

16:300:501 PROSEMINAR IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Fall 2015
Tuesdays 4:50-7:30 pm
GSE Building Room 25B
Professor Tanja Sargent

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Office hours: By appointment

Course description

This course draws on the fields of anthropology, sociology, philosophy and history to ask some key questions about education. The course introduces central concepts in social theory and illustrates how these concepts can shape educational research. The course is organized around the following themes: What are the purposes of education? What is the relationship between social structure and agency? What is the relationship between individuals and social contexts in the learning process? How is education always interwoven with the production of identities? How do schools reflect particular types of cultural knowledge and practices? How are educational policies produced in broader sociopolitical contexts?

Learning goals

Students will:

- Become familiar with a range of approaches to educational research drawing on the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and history
- Begin to frame their own research interests in relation to broader theoretical concepts and frameworks
- Develop critical perspectives on the contexts, institutional structures, practices, and dominant assumptions of schooling that produce social inequalities
- Consider the ways that schools and classrooms can be re-imagined to support educational equity
- Develop their social science research, writing and presentation skills.

Readings and materials

Required texts for the course are as follows:

Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, race and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Levinson, B. (2011) *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Mehta, J. (2013). *The allure of order: High hopes, dashed expectations, and the troubled quest to remake American schooling*. Oxford University Press.

Rios, V. M. (2011). *Punished: Policing the lives of Black and Latino boys*. NYU Press.

All other required readings are available online through the library e-Reserves. See detailed listing of readings in the schedule below.

Recommended books for further reading:

Carter, P. L. & Welner, K. G. (2013). Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give every child an even chance.
Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. Teachers College Press.
Karabel, J. (2006). *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
Kozol, J. (2005). *The shame of the nation: The restoration of apartheid schooling in America*. Random House LLC.
Lipman, P. (2003). *High-stakes education: Inequality, globalization and urban school reform*. New York: Routledge, chapter .
MacLeod, J. (2009). *Ain't no makin'it: Aspirations and attainment in a low-income neighborhood*. Westview Press.
Olsen, L. (1997). *Made in America: Immigrant students in our public schools*. The New Press, 450 West 41st Street, New York, NY 10036.
Pascoe, C.J. (2007). *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Tatum, B. D. (2003). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?": And other conversations about race*. Basic Books.

Additional recommended articles listed below are available through the library eReserves.

Course website

You can access the course website by logging in with your netid at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/> . The website will be an integral part of the course and it is crucial that you become familiar with it as soon as the course begins. Please contact me immediately if you are having any difficulties. Important class announcements are posted regularly on the course website. Please be sure that you are receiving these. It is important to keep your email addresses in the Rutgers Online Directory up to date at all times. To review or update your email settings, please visit the “[Manage Email Addresses](#)” page. You will also be creating collaborative Google documents with your group members. Familiarize yourself with how to use Google Drive and Google Docs using [online user guides](#) if necessary.

Grading and Assignments

Your grade in the course will be based on participation in class and online, 8 reading journal entries, 3 book chapter summaries, 2 class presentations and 2 writing assignments. Grading rubrics for the reading journal entries, presentations and writing assignments will be available in the Sakai/Resources/Rubrics folder.

	% of Grade
Attendance and participation	5%
Reading journal	20%
Book summaries	5%
Presentation on social theory	5%
Final presentation	10%
Writing assignment #1	20%
Writing assignment #2 (Final Paper)	35%

Grades are assigned on the following scale:

93-100 A

83-87 B

73-78 C

88-92 B+

78-82 C+

Reading journal

Use your Sakai blog to keep your reading journal. 8 reading journal entries are required throughout the semester. Post your reading journal entries before the start of each class. I will grade your reading journal at the end of the course but will give you feedback on your first entry so that you know whether or not you are on the right track. Each journal entry should include the following:

- 1) Full citation of each of the readings (copy from syllabus).
- 2) Summary of the main ideas in the readings using the reading guides to focus your reading and writing.
- 3) Use your reading journals to prepare for class discussions and to work on ideas for your writing assignments and final paper. Feel free to embellish your journal entries after we have discussed the readings in class, with ideas gleaned from discussion with classmates, and with your reading of other classmates' journals. Reflect on how the readings apply to your own life experiences and to your developing scholarly interests.
- 4) Note down questions that the reading brings to mind for you and that you might like to raise for discussion in class.
- 5) Where possible, include links to news articles, videos, websites, files etc. that are relevant to the topic at hand.
- 6) Use the comment function in the Sakai blog to interact with each other around the readings. Comment on at least one other reading journal for each post. **Comments must be friendly, supportive and encouraging** so as to ensure that we keep the virtual space safe.

Writing Assignments

Your final paper for the course will be the application of a theoretical perspective to an educational issue relevant to your research interests. It will be submitted in two installments:

-Writing Assignment 1: Choose a social theory/theoretical perspective. Conduct a literature review to outline the dimensions of this theoretical perspective. This should be about 5 double spaced pages. Due in drop box October 20 at 9:00 am.

-Writing Assignment 2: Apply your chosen theoretical perspective to an educational issue that is relevant to your research interests. This should be from 10-15 double spaced pages. Due in drop box December 15 at 9:00 am.

Class presentations

There are two class presentations. On October 20 you will present your chosen theoretical perspective to the class. You will present your final paper during the last class on December 8.

Academic Integrity

Breaches of academic integrity are very serious and I do take action in the case of a violation. It is crucial that you familiarize yourself with the university policy on these issues which can be found online at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. You are responsible for knowing what is appropriate and what is not.

I Purposes of Education

September 1 Introduction

Mills, C. Wright. (1959/2000). *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press, chapter 1.

Levinson, B. (2011) *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, chapter 1.

September 8 NO CLASS *Begin your search for your chosen theoretical perspective.*

Levinson, B. (2011) *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Leonardo, Z. (2004). Critical social theory and transformative knowledge: The functions of criticism in quality education. *Educational Researcher*, 33(6), 11-18.

September 15 Educating citizens. *Reading journal 1 due.*

Durkheim, E. (2000). The nature of education. In B. Levinson (Ed.), *Schooling the symbolic animal: Social and cultural dimensions of education* (pp. 57-61). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gutmann, A. (1987/1999). *Democratic Education*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Labaree, D. F. (1997). Public good, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34(1): 39-81.

Banks, J. A. (2008). Diversity, group identity and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational Researcher* 37 (3), 129-139.

Select three brief excerpts from Dewey and prepare to share them in class along with your personal reflections.

[Dewey, J. \(2012\). *Democracy and Education*. Simon & Brown.](#) [Link to entire book online available in Sakai/Resources/Readings] (any 3 excerpts or your choice)

September 22 Education for domination, legitimation and control. *RJ2 due.*

- Lomawaima, K. T. & McCarty, T. L. (2006). To remain an Indian: Lessons from a century of Native American Education. (Chapters 1, 2, 7&8). New York: Teachers College Record.
- Karabel, J. (2006). *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. (Introduction, Chapters 1, 13)
- Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (2002). Schooling in capitalist America revisited. *Sociology of Education*, 1-18.

Write your chosen theoretical perspective under your name on the Sakai wiki “Chosen theoretical perspective” page and list 5 citations that you are going to use to understand this theoretical perspective more fully.

II Equality of educational opportunity

September 29 Conceptualizing difference in education. RJ3 due.

- Minow, M. (1990). Making all the difference: Inclusion, exclusion, and American Law. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, chapter 1 and 2 excerpts: p. 19-31, 50-53.
- Mehan, H. (2000). Beneath the skin and between the ears: A case study in the politics of representation. In B. Levinson et al. (Eds.), *Schooling the symbolic animal: Social and cultural dimensions of education* (259-279). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in US schools. *Educational Researcher*, 35(3), 3-12.
- McDermott, R., & Varenne, H. (1995). Culture as Disability. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 26(3), 324-348.

October 6 School processes. RJ4 due.

- Anyon, J. (1980). Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work. *Journal of Education*, 162, 67-92. [
- Oakes, J. (2000). The Distribution of Knowledge. (An excerpt from Keeping Track.) In R. Arum & I. Beattie (Eds.), *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Rubin, B. C. (2003). Unpacking detracking: When progressive pedagogy meets students’ social worlds. *American Educational Research Journal* 40 (2): 539-573
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Selected Chapters

Recommended:

- Collins, J. (2009). Social reproduction in classrooms and schools. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 38, 33-48.

October 13 Education reform. Mehta chapter summaries due in Google Doc.

Mehta, J. (2013). *The allure of order: High hopes, dashed expectations, and the troubled quest to remake American schooling*. Oxford University Press.

Recommended:

Weber, M. (1946/2000). The "Rationalization of Education and Training". In R. Arum & I. Beattie (Eds.), *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Find the Mehta Google Doc link in the Sakai wiki. The class will use this to create a collaborative summary of the book Mehta, J. (2013). *The allure of order: High hopes, dashed expectations, and the troubled quest to remake American schooling*. Oxford University Press.

1. Everyone should read Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 10. Work on editing the class notes on those chapters.
2. Sign up on the wiki for one additional chapter. Provide a summary of the main ideas of this chapter. Include one or two excerpts from the chapter along with your commentary.
3. Be sure to have access to the completed document during class.

October 20 Presentations on social theories. Writing Assignment 1 due in drop box 9:00 am.

Levinson, B. (2011) *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Leonardo, Z. (2004). Critical social theory and transformative knowledge: The functions of criticism in quality education. *Educational Researcher*, 33(6), 11-18.

Prepare to present on your research about a critical social theory to the class. Post the title of your presentation on the Sakai wiki by 9:00 am. Writing assignment 1 also due in drop box at 9:00 am.

III Power and identities

October 27 Learning identities and cultural production. RJ5 due.

Wortham, S. (2006). *Learning identity: The joint emergence of social identification and academic learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, chapters 1 and 5.

Demerath, P. (2009). *Producing success: The culture of personal advancement in an American high school*. University of Chicago Press, chapters 3 & 4.

Carter, P. (2003). Black Cultural Capital, Status Positioning, and Schooling Conflicts for Low-Income African American Youth. *Social Problems* 50 (1): 136-155.

Recommended:

Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69-91.

November 3 Cultural capital. *Lareau chapter summaries due in Google Doc.*

[Lareau, A.](#) (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, race and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Recommended:

Bourdieu, P. (2000). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In R. Arum & I. Beattie (Eds.), *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Find the Lareau Google Doc link in the Sakai wiki. The class will use this to create a collaborative summary of Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, race and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1. Everyone should read Chapter 1, 2 and relevant parts of chapter 13. Work on editing the class notes on those chapters.
2. Sign up on the wiki for one additional chapter which will be a profile of a student. For your write up on your selected chapter discuss how the profile of your student links to the main themes raised in chapters 1 and 2 regarding natural growth vs. concerted cultivation, language use in the home, and relationship with the school. Include one or two excerpts from the chapter as well as an anecdote that reflects one of the themes. Look in chapter 13 to see what happened to your student.
3. Be sure to have access to the completed document during class.

November 10 Power and punishment *Rios chapter summaries due in Google Docs.*

Rios, V. M. (2011). *Punished: Policing the lives of Black and Latino boys*. NYU Press.

[YouTube lecture in class] Alexander, M. (2012). *The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. The New Press

Recommended:

Giroux, H. (2015). Henry A. Giroux | Schools as Punishing Factories: The Handcuffing of Public Education. Truthout. Retrieved 24 August 2015, from <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/32238-schools-as-punishing-factories-the-handcuffing-of-public-education>

Metro-Roland, D. (2011). Knowledge, power and the care of the self: The many faces of Michel Foucault in Education Research. In B. A. U. Levinson (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, pp. 139-170). Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Ferguson, A. A. (2001). *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of Black masculinity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapters 1 & 3.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings*. (Chapter 6, pp. 109-133). New York: Pantheon Books

Find the Rios Google Doc link in the Sakai wiki. The class will use this to create a collaborative summary of the book, Rios, V. M. (2011). *Punished: Policing the lives of Black and Latino boys*. NYU Press.

1. Everyone should read the Preface, Chapter 1 and the Conclusion and work on editing the class notes on those chapters.
2. Sign up on the wiki for one additional chapter and be responsible for notes on that chapter. Your notes should include key conceptual points from the chapter, one or two brief excerpts from the book, and a summary of a story or anecdote from the chapter.
3. Be sure that you have access to the completed document during class.

November 17 Globalization and transnationalism. RJ6 due.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, chapter 1

Suárez-Orozco, M. M., Darbes, T., Dias, S. I., & Sutin, M. (2011). Migrations and Schooling. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 40, 311-328.

Abu El-Haj, T. R. (2007). "I was born here, but my home, it's not here": Educating for democratic citizenship in an era of transnational migration and global conflict. *Harvard Educational Review*, 77(3), 285-316.

November 24 Gender and sexuality. RJ7 due.

Pascoe, C.J. (2007). *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapters 1, 3 & 4.

Connell, R.W. (2002). *Gender*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, chapter 1.

Connell, R. (2000) *The Men and the Boys*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapter 9, pp. 148-176.

IV Critical pedagogy and transformative education

December 1 Promoting social justice in the classroom. RJ8 due.

Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New rev. 20th-Anniversary ed.). New York: Continuum.

Moll, L. C. (2010). Mobilizing Culture, Language, and Educational Practices Fulfilling the Promises of Mendez and Brown. *Educational Researcher*, 39(6), 451-460.

Yosso, T. J. (2002). Toward a critical race curriculum. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 35(2), 93-107.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.

Shrewsbury, C. M. (1993). What is feminist pedagogy? *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 8-16.

December 8 Final presentations

December 15 NO CLASS Final papers due 9:00am