

ED 161: SOCIOLOGY OF THE SCHOOL

Department of Education
Tufts University
Fall 2014
Mondays, 4:30-7:15
106 East Hall

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Office Hours: Mondays, 2:30-3:30; Thursdays, 11-12; or by appointment

WELCOME

Schools are fascinating sites for social analysis because they're the meeting place of so many *institutions* (e.g. families, courts and the law, markets and the economy) and people (e.g. children and students, adults and school staff members, parents and guardians, young and old and from every background). In this course we'll examine how experiences of school are profoundly shaped by the location of schools at the crossroads of various institutions, and by broader social, cultural, economic, and ideological factors. In particular, we'll focus on how schools organize *power* by reflecting and reproducing inequalities along various lines of difference (race, class, gender, sexuality, age and development, time and space), or *identity*; and how schools can be sites of progressive change and for overcoming inequality. We'll cover enduring concerns in educational research (e.g. class inequality in schools) and topics that are becoming increasingly popular (e.g. food and health) and controversial (e.g. online higher education).

OBJECTIVES

To demonstrate an understanding of the foundations of education. What are the major structural, cultural, and ideological underpinnings of schooling in the United States? How have, and how do, these make schools sites of access and exclusion?

To develop a familiarity with critical theories of the foundations of education. How have various schools of thought attempted to explain these socio-cultural contexts of schooling? How do theories build on, confirm, or challenge older theories? Which theories help to shed light on your own current and past schooling experiences?

To think critically using range of formats. How can you develop an understanding of these theories and ideas in formal and informal writing, art, lesson plans, debates, and other platforms? How might these theories and ideas support a career as a research or an instructor?

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Do your best.

Ask questions. They're often more valuable than comments. Let me know if you're confused or something is unclear. You've heard it before, and it's true: there are no dumb questions. If you have a question, there's an excellent chance others in class have the same one, and they'll appreciate you for asking it.

Come ready to participate. In-class participation takes many forms, including asking questions, clarifying points, and completing written assignments. You need to complete all the required reading in order to participate meaningfully in class. We'll use a range of formats—texts, music, video, drama, games, and debates—to get our analytic juices flowing. Of course, in-class participation is impossible unless you attend. Please bring the readings to class.

Complete the assignments.

Be respectful. While you're encouraged to critique the materials and each other's ideas, always do so respectfully. Be mindful of the fact that your classmates and I represent an array of viewpoints and life experiences.

Be open to new and alternative ways of thinking. You should actively seek to adopt different ways of seeing education and the social world. How might these different approaches advance your understanding and knowledge, even if those approaches are unfamiliar or uncomfortable?

Be academically honest. Our course will abide strictly by the guidelines laid out in the Tufts Statement of Academic Integrity, available at:

- <http://ase.tufts.edu/biology/bgguide/classes/tahonesty.htm>

A comprehensive review of university policies is available at:

- <http://uss.tufts.edu/studentaffairs/publicationsandwebsites/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

This requires you to cite appropriately, understand what constitutes plagiarism, and consult me before submitting a paper in this class and another class. Possible violations of the policies outlined in the Statement of Academic Honesty will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Course reader. A course reader is available at Gnomon Copy Center at 348 Boston Avenue.

Books. There are three required books.

- Alexie, S. (2012). *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. New York: Little, Brown, and Co.
- Ferguson, A. (2001). *Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Lee, S. (2009.) *Unraveling the "Model Minority" Stereotype: Listening to Asian American Youth* (2nd Ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

ASSIGNMENTS

Class participation and attendance [20%]. Come to class prepared to ask questions, discuss the readings, and participate in class activities. As described above, there will many opportunities for you to participate and through a variety of formats. You'll be penalized 2/3 letter grade if you miss any class—excused or unexcused—but an excused absence that you notify me of *before* the class meets entitles you to a short make-up assignment. You'll also be penalized if you repeatedly show up late. Whenever possible, please let me know before class if you'll be late or absent.

Discussion presentation and facilitation [15% each]. Details to follow. With a partner, you'll give a comprehensive presentation on the day's readings and help to lead discussion that day. I'll share examples of past presentations.

Short Paper [20%]. A 5 pp. paper due on Monday, October 13.

Long Paper [40%] A 10 pp. paper that uses insights from course material to analyze a topic of your choice related to the foundations of schooling. Due electronically on the last day of class, Monday, December 8.

CONTACTING FREEDEN

You can email me at Freeden.Oeur@tufts.edu. So your email doesn't get lost, make sure to include a subject in the subject line and the course number (Ed 161).

ELECTRONICS

While you're free to use your laptop if you prefer to type up your class notes, I expect that you will not use class time to browse the internet (unless you're doing so for class purposes). Electronics can distract everyone. As for phones, unless you tell me before class that there's an emergency and you need to respond to an incoming call, please do not have them out during class.

RESOURCES

Trunk. This will have everything pertinent to the course including announcements and course materials.

- <https://trunk.tufts.edu/xsl-portal>

Office Hours. Students who make use of office hours tend to do better in class. Feel free to stop by with a classmate. The time will be more productive if you come prepared with specific concerns and questions.

Writing. Check out Purdue University's excellent Online Writing Lab (OWL), available at:

- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

It has a great overview of APA formatting, which you should use for all papers in this class. You should also take advantage of the writing tutoring available through the Academic Resource Center:

- <http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingtutoring>

Accommodations. Please let me know if you require any academic accommodations.

Citing Sources. Please use APA (American Psychological Association) formatting. The Purdue OWL website has an excellent overview of this, as well as the Tufts Library website:

- <http://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/content.php?pid=49832&sid=366072>

READING CRITICALLY

Why. Reading critically is a skill that requires practice. Doing it often will enhance both class discussion and help you when it comes time to write and to create your final projects.

Main questions. For each of the readings, ask yourself:

- Why should I care about the topic?
- What is the author's or authors' main idea/thesis?
- What does this argument remind me of (other readings, real life experiences and examples)?
- How does this text relate to education and schooling?
- What are the text's strengths (ones the author or authors identify, and ones that you infer)?
- What are the text's limitations (ones the author or authors identify, and ones that you infer)?
- Is there anything on the blog that relates to the text?

Annotating. This is the process of engaging actively with a text by marking it up. Use whatever annotation system works best for you. I suggest you:

- Read the abstract, then skim the entire text, the introduction next, then the conclusion, before diving into the text with the weekly and main questions in mind.
- Highlight (preferably with a pen in the margins) or underline the thesis and main pieces of evidence.
- Note confusing passages or questions you have.
- Explicitly highlight other texts, class comments, etc. that bear directly on the reading.
- Develop some kind of notation system ("?" for a question, etc.).

A helpful online annotation guide is available at:

- <http://guides.hcl.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits>

SCHEDULE

[H]: In-class handout

[B]: Book

[CR]: Course reader

[O]: Online

[V]: Vide

Class 1: Monday, September 8
SCHOOLING UNDER CAPITALISM

- [H] Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (2011[1976]). *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket. [Selections]

Class 2: Monday, September 15
YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM
MICHAEL BROWN AND FERGUSON

- There has been a tremendous amount of media coverage of Ferguson and the death of Michael Brown. Spend some time reading several articles and watching videos online, and you're encouraged to peruse mainstream outlets and more critical and opinionated online spaces. Select 2 pieces—op-eds, blog entries, more academic pieces, or something else—and bring hard copies to class. You'll share these with a few classmates. By drawing on a range of sources, we should have a large stock of knowledge and commentary from which to draw on in class.
- [CR] Rios, V. (2006.) The hyper-criminalization of black and Latino male youth in the era of mass incarceration. *Souls*, 8(2), 40-54.
- [CR] Nolan, K. (2011.) *Police in the Hallways*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. [Ch. 1, How the police took over school discipline: From policies of inclusion to punishment and exclusion.]
- [O/V] http://www.vice.com/en_ca/read/this-short-documentary-explores-the-toronto-polices-racial-profiling-problem [Read article and watch 30 minute video, "Crisis of distrust: Police and community in Toronto."]

***Student Presentation #1*

Class 3: Monday, September 22
STRUCTURAL RACISM

- [B] Ferguson, A. (2001). *Bad Boys: Public Schools in the Making of Black Masculinity*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. [Selections]

***Student Presentation #2*

Class 4: Monday, September 29
SOCIAL REPRODUCTION & CULTURAL CAPITAL

- [CR] Macleod, J. (2008). *Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations & Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood (3rd ed)*. Boulder, CO: Westview. [Ch. 2, Social reproduction in theoretical perspective; Ch. 6, School: Preparing for the competition.]
- [CR] Lareau, A. (2002). Invisible inequality: Social class and childrearing in black and white families. *American Sociological Review*, 67, 747-776.
- [H] Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (2011[1976]). *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket. (Reading from class 1; just skim)

***Student Presentation #3*

**Class 5: Monday, October 6
NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS & GRIT**

- [CR] Tough, P. (2012.) *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Boston, MA: Mariner. [Ch. 2, How to build character.]
- [V] TED Talks Education. (2013, May). Angela Lee Duckworth: The key to success? Grit. Retrieved from:
http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit.html.
- [CR] Yosso, T. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 8(1), 69-91.

**Student Presentation #4

**Guest Speaker Darryl Williams, Director: Tufts Center for STEM Diversity

****SHORT PAPER DUE BY 4PM ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 13****

**Class 6: Monday, October 20
THE MODEL MINORITY DISCOURSE**

- [B] Lee, S. (2009.) *Unraveling the "Model Minority" Stereotype: Listening to Asian American Youth* (2nd Ed.). New York: Teachers College Press. [Selections]

**Student Presentation #5

**Class 7: Monday, October 27
DECULTURALIZATION & TRIBAL CRITICAL RACE THEORY**

- [CR] Brayboy, B. (2006). Toward a tribal critical race theory in education. *The Urban Review*, 37(5), 425-446.
- [B] Alexie, S. (2007). *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. New York: Little, Brown, and Co. [All]
- [CR] Novel Units Inc. (2010). *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian: Teacher Guide, Grades 7-8*. Bulverde, TX: Novel Units Inc.

**Student Presentation #6

**Class 8: Monday, November 3
GENDER, ETHNICITY & CLASS**

- Morris, E. (2007.) 'Ladies' or 'loudies'? Perceptions and experiences of black girls in classrooms. *Youth & Society*, 38(4), 490-515.
- Bettie, J. (2002.) Exceptions to the rule: Upwardly mobile white and Mexican American high school girls. *Gender and Society*, 16(3), 403-422.

**Student Presentation #7

**Class 9: Monday, November 10
SEXUALITY & SEX EDUCATION**

- [V] Women's Educational Media. (1996). *It's Elementary*.

- [CR] Chung, C., & Courville, M. (2008). *It's Elementary: Talking about Gay Issues in School. A Guide to Community Organizing, Professional Development and K-8 Curriculum*. San Francisco: Groundspark.
- [CR] Garcia, L. (2012). *Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself: Latina Girls and Sexual Identity*. New York: New York University Press. [Ch. 3, The sexual (mis)education of Latina girls.]

**Student Presentation # 8

Class 10: Monday, November 17 FOOD, HEALTH, & SCHOOLS
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- [CR] Vallianatos, M., Gottlieb, R., & Haase, M. A. (2004.) Farm-to-school: Strategies for urban health, combating sprawl, and establishing a community food systems approach. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 23, 414-423.
- [CR] Vander Schee, C. (2009.) Fruit, vegetables, fatness, and Foucault: governing students and their families through school health policy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 24(5), 557-574.
- [V] "Lunch Line" or "Lunch Hour."

**Student Presentation # 9

**Guest Speaker Ryan Redmond, Lecturer, Department of Education, and Instructor for a new course on "Food and Schools"

**Guest Speaker Bridget Meigs, Farm Manager and Instructor, Stonehill College

Class 11: Monday, November 24 DISTANCE LEARNING & THE MOOCS MOVEMENT

- [CR] McClure, C. (2013, February 12). Massive open online courses pioneer in education technology. *The Tufts Daily*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tuftsdaily.com/features/massive-open-online-courses-pioneer-in-education-technology-1.2809857#.UhUgG7yOqeg>.
- [CR] Jaschik, S. (2013, August 19). Feminist anti-MOOC. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/08/19/feminist-professors-create-alternative-moocs>
- Other readings TBA.

**Student Presentation # 10

Class 12: Monday, December 1 HIGHER EDUCATION
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- [CR] Bowen, W. G., Chingos, M. M., & McPherson, M. S. (2011). *Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Public Universities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [Ch. 5, High schools and undermatching]
- [CR] Sandler, R., & Taylor, Jr., S. (2012). *Mismatch: How Affirmative Action Hurts Students It's Intended to Help, and Why Students Won't Admit It*. New York: Basic Books. [Ch. 1, The idea of mismatch, and why it matters; Ch. 3, The discovery of the mismatch effect]

- [CR] Yosso, T., Parker, L., Solorzano, D. G., & Lynn, M. (2004). Jim Crow to affirmative action and back again: A critical race discussion of racialized rationales and access to higher education. *Review of Research in Education*, 28, 1-25.

***Student Presentation #11*

<p>Class 13: Monday, December 8 SCHOLARS' DINNER PARTY</p>
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***Come prepared to share your final paper with the class*

****FINAL PAPER DUE ELECTRONICALLY BY 3 PM****