

University of Maryland
College of Education
Education and Society
EDPL 600
Spring 2007
Tuesday, 4:15-7:00
Tawes Room # 2212

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Office Hours:
By appointment

Course Overview:

Education and Society is an introductory course to graduate studies in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership. In this course students consider the social origins, purposes and consequences of education in modern societies from sociological, economic, political, historical and philosophical perspectives. A primary goal of this introductory course is to help students identify and debate educational issues that cut across different areas of study in the department of Education Policy and Leadership (curriculum theory; organizational leadership; higher education; international education; social foundations), and that *problematize* the notion of *educational opportunity* for educators and policymakers. Principal themes explored in the readings, course discussions, and group-work, include:

Cultural values and beliefs

Whose cultural values and beliefs are promoted through educational opportunities, in particular in complex societies where cultural values are heterogeneous and often contradictory? In considering this question students examine secular and religious goals for education, and the role of the media in shaping these goals.

Human capital and social mobility

How are educational opportunities distributed, and what are the consequences of the distribution of educational opportunities for social mobility, social stratification, and social well-being? In considering this question, students examine how different countries structure and control opportunities to gain technical skills and knowledge.

Commercialization of education and the role of technology

What are the social consequences of market-based pressures to transform educational goods into commodities? In considering this question, students examine the competing academic and commercial goals that educators face in a capitalist society.

Democracy and moral ends of education

What principles should inform the content, organization, and distribution of educational opportunities in a democratic society? In considering this question, students examine different philosophical arguments regarding the “ends” and “means” of education, and the role of education in sustaining civic life in a democratic society.

Class Format and Approach

The course is organized around five units. In the first introductory unit, we examine alternative theoretical perspectives regarding the relationship between education and society. In units two through five, we examine the role of education in preserving cultural beliefs and values; the role of education in promoting human capital and economic prosperity; the potential consequences of the commercialization of education; and the role of education in enriching our civic life.

Classes are a combination of lectures, discussions of readings, and group-work. Group-work assignments vary in format (i.e. *performed debates* regarding contentious policy issues; *brainstorming sessions* focused on producing research questions, *consensus building sessions* that produce provocative statements about the relationship between schools and society). Groups are organized around areas of study in EDPL (curriculum theory group, higher education group, social foundations group, organization group, and international education group); as well as around related areas of interest for students attending this class who come from other departments. Groups are further organized, as much as possible, to include students at different levels in their academic programs. Approximately one third of the time is devoted to discussions of readings, another one third to group-work, and the last third to group presentations/findings.

Requirements

Students are expected to complete all of the readings, attend class regularly, deliver assignments on due dates, and participate fully in class discussions. Students, who for valid reasons cannot attend a class, should let the professor know in advance. Absent students are responsible for making arrangements to acquire missed materials and information from other students.

Students are required to hand in their assignments at the beginning of class on due dates. One of the assignments is a presentation to be delivered during class. One assignment also requires, in addition to the submission of a hard copy, the submission of an electronic copy. Late papers will be penalized a letter grade unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor, and only in extreme circumstance (e.g., serious health problem) will an incomplete be granted. Distribution of grades and due dates for assignments are:

- 1. Class participation and group work—20% of course grade.**
- 2. First assignment due March 6 (week 6)—15% of course grade:
[10% of grade for written prospectus / 5% of grade for presentation]
Prospectus for the final paper & Presentation of topic to class
Note: an electronic copy is to be emailed to me before 4:15pm on March 6, in addition to a hard copy delivered at beginning of class on March 6.**
- 3. Second assignment due March 27 (week 9)—10% of course grade:
Reflective paper**
- 4. Third assignment due April 17 (week 12)—15% of course grade:
Annotated bibliography**
- 5. Fourth assignment due May 8 (week 15)—40% of course grade:
[35% of grade for final paper / 5% of grade for presentation]
Final paper & Presentation**

Description of Assignments

Prospectus for the Final Paper: [Due March 6]

In this very short assignment (1 page / Double-Spaced) students describe the topic for the final paper—>a critical examination of the role of education in a specific society or social group. In this one page prospectus students should at least:

- Provide a title (even if tentative)
- Identify and describe the society (e.g., American democratic society; The People’s Republic of China, etc.) or social group (e.g., elementary school teachers in a particular public or private school of a particular country; students in a particular state or private college/university; policy makers at the federal, state, or local levels; organizations of independent schools; the American Educational Research Association; etc) that will be examined.
- Briefly explain the scholarly importance of the topic.

and

Presentation of topic to class: [Due March 6]

Students will explain their research topics to the class in a timed three-minute oral presentation. This is an important part of the learning process in this particular class because it provides an opportunity for students to identify other students with intersecting research interests, and to establish collaborative, collegiate support networks. Students can build on each other’s knowledge base—a particularly useful exercise in preparation for the annotated bibliography assignment that follows.

For this assignment students should:

- State their research title
- Describe the society or social group they will examine
- Briefly explain the scholarly importance of the topic

Note: Students can read directly from their papers if they wish—provided the reading does not exceed 3 minutes (It is highly suggested that students time their presentations in preparation for this assignment).

Reflective Paper: [Due March 27]

In this short assignment (1 to 3 pages / Double-Spaced), students respond to ideas in the readings that captured their interest, imagination, and curiosity. Students can structure their paper around a quotation, an entire argument advanced by one of the authors, or a recurring theme across readings. They can argue for or against author(s)’ idea(s); offer new questions that might further advance or develop the discussions brought up by authors in the readings; or explain how the ideas challenge or confirm their own understanding.

This assignment is *not a summary!* This assignment is an opportunity for students to critically articulate their responses to arguments regarding the roles and purposes of education in society as advanced in the readings—an opportunity for students to begin developing (or to develop further) their scholarly contributions, and to engage in dialogues with their scholarly communities.

Annotated Bibliography: [Due April 17]

In this assignment (5 to 10 pages / Double-Spaced) students cite at least 10 sources that inform their topic. Sources should include a mix of published articles, texts, or reports relevant to proposed final paper. The bibliography should be consistent with an appropriate style manual (e.g., The American Psychological Association (APA); or the Chicago Style Manual), include *a brief abstract for each source*, and a *statement of the relevance of the source to the final paper*.

Note:

(a) It is expected that students will produce their original abstracts (rather than download abstracts provided in electronic citations). Composing abstracts is an important element in the process of learning to synthesize complex information, and to communicate that information clearly and succinctly.

(b) When stating the relevance of the source, students are expected to be as specific as possible. For example—does the source help contextualize the topic (by providing historical background or a theoretical framework)? Does it challenge student’s analysis (as it has developed to this point) or does it confirm it? Is the source a classic example of treatments of the topic?... *Examples will be provided to help beginning graduate students who have never produced annotated bibliographies.*

Final Paper: [Due May 8]

*****All students are required to discuss the progress of their final papers with me at least once. Please make sure to schedule an appointment with me by November 7th the latest. We can meet in person, or discuss your progress through email communications or by phone. A ten to fifteen minute chunk of time should be set aside for our conversation.*****

In this assignment (10 to 15 pages / Double-Spaced), students critically examine the role or use of education in a specific society or social group. In this final paper, students should:

1. Introduce their topic:
--identify the social group and why it might be important to examine how people in this group use or create their educational opportunities, or what meanings they attribute to the role of education in their lives. In the context of this course, you are welcomed to provide personal reasons for examining your topic.
2. Develop a coherent and clearly reasoned analysis:
--of the ways in which a group of people define the role of education, and the uses they make of a particular educational system. For example, how do charter school advocates in the D.C. area (or across the nation—if that’s feasible) define educational purposes? What purposes do foreign exchange students attribute to their education in American higher education institutions? How do first generation immigrant Latino parents understand public school education in comparison to second or third generations? How does the American federal government construct education for its citizens, in contrast to the Japanese government?
3. Support interpretations with data and sources

4. Provide a summative and reflective conclusion
--you are encouraged here to express your own opinions, bring to light your own experiences, and formulate research questions that might advance our understanding of the relationship between education and society.
5. Provide a bibliography

and

Presentation of final paper analysis to class

Students will present their analyses to the class in a timed five-minute oral presentation.

For this assignment students should:

- State their research topic and scholarly importance of their analysis
- Describe the society or social group they examined
- Explain the major findings/claims/observations derived from their analyses

University of Maryland Point Distribution for Grades

A+ = 95-100; A = 89-94; A- = 83-88;

B+ = 77-82; B = 71-76; B- = 65-70;

C+ = 59-64

Summary of Key Dates

March 6: Prospectus for final paper and oral presentation

March 27: Reflective paper

April 17: Annotated bibliography

May 8: Final paper

Additional Information

Documented Disabilities

The University of Maryland encourages instructors to make accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss an academic accommodation, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Honor Code

"The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>."

Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs. Whenever possible, students will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. Please advise me as soon as possible of any absences for religious observances.

Required Material

The readings are outlined in the syllabus. Other than the assigned individual readings, the following books are required:

Anderson, James and Byrne, Dara (Editors). (2004). *The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v Board of Education*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Bok, Derek. (2003). *Universities in the Marketplace. The Commercialization of Higher Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gutmann, Amy. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Peshkin, Alan. (1986). *God's Choice. The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rosenbaum, James E. (2001). *Beyond College for All: Career Paths for the Forgotten Half*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Additional readings are on the e-reserve course system, accessed via databases or on reserve at Reserve Desk in the basement of Benjamin Building. Throughout the course, students and professor will supply latest articles relevant to weekly class discussions.

Chronology / Topical Outline

Unit I. Theoretical Perspectives

Week 1: January 30—Introductions, Course Review & Logistics

- Overview of course syllabus and materials
- Team Formation
- *Break*
- Team work/Warm-up: Constructing meanings of *education*, bottom-up.
- Whole class discussion: Identifying broad cross-cutting themes

We will engage in a broad discussion regarding the roles and functions of *education* by exploring its meanings from bottom-up. In group-work, students will identify their personal (student) definitions of education, and further explore possible meanings of education from teachers', parents', school administrators', religious authorities', policy makers', state and federal legislators', and business leaders' points of view. In a whole-class discussion we will compare the various meanings and broadly identify intersecting and/or parallel economic, political, sociological, historical, and philosophical conceptualizations of *education*.

Week 2: February 6—*The Functions of Education in Society*

Required Readings for this week include:

No Child Left Behind Act. Can be accessed via web on:

<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/index/az/index.html>

Note: Read Section A (accountability/achievement gap/adequate yearly progress); and read section L-> legislation / Title I: Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged / Statement of Purpose.

Turner, J. (1997). Education. In *The Institutional Order. Economy, Kinship, Religion, Polity, Law, and Education in Evolutionary and comparative perspectives*. (Chapter 12 pp.226-244). New York: Longman.

Turner, J. (1997). Education in Institutional Context. In *The Institutional Order. Economy, Kinship, Religion, Polity, Law, and Education in Evolutionary and comparative perspectives*. (Chapter 13 pp.245-255). New York: Longman.

Collins, R. (1977)*. *Some Comparative Principles of Educational Stratification*. *Harvard Educational Review*, 47 (1), 1-27.

Walzer, M. (1983)*. Education. In *Spheres of Justice. A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (Chapter 8, pp. 197-226). New York: Basic Books.

* *Older but classic works*

Lecture/class discussion:

- . Jonathan Turner's examination of relationship between education and society using an institutional framework.
- . Randall Collins' discussion of education as a set of "cultural markets."
- . Michael Walzer's philosophical construction of schools as mediating institutions

Break

Team work:

Discuss the *No Child Left Behind Act* from Turner's institutional perspective, Collins' "cultural markets" perspective, and Walzer's perspective of schools as mediating institutions in a pluralistic society. Tasks: (a) produce three statements (one for each perspective) that explain the legislation from Turner's, Collins' and Walzer's perspectives; and (b), produce three statements (one for each perspective) that problematize the legislation from your groups' point of view (i.e. implications or repercussions of legislation for curriculum theory, for organizational leadership, for higher education, etc.) in light of readings, whole class and group discussions.

Whole Class discussion: Identifying cross-cutting and divergent themes.

Week 3: February 13—*Informal Structures of Education*

Required Readings for this week include:

Young Techies Say No to College by Matt Richtel (September 8, 2002)
http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/featured_articles/20000908friday.html
(June, 2006).

King, Wilma. (2005). *African-American Childhoods: Historical Perspectives from Slavery to Civil Rights*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
Read the Introduction and one of the following chapters: *Interactions between Enslaved and Slaveholder Children in the Old South / Slave Children in Professional Households in the Antebellum South*.

Coletta, N.J. (1975) Education without schools: Learning among the Ponopeans. *Teachers College Record*, 76, 625-637. This is an older anthropological piece, but illustrative of its time-> we will critique author's constructions of Ponopeans in light of current post-colonial conceptual frameworks.

Finkelstein, B. (1979). Reading, writing, and the acquisition of identity in nineteenth century America. In B. Finkelstein (Ed.), *Regulated children/liberated children: Education in psychohistorical perspective* (pp. 114-140). New York: Psychohistory Press. This too is an older piece, but exemplary of its treatment of topic.

Graves, B. (1989). Informal Aspects of Education in Selected American Occupations. In M.W. Coy (Editor). *Apprenticeship: From Theory to Method and Back Again* (pp.51-64). Albany, NY: Suny.

Resnick, L.B. (1987). Learning in School and Out. *Educational Researcher* (December), 13-20.

Lecture/class discussion:

We consider loosely structured informal educational arrangements within the context of homogeneous and heterogeneous societies, and in reference to civil rights.

Break

Team work:

Problematize, in a statement or question, the notion of informal learning in present-day U.S. society.

Whole Class discussion: Identifying cross-cutting and divergent themes.

Week 4: February 20—Formal Structures of Education

Required Readings for this week include:

Boli, J., Ramirez, F.O. & Meyer, J.W. (1985). Explaining the Origins and Expansion of Mass Education. *Comparative Education Review*, 29, 145-170.

Labaree, D. (1997). Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34, 39-81.

Ogletree, Charles. (2004). All Too Deliberate. In Anderson, J. and Byrne, D. (Editors). *The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v Board of Education*. (pp.45-60).

Lecture/class discussion:

Formal structures of education date at least back to 2,500 BC. However, formal educational systems have only recently emerged as the predominant educational arrangements. We discuss aspects of this transformation, including the emergence of the state, and the policy issues that emerge when comparing public and private interests, particularly in a democratic state.

Break

Team work:

Each group will divide into two sub-teams to prepare a five-minute debate on the pros and cons of highly structured formal education as it applies to the group's particular focus. For example, half of the curriculum theory group will extol the virtues of a highly structured and formalized education (with implications for the very existence of this branch of study of course), and the other half of the group will extol the limitations to curriculum development of highly formalized educational structures; and so on for each group. Particular emphasis is to be placed on implications for questions of equity and civil rights for all American citizens.

Whole Class Activity:

The groups will perform their debates. Each debate will be followed by observations and comments. Cross-cutting and divergent themes will be identified.

Unit II. Social reproduction: Whose Values?

Week 5: February 27—Underlying Value Structures / Mechanisms of Social Control

Required Readings for this week include:

Anderson, James and Byrne, Dara (Editors). (2004). *The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v Board of Education*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
Read Preface and Chapters 1, 2 and 7

Peshkin, A. (1986). *God's Choice. The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Read chapters 1-5

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read Introduction

Lecture/Class Discussion:

- We consider the setting for Peshkin's study, the underlying value structure, and mechanisms of social control.
 - We consider challenges to social control as explored in excerpts from *The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v Board of Education*.
 - We consider notion of "conscious social reproduction" as advanced by Gutmann
- Break

Team Work:

Teams will create a statement about the relationship between education and society in America that focuses on the question of values.

Whole Class Activity: Groups present their statements and class identifies intersecting themes.

Week 6: March 6—Student research in progress / presentations

Prospectus for final paper due + Presentations

Required Readings for this week include:

Anderson, James and Byrne, Dara (Editors). (2004). *The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v Board of Education*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
Read Chapter 8

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read Chapter 1

Peshkin, A. (1986). *God's Choice. The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Read chapters 6-9

Today students present their research topics / Proposed schedule

4:15- 5:15 -> overview of readings for today

5:15-5:35-> break

5:35-7:00 -> presentations and questions

Week 7: March 13—Public good in “pluralist” societies

Required Readings for this week include:

Anderson, James and Byrne, Dara (Editors). (2004). *The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v Board of Education*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
Read Chapters 4 and 5

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read Chapter 2

Peshkin, A. (1986). *God's Choice. The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Read chapters 10-11

Salomone, R.C. (2000). The Common School: Past as Prologue. In *Visions of Schooling: Conscience, Community, and Common Education* (Chapter 2, pp.10-41). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lecture / Class Discussion:

- Early tensions between competing religious groups for control and influence of educational institutions in the United States
- Providing a common set of educational experiences in a pluralistic society

Break

Team Work:

Produce two statements, one in which you argue the pros, and the other in which you argue the cons, of a “total institution.”

Whole Class Activity:

Groups present their pros and cons—class critiques.

Unit III. Human Capital and Technical Skills

Week 8: March 20—*Link between education and work*

Required Readings for this week include:

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ:
Princeton University Press.
Read Chapter 4

Rosenbaum, J. (2001). *Beyond College for All: Career Paths for the Forgotten Half*. New
York: Russell Sage Foundation
Read chapters 1-5.

Lecture / Class Discussion:

- Market and network theories of the high school to work transition
- Tensions between democratic and capitalist aims of education

Break

Team Work:

Teams will discuss (1) the correspondence between academic demands and job requirements from team members' own experiences; (2) the correspondence between graduate studies in education and demands on practitioners (teachers/administrators).

Whole class activity:

Teams present main points of discussions.

Week 9: March 27—*Link between schools and economic opportunities*

Reflective paper due

Required Readings for this week include:

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ:
Princeton University Press.
Read chapter 5

Rosenbaum, J. (2001). *Beyond College for All: Career Paths for the Forgotten Half*. New
York: Russell Sage Foundation
Read chapters 6-9.

Lecture/Class Discussion:

- Social infrastructures and employers' use of information
- Disconnect between schools and work in America
- The cases of Japan and Germany
- Distribution of school resources and implications for social mobility

Break

Team Work:

Brainstorm broad outlines of a policy that might maximize the school-to-work connection within an American reality.

Whole Class Activity:

Teams present and explain.

Week 10: April 3—Democratic schools in capitalist societies

Required Readings for this week include:

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read chapter 6

Rosenbaum, J. (2001). *Beyond College for All: Career Paths for the Forgotten Half*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation
Read chapters 10-12.

Rothstein, R. (2002 January). *Out of Balance: Our Understanding of How Schools Affect Society and How Society Affects Schools*. Paper presented at the 39th anniversary conference of the Spencer Foundation.

Break

Team Work:

Craft a statement or research question that problematizes the tension between democratic and capitalist aims of education in the U.S.

Whole Class Activity:

Teams present and explain.

Unit IV. Commercialization of Education

Week 11: April 10—*Capitalist market-based pressures to “commodify” education*

Required Readings for this week include:

Bok, D. (2003). *Universities in the Marketplace. The Commercialization of Higher Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read chapters 1-6

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read chapter 7

Lecture/Class Discussion:

- consequences of framing education policy as an economic good (last week's reading)
- costs and benefits of commercialization of higher education

Break

Team Work:

Compose, in one to three sentences, “the” purpose of education in a consumer-based society. Devote one other sentence to the purpose of your group’s academic interest within the context of a consumer-based society.

Whole Class Activity:

Groups present and defend their purpose statements.

**Week 12: April 17—*Consequences of commercialization of education for society*
Annotated bibliography due**

Required Readings for this week include:

Bok, D. (2003). *Universities in the Marketplace. The Commercialization of Higher Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read chapters 7-11

Giroux, H.A. (1998). Education Incorporated? *Educational Leadership* (October), 12-17

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic Education*, 2nd Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Read Chapter 8

Lecture/Class Discussion:

- We consider Bok’s recommendations for how to discourage policies that promote commercial success at the expense of educational success.
- We consider the role of television and media

Break

Class Visit to Hornbake Library to Watch Movie: *Beyond Good and Evil*

Unit V. Democratic Education

Week 13: April 24—*Purpose of education in a democratic society*

Required Readings for this week include:

Gutmann, Amy. (1999). *Democratic Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.
Re-read Introduction through Chapter 5

Lecture/Class Discussion:

- Examining education from a moral and philosophical perspective
- Gutmann's principles of non-repression and non-discrimination

Break

Team Work:

Prepare a five-minute debate on democratic merits of a policy of your choosing (NCLB; bilingual education; title IX; Brown v Board of Education, etc.) using Gutmann's criteria of non-repression and non-discrimination.

Whole Class Activity:

Groups debate—Class critiques

Week 14: May 1—*Purpose of education in a democratic society continued*

Required Readings for this week include:

Gutmann, Amy. (1999). *Democratic Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.
Re-read Chapters 5 through 7 and read Epilogue

Lecture/Class Discussion:

- Examining education from a moral and philosophical perspective
- Gutmann on racial discrimination

Team Work:

An activity of students' choice

Whole Class Activity: Groups present

Week 15: May 8

Final Paper Due and Presentations

- Students present their findings.
- Group-Work: synthesize running-group notes
- Course evaluation

