



EDST 601A CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY IN EDUCATION: FIRST-YEAR DOCTORAL SEMINAR

Section: EDST 601 (081)
Term 2, September 2 – November 28, 2014
Wednesdays 9:00am-noon
Location: WMAX 110

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This doctoral seminar offers an opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of social theory (broadly speaking) and related debates in education, as well as to systematically interrogate the basic arguments put forward by social theorists. More specifically, in this course we will examine critical theoretical traditions and conceptual problems in the social sciences and humanities as they relate to the field of education. We will read and discuss a range of contemporary social, cultural, and educational theorists. Theoretical trends, issues, and perspectives in contemporary education—including problems of theory formation and links between the social sciences, humanities and education—will be central in our discussions. You will also be asked to reflect on the implications of committing yourself to a theoretical vantage point in your research program. Ultimately, then, this course aims to provide you with the necessary conceptual tools to conduct theoretically informed work for a larger research project.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

During this seminar you will have opportunities to:

- develop a better understanding of critical social theory and its relation to education and educational research;
- become more confident in reading critical social theory in education;
- practice speaking and writing respectfully and critically about, to, with, and against critical social theory in education;
- apply theoretical perspectives in your own research program.

GUIDELINE FOR PARTICIPATION

Since this is a graduate seminar, I expect all to participate, with the understanding that people participate in different ways. Participation is not graded, but please come prepared to discuss, as the seminar is only as good as you make it. Inspired by the views of scholars such as Jacques Derrida and John Caputo, I place great value on the university as a space for unconditional questioning. To this end, I use the guideline that you can say and ask anything in class, but that you cannot declare what you (or others) have said or asked off-limits for questioning.

COURSE READINGS

All readings are available online through the Library Course Reserves:

<https://go.library.ubc.ca/c7mF9G>

Further notes, .pdfs of PowerPoint slides, and links will be added the course Connect site as we go along, so make sure you check in regularly or set up an alert for new information.

<http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/login-to-connect/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Weekly paragraphs (20%) (based on SFU EDUC 901 course outline by Kieran Egan)

Every week, you are expected to write a one-paragraph response to one of the readings. You should focus on something in the reading that you find insightful, objectionable, or interesting. Your comment should be pointed and clear, expressing your viewpoint strongly. Imagine you are supporting or arguing with the author. The paragraphs are not to be simply a description of what is in the reading, and avoid direct quotation. The central purpose is to locate some important aspect of the reading that you find enlightening, irritating, wrong, or fruitful for present practice, and then to give a clear and forceful presentation of your opinion and arguments for it, or to pose a critical question. Make sure you represent the views of authors accurately. The main purpose of these paragraphs is to stimulate discussion in class. The stronger and clearer your viewpoint and argument, the more lively should be the following discussion. Max. ½ page per week. Please upload to the discussion board of the course Connect site prior to class (each week has its own forum).

Book review OR conference proposal (30%)

For your mid-term assignment you have a choice of two options:

(A) Book review: This review of 6-8 pages should focus on one recent (2013-2014) single-authored book. A book review involves both descriptive and evaluative components. Spend no more than *one third* of the review on the description of the content and author of the book, leaving at least *two thirds* for your critical review. As bell hooks (1994) reminds us, “critical interrogation is not the same as dismissal” (p. 49), so while the review should not be an uncritical celebration of the book, neither should you focus solely on your disagreements with it. In the conclusion, tell the reader whether you would recommend this book. If not, why not? If so, to what audience?

Your book review will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- accuracy of description (i.e., do you represent the central argument(s) and perspectives of the book correctly?);
- quality of your discussion (i.e., do you raise insightful, critical and relevant questions?);
- quality of the writing (i.e., is your writing clear, and free from spelling and grammatical errors?).

(B) Conference proposal: Select a conference in the field of Education (for example, one of the Associations of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education) to which you could submit a proposal for a paper (*not* a poster, symposium, or some other format) that includes or addresses critical social theory. Follow the submission guidelines. For example, the CSSE guidelines ask for a 200-word abstract as well as a three-page proposal (plus reference list).

They ask for the proposal to address:

- (a) purpose;
- (b) perspective(s) or theoretical framework;
- (c) methods and/or techniques;
- (d) data source(s);
- (e) results, conclusions and/or interpretations; and
- (f) educational importance of the study.

Actual submission of the proposal is not required but since CSSE proposals are due in November, you just might want to!

Due date: October 8 (week 6)

Final paper (50%)

In the final paper (max. 15 pages) you should bring one or more of the theoretical perspectives we have discussed in the course to bear on a topic in your area of research interest. You might, for example, choose to argue for a particular theoretical perspective to inform research in your area, or you might choose to critique the dominant understandings of core concepts in your research area, or you might choose to juxtapose two theoretical perspectives in relation to your topic of interest and arrive at a question. Whatever approach you take, the final paper cannot be merely expository, that is, it cannot merely *describe* theories; you have to *use* these theories in a critical way in relation to your research topic. You should get a brief proposal for the final paper approved by me at your earliest convenience but no later than November 10 (week 10).

Your final paper will be evaluated according to criteria specific to the type of paper you choose to write, as well as the following general criteria:

- accuracy in referring to other people's ideas;
- quality of the writing (i.e., is your writing well organized, clear, and free from spelling and grammatical errors?);
- proper use of sources (i.e., do you use references to support or illustrate rather than make your points, and do you cite properly and consistently?).

Due date: November 26, 2014.

General Writing Requirements

For ease of reading and evaluating, please make all your assignments double spaced, left justified, in a reasonable font size (Times 12 is a good indicator, but you may wish to use other fonts, such as Cambria or Palatino, for aesthetic reasons). Use 1-inch margins and number your pages (but not a cover or title page). We will discuss expectations around genre, structure, clarity, grammar and spelling in class. **Please submit all assignments via email as Word documents (attachments).**

Document all sources of information you use in your writing. The reference style currently used most commonly in our Faculty of Education is APA (6th ed.):

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

If you want to use a different recognized reference format, such as MLA or Chicago, please check with your research supervisor to make sure s/he will accept this format in your dissertation. Get used now to the format you will be using in your dissertation, as it will save you time later on.

Academic Integrity

One of the things I value in academic work is understanding how none of us comes to know what we do on our own. As educational scholar Madeleine Grumet (1988) writes,

Lodged right in the middle of this term that we extend to honor the people who have influenced and cared for us, is the word 'knowledge.' An acknowledgment is an admission. It makes explicit what is tacit, or sometimes denied, in every scholarly monologue: none of us knows alone. (p. ix)

Please acknowledge the people through whose knowledge you have come to know what you do. My main concerns in referencing are a) that you honour other people's ideas and wording, and b) that you are consistent in the way you note your sources.

The integrity of academic work depends on the honesty of all those who work in this environment and the observance of accepted conventions such as acknowledging the work of others through careful citation of all sources used in your work. Plagiarism—including self-plagiarism—and other forms of academic misconduct are treated as serious offences at UBC, whether committed by faculty, staff or students. You should be aware of the sections of the University Calendar that address academic integrity (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>) and plagiarism (<http://vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/ubc-regulation-on-plagiarism/>). UBC also has a useful Guide to Academic Integrity that explains what plagiarism is and how to avoid it (<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/>). If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies or conventions in relation to how they apply to the work you do in this course, please discuss them with me.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a letter from Disability Resource Centre (DRC) indicating that you have a disability that requires specific accommodations, please present the letter to me so that I can discuss the accommodations that you might need for class. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, you should first meet with a DRC advisor to determine what accommodations/services you are eligible for. You can find more information at:

<http://www.students.ubc.ca/access/disability-services/?page=current>

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

You will not be penalized because of observances of your religious beliefs. Whenever possible, you will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. It is your responsibility to inform me of any intended absences for religious observances in advance.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 (September 3): INTRODUCTION

Week 2 (September 10): WHY THEORY?

Required reading:

Ball, S. J. (1995). Intellectuals or technicians? The urgent role of theory in educational studies. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 43(3), 255-271.

Popkewitz, T. S. (1984). Paradigms in educational science: Different meanings and purpose to theory. In *Paradigm and ideology in educational research: The social functions of the intellectual* (pp. 32-58). New York, NY: The Falmer Press.

MacLure, M. (2010). The offence of theory. *Journal of Education Policy*, 25(2), 277-286.

Recommended reading:

Taylor, C. (1985). Social theory as practice. In *Philosophy and the human sciences* (pp. 91-115). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ball, S. J. (2006). The necessity and violence of theory. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 27(1), 3-10.

Week 3 (September 17): THE WORKINGS OF POWER, PART I

Required reading:

Coben, D. (1995). Revisiting Gramsci [Electronic version]. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 27(1), 36-51.

Althusser, L. (1994). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation). In *Lenin and philosophy and other essays* (B. Brewster, Trans.). Retrieved from <http://www.marx2mao.com/Other/LPOE70ii.html> and <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm> (Original work published 1970)

Bourdieu, P. (1978). Sport and social class. *Social Science Information*, 17, 819-840.

Recommended reading:

Marx, K. (1969). *Manifesto of the communist party* (Original work published 1848). Retrieved from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/>

Week 4 (September 24): THE WORKINGS OF POWER, PART II

Required reading:

Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical inquiry*, 8(4), 777-795.

Rose, N. (1999). Introduction. In *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self* (2nd ed., pp. 1-11). New York, NY: Free Association Books.

Week 5 (October 1): ON BEING CRITICAL

Required reading:

- Foucault, M. (2007). What is critique? In *The politics of truth* (pp. 41-81). Los Angeles, CA: Semiotexte.
- Butler, J. (2002). What is critique? An essay on Foucault's virtue. In D. Ingram (Ed.), *The political: Blackwell readings in Continental philosophy* (pp. 212-226). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Latour, B. (2004). Why has critique run out of steam? From matters of fact to matters of concern. *Critical Inquiry*, 30, 225-248.

Week 6 (October 8): DEMOCRACY AND POLITICS

Required reading:

- Habermas, J. (1974). The public sphere: An encyclopedia article (S. Lennox & F. Lennox, Trans.). *New German Critique*, 3, 49-55. (Original work published 1964)
- Fraser, N. (1992). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. In C. Calhoun (Ed.), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 109-142). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Rancière, J. (2004). Introducing disagreement. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 9(3), 3-9.

Recommended reading:

- Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2001). Adventures of the multitude: Response of the authors. *Rethinking Marxism*, 13(3-4), 236-243.

Week 7 (October 15): FEMINIST AND QUEER THEORY

Required reading:

- Alcoff, L. (1988). Cultural feminism versus post-structuralism: The identity crisis in feminist theory. *Signs*, 13(3), 405-436.
- Cohen, C. J. (1997). Punks, bulldaggers and welfare queens. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 3, 437-465.

Recommended reading:

- De Beauvoir, S. (2007). The independent woman. In S. During (Ed.), *The cultural studies reader* (3rd ed., pp. 337-357). New York, NY: Routledge. (Original work published 1949)
- Edelman, L. (2004). The future is kid stuff. In *No future: Queer theory and the death drive* (pp. 1-31). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Week 8 (October 22): RACE, POSTCOLONIALISM AND INDIGENEITY, PART I

Required reading:

- Fanon, F. (1967). The fact of blackness. In *Black skin, white masks* (C. L. Markmann, Trans., pp. 109-140). New York, NY: Grove Press. (Original work published 1952)
- Brown, W. (2012). Civilizational delusions: Secularism, tolerance, equality. *Theory & Event*, 15(2).

Recommended reading:

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 271-313). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Week 9 (October 29): RACE, POSTCOLONIALISM AND INDIGENEITY, PART II

Required reading:

Coulthard, G. S. (2007). Subjects of empire: Indigenous peoples and the “politics of recognition” in Canada. *Contemporary Political Theory*, 6(4), 437–460.

Spivak, G. C. (2000). The new subaltern: A silent interview. In V. Chaturvedi (Ed.), *Mapping subaltern studies and the postcolonial* (pp. 324-340). New York, NY: Verso.

Recommended reading:

Alfred, T. & Cornthassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition*, 40(4), 597-614.

Week 10 (November 5): CULTURAL AND AESTHETIC THEORY

Required reading:

Horkheimer, M. & Adorno, T. W. (2007). The culture industry: Enlightenment as mass deception (J. Cumming, Trans.). In S. During, *The cultural studies reader* (3rd ed., pp. 405-415). New York, NY: Routledge. (Original work published 1969)

Hall, S. (1996). Cultural studies and its theoretical legacies. In D. Morley & K.-H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 262-275). New York, NY: Routledge.

Bourriaud, N. (1998). Relational form. In *Relational aesthetics* (pp. 11-24). Dijon, France: Les presse du réel.

Week 11 (November 12): BEYOND THE HUMAN, PART I: ECOLOGY

Required reading:

Code, L. (2006). Introduction. In *Ecological thinking: The politics of epistemic location* (pp. 1-24). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Eckersley, R. (2005). Greening the nation-state: From exclusive to inclusive sovereignty. In J. Barry & R. Eckersley (Eds.), *The state and the global ecological crisis* (pp. 159-180). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Recommended reading:

Shiva, V. (2005). Principles of earth democracy. In *Earth democracy: Justice, sustainability and peace* (pp. 1-11). Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Specter, M. (2014, August 25). Seeds of doubt. *The New Yorker*, 46-57.

Week 12 (November 19): BEYOND THE HUMAN, PART II: POST-HUMANISM

Required reading:

Barad, K. (2003). Posthumanist performativity: Toward an understanding of how matter comes to matter. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(3), 801-831.

Latour, B. (2005). Introduction: How to resume the task of tracing associations. In *Reassembling the social: An Introduction to actor-network-theory* (pp. 1-17). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). Introduction: Rhizome. In *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (pp. 3-25). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Recommended reading:

Haraway, D. (1991). A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century. In *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature* (pp. 149-181). New York, NY: Routledge.

Latour, B. (2005). On the difficulty of being an ANT: An interlude in the form of a dialog. In *Reassembling the social: An Introduction to actor-network-theory* (pp. 141-156). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Week 13 (November 26)

Wrap-up