EDUCATION IN AMERICAN CULTURE

EPE 301
Spring 1999

Dr. Karen Tice
Office: 134b Taylor Education Building
Phone: 257-7976 office, 233-1773 home
Office hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 and Thursdays 2:00-3:15 and by appointment.
E-mail: kwtice01@pop.uky.edu

Course Description:
This course explores the nature of teaching and learning in American society. We will critically examine different perspectives on education and schools, historical and contemporary aspirations for education, the practices--often contradictory--that constitute schooling, and the diversity of educational experiences based on race, class, gender, ethnic, and regional differences.

Course Objectives:
To promote skills of critical analysis by examining and evaluating historical and contemporary debates about the nature of schooling and education in American society.

To examine a variety of approaches to education, assessing their strengths and weakness, with a goal of developing our own understandings, theory, and practice.

To problematicize "education in American culture" by examining the organizational, economic, and political dimensions of schools and the practices that marginalize or empower particular groups of people.

To explore the ways in which race, class, gender, and ethnic relationships shape the educational experiences of all people in society.

Required Readings:

Requirements:

1) **Class Attendance and Participation**

   Attendance and participation in class is essential, not only because examinations will cover what goes on there, but also because a vital part of this course consists of an informed conversation of ideas, reactions, and interpretations that occurs in class. Additionally, since this course in large part is an exploration of issues that affect our own lives, you are expected to contribute your thoughts and questions to our collective consideration of these matters. You are therefore expected to complete all assigned readings on times indicated in the course outline and to be prepared to discuss, challenge, and argue the issues they raise during the class sessions when they are due. Attendance at all class sessions is essential since our goal is to create an atmosphere in which people are comfortable and engaged. This atmosphere cannot develop if you are absent from class. More than one unexcused absence will lower your grade by one letter grade.

2) **Mini-Projects and Mock School Board Hearings.**

   Throughout the semester, students will be expected to complete mini-assignments and participate in the simulation on the History of Education. Additionally, in small groups, each student will be required to plan and conduct one mock school board hearing. These school board hearings will take place in conjunction with our reading on multicultural education and school reform and will be an opportunity for students to consider a variety of perspectives regarding these issues. For the mock school board hearings, the class will be divided into groups including school board members and witnesses for and against the issue under consideration who will be expected to prepare testimony. Students will participate alternatively as witnesses and as board members. More specific guidelines for these assignments will be distributed later in the semester. These projects will count for 20% of your final grade.

3) **School Daze: Experiencing Diversity—Analytic Essay I.**

   You are to conduct two in-depth interviews with persons different from yourself about their educational experiences. The essay discussing these interviews should consider how race, class, and gender were are interwoven into these persons' educational experiences and expectations. You will be expected to use concepts covered in class and readings to inform your analysis of your interviews. (teacher expectations, peer culture,
extra-curricular activities, class and race segregation) We will work on developing interview questions in class. A short class discussion/presentation of your interviews is required. This assignment will count for 20% of your grade.

4) **Field Experience – Analytic Essay II.**

   A field experience placement of 15 hours is required for all EPE 301 students. Essay II is an exploration of your field placement in relation to the concepts and perspectives addressed in this course. Your analysis should integrate course readings and discussion and may be supplemented with other readings, observations or interviews. More specific guidelines for this assignment will be distributed later in the semester. A short class discussion/presentation on your field experience is required. This assignment will count for 20% of your grade.

5) **Two Take Home Exams/Projects.**

   Examination/Projects will require the integration of assigned readings and classroom discussions. These two exams will count for 40% of your grade. The second exam may, in part, be done in groups.

---

**Preliminary Course Outline and Readings**

1) January 14. Introduction to the Course and Each Other.

**Unit One: History of Education in American Culture**

**Child Saving or Saving Society?**

2) January 19.

   **RESERVE READINGS**


3) January 21.

   **RESERVE READING:**


   **RESERVE READINGS:**

2) "The Dangers of Classifying as Merely Backward Children who are Feebleminded," OR "The Delinquent Children of Immigrant Parents," in the Proceedings of the National Conference on Charities and Correction.

5) January 28.

No New Reading. In Class Simulation on the History of Education.

Unit Two: Cultural Politics and Schooling in America

6) February 2.

“Education as Deculturalization, Native Americans and Puerto Ricans,” chapter one and two in Joel Spring, Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality.

Film: “In the White Man’s Image.”

***Field Placement|Project Proposal Due

7) February 4.

“Education as Segregation: African Americans and Mexican Americans,” Chapter three and four in Joel Spring, Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality.

**** Mini-assignment I Due- Cultural Artifacts

8) February 9.


Reserve Reading:


Film: “Taking Back Our Schools.”

RESERVE READING:


Film: The Battle Over the National History Standards


Reserve Reading:

Unit Three: Education & Social Inequality: Gender, Race, and Class

11) February 18. Learning Gender


Film- "Killing Me Softly"

***First Exam Passed Out

12) February 23. Learning Gender

Eder- pp. 61-102

RESERVE READING: "Getting Hassled For Who You Are"

***Miniassignment II Due- Learning Gender Outside of the Classroom: Mass Media.

13) February 25. Learning Gender

Finish Eder. pp. 103-170.

Film: “Failing at Fairness”

*** NOTE: First Exam Due
14) March 2. Learning Gender.
   RESERVE READING:


   RESERVE READINGS:

   1) Sklover. “The 25th Anniversary of Title IX.”
   2) "Girl's softball team exiled to a field not of its dreams." Herald Leader article.

   RESERVE READING:

   1) Holly Sklar. “The Upperclass and Mothers N The Hood.”

17) March 11. Social Class and Education.
   RESERVE READINGS:

   3) "Bob Cole."
      (the latter two articles appeared in Race, Class, and Gender-An Anthology. Andersen and Hill Collins, eds. Wadsworth, 1995).

   RESERVE READING:

19) March 25. Privilege and Education

RESERVE READING:
1) Peggy McIntosh. "White Privilege and Male Privilege."

20) March 30. Race, Gender, & Class

Begin Beals: Warriors Don't Cry Pp. 1-92

*** Note: Analytic Essay I Due.

*** Begin Class Presentations on Exploring Differences

21) April 1. Race, Gender, & Class

Finish Beals, Pp. 92-188

Film- "Ethnic Notions"

22) April 6. Race, Gender, and Class

RESERVE READING:
Christine Sleeter. "How White Teachers Construct Race"

23) April 8. Read for Mock School Board Hearings.

In class group meeting.

24) April 13. Debates over Multicultural Education

RESERVE READINGS:
Multicultural Studies: Representative or Divisive, pp. 223-230.

Guy-Sheftall. "Universities Should Teach Multiculturalism."

Duster. "Universities Should Strive for a Culturally Diverse Student Body."

D'Souza. Cultural Diversity Does Not Produce Quality Education

Bonifer. "Universities Should Not Foster Segregation."

(All of the above articles were taken from Bender and Leone, eds. Education in America—Opposing Viewpoints, Greenhaven Press, 1992).

****Mock School Board Hearings
25) April 15.
Reserve Reading:

*** Note: Analytic Essay II Due

Begin Class Presentations: Field Experiences

26) April 20. School Reform

Film: “I’m What This Is All About”

27) April 22. Kentucky Education Reform Act

RESERVE READINGS:
File on Kentucky Education Reform

*** Mock School Board Hearings

28) April 27.

Reserve Reading:


29) April 29.

Rap-up and Discussion of Final Projects