

Doctoral Seminar: Contemporary Educational Theory

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Course Description

An exploration of how educational philosophy, research paradigms and theories manifest in contemporary educational research debates and dialogues. Through an intensive examination of a range of theories that inform studies in education, students gain an advanced and comprehensive understanding of contemporary educational theory within the Canadian and international contexts.

Course Goals

Provide students with a deepened understanding of social science research, especially as it applies to the field of education;

Provide students with greater insight into the emergent and stratified nature of reality and the way this ontology opens ways to understand the relation between agency and structure;

Enable a deepened understanding of the evolution/emergence of human powers for agency;

Foster an enhanced appreciation for the transforming powers of human reflexivity;

Provide a deepened sense of the evolution/emergence of norm groups and their interactions with individual agency;

Provide a deepened sense of the contribution of critical theory to our understanding of agency and social structure;

Enable a deeper understanding of the contribution of feminist theory to our understanding of patriarchal power;

Foster a deeper understanding of the contribution of critical race theory to our understanding of racism;

Explore the ways the educational system/curriculum/evaluation is shaped by relations of power in contemporary society.

List of Course Modules

Module One: Condition Critical – Michael Apple – Preparing for the Workshop

Module Two: Condition Critical – Michael Apple – Workshop

Module Three: Structure and Agency – A Critical Realist Account

Module Four: The Emergence of Human Powers for Cultural Learning

Module Five: The Power of Human Reflexivity

Module Six: Norm Groups 1– The Social Construction of Culture

Module Seven: Norm Groups 2 (CRASH) – Language, Discourse, and Knowledge

Module Eight: Micro/Macro – Critical Theory 1

Module Nine: Micro/Macro – Critical Theory 2

Module Ten: Feminist Theory and Education

Module Eleven: Critical Race Theory

Module Twelve: Perspectives on Evaluation – Why Things Matter to People

Module Thirteen: Martha Nussbaum and the Future of Education

Required Readings

Apple, M. W. (2006). *Educating the Right Way: Markets, Standards, God, and Inequality* (2nd ed.). Routledge. (Available via MSVU Library Online)

Archer, M. S. (2012). *The Reflexive Imperative in Late Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Available via MSVU Library Online)

Brookfield, S. (2005). *The Power of Critical Theory: Liberating Adult Learning and Teaching* (1st ed.). San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-Bass. (Available via MSVU Library Online)

Elder-Vass, D. (2011). *The Causal Power of Social Structures: Emergence, Structure and Agency* (Reissue.). Cambridge University Press. (Available via MSVU Library Online)

Elder-Vass, D. (2012). *The Reality of Social Construction*. Cambridge University Press. (Available via MSVU Library Online).

Messick, S. (1975). The standard problem: meaning and value in measurement and evaluation. *American Psychologist*, Oct., 955-966. (Available Online)

Nussbaum, M. C. (2012). *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Reprint.). Princeton University Press. (Available via MSVU Library Online)

Plumb, D. (2012). Entanglement in things: Lifelong learning in the Paleolithic and Neolithic. *Proceedings of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education Conference*. Waterloo University: Waterloo, Ontario. (Available Online)

Sayer, A. (2011). *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. (Available via MSVU Library Online)

Tomassello, M. (2008). *Origins of human communication*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press.

Course Policies

Your instructor may change the course requirements (if this proves necessary and reasonable) as well as the marking scheme with reasonable notice to students taking this course.

It is assumed that students will use appropriate format for posting assignments. You will find an excellent resource at the MSVU library not only for course research but also for report writing.

University regulations on Plagiarism and Cheating will be strictly enforced.

Correct use of language (English) including gender neutral language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

Students with Disabilities: Students who have a disability and who require academic accommodations must register with Disability Services (www.msvu.ca/disabilityservices) as early as possible in order to receive accommodations.

Student Evaluation

Name	Module Number	Description	Value
Video Blog	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Blog posting in response to readings	20
1st Paper	5	Highlight the implications of Archer's "imperative of reflexivity" for education	20
Webinar	8 and 9	A 20 minute presentation that draws on the work of a major figure in the critical theory tradition	20
Final Paper	13	Provide a prospectus of ways contemporary educational theory will be addressed within the context of the remainder of their PhD studies	40