

EFND 2030

Schools in U.S. Society

Winter/Spring, 2005
Section 04201
Mondays and Wednesdays
1:30-2:45, Aderhold 531

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Introduction

All of you have endured several years of American schooling. You have spent over 2000 days of your life in the classroom. You have devoted countless hours to your studies. You have stayed up late preparing for tests or finishing papers. You have stressed over grades. You have cursed and praised your teachers. Judging by the fact that you are at the University of Georgia, you have been mostly successful in navigating the difficulties of formal education in the United States. School was undoubtedly the most defining endeavor of your childhood. Now, what was the point?

Why did you have to do it all? What was the purpose of all that schooling? For what reason were you forced to go through those particular motions? Why did your schools look and operate the way that they did? What are you now educated to do and to be?

These questions form the core of this class. Over the course of the semester, we plan to look deeply into the procedures and goals of American formal schooling, such as all of you have experienced. In the process, I hope that you will begin to consider why it was that you had to do all that you were forced to do. Was your schooling all that it claimed to be? Did it really teach you all the things that it was purported to teach you? How did it shape you? What attitudes and mindsets do you have as a result of the day-in, day-out process of American schooling? Is this what formal schooling is supposed to be in a free, democratic, egalitarian society?

The answers can be found at the intersection of philosophy, history, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. All of these disciplines are combined into a single field called Social Foundations of Education. Unlike other educational courses of study, the purpose here is not to teach students *how* schools do their work, but rather *why* they do their work. For what purpose? To what end? Only when you have a clear idea of what schools are supposed to do can you assess how well schools are doing their job. More importantly, only when you have a lucid vision of what you as a teacher are trying to accomplish can

you be an effective educator.

Schools do not look and operate the way they do by accident. There are ideas at work in every part of the school day—even in the physical structure of the buildings. Our goal this semester is to uncover those ideas and assess their legitimacy. I am excited to get started with you, and I look forward to all that we will learn together.

Course Requirements

The course will be dialogical. Our goal will be the collective construction of complex insights into the form, function, and meaning of formal schooling. That will require the full, and fully informed, engagement of all members of the class at every session. Thus, all participants in the course must come to every class having completed the assignments as indicated in the calendar, and being ready to share their insights and questions.

Required Course Texts: All students are required to obtain and read the assigned books according to the schedule noted in the Calendar. There are three required books:

- “*Doing School*” by Denise Clark Pope (Yale University Press, 2001)
- *The Students Are Watching* by Theodore R.Sizer and Nancy Faust Sizer (Beacon Press, 1999)
- *Savage Inequalities* by Jonathan Kozol (Harper Perennial, 1991)

In addition to the three required books, all students must complete one additional book on education. The writing that must accompany this reading is described below.

Writing Assignments: The following assignments are expected, in addition to the midterm and final exam:

1. A formal essay (5-10 pp. double-spaced) in which the student will assess her or his own schooling. Instructions will be given in class. This essay is due on Monday, February 14, 2005, at the start of class.
2. A critical review essay (6-12 pp. double-spaced) evaluating a book of your choice. As mentioned above, the book must address issues of education. Instructions will be given in class. This essay is due on Monday, March 28, 2005.
3. A written journal (typed or handwritten) that includes at least one substantive entry per week. It should reflect your thought processes and reflections on the issues that we are confronting in class. Your journal entries will be collected at the start of each week—Mondays—and will be returned at the end—Wednesdays.

A key component of the learning process in this class is the experience that everyone here

has already had with formal schooling. Thus, in addition to drawing on the readings and class discussions, I expect you to pull greatly from what you personally experienced in school. Do not shy away from the sort of deep reflection and introspection that is necessary to create a profound learning experience. If you address the issues we confront on only a superficial level, you will betray the humanity of the learning experience and you will not take from the class all that you can.

Educational Philosophy: One of the most important things I hope that you gain from your time in this class is a solid sense of why we have schools and what they should be trying to accomplish. Over the course of the semester, we will be working together to ensure that you are pulling together a coherent philosophy of education that, if necessary, will become a part of your job portfolio. The philosophy will be written in four steps: three drafts and an appointment with me.

Movie Presentation: Popular ideas about schooling are everywhere, including in mass media and pop culture. Thus, I will also be requiring you to work on a group project in which you present your reflections after viewing a movie specifically targeted to young people. We will discuss this assignment further as the semester progresses. These presentations will be made on Wednesday, April 6, 2005; Monday, April 11, 2005; and Wednesday, April 13, 2005. We will work out the project schedule together.

Examinations: There will be two formal examinations: a mid-term exam and a final exam. Both will be essay, and both will be taken home. In the examinations, students will be expected to synthesize their readings and their learning from the course. The midterm exam will be due in class on Wednesday, March 9, 2005. The final is due on Friday, May 6, 2005, by 3:00 p.m. (our assigned exam period). I will be in my office to collect the final.

Due Dates: All work is to be completed by the dates indicated in the calendar, below; this includes readings. Late work or missed assignments may be refused completely, or accepted at a 10% point deletion for each day late. If something prevents you from giving your work to me on time, please contact me immediately.

Calendar

A good class will confront issues as they arise and deal with any difficulties that present themselves. Thus, this is a proposed schedule. I will make you aware of any changes that must be made, and oftentimes, I will provide you with readings that are not on this syllabus that I expect to be read. As I will be flexible, I expect that you will be, too.

The readings that are listed for each date are to be completed prior to coming to class. Those with an asterisk (*) are available on WebCT.

Monday, 1/10

Class: Introductions

Wednesday, 1/12

Reading: “No Plans to Pump Inflation Policy” from *The Red and Black*
“The ABCs of Hatred” from *The New York Times*
Class: Continued Introductions; Why?; The “crisis”
**Pass out independent reading assignment sheets

Monday, 1/17—No Class; MLK Day

Wednesday, 1/19

Reading: Excerpt from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire*
Class: How to create an oppressive society
Introduction to South Africa

Monday, 1/24

Reading: Excerpt from *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane*
Class: Continued Introduction to South Africa
Start of film *Cry Freedom*

Wednesday 1/26

Reading: Excerpt from *Biko* by Donald Woods*
Class: Continue film *Cry Freedom*

Monday, 1/31

Reading: Excerpt from *Education in Exile* by Morrow and others.*
[Note: you might want to go ahead and start Wednesday’s readings, as well.]
Class: The Soweto Student Uprising, Nkosi Silkelel’i Afrika, Black Consciousness
**Pass out school assessment assignment

Wednesday, 2/2

Reading: Chapters from *Power Lines* by Jason Carter* and *Long Walk to Freedom*
by Nelson Mandela*
Class: Photos from South Africa, Debriefing the South African experience

Monday, 2/7

Reading: *Doing School*, Chapters 1 and 2
Class: Discussion of Chapters 1 and 2, competition, grades
**Pass Out Movie Presentations Assignment

Wednesday, 2/9

Reading: *Doing School*, Chapter 3
Class: Discussion of Chapter 3, scheduling, extracurricular activities

Monday, 2/14

Reading: *Doing School*, Chapter 4

Class: Work out logistics of Movie Presentation Assignment
Discussion of Chapter 4, machinations of schooling

Wednesday, 2/16

Due: School Assessment Paper

Reading: *Doing School*, Chapter 5

Class: Discussion of Chapter 5

Monday, 2/21

Due: Educational Philosophy, Draft One

Reading: *Doing School*, Chapter 6

Class: Discussion of Chapter 6

Wednesday, 2/23

Reading: *Doing School*, Chapter 7 and Epilogue

Class: Discussion of Chapter 7, *Doing School* as a whole

Monday, 2/28

Reading: Excerpt from “The Big Picture” by Dennis Littky*

Class: Classroom Relationships
**Midterms distributed

Wednesday, 3/2

Reading: Chicago Hope: Maybe This Will Work*

Class: Classroom Relationships

Monday, 3/7

Reading: *The Students Are Watching*, Preface and Chapter 1

Class: Discussion of Chapter 1

[Note: The midpoint withdrawal deadline is 3/8/2005.]

Wednesday, 3/9

Due: Midterm Examination

Reading: *The Students Are Watching*, Chapter 2

Class: Discussion of Chapter 2
Student Evaluation

Monday and Wednesday, 3/14 and 3/16—No Class, Spring Break

Monday, 3/21

Class: No class. Meet with your group to work on your Movie Presentation.

Wednesday, 3/23

Class: No class. Meet with your group to work on your Movie Presentation.

Monday, 3/28

Due: Independent Reading Assignment

Reading: *The Students Are Watching*, Chapter 3 and 4

Class: Discussion of Chapters 3 and 4

Wednesday, 3/30

Reading: *The Students Are Watching*, Chapter 5

Class: Film: *Education and Equity*
Discussion of Chapter 5

Monday, 4/4

Reading: *The Students Are Watching*, Chapter 6 and Afterword

Class: Discussion of Chapter 6 and *The Students Are Watching* as a whole

Wednesday, 4/6

Due: Educational Philosophy #2

Class: Movie Presentations
[Note: Start reading *Savage Inequalities*]

Monday, 4/11

Class: Movie Presentations

Wednesday, 4/13

Class: Movie Presentations

Monday, 4/18

Reading: *Savage Inequalities*; Prologue, Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Class: Debrief Movie Presentations
Guest Speaker: Poverty in Athens

Wednesday, 4/20

Reading: *Savage Inequalities*, Chapter 4

Class: Discussion of *Savage Inequalities*
The No Child Left Behind Act

Monday, 4/25

Reading: *Savage Inequalities*, Chapter 5
Class: The No Child Left Behind Act
Film: *Lalee's Kin*

Wednesday, 4/27

Reading: *Savage Inequalities*, Chapter 6
Class: Continue Film: *Lalee's Kin*

Monday, 5/2

Due: Educational Philosophy #3
All Re-writes
Class: Final Thoughts on *Savage Inequalities*, Class in general

Assessment

Grading: All grading is done by me in close consultation with my colleagues in this department and in the College of Education at large. If ever you are unhappy with a grade, you should contact me immediately in order that we may address the issue together. Further, two of your assignments (the school assessment paper and the independent reading review essay) can be re-submitted after they are returned for a potentially higher grade. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to resubmit work throughout the semester as you grow and learn.

Course Evaluation: Final grades will be based on my assessment of your ability to communicate, to think clearly and critically, and to integrate knowledge as demonstrated in class discussions, writing assignments, and examinations. Grades will be weighted as follows:

Journal—15%
Educational Philosophy—10% (process and product) School
Assessment Paper—15%
Midterm—15%
Independent Reading—15%
Movie Presentation—10%
Final Exam—20%

Attendance: The nature of this course is such that daily attendance is essential for learning. This course is designed for people who come to class; the discussion and dialogue process is central to your intellectual growth. Absences will be reflected in your depth and breadth of understanding of the issues we confront which will in turn be

reflected in your grades, even though absences are not a specific part of the grading scheme. If you miss class, you should contact me immediately, or else expect to be contacted by me.

Final Considerations

Writing: Anyone contemplating teaching should be a proficient, graceful writer. Students who have difficulties with writing are urged to make use of the expertise at the University's Learning Center—132 Milledge Hall. The phone number is 542-8455.

A Note on Plagiarism and Cheating: Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are extremely grave ethical violations. All students are to be aware of the University Academic Honesty Policy. In this course, any instance of academic dishonesty *will result in referral to the administration for disciplinary action in accordance with university policies.*

Problems: I have been hired to promote your intellectual and ethical growth; do not let any questions, anxieties or problems fester without my knowledge. I am committed to ensuring that you get the most out of this class as you can. Good luck!