Education 245: History of American School Reform  
Winter 2013  
T/TH: 1010-1155AM  
Willis 114

Professor Jeffrey Snyder  
Willis 108  
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Office Hours: M: 1-230PM; W: 11AM-1230PM; and by appointment

Course Description

“We have long pinned our hopes on education,” says educational historian David Labaree. “It’s the main way we try to express our ideals and solve our problems.” Is he right? This course examines the history of American education as a long series of reform cycles, from the genesis of the public school system in the mid-nineteenth century to the passage of the No Child Left Behind Legislation in 2002. Drawing on both primary and secondary sources, we will focus on the origins, development and legacies of four key school reform movements—the Common School movement, progressive education, school desegregation and accountability.

Course Readings


* All additional readings will be available on Moodle *

Course Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation (15%)</td>
<td>Every class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation (20%)</td>
<td>Tuesdays, starting January 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Analytical Essays (20% each)</td>
<td>Rolling Deadlines, no later than 1159PM on Friday, January 25 AND Friday, February 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper (25%)</td>
<td>1-page proposal due by 1159PM on Friday, February 15</td>
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<td>Paper due by 5PM on Saturday, March 16</td>
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Course Outline

INTRODUCTIONS

TH, January 3

• course syllabus (print out and read in advance of class)

T, January 8

• Richard Elmore and Milbrey McLaughlin, “Reform Redux”
• David Labaree, “Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals”

THE COMMON SCHOOL MOVEMENT

TH, January 10

• Edward Ayers, “Antebellum Era”
• Carl Kaestle, “Social Change and Education in the American Northeast” and “The Common-School Reform Program”
• Catharine Beecher, “An Essay on the Education Of Female Teachers for the United States” (1835)

T, January 15

• Kaestle, “The Ideology of Ante-bellum Common-School Reform”
• Horace Mann, 12th Annual Report (1848)
• William Holmes McGuffey, McGuffey Readers, excerpts

Group Presentation

TH, January 17

• Kaestle, “The Legacy of Common Schooling”
• Labaree, “Founding the American School System”
• David Tyack, “Schools for Citizens”
PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

T, January 22

- Robert Crunden, “Progressive Era”
- Diane Ravitch, “The Educational Ladder” (skim) and “A Fork in the Road”
- John Dewey, “The School and the Life of the Child” (1903)

Group Presentation

TH, January 24

- Tyack, “Inside the System: The Character of Urban Schools, 1890-1940”
- Adele Marie Shaw, “The True Character of the New York Public Schools” (1903)
- Mary Antin, Promised Land (1912), excerpt

*Friday, January 25: Analytical Essay No.1 due by 1159PM*

T, January 29

- Herbert Kliebard, “Scientific Curriculum Making”
- Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education (1918)
- Franklin Bobbitt, The Curriculum (1918), excerpts

Group Presentation

TH, January 31

- Kliebard, “The Search for Meaning in Progressive Education”
- Labaree, “The Progressive Effort to Reshape the System”

SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

T, February 5

- Raymond Arsenault, “Civil Rights Movement”
- Erik Eckholm, “Black Schools Restored As Landmarks”
- W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Forethought” and “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” (1903)

Group Presentation
TH, February 7

- Patterson, *Brown*, chs.3 (“The Court Decides”) and 4 (“Crossroads, 1954-55”)
- Fourteenth Amendment, Section 1 (1868)
- *Brown* ruling (1954)
- Newspaper headlines (1954)
- Zora Neale Hurston, “Court Order Can’t Make the Races Mix” (1955)

T, February 12

- Patterson, *Brown*, chs.5 (“Southern Whites Fight Back”) and 8 (“Stalemates”);
  skim chs. 6 (“Striving for Racial Balance in the 1960s”) and 7 (“The Burger
  Court Surprises”)

Group Presentation

in class: watch *Eyes on the Prize (Fighting Back: 1957-1962)*

TH, February 14

- Patterson, *Brown*, chs.9 (“Resegregation?”) and 10 (“Legacies and Lessons”)
- Linda Greenhouse, “Justices Reject Diversity Plans in Two Districts”

*Friday, February 15: Research Paper Proposal due by 1159PM*

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

T, February 19

- Ravitch, *Death and Life of the Great American School System*,
  chs.1 (“What I Learned About School Reform”),
  2 (“Hijacked! How the Standards Movement Turned into the Testing Movement”),
  3 (“The Transformation of District 2”) and
  4 (“Lessons from San Diego”)
- *A Nation at Risk* (1983)

Group Presentation
TH, February 21

- Ravitch, *Death and Life*, chs.5 (“The Business Model in New York City”), 6 (“NCLB: Measure and Punish”) and 8 (“The Trouble with Accountability”)
- No Child Left Behind, Title I “Statement of Purpose” (2002)

*Friday, February 22: Analytical Essay No.2 due by 1159PM*

T, February 26

- Ravitch, *Death and Life*, chs.9 (“What Would Mrs. Ratliff Do?”), 10 (“The Billionaire Boys’ Club”) and 11 (“Lessons Learned”)
- Bill Gates, Speech to the National Conference of State Legislatures (July 21, 2009)

Group Presentation

**RESISTANCE TO REFORM**

TH, February 28

- Labaree, “Organizational Resistance to Reform” and “Classroom Resistance to Reform”
- Tyack and William Tobin, “The ‘Grammar’ of Schooling: Why Has it Been so Hard to Change?”

**WHAT’S NEXT?**

T, March 5

- Readings TBD

Informal Presentations

TH, March 7

- Readings TBD

Informal Presentations

*Saturday, March 16: Final Research Paper due by 5PM*
Course Assignments and Grading

Participation, 15%

“Be Prepared.” The Scout motto sums up the crux of participation. Because this course places a premium on classroom and small-group discussions, students are expected to come to every class on time with the assigned readings completed, ready to participate meaningfully in all class activities. I will often send out guiding questions for the readings over email. I expect that you will bring notes to class based on these questions.

Speaking up, while important, is not the only hallmark of participation. Active listening and engaging with others’ ideas respectfully are also key components of participation. *Air-time* is less important than the relevance and sincerity of your contributions.

Please *power-down* your electronic devices—laptops, cell-phones, etc.—before the start of class (and, yes, we can still see you when you are surreptitiously texting under the table).

Group Presentations, 20%

Tuesdays, starting January 15

Working in small groups, you will be responsible for leading the first 45 minutes of a single class session. In addition to guiding discussion for the topic at hand, each group will prepare a short presentation using materials that are not on the course syllabus. The goal is to present relevant information that goes beyond the course texts. Each group will create a class handout with a 250-word summary of the key information along with a short bibliography (citing a minimum of three scholarly sources). You will be evaluated on the quality of your presentation and handout as well as on your ability to facilitate a thoughtful and engaging conversation. Each group should meet with me in advance to discuss their ideas and plans. I highly recommend that all groups practice their presentations before class.
Two Analytical Essays (1,000 words), 20% each
Rolling deadlines, no later than 1159PM on Friday, January 25 (#1) AND Friday, February 22 (#2)

Each analytical essay will present a critical reading of a course text. Your essay should have a central argument that focuses on what is most significant, provocative or problematic about the text. Concentrate your energies on developing your own original analysis—deepening or complicating our understanding of the text—rather than on summarizing the text. Please see the Guidelines for Critical Reading below.

*Revision Option*: You may revise ONE of your analytical essays based on my feedback. If you choose to do so, you will need to hand in the revised paper along with a 1-paragraph description of how you addressed my comments. Revisions are due a week after I return the papers to you. The final grade for the essay will be the average of the original and revised essay grades.

Final Research Paper (2,000 words), 25%
1-page proposal with your topic, research question and an initial bibliography due on Friday, February 15 by 1159PM

Final Paper due on Saturday, March 16 by 5PM

The goal of this paper is to synthesize the historical scholarship on a research topic of your choosing. Over the course of the term, you will have the opportunity to identify a topic as well as formulate and refine a specific historical research question. Your essay will:

1. draw on at least five secondary sources (academic journal articles, book chapters and/or books)
2. provide a brief overview of your topic
3. pose a specific research question
4. answer your research question by weaving together the work of multiple scholars
5. explain the significance of your analysis
The Fine Print

Attendance:

Given the importance that all Educational Studies classes place on learning with peers through classroom discussions, students are expected to come to every class session. After two unexcused absences from class, each subsequent absence will result in the lowering of your course grade by a third (e.g. from an A to an A-).

Guidelines for Written Assignments:

1. All written assignments should be double-spaced and written in 12-point Times font
2. Include a word-count at the top of each assignment
3. Use a standard format (APA, Chicago, etc.) for all citations
4. Submit all of your assignments using the dropboxes on Moodle
5. No late assignments will be accepted without prior approval from the instructor

The Writing Center:

Please note that the Writing Center (located on the 2nd floor of Scoville) has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final proofreading. Walk-ins are welcome, although writers with appointments have priority: https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/

Guidelines for Critical Reading:

As a critical reader of a particular text, you should use the following four questions to guide your reading:

1. What are the author’s main claims? This is the analysis issue—what is the author’s angle?
2. Who says? This is the validity issue—what is the author’s evidence?
3. What’s new? This is the value-added issue—what does the author contribute that we don’t already know?
4. Who cares? This is the significance issue—is the text worth reading?

Academic Honesty:

Sharing ideas with friends is central to the academic enterprise at Carleton. So too is availing yourself of the ever-expanding universe of print and digital resources available through the Library. In your written work, of course, it is imperative that the words you present as your own are in fact original to you. When you borrow somebody else’s ideas or words, make sure to cite the original author. For more on academic honesty at Carleton, including a helpful overview of citations, see: http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/honesty/
Disability Services:

Carleton is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process.

Bibliography:

*Primary Sources*


Fourteenth Amendment, 1868.


No Child Left Behind, Statement of Purpose, 2002.

**Secondary Sources**


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