Rationale
The study of philosophy of education should help educators in the articulation of their beliefs and assumptions about education and schooling; and of their goal as educators. Philosophy examines people's beliefs for what they assume about the nature of knowledge, reality and value. It assists in the reconstruction of one's beliefs to form more coherent and consistent patterns, and in the discernment of such patterns in the beliefs of others.

Texts
Plato, Protagoras
B.F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity (out of print)
John Dewey, Democracy and Education
Materials other than books are available at Johnny Print.

Assignments
1. Members of the class are asked to keep a journal of reactions to the readings, class discussions, or other related experiences. Journals should be personal reactions to what students find most relevant to their own thinking. Each week I will ask for a volunteer to present their reactions to the readings (in whole or part). In response, the rest of the class should practice what Peter Elbow calls "methodological believing." Elbow writes: "When a reader is telling what she sees in a text or what happened to her in reading,...the other readers must not just shut up, they must [should?] actively try as hard as they can to believe her--to see and experience the text as she does. (In this way we may see) something faint...which she is particularly good at seeing." ("Methodological Doubting and Believing: Contraries in Inquiry," in Embracing Contraries, NY: Oxford, 1986, pp. 254-300). For five minutes following a reaction statement members of the class should discuss what is helpful or interesting about the reaction statement; what are features of it that others might be notice; in what sense is it true? In place of a journal entry on the Protagoras students are asked to write a two-page paper (due Sept. 9) in answer to the question, What is Socrates' Philosophy of Education (in the Protagoras)?

2. The Final Report. For the second class meeting students should prepare a list of ten topics in education which are of particular relevance to their interests. We will discuss these topics with a view to identifying possible philosophical issues that they give rise to. Students should then select a particular topic as the basis for an oral report to the class during the final weeks of the semester, discussing the philosophical issues involved. The report should take approximately 30 minutes, and involve the class in philosophic
discussion. The report should become the basis for a position paper (approximately 5 pages) due the final class session.

Evaluation
Final evaluation will give approximately equal weight to the reports (both oral and written), the journals and to the quality of class participation. My aim is not to encourage competition in the last of these areas, but to give students credit for an area I consider vital to the success of the class.

Tentative Schedule of Reports

Aug. 26 Introduction

Sept. 2 Philosophy vs. Sophistry. Read: Plato, Protagoras. Hand in list of 10 educational topics (see "assignments")

Sept. 9 Socratic Philosophy of Education. Read: William Hare and John Portelli, Philosophy of Education, 2nd ed., Chs. 5 (Bailin) and 20 (Gutmann); Henry Perkinson, "Socratic Approach to Education Today" (packet). Write (2 pages): What is Socrates' philosophy of education (in the Protagoras)?


Sept. 23 The Social Self: Dewey and George Herbert Mead. Read: Dewey, Democracy and Education, Chapters 1 through 8.

Sept. 30 Progressivism. Read: Hare & Portelli, Ch. 24 (Clark and Wilson), 15 (Rorty).

Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism. Read: John Dewey, Democracy and Education, Chapters 24 and 25.

Oct. 7 Existentialist Response to Dewey. Read: David Denton, ed., Existentialism and Phenomenology in Education, Chapters 1 and 2 (in packet); Hare and Portelli, Ch. 14 (Greene).

Oct. 14 The Structure of Disciplines Movement: Bruner and Piaget. Read: Robert Mason, Contemporary Educational Theory, Chapter 3 (in packet); Hare and Portelli, Ch. 8 (Siegel).

Oct. 28  Critique of Behaviorism.  Read:  Denton, Aspect C, Ch. 8, and Aspect D, Ch. 9 (in packet).  Hare & Portelli, Chapters 1 (Carr) and 23 (Eisner).

Nov. 7  Moral Education.  Read: Hare & Portelli, Chapters 17 (Noddings), 21 (Singh), and 13 (Freire).

Nov. 11  Liberalism and Neutrality.  Read: Hare & Portelli, Chs. 19 (Callan), 9 (Dearden), 11 (Hare); 10 (Warnock).

Nov. 18  Postmodern developments in philosophy of education.  Read: Madhu Prakash, "What Are People For?" (in packet).  Hare & Portelli, Chs. 26 (Bellous) and 22 (Bailin).

Nov. 25  THANKSGIVING

Dec. 2  The last three meetings will be used for reports
Dec. 9  from members of the class.
Dec. 16 (EXAM WEEK).  Class evaluation.  All journals and written reports due.