COURSE DESCRIPTION

Wherever the U.S. has sought to gain or maintain control, whether by way of enslavement, forced assimilation, colonialism within the continental U.S., or by way of military occupation and imperialist rule abroad, education has played an all too often overlooked supporting role. Yet wherever this is true, there are also people who have used education as a means of resistance, rebellion, revolution, and liberation. This course offers an introduction to the transnational history of education in relation to the development of U.S. empire both at home and abroad. By bringing together topics often approached separately -- immigration, education, race, colonialism, and the history of U.S. empire -- we will interrogate the ways that education has been mobilized to deploy power: controlling knowledge, categorizing and policing difference, administering unequal paths to citizenship/belonging, forcing assimilation, promoting socio-economic divides, and asserting discipline and control. Topics to be covered include American Indian education and self-determination, African American education in slavery and freedom, U.S. colonial education in the Philippines/Cuba/Puerto Rico, State Department experiments in educational diplomacy and child socialization, educational missions abroad, and national security and the war on terror. Throughout, we will draw links between the past and the present and ask what it might mean to “decolonize” education today.

ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Response:
Our class is divided in half, into group A and group B. In alternating sessions, one group will post a brief (150-200 word) reading response to Canvas before class (no later than 7am on days class meets), and the other group will post a reflection to Canvas after class (no later than 11am on the days after class, on the same thread as the pre-class posts). You are strongly encouraged to read one another’s posts regardless of your grouping.

Pre-class reading responses can include one or any combination of the following: one or two discussion questions (not yes or no questions, but sincere questions for discussion), or one or two points of interest (what you’re thinking about, concerned about, confused about, startled by, angry about, hoping to think more about in class). I will draw from these to shape class discussion, and thus no credit will be given for late posts. Your post can always be posted as a “reply” to something a classmate has already said.

Post-class responses are a time to discuss what you continue to grapple with after attending class. What are you thinking about? Did class raise any debates or complex issues that you don’t want
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us to forget about? If you didn’t get an opportunity to participate in class, or left something unsaid, this is your chance to share your thoughts while also reflecting on our discussion. I encourage these posts to be made as “replies” to posts made earlier in the thread so that we continue to be in discussion with one another, but this is certainly not required.

Presentation
10% of grade
Weeks to be assigned
In pairs and in consultation with tzb, students will be responsible for beginning a class session with a 20-minute teaching presentation.

Goals: Your presentation should seek to accomplish the following goals:
1. Teach: Broadly introduce the week’s topic/content – big themes or main ideas, perhaps key quotations or main arguments of key readings. You are not responsible for teaching the content in full, just briefly setting the stage in broad contours.
2. Connect: Broaden our shared archive by connecting that week’s topic to a news story or primary source of some kind (video clip, sample curriculum, text, etc) that you share with the class. You might share something historical or something contemporary. Ideally, what you choose to present here will expand upon syllabus content, rather than being drawn directly from, or reproducing, assigned content.
3. Engage: To engage your classmates, you might prepare discussion questions (maybe inviting your classmates to help you analyze whatever you have shared), plan a think/pair/share exercise, a free writing exercise, or some kind of creative class activity.

Midterm Essay:
At least 5 pages
(double spaced times new roman / submitted as a word doc)

• Option 1: Identify and lightly research a contemporary event, person, experience, or organization and mobilize your findings as a frame for explaining / illustrating a bigger question or problematic covered by course materials. The essay will move from the particular (your chosen topic) to the general (the broader problematic). You do not need to make an original argument, so much as you need to move from the particular to the general to map out the stakes of a larger problem relating to empire & education and to convincingly establish why it matters. Use & engage with direct quotations from at least 2 course readings.

• Option 2: Select one of the debates/tensions highlighted in the course and write an argument driven paper that stakes your own claim in the debate. Clearly mark out the significance of the debate/tension, and attempt to carve out your own place within it. Use & engage with direct quotations from at least 2 course readings.
• **Option 3**: With the help of quotations from 3 course readings, write a personal narrative marking the ways in which your own educational experiences, educational ambitions/future desires, are imbricated in the landscape of empire. You may do so through situating your own experiences historically and/or theoretically, but rather than only being descriptive, you must craft a clear claim about why it is important to re-think yourself in this context of empire. Do things look different? Does the path forward shift? Is there an escape? What would that mean? (just questions to get you thinking…)

• **Option 4**: Write a paper exploring the question of power and pedagogical styles (ie, authority, discipline, etc) in the classroom. In what ways are the political desires of empire enacted in the classroom through non-curricular or inter-personal dynamics between teachers and students? Is it possible to envision a mode of schooling that is truly free? What are the opportunities for student resistance? Your paper should draw on 2 course readings, and offer a clear argument about the relationship between politics/power and pedagogy and why it matters.

• **Option 5**: Drawing from at least 2 course readings, explore the nature of an educational problem relating to the relationship between empire & education that you would like to see rectified, and describe what your solution would entail. This is an opportunity for you to diagnose a problem and propose a solution, but it is also an opportunity to be precise about the nature of the problem and the kind of goal or world to which you aspire. Perhaps your solution is a full-blown decolonizing revolutionary struggle (and if it is, you can say so). But perhaps you want to focus, for now, on a smaller-scale goal that could undo a certain set of imperial educational practices/traditions or address a certain set of consequences down to the level of individual psychology & experience by way of providing people with a new set of skills for surviving the violences of empire.

**Final Project:**
Proposals for alternative final assignments are welcome. Two-part projects with a partner and projects that engage with a wider audience beyond our class are encouraged.

Possible Options:
1) A 10-page final essay offering an original argument about any dimension of the relationship between education /empire and/or decolonizing education, and should include at least 5 secondary sources from course readings. The final paper is not a research paper, but should engage a close reading / original analysis of a primary source or set of primary sources beyond those included in the course. Proposals for alternative traditional essays are welcome.
2) A creative youtube-style video or podcast that directly engages at least five secondary sources from course readings
3) A collaborative / creative project of your own design (perhaps a zine or an illustrated narrative) that directly engages at least five course readings. We can discuss many options.
4) An in-class 20 minute presentation that also fulfills these same requirements. Presentations will be given on final class convening.
GRADING

• 20% Attendance & participation
• 30% Reading responses / after class reflections
• 10% Short presentation
• 20% Midterm Essay
• 20% Final Project

OFFICE HOURS AND EMAIL POLICY

Email: You are always welcome to email me (prof. tzb) with questions or concerns (talya.zemach-bersin@yale.edu). Note that I am unlikely to respond to emails sent past 6pm until the following morning. If I do not respond within 24 hours, please follow up with a reminder.

Office Hours: I will hold regular office hours, either by zoom or in person. Office hours will be posted on Calendly (you will find the link to sign up in my email signature and posted on Canvas). If you are unable to find a time that works, you’re always welcome to schedule an alternate time by email. Office hours is a great way for me to learn more about how to support you and especially if we are new to one another I encourage you to sign up early in the semester even if you do not have any course content questions to discuss.

SEMINAR POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Classroom Climate: As members of an academic community we have an obligation to foster an atmosphere conducive to the freedom to learn. We will learn one another’s names, pay just as much attention to listening as to planning our next contribution, and come up with a set of shared classroom values for facilitating a collaborative learning environment. I expect this to be an ongoing and flexible process demanding open lines of communication. If you have any questions or should any concerns arise, please do not hesitate to email me – I sincerely want to hear from you & help to ensure that our shared classroom values are met.

Participation: Our goal is to create a collaborative learning environment that is driven by intellectual integrity. Therefore, when you come to class without having done the readings, you’re not just doing yourself a disservice, you’re damaging our ability to work together and forge a lively intellectual community. In addition to class discussions, we will regularly do small group or partner exercises that will require you being prepared. The more invested you are in participating in a thoughtful and informed way, the better this class will be for everyone. Do your best to participate substantively each session. If participating tends to be difficult for you, I encourage you to talk with me in office hours so that I can get to know you and perhaps strategize with you. Reading responses and office hours are also ways to participate further if in-class participation remains a challenge.
Late Work & Attendance
• Attendance is required, more than two unexcused absences will result in deductions.
• Late reading responses will not receive credit.
• In the name of reading your best work, I am happy to consider requests for non-emergency extensions on papers so long as I receive your request more than 24 hours ahead of deadline.
• Extension requests in the case of an emergency are of course granted.

Laptop & Tablet Policy: We usually remember conceptual information better (and listen in a more present way) when taking notes by hand. Therefore, I encourage you to use a notebook for notetaking rather than your laptop. I strongly encourage you to bring to class the readings, whether on a tablet or printed out. This will not only help with your comprehension, it will make it easier for you to look back over readings while simultaneously engaging with your classmates.

Accommodations: Yale University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you might require accommodations or modifications of any of these course procedures.

Plagiarism & Academic Honesty: You are expected to give proper credit for the use of others’ ideas and words. Your papers must follow Yale's Undergraduate Regulations for respecting academic honesty through the proper documentation and citation of sources. For a reminder about the codes of academic conduct refer to: http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/cheating-plagiarism-and-documentation. A free resource to check your work for possible plagiarism is https://edubirdie.com/plagiarism-checker.

COURSE MATERIALS

Online Materials
Other than the below books, all readings will be posted on Canvas.

Required Book
Please order online as soon as you commit to class. Available on Amazon, Bookshop.org, etc.

• la paperson, A Third University is Possible (University of Minnesota Press, 2017)
  <$10 new paperback>
COURSE READINGS & SCHEDULE

Note: Readings are subject to revisions based on how we, as a group, progress – where our attention needs to linger or diverge. We will have regular group discussions on how to best proceed.

WEEK 1
Mon. July 3: HISTORIES OF OUR PRESENT
Total pages: 27
- El Meyerhoff, “Against the Romance of Education: Snapping in and At the University,” in Beyond Education: Radical Studying for Another World (2019), p1-20 *not entire intro!
- Jack Halberstam, “The Wild Beyond,” in Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study (2013), p5-12

Wed. July 5: IMPERIAL KNOWLEDGE
Total pages: 94
  - Chapter 1: Where is Here? p1-13 *not entire chapter!
  - Chapter 2: Adventures in Learning
  - Chapter 3: Imperial Show-and-Tell

WEEK 2
Mon. July 10: SCHOOLING, SOCIAL ORDER & PROTEST
approximate pages: 107
- Documentary: Tell Them We Are Rising [watch first 40 minutes for background]
  http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/videos/tell-them-we-are-rising/ [available on youtube if necessary]
- Carmen Kynard, “Before I’ll be a Slave, I’ll be Buried in My Grave,” in Vernacular Insurrections, p.25-66 (41pgs)
Wed. July 12: SETTLER COLONIAL SCHOOLING & RESISTANCE
approximate pages: 110
  Chapter 1: Reform (p12-27 *not entire chapter, 15pgs)
  Chapter 2: Models (p. 28-55) (27pgs)
• K. Tsianina Lowamaima, “You’re a Woman, You’re Going to be a Wife,” *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chicollo Indian School* (1995), 81-100 (19pgs)
• Sandy Grande, “Mapping the Terrain of Struggle,” in *Red Pedagogy* (2004), p11-29 (18pgs, can skim early pages that offer repeat historical details)

WEEK 3
Mon. July 17 THE COLONIAL CRUCIBLE: NEW POSSESSIONS
approximate pages: 100
• Derek Taira, “Colonizing the Mind: Hawaiian History, Americanization, and Manual Training in Hawaiʻi’s Public Schools, 1913-1940.” *Teacher College Record*, 2021. 20pgs
• Pablo Navarro-Rivera, “The Imperial Enterprise and Educational Policies in Colonial Puerto Rico,” in *Colonial Crucible*. 12pgs

Wed: July 19: **MIDTERM ESSAY DUE by 9am / start of class**

WEEK 4
Mon. July 24: COMPLICITY, RESISTANCE, & US
approximate pages: 91
la paperson, *A Third University is Possible*, xiii-70 (entire book)
Wed. July 26: INCLUSION & THE IMPERIAL IMAGINARY  
Total pages: 119

WEEK 5  
Mon. July 31: DISCIPLINE & PUNISH  
approximate pages: 149
- **Suggested read for main points:** Michel Foucault, “The Means of Correct Training” in *Discipline and Punish* (p170-194)
  (suggested: Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, Forward)  
  Preface: Canaries in the Mine (xv-xxiv)  
  Introduction: On (In)Visibility  
  Chapter 1: Zora (p3-39)  
  (suggested: Conclusion: Trouble-Making in School)
  Introduction (p1-10)  
  (suggested: Chapter 4: The Environment and the North End Community School)  
  Chapter 5: The World of Fair View (p111-160)

Wed. August 2: “DECOLONIAL” PEDAGOGY & EPISTEMOLOGICAL PLURALISM  
approximate pages: 100
- Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández, “Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity,” 2012 (20pgs)
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  - Learning the Grammar of Animacy, p46-57
  - Allegiance to Gratitude, p101-113
  - *Mishkos Kenomagwen*: The Teaching of Grass, p152-162

**FINAL PROJECT DUE: Friday Aug. 4, midnight**