Popular Culture and Pedagogy
ETHN 289: Special Topics/Ethnic Studies Research
Fall 2009
Thursdays 4:30 - 7:20 p.m., Social Sciences Building 103

Are you interested in thinking about speech acts, art, music, media, social movement making, state repression, (and schooling), as pedagogical acts? Are you interested in taking a critical look at pedagogy as disciplinary yet potentially transformative? This course examines popular culture as a site of domination and resistance, and pedagogy broadly as (always political) educational projects in a variety of social contexts. Lectures will focus on the popular culture and U.S. urban public schools, but class participants will be asked to translate these frameworks to other contexts and social phenomenon. We hope to maintain a critical, yet hopeful perspective on human agency in the realm of the popular, and students will be required to produce texts across a range of media, and across a range of academic/interventionist genres.

Requirements

Weekly writing assignments
1. Always bring the readings for the current week to class.
2. Response papers: You will always have 2 short papers to write each week, responding to the readings. I will give you the prompt for those papers in class.

Analysis of a pedagogical text (1 to 3 pages written, and 5-8 min group presentation). Due week 3.

Analysis of a hegemonic moment (6-8 page paper). Due week 6.

Film or other cultural production (Due week 10) Students will produce an artistic ‘text’ broadly defined, as an intervention for a specific audience that is concerned about an issue, moment, place. This text can be musical, literary, visual, performance, etc. Collectively, we will discuss specifically the narrative video medium, and students will be required to have a video element unless they request to opt out in order to work on another medium with greater intensity.

A note about workload
This course has an extremely heavy workload because in conjunction with readings, students will be writing each week, and creating their own pedagogical texts.

A note about attendance
I expect perfect attendance. Although I have no strict mathematical ‘scoring’ rules for the grading attendance, more than 1 absence will likely result in not passing.
Readings

All readings will be provided electronically on E-reserves or on WebCT, with the exception of those listed below. I recommend that you download/print ALL the readings in the first week of the quarter.

- Battle of Algiers – See the uploaded videos on Youtube by RuleBrittania
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWC6SstptmE

Calendar

Week 1: Connecting Popular Culture and Pedagogy – A few big ideas

Reading due week 2

Battle of Algiers. View on youtube.com parts 4 to 11 (out of 13)

- Chapter 1. Introduction. excerpt, pp.3-13

- Chapter 1. pp.43-69

- Chapter 1. Looking for the “Real” Nigga: Social Scientists Construct the Ghetto. pp.15-42

Week 2: Critical Pedagogy

Reading due week 3

- Chapter 4. Prophets of rage: rap music and the politics of black cultural expression, pp.99-145

- Chapter 2. pp.71-86

Week 3: Pedagogical Texts

Readings due week 4


Ya Basta. [e-reserves]
  • Pp.25-49. Vodovnik. The Struggle Continues
  • Pp.53-62. There will be a storm.

Oropeza, Lorena..................Razi Si! Guerra No! [e-reserves, e-book]
  • pp80-112. Branches of the same tree: Aztlan and Vietnam

Analysis of a pedagogical text due

Week 4: Hegemony & Counterhegemony

Readings due week 5


  • pp. 1-10 (chapter 1)
  • pp.72-88 (ch 5 “a singing army”)

Yang, K. Wayne. Introduction to the Small Schools Movement. From Taking Over: Complicity and Self-Determination in Urban School Reform [WebCT]

Week 5: Intellectuals & Popular Culture

No readings due week 6

Analysis of a hegemonic moment (6-8 page paper) due
Week 6: Literacy

Readings due week 7


Menez, Herminia “The viscera sucker and the politics of gender”. [WebCT]

Augusto Boal (1985) Theater of the Oppressed. [e-reserves]
  • Pp.120-166. Chapter 4: Poetics of the Oppressed.

Week 7: Body, Myth, Text

Readings due week 8


Critical race theory. Delgado & Stefancic [e-reserves]

Handbook of social justice in education. Ayers, Quinn, Stovall [e-reserves]
  • Chan, Pp.554-564 The alternative globalization movement.

Week 8: Narratives and Counternarratives

Readings due week 9


Week 9: Art and Ideology

Due week 10 – final films

Week 10: Exhibition @ the Cross Cultural Center, Comunidad Room. Invite friends.

Due finals week – reflection on research