

Topics: Educational Philosophy: A Good Education

MSEd 451 section 23

FALL 2021

INSTRUCTOR

Email: john.oconnor@northwestern.edu; aconnojo@nths.net

NOTE: One of our chief and ongoing and **uncollected** assignments will be the use of

a [Commonplace Book](#) Download Commonplace Book. I'm attaching a description here (that I've been using in my other classrooms this year), including a link to a blog that features some samples. For this reason, please bring a single subject notice to class every day, starting with our first class. This is an experiment for me as a teacher that seems ideal for our ongoing philosophical investigations.

WEEK ONE: September 27th: Why develop a philosophy of education? Introductions:

to the course and to each other.

Commonplace books

Beginning to articulate our own philosophies of education

Stephen Mintz: [Preface to "A History of Childhood"](#) Download Preface to "A History of Childhood"

Code Switch Podcast: ["The Folk Devil Made Me Do It"](#) start: min. 17

Poems: Kimiko Hahn ["To a #2 Pencil, on May 1, 2020"](#)

Kathryn Levy ["We"](#) Download "We"

Watch the opening of *To Be and To Have*: (ORT: 104 min). On Hoopla.

Due Next week:

Think Piece #1

Plato: Meno (pp. 6-22) and Protagoras: (24-29)

* N.B. All page numbers, unless otherwise specified, refer to *Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education*. by Stephen Cahn

Canin: ["The Palace Thief"](#) Download "The Palace Thief"

O'Connor: ["Once More to the Ocean"](#) Download "Once More to the Ocean"

WEEK TWO: October 4th: Can virtue be taught?

Discuss: Plato, Canin, and film.

Poems: Whitman ["When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer"](#); ["Noiseless, Patient Spider"](#)

What is the difference between information and knowledge? Between knowledge and wisdom?

What is the difference between memory and recollection? What is learning?

Test case: ED Hirsch: cultural literacy

Discuss *To Be and To Have*

Due next week:

Locke: "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" (105-121)

Anne Tyler: ["Teenage Wasteland"](#)

Wollstonecraft: "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (174-184)

First half of *The Catcher in the Rye*

[Rousseau: "Emile" (122-152)]

WEEK THREE: October 11th: Are children born good? What do we mean when we say that all children should be given a good education?

Poems: ["The Leaden-Eyed"](#) by Vachel Lindsey

Discuss: Locke, Tyler, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, Salinger

Due next week:

Dewey: Democracy and Education and Experience and Education (228-290)

[Kaplan: The student and the teacher: designing a democratic relationship](#)

Download

Kaplan: The student and the teacher: designing a democratic relationship

Finish *The Catcher in the Rye*

WEEK FOUR: October 18th: What is a good school? What is the difference between schooling and education?

Guest speaker: Andy Kaplan

Poem: ["The World I Live In"](#) by Mary Oliver

Discuss Dewey, Whitehead, Salinger,

"What the best and wisest parent wants for his child, that must we want for all the children of the community. Anything less is unlovely, and left unchecked, destroys our democracy." -- Dewey, *The School and Society*

Due Next Week:

Read: *Refugee High*

A.S. Neill: Summerhill (295-301)

Read Freire (379-386)

[8-Year Study](#)

Download 8-Year Study

WEEK FIVE: October 25th WHAT IS A GOOD EDUCATION?

Poem: Langston Hughes ["Theme for English B"](#)

Guest speaker: Elly Fishman

Discuss *Refugee High*; Summerhill; Freire; Salinger; [8 Year Study](#)

Download 8 Year Study

What has Holden learned? What would be different if that book had been set in 2021?

Due next week

Watch *School of Rock*

Listen to the *Against the Rules* podcast: "Don't be good, be great"

WEEK SIX November 1st: What is a good teacher?

Poem: [Billy Collins "Workshop"](#)

Discuss: *School of Rock*; Against the Rules podcast

In class we will watch: Gloria Ladson-Billings: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (TED Talk):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HR8NEPK7I0>

Due Next Week:

Watch a Teacher Hero movie (*Dead Poets Society* by Weir; *Dangerous Minds*; *Stand and Deliver*; *Mr. Holland's Opus*; *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*; *Blackboard Jungle*; *To Sir, with Love*)

Read Bill Ayers: ["A Teacher Ain't Nothing But a Hero"](#) Download "A Teacher Ain't Nothing But a Hero"

O'Connor: ["The Elephant, the Diva, the Foot Fetishist, and the Teacher Hero"](#) Download "The Elephant, the Diva, the Foot Fetishist, and the Teacher Hero"

Nussbaum: p 445

Vonnegut: ["Here is a Lesson in Creative Writing"](#) Download "Here is a Lesson in Creative Writing"

WEEK SEVEN: November 8th: What is a teacher hero? What is the ideal relationship between teacher and class/student/school/society?

Poem: [Yehuda Amichai "The School Where I Studied"](#)

Guest speaker: Dave Stovall, Prof. of Criminology, Law, and Black Studies at UIC

Discuss Teacher Hero movies

How to avoid the teacher hero trap?

Due Next Week:

Read Sandel: *The Tyranny of Merit*

WEEK EIGHT: November 15th: What role should the larger society play in the cultivation of a good education?

Poem: ["Measuring Cups" by Andrew Bird](#)

Guest speaker: Paul Horton

Discuss Michael Sandel

Due next week:

Philosophies/Presentations

WEEK NINE: November 22nd: What is your philosophy of education?

Poem: [Szyborska: "Among the Multitudes"](#)

["Little Boxes"](#)

Presentations of your Philosophies

Due Next Week:

Read Maxine Greene: 420-427

Reflections

WEEK TEN: November 29th Final class

Poem/song: "[What did you learn in school today?](#)" by Tom Paxton/PeteSeeger

Sharing Philosophies (continued, if necessary)

Reflections

OPTIONAL EXCERPTS:

[The Legal vs. The Literary Jerome Bruner]

[On Representation: Paisley Rekdal]

[Harry Potter: Delores Umbrage pp.]

[John McPhee: The Headmaster]

[To Teach -- Bill Ayers? Kozol?]

[Kieran Egan: Teaching as a Performance]

Barry Schwartz: The Paradox of Choice TED Talk