

## 15:255:615:J1 SOCIAL CONTEXTS I: SOCIOCULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION

Summer July 25-August 11, 2016  
Mondays and Wednesdays 5:00-8:30 pm  
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Office hours: By appointment

### Course description

This course draws on readings in educational sociology and critical educational studies to explore the relationships between schools and society. In the class we investigate the sources of racial and ethnic stratification in academic achievement; cultural and social reproduction of educational inequality; the immigrant experience; student agency and identity; gender and sexuality; and the ways that schools both produce and resist social and cultural inequalities. This is a hybrid course consisting of both face-to-face seminars and asynchronous online assignments.

Students will:

- 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:

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

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

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.

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.

Suarez-Orozco, C., Suarez-Orozco, M., & Todorova, I. (2008). *Learning a New Land: Immigrant Students in American Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University 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 or course Sakai site.

**Course website and online component**

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, a reading journal and three writing assignments. Grading rubrics for the reading journal and writing assignments will be available in the Sakai/Resources/Rubrics folder.

		<b>% of Grade</b>
Attendance and participation		10%
Reading journal		20%
3 writing assignments		70%
Writing assignment #1	15%	
Writing assignment #2	15%	
Writing assignment #3	40%	

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. Post your reading blog 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. Your journal entry for each reading should include the following:

- 1) Full citation of the reading (copy from syllabus).

- 2) Summary of the main ideas in the reading using the guiding questions in the reading journal rubrics 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. Use the comment function in the Sakai blog to interact with each other around the readings. Comment at least three times on others' reading journal entries during the course of our three weeks together. **Comments must be friendly, supportive and encouraging** so as to ensure that we keep the virtual space safe.
- 4) Reflect on how the readings apply to your own life experiences and to your development as a scholarly practitioner.
- 5) Note down questions that the reading brings to mind for you and that you might like to raise for discussion in class.
- 6) Where possible, include links to news articles, videos, websites, files etc. that are relevant to the topic at hand.

### *Writing Assignments*

There are three writing assignments for the course. Each assignment should build on the previous assignment. The third assignment is your final paper and should integrate all three assignments into a seamless paper on the ways that schools both reproduce inequality and also work to foster social justice.

Writing assignment #1: What are the sources of inequality in educational outcomes? (3-4 double -paced pages)

Writing assignment #2: How do schools, universities, and the US education system contribute to the reproduction of social inequality? (6-8 double-spaced pages)

Writing assignment #3: What are the sources of educational inequality and how can schools and universities work to reduce inequality and foster social justice? Consider the implications of your argument for a specific educational context with which you are familiar. (9-12 double-spaced pages not including cover page and reference list)

### **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.

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## **WEEK 1** Dilemma of difference, power, stratification and inequality, Critical Race Theory

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<b>Monday July 25 FACE-TO-FACE</b>
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Guiding questions: How do attitudes towards difference shape educational policies and practices? What are the dimensions of educational inequality in America? How do we define and measure educational inequality? What dilemmas arise as we try to address educational inequality?

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.**

Warikoo, N., & Carter, P. (2009). Cultural explanations for racial and ethnic stratification in academic achievement: A call for a new and improved theory. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 366-394.

### **Recommended**

McDermott, R., & Varenne, H. (1995). Culture as Disability. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 26(3), 324-348.

Kao, G., & Thompson, J. (2003). Racial and Ethnic Stratification in Educational Achievement and Attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, (29), 417-442.

Buchmann, C., DiPrete, T., & McDaniel, A. (2008). Gender Inequalities in Education. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 319-337.

## **Tuesday, July 26 ONLINE**

Group assignment:

Using Google Docs, create a summary of the book, Rios, V. M. (2011). *Punished: Policing the lives of Black and Latino boys*. NYU Press.

1. All group members should read the Preface, Chapter 1 and the Conclusion and work on editing the group notes on those chapters.
2. Each group member will sign up on the Sakai 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 all have access to the completed document during class on Wednesday.

## **Wednesday, July 27 FACE-TO-FACE**

What are the systemic institutional sources of educational inequality? How can societal institutions be reimaged to create greater equality? How are schools and classrooms sites for the production of success and advantage, failure and disadvantage?

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

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in US schools. *Educational Researcher*, 35(3), 3-12.

Karabel, J. (2006). *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, Introduction and chapter 8.

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

### Recommended

- Reardon, S. F., & Owens, A. (2014). 60 Years after Brown: Trends and consequences of school segregation. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 199-218.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. Teachers College Press. (chapter 1 available in eReserves)
- Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New rev. 20th-Anniversary ed.). New York: Continuum, chapter 2.
- Stevens, M. L., Armstrong, E. A., & Arum, R. (2008). Sieve, incubator, temple, hub: Empirical and theoretical advances in the sociology of higher education. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 127-151.

**Thursday, July 28 ONLINE** Writing assignment #1 due Friday July 24 9:00 am

Writing assignment #1: What are the sources of inequality in educational outcomes? (3-4 double-spaced pages)

**WEEK 2** Cultural and social reproduction; social and cultural capital; immigration, culture and language; agency and identity; resistance theory.

**Monday, August 1 FACE-TO-FACE**

How do immigration experience, language and culture result in educational inequality? How does student racial and cultural identity affect educational experiences and outcomes?

Class preparation:

Portraits of immigrant students are available in Sakai/Resources. These portraits are excerpts from the book Suarez-Orozco, C., Suarez-Orozco, M., & Todorova, I. (2008). *Learning a New Land: Immigrant Students in American Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Sign up on the Sakai wiki for a portrait of an immigrant student and prepare to briefly share the story of this immigrant student in class. Be sure to cover the following aspects in your story of your immigrant student: why they came to the US, immigration experience, any family separation, networks of relationships in US (family, teachers, mentors, peers etc.), language issues, school experience and academic achievement.

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

- Zine, J. (2001). Muslim youth in Canadian schools: Education and the politics of religious identity. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 32(4), 399-423.
- 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.
- Carter, P. L. (2005). *Keepin' It Real: School Success Beyond Black and White*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 1.

### **Recommended**

- Suarez-Orozco, C., Suarez-Orozco, M., & Todorova, I. (2008). *Learning a New Land: Immigrant Students in American Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Olsen, L. (1997). *Made in America: Immigrant students in our public schools*. The New Press, 450 West 41st Street, New York, NY 10036.

## **Tuesday, August 2 ONLINE**

### Group assignment:

Using Google Docs, create a summary of the book, Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, race and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1. All group members should read Chapter 1, 2 and relevant parts of chapter 13. Work on editing the group notes on those chapters.
2. Each group member must sign up on the Sakai 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 on Wednesday.

## **Wednesday, August 3 FACE-TO-FACE**

How do differences in family background and home environment result in educational inequality? How are schools and classrooms sites for the production of success and advantage, failure and disadvantage?

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

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

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.

### **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.

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

MacLeod, J. (2009). *Ain't no makin'it: Aspirations and attainment in a low-income neighborhood*. Westview Press, chapter 2.

**Thursday, August 4 ONLINE** Writing assignment # 2 due 9:00 am Friday July 31<sup>st</sup> in Sakai drop box

Writing assignment #2: How do schools, universities and the US education system contribute to the reproduction of social inequality? (6-8 double spaced pages-- Continue to expand upon and edit your writing from week 1)

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**WEEK 3** Gender and sexuality, feminist theory, culturally relevant pedagogy

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**Monday, August 8 FACE-TO-FACE**

Guiding questions: What is the role of gender and sexual identity in the schooling and lives of young people? What role do gender and sexual identity play in educational inequality?

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.

[MOVIE in class] My Life in Pink (Ma Vie en Rose) (1997)

**Tuesday, August 9 ONLINE**

Work on final paper.

**Wednesday, August 10 FACE-TO-FACE**

Guiding questions: How can classrooms in schools and universities work to reduce inequality and foster social justice?

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

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

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

**Recommended**

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

**Thursday, August 11 ONLINE** Final paper due Friday August 7, 9:00 am in Sakai drop box

Writing assignment 3--Final Paper: What are the sources of educational inequality and how can schools and universities work to reduce inequality and foster social justice? Consider the implications of your argument for a specific educational context with which you are familiar. (9-12 double spaced pages not including cover page and reference list)