

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY

SOCIOLOGY 104

Fall 2008

Friday 9:00am-11:40am

CLS 3105

Instructors:

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PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This course analyzes education as a key social institution that both influences and is influenced by the larger society. Utilizing a sociological perspective, you will be introduced to a wide array of topics and case studies that elaborate on the embeddedness of classrooms and schools in social contexts. This course will span a variety of school-related processes, such as moral and technical socialization, curricular differentiation, identity formation, social and economic reproduction, and educational reform. Particular attention is paid to questions about the widespread societal interest in schools. For example, what goals are schools meant to achieve? In what ways do these goals present contradictions that play out in schools' everyday affairs? These questions emerge as central considerations for schools officials, community members, political leaders, and social analysts. By unpacking these different perspectives, this course will seek to lay the foundation for a critical understanding of the ways in which schools operate as dynamic social and political institutions.

STUDENT COMPETENCIES LEARNED IN THE COURSE

- * Read and write at a college level.
- * Demonstrate critical, conceptual thinking.
- * Discern and identify distinct concepts and theoretical perspectives in the Sociology of Education.
- * Assess and apply theoretical frameworks to diverse social realities.
- * Develop your personal beliefs and critical understandings about the nature of schools and schooling.
- * Develop and exercise your personal voice through an enriched understanding of the politics of educational reform.
- * Develop an understanding of educational inequality and begin to imagine yourself as an agent of social change!

GRADING, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXPECTATIONS

* Attendance and Participation	15%
* Reflection Pieces (15% each)	30%
* Blackboard Discussions	15%
* Midterm Exam	15%
* Final Exam	25 %
	= 100%

1. Attendance and Participation (15%)

Fifteen percent of your grade will reflect overall class attendance and participation. These points will be based on attendance, involvement in class by raising questions and issues, listening and responding respectfully to others, and participating in group work. Excellent class attendance and participation means not missing class without notice, being on time and staying for the full time, and being actively engaged in the class.

One of the best ways to learn something is to hang out with people who already know how to do what you need or want to learn. They can be role models and give you feedback. You can benefit from observing and working with others who are also learning. They, too, can be role models and provide support. To be prepared for the

class you should do the assigned reading and assignments prior to the class, understand the major themes in the reading and/or ask questions related to your lack of understanding, raise questions and issues for discussion, and share materials with others in the class.

2. Reflection Pieces (30%)

The work you read and discuss in this course, will, we believe, cause you to rethink some of your own schooling experiences. After Week 4 (September 19), you will write a short (3-5 page) reflection piece on a single event or issue in your own educational background. You will write a very brief description of the event or issue and then choose 2-3 authors from those whose work you have read to this point in the course and use them to help you reflect on and analyze that experience. This paper will be due on Friday, September 26 (Week 5).

Final Reflection Piece handed out November 21 (Week 13), due December 5 (Week 15).

3. Blackboard Discussions (15%)

In order to encourage discussion of the reading, we will post questions on Blackboard prior to each class meeting. You will have until Wednesday at 10pm to post an initial response to these questions. Your initial response must range from 150-250 words. You will then have until Thursday at 10pm to post follow-up responses to your classmates' initial responses. These follow-up responses must be no more than 100 words. In each Friday's class, we will draw on your postings to prompt discussion.

Your participation in these online discussions will count for 15% of your grade. Points will be based on clarity, level of engagement with the reading, and the maturity demonstrated in your responses to your classmates' ideas.

Because of the size of the class, we will break you up into two separate groups for the blackboard discussions.

3. Midterm Exam – October 17 (15%)

The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions geared toward your understanding of the authors' main points.

4. Final Exam – December 12 (25%)

The final exam will consist of short answer and essay questions that cover *all* course readings, discussions, and lectures.

Course Schedule

*Note on readings:

All readings are available on the Blackboard site for this course. Please contact the instructors if you have any problem accessing these readings. Students are expected to complete ALL required readings for this course.

Week 1 (August 29) – Introduction and Course Overview

Week 2 (September 5) - Looking at U.S. Schools

Required Readings:

Ortner, Sherry B. 2006[2003]. "American High Schools," in *New Jersey Dreaming: Capital, Culture, and the Class of '58*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (pp. 90-109).

Dewey, John. 1916. "The Democratic Conception in Education," in *Democracy and Education*. NY: Free Press. (pp. 95-116).

Optional Readings:

Olsen, L. 1997. "Introduction," in *Made in America*. NY: New Press. (pp. 9-28); Anyon, J. 1980. "Social class and the hidden curriculum of work." *Journal of Education*, Vol. 162. (pp. 67-92). Lightfoot, S. 2000. "Highland Park High School: Hierarchies, Ambition, and Stress," in *The Good High School*. NY: Basic Books. (pp. 121-149). Michie, G. 1999. "Room to Learn," in *Holler if You Hear Me*. NY: Teachers College Press. (pp. 1-32).

Week 3 (September 12) - School and Society: The Aims of Education

Required Readings:

Hirsh, E. D. 1987. "Literacy and Cultural Literacy," in *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (pp. 1-32).

Bruner, Jerome. 1996. "The Complexity of Educational Aims," in *The Culture of Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (pp. 66-85).

Optional Readings:

Carnoy, Martin and Levin, Henry. 1993. "Contradictions in education," in Shapiro, H., and Purpel, D. (eds.) *Critical Social Issues in American Education*. NY: Longman. (pp. 5-29).

Week 4 (September 19) - Equality of Opportunity and American Schooling

***First Reflection Piece Assigned**

Required Readings:

Kozol, J. 2005. "From the Shame of the Nation," in *City Kids, City School: More Reports from the Front Row*. NY: The New Press. (pp. 145-161).

Books, Sue. 2008. "What Teachers Need to Know About Poverty," in *City Kids, City School: More Reports from the Front Row*. NY: The New Press. (pp. 184-193).

Lipman, Pauline. 2008. "Education and the New Urban Workforce in a Global City," in *City Kids, City School: More Reports from the Front Row*. NY: The New Press. (pp. 273-286).

Optional Readings:

Kozol, J. 1991. "Chapter 4," in *Savage Inequalities*. NY: Crown Publishers. (pp. 133-174); Delpit, L. 1995. "The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children," in *Other People's Children*. New York: The New Press. (pp. 21-48); Nieto, S. 1998. "Fact or fiction: Stories of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. schools." *Harvard Educational Review*. 68(2). (pp. 133-163).

Week 5 (September 26) – Cultural Difference: Assimilation, Alienation, and the Deficit Theory

***First Reflection Piece Due**

Required Readings:

Ogbu, J. 2000. "Understanding cultural diversity and learning," in Levinson, B. (ed.) *Schooling the Symbolic Animal*. NY: Rowman and Littlefield. (pp. 190-206).

Rodriguez, Richard. 1982. "Aria," in *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez*. New York: Bantam Books. (pp. 11-40).

Optional Readings:

Martin, Jane Roland. 1998. "Becoming Educated: A Journey of Alienation or Integration?" in Shapiro, H., and Purpel, D. (eds.) *Critical Social Issues in American Education*. (pp. 137-148); Badillo, Herman. 2006. "The Politics of Education," in *One Nation, One Standard: An Ex-Liberal on How Hispanics Can Succeed Just Like Other Immigrant Groups*. New York: Sentinel. (pp. 49-56); Tabachnick, B. and Bloch, M. 1995. "Learning in and out of school: Critical perspectives on the theory of cultural compatibility," in Swadner, B. and Lubeck, S. (eds.) *Children and Families at Promise*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press. (pp. 187-209).

Week 6 (October 3) – Pluralism, Multiculturalism, Critical Pedagogy – Week 1

Required:

Freire, Paulo. 2003[1970]. "Chapter 2," in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, reprinted in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. New York: Routledge. (pp. 57-68).

McClaren, Peter. 2003[1989]. "Critical Pedagogy: A Look at the Major Concepts," in *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education*, reprinted in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. New York: Routledge. (pp. 69-96).

Optional:

Sleeter, Christine and McLaren, P., eds. 1995. "Introduction: Exploring Connections to Build a Critical Multiculturalism," in *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Difference*. NY: SUNY Press. (pp. 5-32).

Week 7 (October 10) – Pluralism, Multiculturalism, Critical Pedagogy – Week 2

Required:

Ladson-Billings, Gloria. 1994. "Chapter 3: Seeing Color, Seeing Culture," in *Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (pp. 30-53)

Nieto, S. 2002. "Introduction," in *Language, Culture and Teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. (pp. 1-24).

Optional: Greene, Maxine. 1993. "The passions of pluralism: Multiculturalism and the expanding community," in Perry, T. and Fraser, J. *Freedom's Plow*. NY: Routledge. (pp. 185-196). Fine, M. Anand, B., Jordan, C. and Sherman, D. 2000. "Before the bleach gets us all," in M. Fine and L. Weiss, eds. *Construction Sites*. NY: Teachers College Press. (pp. 161-179); hooks, bell. 1989. "Keeping close to home: Class and education," in *Talking Back*, Boston, MA: South End Press. (pp. 73-83); Delpit, Lisa. 1995. "Skills and other dilemmas of a progressive black educator," in *Other People's Children*. New York: The New Press. (pp. 11-20)

Week 8 (October 17) – Midterm Exam

Week 9 (October 24) - School, Home, and Community

Required:

Heath, Shirley Brice. 2001[1982]. "What No Bedtime Story Means: Narrative Skills at Home and School," in Duranti, A., ed., *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. (pp. 318-342).

Deyhle, D. and Margonis, F. 1995. "Navajo mothers and daughters: Schools, jobs and the family." *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 26(2). (pp. 135-167).

Optional:

Lareau, A. 2000. "Interconnectedness Between Family and School: Prescott," in *Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Intervention in Elementary Education*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. (pp. 61-82). Varene, Hervé and Rac McDermott. 1998. "The Farrells and the Kinneys at Home: Literacies in Action," in *Successful Failure: The School America Builds*. Boulder: Westview Press. (pp. 45-62).

Week 10 (October 31) – Patterns of Identity in Schools

Required:

Fine, Michelle and Sara McClelland. 2006. "Sexuality Education and Desire: Still Missing after All These Years." *Harvard Educational Review*. 76(3): 297-338.

Olsen, L. 1997. "Chapter 2: The Maps of Madison High: On Separation and Invisibility" and "Chapter 5: To Find Your Race and Your Place: Race Tracks at Madison High," in *Made in America*. NY: New Press. (pp. 37-57, 58-89, and 106-120).

Optional:

Sadker and Sadker 1994. "Hidden Lessons," in *Failing at Fairness*. NY: Macmillan. (pp. 1-14); Epstein, D. and Johnson, R. 1998. "Chapter 5," in *Schooling Sexualities*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press; Ferguson, Ann Arnett. 2001. "School Rules," in *Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity*. Arbor: University of Michigan Press. (pp. 49-73).

Week 11 (November 7) - Working in Schools

Required:

Delpit, L. 2008. "Lessons from Teachers," in *City Kids, City School: More Reports from the Front Row*. NY: The New Press. (pp. 113-135).

Biklen, S. 1995. "Can Elementary Schoolteaching Be a Career?" in *School Work: Gender and the Cultural Construction of Teaching*. Teachers College Press. (pp. 22-46).

Optional:

Grant, G. and Murray, C. 1999. "Three Questions Every Teacher Must Answer," in *Teaching in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (pp. 57-75). Britzman, D. 1991. "Contradictory Realities in Learning to Teach," in *Practice Makes Practice*. Albany: State University of New York Press. (pp. 25-44); Metz, M. H. 1990. "How social class differences shape teachers' work," in McLaughlin et al. (eds.) *The Contexts of Teaching in Secondary School*. New York: Teachers College Press. (pp. 40-110); Lightfoot, S. 2000. "George Washington Carver High School: Charismatic Leadership: Building Bridges to a Wider World," in *The Good High School*. New York: Basic Books (pp. 29-55); Khayatt, M. 1992. "Consequences of Being a Lesbian at School," in *Lesbian Teachers: An Invisible*

Presence. Albany: SUNY Press. (pp. 203-226); Foster, M. 1993. "Resisting racism: Personal testimonies of African American teachers." in L. Weiss and M. Fine (eds.) *Beyond Silenced Voices*. Albany: SUNY Press. pp. 273-288; Smulyan, L. 2000. "Studying the Principalship," in *Balancing Acts*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. (pp. 9-38).

Week 12 (November 14) – School Choice

Required:

Meier, D. 1995. "Central Park East: An Alternative Story," in *The Power of Their Ideas*. Boston: Beacon Press. (pp. 15-45).

Lightfoot, S. 2000. "Chapter 5: St. Paul's School: Certainty, Privilege, and the Imprint of History," in *The Good High School*. New York: Basic Books. (pp. 221-245)

Optional:

Proweller, A. 1998. "Chapter 2: Inside Best Academy: Socialization in the Private Girls' School," in *Constructing Female Identities*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press. (pp. 17-60); Bryk, A. 1995. "Lessons from Catholic high schools on renewing our educational institutions," in Halliman, M. (ed.) *Restructuring Schools: Promising Practices and Policies*. New York: Plenum Press. (pp. 81-98); Cookson and Persell. 1985. "Privilege and the Importance of Elite Education," in *Preparing for Power: America's Elite Boarding Schools*. New York: Basic Books. (pp. 13-30).

Week 13 (November 21) – Fieldtrip to Pedro Albizu Campos High School

Class Meets at Puerto Rican Cultural Center, 2739-41 W. Division Street

***Final Reflection Piece Assigned**

Required:

Antrop-Gonzalez, R. (2003) "This School is My Sanctuary: The Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Alternative High School." *CENTRO: Journal of Center for Puerto Rican Studies*. 15(2): 233-255.

Week 14 (November 28) – Thanksgiving – No Class Meeting

Week 15 (December 5) – Reconstructing Schools and Classrooms

***Final Reflection Piece Due**

Required:

Dyson, Michael Eric. 2008. "Unnatural Disasters: Race and Poverty," in *City Kids, City School: More Reports from the Front Row*. NY: The New Press. (pp. 241-254).

Tough, Paul. 2008. "A Teachable Moment," from the New York Times, August 17, 2008.

Anyon, J. 2008. "Putting Education At the Center," in *City Kids, City School: More Reports from the Front Row*. NY: The New Press. (pp. 310-323).

Golhaber, Dan D. and Eide, Eric R. 2002. "What Do We Know (and Need to know) about the Impact of School Choice Reforms on Disadvantaged Students?" *Harvard Education Review*. 72:2: 1-20.

Optional:

Shor, Ira and Freire, Paulo. 2003[1986]. "What are the Fears and Risks of Transformation?" in *A Pedagogy for Liberation*, reprinted in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. New York: Routledge. (pp. 479-496); Sleeter, C. 1996 "Teaching Science for Social Justice," in *Multicultural Education as Social Activism*. Albany: SUNY Press. (pp. 181-197); Athanases, Steven. 1996. "A gay-themed lesson in an ethnic literature curriculum: Tenth graders' responses to 'Dear Anita.'" *Harvard Educational Review*. 66(2): 231-256; Ravitch, D. 1995. "Introduction" and "Chapter 1: The Idea of Standards," in *National Standards in American Education*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute. (pp. 1-32).

December 12 – Final Exam

HAVING TROUBLE? If you know you have difficulty with study habits, writing skills, or any other outside troubles that might affect your ability to do your best, then let us know. You may not be responsible for the situation you are in, but you are responsible for making an effort to let us know you need help or support. We will not share any information you give us with anyone else without your consent.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK LOOP: Student work will be assessed as to the extent to which it meets criteria standards. Results will be used to make changes in the course. As changes are made, further assessments will be done to determine the successfulness of these changes. In addition, students will be provided with feedback on their work, and given an opportunity to reflect on this feedback as a way to continue their own growth. The program also attempts to get feedback from students as they matriculate through the system and then as they are part of the professional field.

INCOMPLETES: University policy on incompletes states that all incompletes must be requested in writing by the student. The request must detail work not completed. If you require an incomplete, you must discuss this with your instructor as soon as possible. It is the instructor's option not to issue an incomplete. Please note that you have one semester to complete the work. If it is not completed within the next semester, a final grade of "F" will be filed for you by the instructor. Not having time to complete the course requirements is not a valid reason for an incomplete to be given. Failure to complete necessary work will result in your not earning points in that section and may result in a final grade of "F."