

Sociology 113 – Sociology of Education  
Fall 2021 – Tuesday, Thursday 8:00-9:30 – 166 Social Science Building

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In this course we will investigate the contradictions and possibilities of education. Throughout the course students will learn some basic facts of education and its organization in the United States as well as a selection of key orienting perspectives and theories for understanding the way education works.

The aim of these efforts is threefold. As one might imagine, one course aim is that students learn particular substantive facts about education. A second aim is that students learn a range of theoretical perspectives analysts have developed for considering education and society. A third aim is that students become adept at evaluating evidence bearing on the relation between substantive facts and theoretical perspectives. The first aim is important, but it is the second and third aim that sets our work apart and makes it a college-level course. Consequently, the point is not only to learn facts, but also and most important, to be able to marshal those facts to evaluate other claims, and to sensitively weigh evidence.

### **Assignments**

There are four written assignments. They are due September 23, October 21, November 12, and December 13 (in lieu of a Final Exam). Each due date you must submit a *Fact Sheet* on an education issue of your choice. The Fact Sheet should convey facts and draw on selected theories and concepts from the previous weeks. Each Fact Sheet counts 25% of your grade.

### **Lectures**

Lectures will generally provide new information, and elaborate or extend the reading, not repeat it. Please complete the reading assignment for the date before class meets.

### **Material for the courses**

#### Reading material

Much of the reading material is available via JSTOR, Google Scholar, or via UCLibrarySearch, and some of the other material is available at specific web-sites (e.g., my web-site). After each paper its location will be noted in bold (e.g., **JSTOR**). JSTOR and UCLibrarySearch are accessible from university computers; if you prefer to access these sites from home you need to follow library instructions for doing so. University web-sites contain information on how to do that for the different types of computers one might use.

Papers that are on publicly available web-sites have the url in the syllabus, while papers on JSTOR or UCLibrarySearch are noted in the syllabus with a bold **JSTOR** or **UCLibrarySearch** after the citation. For the JSTOR and UCLibrarySearch papers you'll need to use the search tools of the site to find the paper. For JSTOR you need the author or title. For UCLibrarySearch first find the journal, then find the appropriate electronic location of that issue, and then a search using some information from the citation (e.g., author, title) will be needed.

Some articles are not available electronically; those papers are in a Reader for purchase at Copy Central, 2411 Telegraph Avenue. Papers that are in the Reader are noted in the syllabus with a bold **READER** after the citation. These articles are less common on the syllabus, but they are essential (or I would not assign them given the extra drudgery of making them available). Thus, I encourage you to obtain the Reader as it is likely by far the easiest way of accessing these materials.

The Cal Bookstore has copies of the following books, or you may order them through whatever other means you prefer (e.g., amazon):

Bowles, Samuel, and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.

Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (**Available Online via UCLibrarySearch**)

#### Audio or Audiovisual Material

Occasionally you are assigned to watch or listen to an interview or commentary on a specific episode of the *This Week in Sociological* podcast before the class session. Episodes are typically 40-50 minutes, and the (usually) interview or (sometimes) commentary assigned is about 25-28 minutes. When you are asked to watch or listen the notice is marked with the following symbol:



The audio version of *This Week in Sociological Perspective* is available through Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Podtail, and Spotify (though I understand that Spotify coverage is . . . spotty). The video version is available at <http://twispvideo.libsyn.com/>

## **PART I – INTRODUCTION**

### **Week 1, Aug 26**

**Aug 26 -- Introduction: The Professor, The Course, and Some Facts about U.S. Education**

## **PART II – FOUNDATIONAL RESOURCES**

**>> Week 2, Aug 31- Sep 2 – The Purpose(s) of Schooling and Schools as Rational Organizations**

### **Aug 31 – The Purpose(s) of Schooling**

Labaree, David F. 1997. “Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals.” *American Educational Research Journal* 34: 39-81. **JSTOR**

### **Sep 2 – Organizations as Rational Systems**

Scott, W. Richard. 1987. “Organizations as Rational Systems,” pp. 31-50 of *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems, second edition*. New York, NY: Prentice-Hall.  
**READER**

▣ also watch or listen to the April 15, 2021 podcast episode of *This Week in Sociological Perspective*, for an interview with Professor Jacob Felson on “Online or in Person? Examining College Decisions to Reopen during the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

**>> Week 3, Sep 7-9 – Effects of Organizations and Selected Organizational Explanations of “Failing” Schools**

### **Sep 7 – Effects of Organizations Schools Debate**

Alexander, Karl, and Stephen L. Morgan. 2016. “The Coleman Report at Fifty: Its Legacy and Implications for Future Research on Equality of Opportunity.” *Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 2: 5; 1-16. **JSTOR**

### **Sep 9 – Selected Organizational Explanations of “Failing” Schools**

Weick, Karl E. 1976. “Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems.” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21: 1-19. **JSTOR**

**>>Week 4, Sep 14-16 – Selected Political Explanations of “Failing” Schools**

### **Sep 14 – Public Confidence and Support**

Fischel, William A. 1996. "How *Serrano* Caused Proposition 13." *Journal of Law & Politics* 13: 607-636. **Google Scholar**

**Sep 16 – The Political Returns to “Failing” Schools**

Labaree, David F. 2008. "The Winning Ways of a Losing Strategy: Educationalizing Social Problems in The United States." *Educational Theory* 58: 447-460. **Google Scholar**

**>>Week 5, Sep 21-23 – Fact Sheet 1 and Review**

**Sep 21 – Fact Sheet Information and Review**

**Sep 23 – Fact Sheet 1 due at 5pm in pdf format via email**

**PART III – KEY ORIENTING PERSPECTIVES**

**>> Week 6, Sep 28-30 – Human Capital Theory and Cultural Capital Theory**

**Sep 28 – Human Capital Theory**

Becker, Gary. 1962. "Investment in Human Capital: A Theoretical Analysis." *Journal of Political Economy* 70 (Supplement) 9-49. **JSTOR**

**Sep 30 – Cultural Capital Theory**

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital," pp. 241-258 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by John Richardson. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.

**[http://home.iitk.ac.in/~amman/soc748/bourdieu\\_forms\\_of\\_capital.pdf](http://home.iitk.ac.in/~amman/soc748/bourdieu_forms_of_capital.pdf)**

**>> Week 7, Oct 5-7 – Social Capital Theory and Resistance Theory**

**Oct 5 – Social Capital Theory**

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: S95-S120. **JSTOR**

☑ also watch or listen to the June 4, 2020 podcast episode of *This Week in Sociological Perspective* for an interview with Professor Jessica Calarco on "Avoiding Us versus Them: How Schools' Dependence on Privileged 'Helicopter' Parents Influences Enforcement of Rules."

**Oct 7 – Resistance Theory**

Fordham, Signithia, and John U. Ogbu. 1986. "Black students' school success: Coping with the 'burden of 'acting white'." *Urban Review* 18: 176-206. **Google Scholar**

**>>Week 8, Oct 12-14 – A Structural Marxist Analysis of Schooling in the United States**

**Oct 12 – Historical Development of Schools in the U.S.**

Bowles, Samuel, and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America*, (pp. 3-150 only). Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.

**Oct 14 – Structures of Schools/Schooling and Determinants of Success**

Bowles, Samuel, and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America*, (pp. 151-288 only). Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.

**>> Week 9, Oct 19-21 – Fact Sheet 2 and Review**

**Oct 19 – Fact Sheet Information and Review**

**Oct 21 – Fact Sheet 2 due at 5pm in pdf format via email**

**>>Week 10, Oct 26-28 – Tracking and Curricular Programs**

**Oct 26 – Curriculum Differentiation, Social Background, and Effects of Tracking**

Lucas, Samuel R., Santiago J. Molina, and John M. Towey. 2020. "Race/Ethnicity over Fifty Years of Structural Differentiation in K-12 Schooling: Period-Specific and Life-Course Perspectives." *Annual Review of Sociology* 46: 355-378.

**Oct 28 – GATE and Special Education**

Yell, Mitchell L., David Rogers, and Elisabeth Lodge Rogers. 1998. "The Legal History of Special Education: What a Long, Strange Trip It's Been!" *Remedial and Special Education* 19: 219-228. **Google Scholar**

Worrell, Frank C., and Jesse O. Erwin. 2011. "Best Practices in Identifying Students for Gifted and Talented Education Programs." *Journal of Applied School Psychology* 27: 319-340. **Google Scholar**

▣ also watch or listen to the May 21, 2020 podcast episode of *This Week in Sociological Perspective*, for an interview with Professor Jayanti Owens on "Relationships between an ADHD Diagnosis and Future School Behaviors among Children with Mild Behavioral Problems."

**>>Week 11, Nov 2-4 – Education, Immigration, and The Wider Context of Immigration**

**Nov 2 – The Wider Context of Immigration**

Cherry, Robert. 2003. "Immigration and Race: What We Think We Know." *Review of Black Political Economy* 31: 157-184. **Google Scholar**

**Nov 4 – Immigration and Education**

Betts, Julian R. 1998. "Educational Crowding Out: Do Immigrants Affect the Educational Attainment of American Minorities?," pp. 253-281 in *Help or Hindrance: The Economic Implications of Immigration for African Americans*, edited by Daniel S. Hammermesh and Frank D. Bean. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. **Project MUSE**

**>> Week 12, Nov 9-11 – Fact Sheet 3 Info and Holiday**

**Nov 9 – Review and Fact Sheet 3 Info (due 5pm in pdf format via email on Friday, Nov 12)**

**Nov 11 – Veterans' day Holiday**

**>> Week 13, Nov 16-18 – Educational Attainment and Measured Achievement**

**Nov 16 – Levels, Correlates, and Theories of Educational Attainment**

Lucas, Samuel R. 2008. "Educational Attainment," pages 115-122 in *Encyclopedia of the Life Course and Human Development*, edited by Deborah Carr. Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillian Reference, USA. **READER**

Lucas, Samuel R. 2017. "An Archaeology of Effectively Maintained Inequality Theory." *American Behavioral Scientist* 61: 8-29. **Google Scholar**

▣ also watch or listen to the October 29, 2021 podcast episode of *This Week in Sociological Perspective*, for an interview with Ms. Tabitha Wilbur on "Stressed but not Depressed: A Longitudinal Analysis of First-Generation College Students, Stress, and Depressive Symptoms."

**Nov 18 – Levels, Correlates, and Theories of Measured Achievement**

Lucas, Samuel R., and Véronique Irwin. 2018. "Race, Class, and Theories of Inequality in the Sociology of Education," pp. 73-107 in *Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, edited by Barbara Schneider. New York, NY: Springer International Publishing AG. **UCLibrarySearch**

- ▣ also watch or listen to the July 30, 2020 podcast episode of *This Week in Sociological Perspective* for an interview with Professor Kristen Hourigan on “Girls Try, Boys Aim High: Exposing Difference in Implied Ability, Activity, and Agency of Girls Versus Boys in Language on McDonald's Happy Meal Boxes.”

**>>Week 14, Nov 23-25 Privatization and Holiday**

**Nov 23 – Privatization**

Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. **Available Online via UCLibrarySearch**

**Nov 25 – Thanksgiving Holiday**

**>> Week 14, Nov 30-Dec 2 –The Experience of Teaching and Selected Teacher Responses**

**Nov 30 – The Experience of Teaching**

Sizer, Theodore. 1992. "Prologue: Horace's Compromise," pp. 9-21 in *Horaces' Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. **READER**

- ▣ also watch or listen to the June 10, 2021 podcast episode of *This Week in Sociological Perspective*, for a commentary on different approaches to worker empowerment. Note: The commentary occurs in the second segment.

**>> Dec 2 – Discussion**

**>>Final Assignment (Final Fact Sheet) due 5pm on Monday, December 13**