

**Course Title:** EDPL 837, Race, Class, and Social Justice: A Policy Seminar in Curriculum Theory and Development  
**Instructor:** Dr. Steven Selden  
**Phone:** (301) 405-3566  
**Email:** [ss22@umail.umd.edu](mailto:ss22@umail.umd.edu)  
**Semester:** Spring, 2004  
**Time:** Thursday 4:15-7:00  
**Location:** 3233 Benjamin  
**Office Hours:** Before and after class and at student and instructor's mutual convenience

*Race prejudice and religious intolerance degrade and defile you quite as much as those whom you attack. But by helping to afford every human being an opportunity to develop [their] potentialities to the full you put yourself in the front rank of the true creators of this earth. You create yourself as a human being and you help to create other human beings.*

Ashley Montagu  
*Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race,*  
(1942)

## *I.* **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An advanced graduate seminar focusing upon critical analyses of the themes, concepts, and language relevant to Curriculum Theory, Policy, and Research. This semester EDPL 837 will focus on public policy issues relating to race, class, and social justice with special reference to patterns of economic and cultural distribution, their impact upon persons at society's margins and on specific curricular responses to injustice. Prerequisite: EDPL 634 or instructor's permission.

### **A Note to Students**

EDPL 837 will be structured this spring much like a conversation in which we join with each other and with our assigned authors in a dynamic interchange. Our purpose will be to reveal, clarify, and share the meanings inherent in the texts and as appropriate, within ourselves. The focus of the readings is upon race, class, and social justice viewed through various disciplinary perspectives. To that end, we will bring the writings of a number of observers from economics, sociology, policy studies, literature, and education to our metaphorical class table.

As with other classes taught by this instructor, this course will draw upon both critical theory and postmodernism in its analysis of policies regarding race, class, and social justice in the context of America's schools. The course will begin with Ronald Dworkin's provocative application of the "rescue" and the "prudent insurance" principles as applied to social justice. It will then move to the work of other authors (Kozol, 1992; Lee & Berkam, 2002, Miringoff), arguing that if left unanalyzed, policies such as the federal "Leave No Child Behind" legislation may decrease, rather than to increase, social justice in America. To put it as succinctly as

possible, EDPL 837 will critically analyze relationships between and the contradictions within the political economy (Collins & Yeskel; Hacker; Miringoff; Wilson), culture (Bell; Morrison; Rodriguez), and curriculum policy (Kozol; Lee & Berkham; Meier; Selden).

<b>EDPL 837 Course Schematic</b>		
<b>A. Conceptual Level</b>	<b>B. Data Level</b>	<b>C. Contradictions</b>
<b>1. Political Economy</b>	Collins & Yeskel; Hacker; Miringoff; Wilson	
<b>2. Culture</b>	Bell; Morrison; Rodriguez	
<b>3. Contested Terrain of the Curriculum</b>	Kozol; Lee & Berkham; Meier; Selden	

In addition, the course will hold as problematic two commonly held notions of post-millennial America. The first is that the benefits of America’s economic expansion of the 1990s have been extended to all citizens; the second is that the problems vexing America’s schools can be solved through a set of internalist policies that divorce the school from the issues of economic inequality and coalition politics.

## **II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS/POLICIES**

### ***A. Student Attendance/Class Participation***

Students will be required to attend all classes, to join in cooperative study groups (where appropriate), to complete all assigned reading, and to participate in all class discussions. It is also suggested that students review the weekly issues of either the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Education Week*, or the education columns of the *New York Times*. Given the rapidly transforming nature of the electronic resources, it is suggested that, if possible, students search these sources on the web (where enrollment fees are not required) in advance of each class. Each class will begin with a brief “for the good of the order” discussion of these items. Students who are unable to attend class will be required to contact classmates or the instructor prior to the next scheduled meeting to determine assignments and to obtain copies of any materials distributed during class.

### ***B. Assignment Schedule/Grade Record Keeper***

Final grades for EDPL 837 will be based on the following:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
1. Class Participation	Every Class	As Appropriate	10%____
2. Midterm Examination	April 8, 2004	6 pages	40%____

3. Reading Contract	May 13, 2004	TBD	50% ____
Final Grade			100% ____

***C. Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities***

Students who have documented disabilities should contact the course instructor during the first week of classes to discuss academic accommodations. Students requesting an accommodation may also contact the Office of Disability Support Services (301-314-7682). DSS will assist in determination and implementation of appropriate academic accommodations.

***D. Academic Integrity***

Academic integrity is the foundation of learning. The University of Maryland has approved a Code of Academic Integrity available on the web [www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Departments/jpo/code\\_acinteg.html](http://www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Departments/jpo/code_acinteg.html). The code prohibits students from cheating on the exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. As part of the course requirements for EDPL 837 students should familiarize themselves with the code and its obligations.

***E. Religious Observances***

The University System of Maryland provides that students should not be penalized because of the observance of their religious beliefs; students enrolled in EDPL 837 shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.

***F. Course and Instructor Evaluation***

The College of Education is in the process of selecting a course evaluation instrument to be administered in all COE classes. This nationally-normed instrument will be completed by the class participants as part of the students' evaluation of EDPL 837. If the new instrument allows, students will have the opportunity to select 10-12 additional course-specific items from a pre-existing item pool during the first class meeting; these items will be included in the final course evaluation. When the summaries of the evaluations become available during the fall semester, they will be mailed to each class participant.

***G. Student-Generated Alternative Readings***

After considering the readings listed in this syllabus, it may be the class judgment that one or more of the texts should be replaced with volumes on similar disciplinary content but with a different conceptual orientation. For example, some may feel that the work Thomas Sowell or William Bennett should have equal footing on the bibliography with that of Toni Morrison and Chuck Collins. This option will be discussed during the second class meeting.

***III.***

***CLASS SCHEDULE***

EDPL 837

Race, Class, and Social Justice: A Policy  
Seminar in Curriculum Theory and Development  
Spring 2004

<i>Date</i>	<i>Concept and Assignment</i>
January 29, 2004	<p><b><u>Introduction and Course Overview: Considering Equality and Fairness in Terms of Race and Class</u></b></p> <p>Introduction, overview, required readings, course requirements.</p> <p>Students select additional items for final course evaluation from item pool.</p> <p>Discuss Reading Contract Assignment.</p>
February 5, 2004	<p><b><u>Theorizing About Equality: The Rescue and Prudent Insurance Conceptions of Social Justice</u></b></p> <p>Dworkin, R., (1994). "Will Clinton's plan be fair?" <i>New York review of books</i>, Volume XLI, Numbers 1 &amp; 2, January, 13, pp. 20-27.</p> <p>Optional Reading: Mackler, A., (2003). <i>Introduction to Jewish and Catholic bioethics: A comparative analysis</i>. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. 0-87840-146-6</p> <p>Class to consider alternative readings/assignments.</p>
February 12, 2004	<p><b><u>Literature and the Phenomenology of Inequality</u></b></p> <p>Morrison, T, (1970). <i>The bluest eye</i>. New York: Washington Square Books.</p>
February 19, 2004	<p><b><u>Inequality and America's Schools: Mocking The Policy of "Leave No Child Behind"</u></b></p> <p>Kozol, J., (1992). <i>Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools</i>. New York: Crown Publishers.</p> <p>Vodeotape: CEPAL Colloquium Series – Jonathan Kozol.</p>
February 26, 2004	<p><b><u>Economic Inequality In America: Mocking The Policy of "Leave No Child Behind"</u></b></p> <p>Collins, C. &amp; Yeskel, F., (2000). <i>Economic apartheid in America</i>. New York: The New Press.</p>
March 4, 2004	<p><b><u>The Nation's Social Health, 1970-2001: Mocking The Policy of "Leave No Child Behind"</u></b></p>

Miringoff, M. L., (2003). *2003 index of social health: Monitoring the social well-being of the nation*. Tarrytown: Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy, Fordham Graduate Center.

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March 10, 2004

**CEPAL Colloquium: Dr. bell hooks: "Social Justice and America"**

Dr. hooks colloquium will take place at 4:15-6:00 in the Nyumburu Coltural Center adjacent to the Stamp Union. This meeting will stand in lieu of our April 1, 2004 class meeting.

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March 11, 2004

**Inequality and School Achievement as Children Begin School**

Lee, V.E., and Berkham, D.T., (2002). *Inequality at the starting gate: Social background differences in achievement as children begin school*. Washington DC: Economic Policy Institute.

Optional reading: Hart, B., and Risley, T.R., (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experiences of Young American children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

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March 18, 2004

**Creating Inequality: The Disappearance of Work in the Ghetto**

Wilson, W. J., (August 18, 1996). "When work disappears." *New York Times Magazine*, pp. 28-54.

Optional Reading: Hacker, A., (1996). Review Essay: "Modest proposals: When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor, by William Julius Wilson." *New York Review of Books*, Volume XLIII, Number 19, November 28, pp. 9-12.

Midterm examination distributed to class. Exam due by 7:00 pm, April 1, 2004.

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March 25, 2004

**(Spring Break – Sorry, No Class)**

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April 1, 2004

**Take-Home Midterm Examination**

Students will complete and return the timed take-home midterm examination by 7:00 pm on April 1, 2004. Exams should be emailed as rtf file to course instructor at, [ss22@umail.umd.edu](mailto:ss22@umail.umd.edu)

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April 8, 2004

**The Role of Intellectual Structures in Legitimizing Inequality: The Organization of the Eugenics and American Education**

Selden, S., (1999). *Inheriting shame: The story of eugenics and racism in America*. New York: Teachers College Press.

See also: "Popularizing Eugenics," *Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement*, an in-line archive of materials from national databases relating the popular eugenics movement in America. Sponsored by a grant from the Ethical, Legal, and Social Influences (ELSI) division of the Human Genome Project. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's DNA Learning Center (<http://vector.cshl.org/eugenics/>)

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April 15, 2004

**Race, Color, and Identity: American the Brown**

Rodriguez, R., (2003). *Brown: The last discovery of America*. New York: Penguin Books.

Pay your taxes!

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April 22, 2004

**Resisting Racism: Transforming Equity and Equality**

Bell, D., (1992). *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism*. New York: Basic Books.

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April 29, 2004

**The Possibility of Transcending Inequality: Deborah Meier and the Story of Central Park East Elementary and Secondary School**

Meier, D., (2002), *The power of their ideas: Lessons for America from a small school in Harlem*. Boston: Beacon Press.

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May 6, 2004

**Class-Selected Reading Assignment**

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May 13, 2004

**In Summary: Discussing, Unpacking, Integrating the Semester's Readings and Analyses**

Completed Reading Contracts due to course instructor. Class to discuss the activity and its implications for understanding the issues of race, class, social justice and curriculum policy with class.

**IV.  
COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY  
EDPL 837  
Policy Seminar in Curriculum Theory and Development  
Spring 2004**

***A. Books To Be Purchased***

Bell, D., (1992). *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism*. New York: Basic Books.

- Collins, C. & Yeskel F (2000). *Economic apartheid in America*. New York: The New Press.
- Kozol, J., (1992). *Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Lee, V.E., and Berkham, D.T., (2002). *Inequality at the starting gate: Social background differences in achievement as children begin school*. Washington DC: Economic Policy Institute.
- Meier, D., (2002), *The power of their ideas: Lessons for America from a small school in Harlem*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Morrison, T., (1970). *The bluest eye*. New York: Washington Square Books.
- Rodriguez, R., (2003). *Brown: The last discovery of America*. New York: Penguin Books. ISBN:
- Selden, S., (1999). *Inheriting shame: The story of eugenics and racism in America*. New York: Teachers College Press.

### ***B. Materials Distributed by Instructor***

- Dworkin, R., (1994). "Will Clinton's plan be fair?" *New York review of books*, Volume XLI, Numbers 1 & 2, January, 13, pp. 20- 27.
- Optional Reading: Hacker, A., (1996). Review Essay: *Modest proposals: When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor, by William Julius Wilson*. New York Review of Books, Volume XLIII, Number 19, November 28, pp. 9-12.
- Miringoff, M. L., (2003). *2003 index of social health: Monitoring the social well-being of the nation*. Tarrytown: Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy, Fordham Graduate Center.
- Wilson, W. J., (August 18, 1996). "When work disappears." *New York Times Magazine*, pp. 28-54.

*January 30, 2004*