

Education and Society

15:310:551, Fall 2021

Dr. Joy Latahara Smith

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Office Hours: Via Email or By Appointment

Class Sessions: Mondays (6:00 PM-7:30 PM via Zoom)

This course draws on the fields of anthropology and sociology to ask several key questions about education, introducing central concepts in social theory and illustrating how these concepts might shape educational research.

This course is organized around several key questions:

- What are the purposes of education?
- What is the relationship between social structure and agency in schooling?
- What is the relationship between individuals and social contexts in the learning process?
- How is education interwoven with the production of identities?
- How do schools reflect certain/particular types of cultural knowledge and practices?
- Are education and schooling forces for the reproduction or transformation of inequalities?

At the conclusion of this course, our goal is that all students:

- Become familiar with a range of approaches to educational research drawing on the disciplines of anthropology and sociology
- Begin to frame their own research interests in relation to broader theoretical concepts and framework
- Develop critical perspectives on the contexts, institutional structures, practices, and dominant assumptions of schooling that produce social inequalities, with particular attention to how historically rooted systems of oppression manifest in educational settings
- Consider the ways that schools and classrooms can be re-imagined to support educational equity
- Connect critical social theory to concrete educational issues
- Become prepared for the next stages of doctoral study (for doctoral students)

Course Materials and Resources

Please purchase this book from your preferred bookseller. All other readings are available through the course website on Canvas.

Required

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

Assignments

1) **Reading Response Papers** (1 single-spaced page, 50% of your final grade).

You will write **10** reading response papers over the course of the semester. (**All 12 papers are required for a passing grade in this course.**) **These papers are due on Saturday nights at 8:00 PM on Canvas.** They should focus on the week's theme, draw parallels between the texts and include your questions about the readings (i.e., what you are grappling with, your frustrations, etc.). Although I do expect you to pay reasonable attention to writing style and mechanics, the papers do not need to be polished. During the semester, you can request feedback to make sure you are on the right track.

2) Applying Theory Paper/Presentation (500-word vignette, 2000-word analysis, 25% of your final grade)

There are two parts to this assignment:

First, you will write a 500-word vignette about an educational issue or episode that you are facing or have faced or have observed or experienced. The vignette could be drawn from your own schooling, your professional life, your children or elsewhere (a story told by a friend). Make the vignette as descriptive as possible, **without** using evaluative or analytical language or proffering opinion or theory. Your goal is to describe a complex or troubling educational episode as vividly as possible. These will be shared online with the class (10 points)

Second, you will choose three theoretical frameworks that illuminate what is going on in your vignette. Use them to analyze the vignette, referring to readings from class. This analysis should be approximately 2,000 words long and should help the reader understand the incident from three different theoretical vantage points. The three might interconnect to explain distinct aspects of the vignette, or each one might be applied to its own discrete analysis of the vignette. You will do a 10-12-minute presentation on your theory paper to the class, as well. (15 points)

3) Final Paper. (8-10 pages, double-spaced paper using course readings; 30% of your final grade.)

Your final paper must address one of the following questions through the lens of how education and schooling are forces for both the reproduction and the transformation of inequalities.

- What are the purposes of education?
- What is the relationship between social structure and agency in schooling?
- What is the relationship between individuals and social contexts in the learning process?
- How is education interwoven with the production of identities?
- How do schools reflect cultural knowledge and practices?

Summary of Assignments

1. Response Papers (1 single spaced page, 50% of your grade)
2. Applying theory paper/presentation (25% of your grade)
 - a. Vignette: Due Week 5 (10 points)
 - b. Analysis: Due Week 10 (15 points)
3. Final Paper (25% of your grade)

Course Guidelines/Expectations:

A successful class will depend on every member of the group being actively engaged as both learners and teachers. It is my assumption that each of us has valuable perspectives and experiences that will inform our collective, developing knowledge.

Class attendance is a requirement. Students are expected to be on time for our virtual (Zoom) sessions. This is our only opportunity to discuss the material as a group. If you are unable to attend class, please let me know prior to the start of our session. Please refer to the university policy for excused absences. In general, inconsistent attendance will result in a significantly lower grade.

This class is a discussion-oriented seminar and learning in this class will require your active participation. For this class to be effective, all students must come prepared to discuss the week's assigned readings. Response papers are intended to help you think about the issues raised in the readings ahead of class time. This seminar requires a high degree of independence, responsibility, and intellectual resourcefulness (ability to search out and make connections

across theory, practice, sites, ideas, people) in your work. There are many ways to participate in class; actively listening, asking questions, commenting on the thoughts of others, or discussing tentative, speculative ideas are valued as much as stating original, completely formed thoughts.

All assignments are required to pass this course. An “A” assignment is an exceptional one. It is not an assignment that merely meets the requirements outlined in the syllabus. All written work is graded on thoroughness, quality of analysis, level of support from data and/or research literature, organization and clarity.

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

93-100 A

88-92 B+

83-87 B

78-82 C+

73-78 C

Email will be my primary mode of communication with you. Please check your Rutgers email regularly; all Canvas notifications are sent there. Generally, I will respond to your messages within 24-48 hours of receiving them. If I do not reply within that time frame, feel free to follow up with me.

Anyone with a differing need that requires any accommodation should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. We want to make sure that you receive the support that you need, to be successful in the course. Those who require accommodations must complete an intake interview. Then, s/he/they will be provided with documentation (Letter of Accommodations)—which should be presented to all your professors as well. This link will direct you to the information: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

Academic Integrity Any breach of academic integrity is very seriously. Please familiarize yourself with the University Policy on the issue; it can be found here: <https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>.

Weekly Themes and Readings

*Denotes chapter from textbook

Week 1: Critical social theory and transformative knowledge Class will not meet tonight.

September 13th

First response due September 11th

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

Week 2: Why do we need theory to study education?

September 20th

- 1) *Levinson, B. (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, Introduction, pp. 1-24.

Week 3: Economic and Social Reproduction

September 27th

- 1) Bowles, S. & Gintis, H. (1976). *Schooling in capitalist America: Educational reform and the contradictions of economic life*. Chapters 3 & 4 (focus on pp. 53-56, 92-125, skim the rest).
- 2) Collins, J. (2009). Social Reproduction in classrooms and schools. *Annual Review of Anthology*, 38, 33-48.
- 3) Willis, P. *Learning to Labor* (summary)
- 4) Oakes, J. (1985/2005). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Selected Chapter.

Week 4: Social and Cultural Capital

October 4th

- 1) *Levinson, B. A. U. (2011). Symbolic domination and the reproduction of inequality: Pierre Bourdieu and practice theory. In B. A. U. Levinson (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, Chapter 4, pp. 113-138.
- 2) Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, race and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapter 1.
- 3) Nichols, L., & Islas, A. (2016). Pushing and pulling emerging adults through college: College generational status and the influence of parents and others in the first year. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 31, 59-95.
- 4) Carter, P. (2003). Black Cultural Capital, Status Positioning, and Schooling Conflicts for Low-Income African American Youth. *Social Problems* 50 (1): 136-155.

Week 5: Hidden Curriculum, Hegemony, Knowledge/Power

October 11th

- 1) *Gross, J. (2011). Education and hegemony: The influence of Antonio Gramsci. In B. A.U. Levinson (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, Chapter 2, pp. 51-79.
- 2) Anyon, J. (1980). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education*, Vol. 162, 253-276.
- 3) *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.
- 4) Ferguson, A. A. (2001). *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of Black masculinity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Chapters 1 & 3. 4)

**Apply Theory/Presentation: Vignette is Due
No Response Paper this Week.**

Week 6: Learning Identities, Situated and Sociocultural Approaches

October 18th

- 1) Wortham, S. (2006). *Learning identity: The joint emergence of social identification and academic learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 1&5)
- 2) Cone, J. (2006). Detracked ninth grade English: Apprenticeship for the work and world of high school and beyond. *Theory into Practice*, 45(1), 55-63
- 3) Nasir, N. &, Hand, V. (2006). Exploring sociocultural perspectives on race, culture, and learning. *Review of Education Research*, 76, 449-475.
- 4) Moschkovich, J. (2002). A situated and sociocultural perspective on bilingual mathematics learners. *Mathematical Thinking and Learning*, 4, 189-212.
- 5) Muñoz, J. E. (1999). *Disidentifications: Queers of color and the performance of politics* (Vol. 2). U of Minnesota Press.

Week 7: Constructing Disability and Difference

October 25th

- 1) 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.
- 2) McDermott, R., & Varenne, H. (1995). Culture as disability. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 26, 324-348.
- 3) 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.**
- 4) Artiles, A. (2011). Toward an interdisciplinary understanding of educational equity and difference: The case of the racialization of ability. *Educational Researcher*, 40, 431-445.

Week 8: Communities of Practice and Figured Worlds

November 1st

(Class will not meet via Zoom this week)

- 1) Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Selected Chapters
- 2) National Council of Teachers of English. (2011). *Communities of practice*. Policy research brief. <http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/CC/0212nov2011/CC0212Policy.pdf>
- 3) Rubin, B.C. (2007). Learner identity amid figured worlds: Constructing (in)competence at an urban high school. *The Urban Review*, 39, 217-249.

Week 9: Theorizing Gender and Sexuality in Education**November 8th**

- 1) *Dadds, J. D. Feminisms: Embodying the Critical. In B. A.U. Levinson (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, Chapter 6, pp. 51-79.
- 2) West, C. & Zimmerman, D. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society*, 1, 125-151.
- 3) Pascoe, C.J. (2007). *Dude you're a fag: Masculinity and sexuality in high school*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Chapters 1-3, 6.
- 4) Lugg, C., & Murphy, J. (2014). Thinking whimsically: queering the study of educational policymaking and politics. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27, 1183-1204.
- 5) Desai, K. (2016). Teaching the Third World Girl: Girl Rising as a precarious curriculum of empathy. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 43, 248-264.

Week 10: Critical Race Theory**November 15th**

- 1) *Kumasi, K. D. (2011). Critical Race Theory and Education: Mapping a Legacy of Activism and Scholarship. In B. A.U. Levinson (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, Chapter 7, pp. 51-79.
- 2) Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11, 7-24.
- 3) 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.
- 4) Beyond Love, A critical race ethnography of the schooling of adolescent black males, Garret Albert Duncan, *Equity & Excellence in Education* (2002), 35, 2:131-143 5) Brayboy, B. (2005). Toward a tribal critical race theory in education. *The Urban Review*, 37, 425-446.
- 5) Teranishi, R. (2002). Asian Pacific Americans and critical race theory: An examination of school racial climate. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 35, 144-154.

Vignette Analysis Due**No Response Paper Due****Week 11: Critical, Social Justice and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy****November 22nd**

- 1) Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New rev. 20th-Anniversary ed.), Chapters 2 and 3. New York: Continuum.
- 2) Moll, L. C. (2010). Mobilizing culture, language, and educational practices: Fulfilling the promises of Mendez and Brown. *Educational Researcher*, 38, 451-460.
- 3) Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.
- 4) Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 41, 93-97.

Vignette Presentations: Part I

Week 12: Democracy and Education**November 29th**

- 1) Gutmann, A. (1987/1999). *Democratic Education*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Introduction and Chapter 1.
- 2) Labaree, D. F. (1997). Public good, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34, 39-81.
- 3) Banks, J. A. (2008) Diversity, group identity and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational Researcher* 37 (3), 129-139.
- 4) Rubin, B.C. (2016). "There's still not justice": Youth civic identity development amid distinct school and community contexts. *Teachers College Record*, 109, 449-481
- 5) Dewey, selected readings.

Vignette Presentations: Part II**Week 13: Globalization, migration, education****December 6th**

- 1) * Levinson, B. A. U., Gross, J. P. K., Hanks, C. (2011) Friendly Critiques and Fellow Travelers: Questioning and Expanding the Critical Social Theory Canon. In B. A.U. Levinson (Ed.), *Beyond critique: Exploring critical social theories and education*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, Chapter 8, pp. 51-79.
- 2) Suarez-Orozco, M. M. (2001). Globalization, immigration, and education: The research agenda. *Harvard Educational Review* 71 (3), 345-365.
- 3) Orellano, M. F. (2001). The work kids do: Mexican and Central American immigrant children's contributions to households and schools in California. *Harvard Educational Review* 71 (3), 366-389.
- 4) Abu El-Haj, T. (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.
- 5) Manual Figueroa, A. (2017). Speech or silence: Undocumented students' decisions to disclose or disguise their citizenship status in school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 54, 485-523.

Vignette Presentations: Part III**Week 14: Final Class--Paper is Due****December 13th**