relationship with those they seem to perceive as numbers in a paperwork, instead of persons.

The vision of the film was followed by a workshop in which the students worked in groups sharing the contents emerging from their work on the Mural platform. A number of schedules were drawn up before on a Mural dedicated page to guide the students' reflections and conclusions. Each schedule asked the students to reflect on three main themes: 1) aspects of professional interest as future employment officers and work trainers; 2) points of contact or distance between the content of the film and issues/theories covered in the course; 3) the take-away message of the film. For each topic, students were guided to make an initial brainstorming within the group, to extract some key points from the brainstorming and to make some inferences. At the end, the students were asked to write a conclusion of their logical path.

#### **4. Results and discussion of the cinema didactic experience**

For each topic, students write on Mural page their reflections, inferences and conclusions. The text material was collected and transcribed. The paper and pencil method was used to analyse the text in order to understand the content written by the participants in relation to three tasks given considering: a) the content of the students' reflections; b) the types of emotional reactions that the vision of this film evoked in them; c) the level at which they were able to manage and understand the complexity of the reality presented by the film.

The students' reflections focused on the need for a less rigid bureaucratic approach to vulnerable situations as those which happened to Daniel or Katie, and some support for older workers who are unable to manage digital services and devices; at the same time, they hypothesized that insurance offices need to be better trained to deal with people, not numbers. They highlighted the harshness of officials, which they attributed to a lack of empathy. This issue, that they underlined while reflecting on the professional points of interest, returns also when they have to deal with the points of contact between the film and the didactic course, thanks to some lectures about the emotional work that

were presented<sup>33</sup>. They also stressed the incoherence of a democratic state that allows people like Daniel or Katie to be rejected by the insurance system that the state itself delegates and pays for, recalling the words of Martha Nussbaum<sup>34</sup> and our Constitutional chart, others topic of the course.

The emotions evoked by the film and written by the students on the Mural, range from disappointment to fear, from anger to sadness. The students' expressions and their silence at the end of the film vision give to teacher a clear idea of the disorientation and the sense of uncertainty they were experiencing at that moment. They make silence because they were trying to find some words that could explain to them before than another, what they were perceiving<sup>35</sup>. Besides, it was as if they had seen something they didn't know or couldn't imagine could exist<sup>36</sup>. The vicarious experience they were exposed to was almost shocking to them: hunger, poverty, prostitution as a way of feeding one's children were issues they hadn't thought of in their daily lives and which the film made very real through the talent of the actors and the masterful direction of Ken Loach. But, contrary to what underlined Agosti<sup>37</sup>, the provocation inscribed in the movie succeed only to make them angry or sad: they couldn't think about what they could have done if they were Daniel or Katie, because they were overwhelmed by negative emotions.

Moreover, contrary to what was suggested by Jara<sup>38</sup>, the depth of emotion that the film evoked made students unable to go beyond a descriptive analysis of what they had seen and to grasp its complexity. Only one group managed to write that the film made it clear that there is no single solution to some complicated problems. What the students failed to grasp was that the rigidity of the insurance officers was not just due to a lack of empathy in their characters, but to a more real need to process as much paperwork as possible in as little time as possible, because in a privatised welfare system, any paperwork is money. So, it was necessary for the teacher to make them understand that what they had experienced as unpleasant characteristics of a person was instead the true reality of workers who had to deal with a system that had caught up with them and often threatened to crush them too. The real question they should have asked to themselves was not why those employees were so badly trained to manage people, but why those employees had agreed to work in that service, because even if they had been replaced by someone else, he or she would probably have behaved in the same way, with the rules of engagement of that privatised service unaffected. The logic of keeping one's job, even if it means compromising one's principles, has perhaps not yet shaken the naive enthusiasm of these young people, unlike that of many adults<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> As Giroux stated: "film offers students an opportunity to connect the theoretical discourses we engage in classes to a range of social issues represented through the lens of Cinema", H. A. Giroux, *Breaking into the movies: Pedagogy and the politics of film*, in "JAC", 2001, pp. 583-598. Regarding the Emotional labour see: A. R. Hochschild, *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*, University of California Press, 2019.

<sup>34</sup> M. C. Nussbaum, *Creating capabilities: The human development approach*, Harvard University Press, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> J. Baranova, L. Duoblienè, *Multimodal Education: Philosophy and Practice*, cit.

<sup>36</sup> A. Poli, *Cinema and digital technology as resources of teaching and learning*, cit.

<sup>37</sup> A. Agosti, *I cinema per la formazione dell'operatore socio-educativo*, cit., p.136.

<sup>38</sup> C. B. Jara, *Cinema and Education: a history of the discourses in favor of cinematography in schools*, cit.

<sup>39</sup> Al. Gini, *Work, identity and self: How we are formed by the work we do*, in "Journal of business ethics", 1998, 17(7), pp. 707-714.

Another sign of their inability to make complex and daring, i.e. critical, common-sense challenging reflections, is related to their certainty about the fact that Katie, who was discovered by Daniel while she was prostituting herself and pitied by him, has given up this work. However, no scene in the film or any of the characters' words gave any idea of what Katie really decided to do, whether or not to continue prostituting herself. But the students were sure that the pity Daniel showed her was enough to make her change her mind. This is perhaps a sign of their lack of deductive reasoning, which is probably limited by common sense, which sees prostitution as a crime, a fault or a guilt to be ashamed of, not a way of surviving.

Another provocation that the film gave them was the fact that the State sometimes seemed to be, or become, an accomplice of the logic of the market, which was unacceptable to the boys and girls. Nevertheless, they understood that what they had seen happen in England could one day happen in Italy, and this, besides becoming a source of disorientation and anxiety for them, made them think about the fact that a better investment in training for work could change things. At the end of their conclusions, the students seemed to ask themselves if this was the world they wanted for their future, and since the answer was no, they tried to propose some strategies to change it. Perhaps this is the message they take away from the film, the will to do something, as the protagonists of tomorrow's work training, so that at least the most unfortunate people they will encounter will be treated humanely. Certainly, this was the first, albeit week-long, sign of their emerging critical attitude, since they weren't resigned to the status quo; moreover, as some authors have noted<sup>40</sup>, it could be the sign of a growing sense of citizenship, since they were trying to understand how they could contribute in all this complexity, conceiving new ideas for their growth<sup>41</sup>.

## 5. Conclusions

The film succeeded in touching certain emotional chords that a lecture can never touch, and in confronting the students with the reality of the facts, forced them to look beyond their own backyard. This journey was for them very difficult, because of the unknown it made knowable and the unspeakable it made evident. So, they found difficult to comprehend such an intricate complexity: while they could easily empathise with the protagonists, they were very quick to judge the rigidity of the staff, without asking themselves which is the reason for this rigidity. What they did not seem to understand was that both the protagonists and the agents were victims of a system that crushes those who do not play by the rules of a business that must constantly make money. Their proposals to be future better officers in the employment services demonstrated their critical attitude towards the status quo, but it is not easy to understand if their enthusiastic will can be enough to let Daniel and Katie, or who for them, not be managed as a number of a paperwork.

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<sup>40</sup> Malavasi P., *Interpretare il testo filmico*, cit., p. 60.

<sup>41</sup> M. L. Powell, R. A. Newgent, S. M. Lee, *Group cinematherapy: Using metaphor to enhance adolescent self-esteem*, cit.



Educational experiences such as the one presented can be a means of stimulating in students a greater awareness of the complexity of reality, but, as many already cited authors pointed out<sup>42</sup>, they need to be accompanied and guided by a teacher who can help them to be something more than observers of our world of inequalities, in order to search for new opportunities for themselves and for the others who have less opportunities behind them. Only in this way, these future employment officers, these human resource managers, will really be able to be, as Giroux says<sup>43</sup>, critical and transformative agents in a society which, according to Gini<sup>44</sup>, still sees work and business only as a way of making money and not of building people.

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<sup>42</sup> See the cited papers by the authors Malavasi, Jara, Agosti, Stocchetti, etc.

<sup>43</sup> H. A. Giroux, *On Critical Pedagogy*, Bloomsbury USA Academy, London, 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Al. Gini, *Work, identity and self: How we are formed by the work we do*, cit.

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