

The Politics of Education: Class and Race in Urban America, 1954-1996

This is a research workshop aimed at exploring the history of educational reform in urban America. Elements of the course include: Teachers' unions, African American perspectives on educational reform, the economics and politics of urban life, Black mayors and school reform, Race riots and neighborhood dynamics, class relations in school reform and the debates over public and private education. This course is largely based on original research, historical documents and archival materials. The major question for the seminar is to answer the question: why can't we build schools that are both democratic and successful for students? Why is educational reform so elusive?

Papers: You will be asked to write one paper in three parts. First you will write a paper on the history of your chosen city, focusing on educational change in the post World War II era. You will include in this paper your bibliography for the semester and some newspaper readings: (25%). The second paper will involve more research, this time developing ideas from the readings, but using as many primary sources as available. This essay will include collecting primary source documents and locating other documents., you ought to have located the primary sources, i.e. newspapers and other publications plus you need to have read publications from the Department of Education. Research documents: Newspapers, reports and interviews. Congressional testimony, state documents, reports from the Department of Education, National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. (25%) The final paper will summarize your research and the research of others in approaching the problems of educational reform. (40%). Participation in the seminar is paramount to its success. I suggest you hone your discussion skills. (10%).

Required Reading:

Jonathan Kozol, *The Shame of a Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*

1. Discussion:

Jonathan Kozol, *The Shame of a Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*

Questions: How has public education failed to educate minorities in America and why? What is meant by *apartheid schooling*? What has the introduction of choice meant in education and how does that effect urban schools? Do we have the power to change the educational landscape, or are we locked into a battle of special interests and underfunding?

2. Research in Education: Meeting with the Library. January 30

This session is devoted to the library, we meet in the computer room of the library at class time. The first session will help you with the first paper: you will build a bibliography, order newspaper sources, learn about library resources.

3. Brown v. Board/ Desegregation 1954-1965 February 6

We begin with your results of the early histories of your cities. We take a look at *Eyes on the Prize*, and you will read a history about the Brown decision, whether from sources about your city or from the following list:

Marty Gitlin, *Brown v Board of Education: Essential Events*; Michael J. Klareman, *Brown V. Board of Education and the Civil Rights Movement*; Robert J. Cottrol, Raymond T. Diamond, Leland B Ware, *Brown v. Board of Education; Caste, Culture and the Constitution*; James T. Patterson, *A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy*; Brooke Thomas, *Plessy v.Ferguson*; Gary Orfield and Susan E. Eaton, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown V. Board of Education*; John Charles Boger, *School Resegregation: Must the South Turn Back?*; Charles E. Clotfelter, *After Brown: The Rise and Retreat of School Desegregation*; Charles J. Ogletree, *All Deliberate Speed; Reflections on the First Half Century of Brown V Board of Education.*

4. Report on the Cities: *Paper Due* February 13

We meet in the Library to read more on how to find documents, how to find more primary sources for your next paper.

5. Cities on Fire: 1965-1968 February 20

Kerner Commission Report and Black Power

6. Black Mayors: February 27

If you don't have a biography of the Mayor of your city, or if your Mayor was white, read this book:

J. Philip Thompson, *Double Trouble: Black Mayors, Black Communities and the Call for Deep Democracy.*

7. Class and Education: March 6

Your reading may include any book on your bibliography or any of the following:

Annette Lareau, *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*; Jean Anyon, *Ghetto Schooling: The Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform*;
Sheryll Cashin, *The Failure of Integration: How Race and Class are Undermining the American Dream*;

8. Urban Fiscal Crisis: 1974-1980 *Papers Due* **March 20**

This week we will review all of the papers be prepared to summarize your paper in seminar. We will also discuss the fiscal crisis in the cities.

9. Charter Schools: 1968-2005 March 27

If you don't have a book or report on Charter Schools in your city, or if you need more background please consult this list:

Bruce Fuller, *Inside Charter Schools: The Paradox of Radical Decentralization*.
Amy Stuart, *Where Charter School Policy Fails: The Problems of Accountability and Equity*

10. A Nation at Risk 1986 April 3

You all have to read the report, *A Nation at Risk* and be prepared to discuss the impact of this report on your school districts.

David T. Gordon, *A Nation Reformed: American Education 20 Years After a Nation at Risk*. William Hayes, *Are We Still a Nation at Risk Two Decades Later?*
Deborah Meier, *Many Children Left Behind*; Pedro Noguera, *City Schools and the American Dream*;
Paul Tomas Hill, *Getting Serious about Urban School Reform*

11. Individual consultations: Be prepared to discuss your papers. April 10

12. Individual consultations: April 17

13. Discussion of Papers April 24

14. Final Session: May 1