

EDUCATION 435

Educational Theory and Theory Criticism:
Current Issues in Education

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This course will examine current issues in educational theory. The main works of theory will be related to their use in educational settings and to their larger social and political implications. Assumptions of the course are that no one theory predominates in education; that social and political factors are crucial in the crux between theory and practise; that any constructive reform in education must be based on theoretical underpinnings that are purposive and understood.

Topics to be discussed include: The hidden curriculum; Liberal education; The political economy of schooling; Personal growth and self-awareness; Development as the aim of education; Natural man as the basis for education; The curriculum revolutions; Dialogue as a means of education; Alternative schooling; De-schooling; Education for "developing" cultures; Education and community.

The course will be carried on in two successive contexts:

1. Reflective analysis of a case or a set of questions based on the general topic under consideration for the meeting.
2. Generally this will be followed by large group case discussions to pool and clarify issues. Occasionally there will be films, and guest discussion leaders.

Requirements

1. One page analysis of set readings to be handed in each class.
2. Small group reports to class on special topics during latter part of course.
3. Structured "take-home" paper at the end of the course: half of the paper will deal with issues on which all students will write; half of the paper will deal with a topic of the students' own choosing -- hopefully an effort to integrate past experience with issues raised and discussed in the course.

Readings Include:

Schooling in Capitalist America, Bowles and Gintis

Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Freire

Education and Community, Donald Oliver

Summerhill, A. S. Neill

The Night is Dark and I am Far From Home, Jonathan Kozol