

U.S. Schooling and Society

Sociology 491/591-Sociology of Education
Fall 2003, CRN: 15140/15148
Mondays and Wednesdays, 4 – 5:20 PM, 176 Education

Professor Jiannbin Shiao

Office Hours in PLC 632:

Tuesdays, 9:30 AM -12:30 PM

(Sign-up or drop-in).

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Course Prerequisites: 12+ credits of Sociology courses,
(Sociology 310, 311, and 312 especially recommended).

Required Group Work: In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), you may opt for the group whose members will not place copies of their papers on reserve for sharing; however, your papers will be graded by the same criteria as those with access to fellow students' papers.

Additional information can be found on the course's Blackboard site.

What is the relationship between education and society?

This course examines the relationship between schooling institutions and the larger society in which they are embedded, with a major focus on the U.S. public K-12 system. The primary objective of the course is to enable each student to think critically about education as a social institution, particularly the U.S. educational system, and her/his own relationship to the system of schooling. The course readings and class meetings will explore the **interlocking historical, organizational, cultural, social class, gender, and racial issues** that lead to an understanding of the impact and role of education from a range of vantage points, especially those perspectives outside of the U.S. mainstream.

The course is primarily oriented around lecture and reading topics, but students will be expected to engage the issues raised in the readings in structured class discussions and activities. The course assignments will challenge students to master the languages of sociological debate about the importance of education for society and to comparatively situate their educational biographies in that landscape. The assignments include weekly reading journals, two educational biography papers, and either a final cumulative examination or a final research paper on a topic chosen in consultation with the professor. Graduate students enrolled in 591 are required to take the paper option.

Required Materials:

- The required materials are in 3 places: **books, E-Reserves, and a course packet.**
- There are **four required books** for the class, all available at Mother Kali's Books at 720 East 13th Avenue:

ANYON, Jean. 1997. *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform*. New York: Teachers College Press.

KOZOL, Jonathan. 1991. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. New York : HarperPerennial.

SUSKIND, Ron. 1998. *A Hope in the Unseen: an American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. New York : Broadway Books.

WEILER, Jeanne. 2000. *Codes and Contradictions: Race, Gender Identity, and Schooling*. New York: State University of New York Press.

- The virtual packet of readings is available on-line through the Library E-Reserves system. For more information: http://libweb.uoregon.edu/acs_svc/usingeres.html.
User Name: fall03 and password: back.
- The Course Packet is available at the **University Bookstore**. These additional readings are not in E-Reserves.
- **All of the materials are also on Reserve at Knight Library.**
- **Graduate students in 591** will have additional books, other readings, and an occasional seminar on Fridays, if scheduling permits.

Course Requirements:

- Students are required to **check the course's Blackboard site weekly** for messages from the professor. In addition, selected files for handouts, overheads, and related materials will be available for downloading. If you need technical assistance with your account, please see the staff at the **Information Technology Centers** at the Knight or Science libraries.
- **5 reading journals:** 1 single-spaced page covering all of the required reading materials for a given week in Weeks 2-9. Each journal is due on the Monday of the week for which the readings were assigned. In other words, the journal covering the Week 2 readings will not be accepted after the Monday class meeting in Week 2. A more detailed assignment handout will become available.
- **2 educational biographies:** 4 pages for the first paper - situating your educational experiences in the course concepts and readings and 6-8 pages for the second paper - reworking the first paper with further readings and systematically comparing those experiences with both another student in the class and the protagonist of A

Hope in the Unseen. Do your experiences substantiate existing theories, challenge them, or perhaps provide “exceptions that prove the rule?” A more detailed assignment handout will become available.

1. The educational biography papers should have a **cover page** indicating, at minimum, **the paper's title**, the student's name, the course number, and the term & year. Also, these papers should end with a **bibliography**, but neither the cover page nor the bibliography will count toward the required page length. Each page after the cover should have a **footer** with the student's last name and a page number. No **margins** are to be larger than one inch. No **typefaces** are to be larger (or smaller) than 12 points. All original text must be **double-spaced**; only long quotes, section titles, and the bibliography may be single-spaced. Papers attempting to reach the page limit through enlarging or shrinking typefaces, margins, or spacing will be graded down.
 2. Papers should be submitted to the **professor's box** in the main Sociology department office. Papers submitted after the due date and time (see the course schedule) are **automatically late** and will be discounted a full letter grade. Without advance approval, no papers will be accepted after 12 noon the following day. Anticipate computer failures, disk problems, etc, and plan ahead.
- A final assignment, **either a cumulative final examination or a final research paper on a specific aspect of educational reform**: 8-10 pages for undergraduates and 10-15 pages for graduate students. The in-class exam will test your mastery of the reading materials, lectures, and class discussions through essay questions and short answer questions. A study guide will become available in Week 10.
 - Students interested in the research option must conduct preliminary research on topics and then submit a **paper proposal (in week 5)**, 3 pages, reporting scholarly sources to pursue further, stating its central concerns, and discussing expectations based on the appropriate readings from the syllabus. The scholarly references for the research paper option must come from **library sources** - materials in books and articles in scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines, and books. **Web searches** are encouraged, but web sites will not count toward the minimum number of scholarly references.
 - **Class attendance, participation, and visits to office hours**, voicing your thoughts and opinions as the occasion demands. **More than three unexcused absences** will significantly lower your grade. Students bear complete responsibility for their absences; please make your own arrangements for notes and discussion with those classmates who were present. In addition, I regard **classroom time** as relatively sacred. Turn off your cell phones and pagers, and focus on the subject at hand. Do not bring your non-enrolled friends, family members, or pets to class; this is **our** time. However, if you are especially shy, please visit me in **office hours** to discuss the material. Lastly, I am here to introduce you to particular perspectives and teach you **how** to think and speak in their language, not **what** to believe about education. **What you learn from this class will depend upon your efforts to develop a systematic synthesis and critique of the readings and lectures.**

Grading:

Class Participation and Extra Credit	20%
Reading Journals	15%
First Educational Biography	15%
Second Educational Biography	25%
<u>Final Examination or Paper</u>	<u>25%</u>
Total	100%

Reasonable Accommodations:

If you have a **documented disability** and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me well before the due date of the first major assignment. In addition, please request the Counselor for Students with Disabilities to send me a letter verifying your disability.

If your **religious beliefs and/or university representation** preclude you from attending class on a day that an assignment is due, please make the requests for accommodation in writing at the start of the term. **Please do not** simply hand me an official form-letter listing dates; **also identify** the specific dates you will be absent from our course and whether an assignment is due on any of those days.

Academic Integrity:

I expect that the work you submit for this course to be the product of your own efforts. I will not list the many aspects of **academic dishonesty** covered in university regulations; you can look them up, yourself. I have not hesitated to refer students to the Student Conduct Office - even though the process makes me extremely irritable and cranky. **However**, I still encourage you to study together, discussing the course materials outside of class. After all, it is the dynamic tension between intellectual community and individuality that makes higher education possible and enjoyable. If you have questions about the ethics of group study and work, please come visit me in office hours.

Course Schedule:

Capitalized AUTHORS indicate books. The ending notation [ER] indicates a reading on E-Reserves. The ending notation [Packet] indicates a reading in the course packet. Unless otherwise noted, all readings below are required.

Week 1 (September 29 and October 1) Introduction - The Function and Study of Education

- Parsons, Talcott. 1959. "The School Class as a Social System: Some of its Functions in American Society." *Harvard Educational Review*. 29: pp 297-318. [ER]
- Video-in-class: *Preschool in Three Cultures*. Finish viewing in Reserves for Week 2.

Week 2 (October 6 and 8) Classrooms and The Hidden Curriculum

- Video-on-Reserve: *Preschool in Three Cultures*.
- Heath, Shirley. 1982. "Questioning at Home and at School: A Comparative Study." Pp. 102-131 in George Spindler, Ed. *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. [ER]
- Anyon, Jean. 1981. "Social Class and School Knowledge." *Curriculum Inquiry*. 11 (1): pp. 3-42. [ER]
- Orenstein, Perry. 1994. "Learning Silence: Scenes from the Class Struggle." Pp. 3-31 in *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem, and the Confidence Gap*. New York: Anchor Books. [ER]
- Orenstein, Perry. 1994. "You People Are Animals: Life in the Urban School." Pp. 135-154 in *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem, and the Confidence Gap*. New York: Anchor Books. [ER]

Week 3 (October 13 and 15) The History of U.S. Schooling: The Case of Newark

- ANYON, Introduction and Chapters 3-5.
- **Research Paper Option:** Conduct preliminary library research on potential topics.

Week 4 (October 20 and 22) Inequalities Between Classrooms

- Oakes, Jeannie. 1985. Chapters 1, 4, 7, and 10. Pp. 1-14, 61-92, 137-149, and 191-213 in *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality*. New Haven: Yale University Press. [Packet]
- Hallinan, Maureen. 1994. "Tracking: From Theory to Practice." *Sociology of Education*. 67 (2): pp. 79-84. [ER]
- Oakes, Jeannie. 1994. "More than Misapplied Technology: A Normative and Political Response to Hallinan on Tracking." *Sociology of Education*. 67 (2): pp. 84-89. [ER]
- Hallinan, Maureen. 1994. "Further Thoughts on Tracking." *Sociology of Education*. 67 (2): pp. 89-91. [ER]

- Oakes, Jeannie. 1994. "One More Thought." *Sociology of Education*. 67 (2): p. 91. [ER]
- **Research Paper Option:** Visit Professor Shiao for consultation.

Recommended

- Grusky, David B. 2001. Book Review, *Tracking Inequality: Stratification and Mobility in American High Schools*, by Samuel Roundfield Lucas. *Contemporary Sociology*. 30 (6): pp. 574-576. [ER]

Week 5 (October 27 and 29) Inequalities Between Schools

- KOZOL, Introduction and Chapters 2, 4, and 5.
- ANYON, Chapters 1, 6, and 7.
- **Research Paper Option: Research Proposal due by 4 PM, Thursday.**

Week 6 (November 3 and 5) Cultures in Schooling I: Jocks and Burnouts

- Eckert, Penelope. 1989. Chapters 1, 3, 4, and 5. Pp. 1-24, 36-99 in *Jocks and Burnouts: Social Categories and Identity in the High School*. New York: Teachers College Press. [Packet]
- **Educational Biography Paper Due by 4 PM, Thursday.**

Week 7 (November 10 and 12) Cultures in Schooling II: Race and Ethnicity

- Ogbu, John. 1991. "Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities in Comparative Perspective." Pp. 3-33 in Margaret Gibson and John Ogbu, eds. *Minority Status and Schooling: a comparative study of immigrant and involuntary minorities*. New York: Garland. [ER]
- Fordham, Signithia. 1988. "Racelessness as a Factor in Black Students' School Success: Pragmatic Strategy or Pyrrhic Victory?" *Harvard Educational Review*. 58 (1): pp. 54-84. [ER]
- Matute-Bianchi, Maria. 1991. "Situational Ethnicity and Patterns of School Performance among Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Mexican Descent Students." Pp. 205-247 in Margaret Gibson and John Ogbu, eds. *Minority Status and Schooling: a comparative study of immigrant and involuntary minorities*. New York: Garland. [ER]
- Lee, Stacy. 1996. "Academic Achievement Among Asian Americans." Pp. 52-69 in *Unraveling the 'Model Minority' Stereotype: Listening to Asian American Youth*. New York: Teachers College Press. [ER]

Recommended

- Perry, Pamela. 2002. "Clavey High: 'There aren't enough white kids here to have many skaters.'" Pp. 44-72 in *Shades of White: White Kids and Racial Identities in High School*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. [ER]

Week 8 (November 17 and 19) Cultures in Schooling III: Gendering Race and Class

- WEILER, Chapters 1, 2, 4-6*, and 9 (*choose 2 of the 3 chapters to compare).

Recommended

- Video-in-class: *Kelly Loves Tony*. (Selections)

Week 9 (November 24 and 26) Education in Longitudinal Perspective

- SUSKIND, the entire book.
- **Comparative Educational Biography Paper Due in class, Wednesday.**

Week 10 (December 1 and 3) The Challenge of Reform

- Bulman, Robert. 2002. "Teachers in the 'Hood: Hollywood's Middle-Class Fantasy." *Urban Review*. 34 (3): pp. 251-276. [ER]
- WEILER, Chapters 7, 8, and 10.
- Feature Web Site: "See Forever Foundation & The Maya Angelou Public Charter School" at: <http://www.seeforever.org/>.

Recommended

- ANYON, Chapters 2 and 8.

Exam Week (December 8-12)

- **Final Examination: 3:15-5:15 PM, Wednesday, December 10.**
- **Research Paper Option: due 5 PM, Wednesday, December 10.**