Course Description

This course focuses on education as a social institution and the inequalities structured within it. Using theory and empirical evidence, education in the United States will be examined from pre-school through post-secondary levels. The intersections of education and other institutions, (e.g. political, economic and familial) are analyzed and include discussions of race/ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality. Further, the role of education in social reproduction and social control will be examined.

Required Texts


Required Assignments

Educational Autobiography 15% DUE: 2.28
Critical Analysis of your Educational Autobiography
   Primary and Secondary 20% DUE: 4.2
   Post-Secondary 20% DUE: 5.9
(4) Blackboard Reading Summaries (5% each) 20% DUE: TBS
Research Paper 25% DUE: 5.14
**Course Goals**

To....

**Develop a “sociological imagination” regarding education—how one’s own experiences in education can be understood in a structural context:** This course is framed around Mills’ framework of the sociological imagination which emphasizes the connection between biography and history as well as the interaction of individual and society.

**Gain knowledge of the history and origins of education in the United States:** Integral to understanding contemporary issues in education is knowledge of the origins of education in the United States, particularly how this development is linked to changes in other social institutions.

**Develop an understanding of education as a social institution:** Education often is examined as a process, but also can be understood structurally as a social institution. It is valuable to be able to both separate the two, as well as understand how they are related.

**Develop an understanding of the intersectional inequalities which persist in education:** Structural boundaries to educational attainment are examined in regards to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and class in order to emphasize how these intersectional statuses impact the structure and outcomes of education.

**Develop an understanding of how education plays a role in social control:** Critique of education challenges its social function. It is useful to examine the possible “hidden curricula” that exist within the institution of education that emphasizes hegemonic conformity.

**Description of Assignments**

**Educational Autobiography:** This assignment is designed to allow you to reflect on your experiences within the social institution of education starting with your first day of schooling to present day at Oberlin College. The paper should be approximately 7-9 pages in length and as detailed as possible. You will be using this as a basis for two future assignments, so please keep this in mind when writing about your experiences.

**Critical Analysis of Your Educational Autobiography:** Using your Educational Autobiography as a text, you will critically analyze your experiences using information from the course readings and discussions. In the analysis, you should assess your experiences within the theoretical frameworks presented in the readings and compare your experiences with any empirical information in the readings. Ask yourself questions such as, “How do I understand my experiences differently now than before reading the course materials?” “How do my experiences compare or contrast with those in the readings? etc… The first critical analysis will focus on your experiences in primary and secondary educational experiences and the second on your experiences in college. Each
paper should be 6-8 pages in length with appropriate referencing/citation, including a bibliography. Outside sources also may be used.

**Blackboard Reading Summaries:** During the semester you will need to complete 4 reading summaries to be posted on Blackboard the day before the readings are to be discussed. There are an abundance of readings in this class and I hope to have effective discussions based on them. These assignments are designed to alleviate some of the reading load as well as help you develop succinct summative writing skills. These will be scheduled throughout the semester in consultation with the instructor. The post will be graded on a 1-5 point scale. Thoroughness and clarity will result in greater points awarded.

**Research Paper:** This paper is based on library research consisting of monographs, edited texts, empirical data, journal articles and other scholarly sources used to illuminate and expound upon a topic relevant to the course. The paper should reflect a conceptual analysis and synthesis of the information you gather, rather than a series of summaries. The paper also should use appropriate citation and referencing of sources, including a bibliography of at least 10 sources. It is expected that the final paper, exclusive of the bibliography, will be approximately 12-15 pages in length.

**Instructor policies:**

1. **Assignments Must Be Handed In On The Date They Are Due.** All late assignments will be penalized one letter grade each day they are late (e.g. an A would become an A- if one day late). Assignments that are not turned in will receive a value of “Zero” in the final grade computation (e.g. Failing to hand in an assignment that is worth 20% of the final grade will yield 0%, thus the “best” final grade you can achieve is an 80% or a B-, IF you have 100% on all other assignments). **Assignments Will Not Be Accepted Via Email!**

2. **Office Hours** are listed at the top of this syllabus. You may come to see me between the times listed. Upon special request, I will meet with students at times outside of my office hours. Please see me IN PERSON to set up such an appointment.

3. I receive up to 30 or more e-mails per day. Please do not expect me to reply immediately to an e-mail question or request. If something is urgent, please CALL ME in my office or signify in the e-mail header that it is urgent.

4. **Honor Code:** This course will follow the policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code and Honor System. Please include the statement “I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment” in all written work. Please contact me if you have any questions about citation, or the relationship of the Honor Code to your work in this course. For more information on the Honor Code, see [http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/students/student_pages/honor_code.html).
(5) **Students with Disabilities**: If you need disability-related accommodations for your work in this course, please let me know. Support is available through Student Academic Services—please contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Disability Services, (Room G27 Peters Hall, ext. 55588) for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

(6) I reserve the right to modify the syllabus during the semester, if needed.

**Schedule**

*Please complete the readings by the day they are listed. We will discuss these readings in class. Either bring the readings to class or bring your notes.*

2.5 **Introduction**

2.7 **On Blackboard**

From Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, Epilogue

From *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*

Barr and Dreeben: How Schools Work
Sadovnik: Theories in the Sociology of Education
Durkheim: Moral Education

2.12 **Rury: Introduction**

*On Blackboard*

Collins: Conflict Theory of Educational Stratification
Bowles and Gintis: Schooling in Capitalist Societies

From *Critique and Utopia: Hew Developments in the Sociology of Education in the 21st Century*

Ch.2 Lima, Schooling for Critical Education: The Reinvention of Schools as Democratic Organizations
Ch. 10 Mc Donough and Nunez, Bourdieu’s Sociology of Education: Identifying Persistent Inequality, Unmasking Domination, and Fighting Social Domination

2.14 **Rury: Chapter 1-Colonial America: Religion, Inequality and Revolution**

Chapter 2- Emergence of a Modern School System: The 19th Century
Chapter 3- Ethnicity, Gender and Race: Contours of Social Change in the 19th Century

Rury: Chapter 4- Growth, Reform and Differentiation: The Progressive Era
On Blackboard

From Critique and Utopia: New Developments in the Sociology of Education in the 21st Century
Ch. 6. Teodoro, Educational Policies and the Sense of Possibility: A Contribution to Democratic Education in a Progressive Age

2.19 On Blackboard

From Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools
Zimmerman: Ch. 4- The Cold War Assault on Textbooks
Ch. 5- Black Activism, White Resistance, and Multiculturalism
Rury: Chapter 5- Education, Equity, and Social Policy: Postwar America through the 1970’s
Chapter 6-Globalization and Human Capital: From “A Nation at Risk” to Neo-liberal Reform

2.21 From Beyond Silenced Voices

Orfield and Lee: Ch. 1- Segregation 50 Years after Brown: A Metropolitan Challenge

On Blackboard

From Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools
Zimmerman: Ch. 5- Religious Education in Public Schools
Ch. 6-School Prayer and the Conservative Revolution

2.26 Rury, Epilogue

On Blackboard

Simmons and Masschelein: The Governmentalization of Learning and the Assemblage of a Learning Apparatus

From Ideology, Curriculum, and the New Sociology of Education: Revisiting the Work of Michael Apple

Dimitriadis, Weis and McCarthy: Introduction
Arnot: Retrieving the Ideological Past: Critical Sociology, Gender Sociology, and the School Curriculum
2.28 From *Ideology, Curriculum, and the New Sociology of Education: Revisiting the Work of Michael Apple*

- Torres: Schooling, Power and the Exile of the Soul

From *Beyond Silenced Voices*

- Yonezawa and Wells: Ch. 4- Reform as Redefining the Spaces of Schools: An Examination of Detracking by Choice
- Valenzuela: Ch.5- Subtractive Schooling: Caring Relations and Social Capital in the Schooling of U.S.-Mexican Youth

3.5 From *Beyond Silenced Voices*

- McCarthy, et. al. Ch. 7- Race, Suburban Resentment and the Representation of the Inner City in Contemporary Film and Television
- Lee, Ch. 8- Learning about Race, Learning about “America”: Hmong American High School Students
- Abu El-Haj, Ch. 12- Global Politics, Dissent, and Palestinian American Identities: Engaging Conflict to Reinvigorate Democratic Education
- Carlson, Schramm-Pate, and Lussier, Ch. 13-Risky Business: Teaching about the Confederate Flag Controversy in a South Carolina High School

3.7 From *Beyond Silenced Voices*

- Kim and Markus, Ch. 11- Speech and Silence: An Analysis of the Cultural Practice of Talking

*On Blackboard*

From *Silenced Voices and Extraordinary Conversations*

- Fine, Anand, Jordan and Sherman: Before the Bleach Gets Us All
- Weis: Acquiring White Working-Class Identities: Legitimate and Silenced Discourse within the School

From *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*

- Cookson and Persell: Preparing for Power: America’s Elite Boarding Schools

3.12 From *Beyond Silenced Voices*

- Smith: Ch 6.- The Ideology of “Fag”: The School Experience of Gay Students
On Blackboard

Little: Embracing Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Youth in School-Based Settings

Macgillivray: Gay Rights and School Policy: A Case Study in Community Factors that Facilitate or Impede Educational Change

GLSEN Report: *Shared Differences: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Students of Color in Our Nation's Schools*

3.14

On Blackboard

From *Youth and Sexualities*
Rasmussen: Safety and Subversion: The Production of Sexualities and Genders in School Spaces

From *Silenced Voices and Extraordinary Conversations*
Fine: Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire

From *Beyond Silenced Voices*
Brown, Ch. 9- In the Bad or Good of Girlhood: Social Class, Schooling and White Femininities

O’Connor, Lewis and Mueller, Ch. 10- The Culture of Black Femininity and School Success.

3.19 From *Ideology, Curriculum, and the New Sociology of Education: Revisiting the Work of Michael Apple*

Nozaki: Riding Tensions Critically: Ideology, Power/Knowledge, and Curriculum Making

Carlson: Are We Making Progress? Ideology and Curriculum in the Age of No Child Left Behind

On Blackboard

From *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*
Grant and Murray: Teaching in America: The Slow Revolution
From Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*,
Ch. 6: NCLB: Measure and Punish
Ch. 8: The Trouble with Accountability

3.21 On *Blackboard*

Wenglinsky: How Money Matters: The Effect of School District Spending on Academic Achievement

Potter: Examining the Role of Corporate Sponsorship in the Public School System: Appropriate Pathways

From *Ideology, Curriculum, and the New Sociology of Education: Revisiting the Work of Michael Apple*

Luke: Teaching After the Market: From Commodity to Cosmopolitan

4.2 From *Beyond Silenced Voices*

Dimitriadis: Ch 14- Popular Culture, Pedagogy, and Urban Youth: Beyond Silenced Voices

*On Blackboard*

Sewell: Affecting Social Change: The Struggle for Educators to Transform Society

From *The Abandoned Generation*
Giroux: Ch. 4- Leaving Most Children Behind: Public Education Under Siege

Aron and Loprest: Disability and the Education System

4.4 On *Blackboard*

From *Standardized Minds: The High Price of America’s Testing Culture and What We Can Do to Change It*
Sacks: Ch. 4- Crusade: Rise of the Test-Driven Accountability Machine in Our Schools;
Ch 5- Crime and Punishment: How the Accountability Machine Hurts School Children;
Ch 6- The Great American Dumb-Down: How the Accountability Machine Harms Schools
Ch 7- Do No Harm: Stopping the Damage to American Schools

From Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*,

8
Ch. 9: What would Mrs. Ratliff Do?
Ch. 11: Lessons Learned

4.11 From *Ideology, Curriculum, and the New Sociology of Education: Revisiting the Work of Michael Apple*

Fine: Contesting Research Rearticulation and “Thick Democracy” as Political Projects of Method

Gitlin: (Re)visioning Knowledge, Politics and Change: Educational Poetics

From *Beyond Silenced Voices*
Torre: Ch 15- The Alchemy of Integrated Spaces: Youth Participation in Research Collectives of Difference

*On Blackboard*

From *Silenced Voices and Extraordinary Conversations*
Fine and Anand: Revisiting the Struggle for Integration

4.16-18 Lubienski and Weitzel, *The Charter School Experiment* Entire Text

*On Blackboard*


4.23 *On Blackboard*

From *A History of American Higher Education*
Thelin: Ch. 3- Diversity and Adversity: Resilience in American Higher Education, 1860 to 1920
Ch. 5- Alma Mater: America Goes to College, 1890 to 1920
Ch. 7- Gilt by Association: Higher Education’s “Golden Age”, 1945 to 1970
Ch. 8- Coming of Age in America: Higher Education as a Troubled Giant, 1970 to 2000

4.25 *On Blackboard*

From *The Racial Crisis in American Higher Education: Continuing Challenges for the Twenty-First Century*
Teddlie and Freeman: Twentieth-Century Desegregation in U.S. Higher Education

From *The Agony of Education: Black Students at White Colleges and Universities*
Feagin, Vera and Imani: Black Students at Predominately White Colleges and Universities: The Rhetoric and the Reality
Bowman and Smith: Racial Ideology in the Campus Climate: Emerging Cross-Ethnic Differences and Challenges
Hurtado: Creating a Climate of Inclusion: Understanding Latina/o College Students
Chang and Kiang: New Challenges of Representing Asian American Students in U.S. Higher Education

4.30 From *Beyond Silenced Voices*
Bloom: Ch. 4- Hollowing the Promise of Higher Education: Inside the Political Economy of Access to College

*On Blackboard*

From *The Racial Crisis in American Higher Education: Continuing Challenges for the Twenty-First Century*
Tierney and Chung: Affirmative Action in a Post-*Hopwood* Era
Feagin Vera, and Imani: Issues of Recruitment and Retention: If They Do Anything, It’s to Encourage You to Leave
Giroux and Giroux:
Ch. 6- Youth, Higher Education and the Breaking of the Social Contract: Toward the Possibility of a Democratic Future
Ch. 7- Neoliberalism Goes to College: Higher Education in the New Economy

5.2-5.9 Mullen, *Degrees of Inequality*, entire text