

Philosophy of Education

EFND 8010

Spring 2008

Class Day–Wednesday

Room RC 113

Class Time: 5-7:45 PM

Instructor: Andrew Gitlin

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Course Purpose:

Because philosophy is such a broad field, this course will focus on a specific area of the philosophy of education, that being the relations between aesthetics, social justice and education. (Aesthetics places an emphasis on imagination, creativity, and forms of knowledge involved in the production and representation of art.) To begin this exploration we will center on the work of John Dewey and what art meant for education according to this great educational philosopher. While Dewey is known for a democratic orientation (and the word transformation is used to describe his work) that can fit within a social justice perspective, social justice and its relation to aesthetics is more directly addressed in our second text by Nussbaum that looks at imagination as a form of social justice. From this point we will move to the best known philosopher of education that focuses on the arts today, namely Maxine Greene. In her book, she looks at the possibilities of imagination for creating social change that breaks through the traditions and orientations that keep us stuck within the status quo. Egan's book on imagination follows and does an excellent job at relating imagination to education in the middle years. While one can argue that Egan's book does not directly address social justice, he does talk specifically about freedom and the move beyond conventional thinking. Most importantly however, this book is unique in its ability to relate imagination to education and provide an in depth history of imagination. Finally, we will proceed to a book I authored with Marcie Peck, that utilizes aesthetics as the basis for knowledge production that has commonsense as the object of inquiry. In this way, the twin aims of innovation and freedom are part of the exploration of educational poetics.

In sum, you should not only learn quite a bit about aesthetics, but see its potential as a force for social justice and be able to consider what this would mean for schooling.

Required Texts

- Jackson, P. (1998). *John Dewey and the lessons of art*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Nussbaum, M. (1995). *Poetic Justice: The literacy imagination and public life*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Egan, K. (1992). *Imagination in teaching and learning: The middle school years*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gitlin, A. & Peck, M. (2005). *Educational poetics: Inquiry, freedom and innovative necessity*. New York: Peter Lang Publishers.

Tentative Schedule

January 9th–Introduction

review Syllabus

activity on imagination

January 16th–Reading Due: Jackson Chapter 1

This chapter discusses how experience is structured by the arts and the potential of art experience for education

January 23rd–Reading Due: Jackson Chapter 2

This chapter discusses spirituality, art, and education.

Specifically, how spirituality can lead to transformation.

January 30th–Readings Due: Jackson Chapters 3 and 4.

We will look theory and practice
what art as experience means for education

February 6th –Readings Due: Nussbaum Chapter 1

how literacy and the literacy imagination has potential for
social justice and transformation

February 13th –Readings Due: Nussbaum Chapter 2

how fancy found within literature
can be a part of social justice

February 20th –Readings Due: Nussbaum Chapter 3 and 4

emotion imagination and social justice.

February 27th –Readings Due: Greene (part one–1-88)

imagination, community and social vision

March 5th –Readings Due: Greene (part two) 89-154)

writing and social justice

art imagination

change , texts and representation

March 12th –Readings Due: Greene (part three 155-198)

diversity imagination and social change

March 19th –Readings Due: Egan pages 1-44

the history of imagination

March 26th –Readings Due: Egan pages 45-90

why is imagination important to education

humanizing knowledge

April 2st –Readings Due: Egan pages: 91-118.

Learning, education and imagination

April 9th–Readings Due: Egan pages: 119-168.

Theory and practice imagination and education

April 16th–Readings Due: Gitlin Chapters one and two

the unknown

relations of freedom

April 23rd–Readings Due: Chapters 3 and 4

assumptions and practices of educational poetics

April 30th–Readings Due: Chapters five, six and seven and epilogue.

Borderlands

and the search for a deep poetic

May 7th–Final Paper Due

Assignments

Response Paper–

Every week a response to the readings is due. The structure of this response is the following:

- a) outline one or two major arguments in the readings
- b) respond to the arguments critically, what you disagree with or agree with and why
- c) ask 2-3 questions that speak to issues that are important to you.

Typed one page single spaced and is due at the beginning of class –although I will ask you to hold onto the response to inform the seminar.

Final Paper –

7-10 page paper that describes your position and reflects your understanding of the readings on the relation between aesthetics, social justice and education.

Seminar format– We will discuss the readings and move back and forth between your questions and analysis and my concerns and perspectives

Grades

The response papers are graded +, or minus if you have 12 +'s you have an A, 9+'s a B and 7+'s a C and these responses count for 50% of your grade

Final paper 50% of your grade and I grade on deep of understanding and analysis, I expect for an A an in depth understanding of the readings and a well developed analysis of your position or critique of that position.