

SPRING SEMESTER 1980

EDUCATION 487 Special Topic: Power in Educational Thought

INSTRUCTOR: David Nyberg

TIME: Monday evenings 4:30 - 8:30

This course takes up the challenge of introducing power into the vocabulary of educational studies. If Bertrand Russell was right in claiming that "the fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy is the fundamental concept in physics," then it must be seen as odd that the challenge has not been taken up before. One question to be answered is why such a fundamental concept, such a universal category of human social life has lain so completely neglected in education for so long.

Discussion will concentrate on analyzing the essential attributes and several forms of power in ordinary social transactions. These attributes and forms will be put together and proposed as a new conception of power that has a good deal of relevance to the understanding of educational processes (curriculum design, the means of instruction, and evaluation) and has important implications for a renovation in the ethics of education.

The course will conclude by linking the new conception of power with a logic of freedom that emphasizes the skills of diagnosing constraints, and by arguing that teaching these skills along with knowledge about power is both practically feasible and ethically incumbent on contemporary education.

#### TOPICS:

1. A survey of the best that has been written about power in philosophy, political science, sociology, and psychology.
2. Personal and ethical ambivalence about power
3. The very idea of power
4. Forms of power in education
5. Power and the logic of freedom
6. Toward a renovated ethics of education

#### SELECTED READINGS:

These are some books and articles that students will find useful, and from which specific assignments will be drawn.

Arendt, H. On Violence.

Barry, Brian (ed.) Power and Political Theory

Bell, David V.J. Power, Influence, and Authority

Berle, Adolph A. Power

Berlin, Isaiah. "The Question of Machiavelli". The New York Review, November 4, 1971

Cartwright, D. (ed.) Studies in Social Power

Champlin, John R. (ed.) Power

Clegg, Stewart Power, Rule, and Domination

Clegg, Stewart The Theory of Power and Organization

Coleman, James S. Power and the Structure of Society

Dahl, Robert A. Modern Political Analysis

(over)

Dahl, Robert A. "Power". International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences  
Feinberg, Joel "The Idea of a Free Man", in Educational Judgements, ed.  
James F. Doyle  
Jouvenel, Bertrand de On Power  
La Boetie, Etienne de The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse of  
Voluntary Servitude  
Lasswell, Harold D. Power and Personality  
Lasswell, Harold D. and Kaplan, Abraham Power and Society  
McClelland, David C. Power: The Inner Experience  
May, Rollo Power and Innocence  
Merriam, Charles E. Political Power  
Milgram, Stanley Obedience to Authority  
Nagel, Jack H. The Descriptive Analysis of Power  
Nyberg, David Power Over Power  
Olsen, M. E. (ed.) Power in Societies  
Oppenheim, Felix E. Dimensions of Freedom  
Plato Gorgias  
Weber, Max The Theory of Social and Economic Organization  
Winter, David G. The Power Motive