Gender and Sexuality in Compulsory Education

Department of Gender Studies, MA Program
Elective 2-credit course
Fall Semester 2017/2018
Instructor: Dorottya Redai
Class time: Monday, 17.20 – 19.00
Office: Z510B
Office hours: 16.00-17.00 Monday or by appointment

Course description

Education is one of the major fields of social life where subjectivities and social inequalities are constituted and re-produced on institutional, curricular and interpersonal levels. Our focus in this course is compulsory education, meaning primary and secondary schooling, and the re/production of gendered and sexual subjectivities and inequalities. The first part of the course provides an introduction to some key concepts and debates in the field of gender and education, including gender socialisation theories, disciplinary power, docile bodies, class habitus and cultural capital. In the second part of the course we will engage with the specific ways and forms of re/producing gendered and sexual subjectivities and inequalities in contemporary neoliberal schooling via qualitative research studies done in schools. We will inquire into the constitution of femininities and masculinities, sexualities, and look at sex education and teachers’ subjectivities. Raced/ethnic and classed subjectivities and inequalities are inseparable from gender and sexuality, therefore, besides devoting two classes specifically to these axes, they will be intersectionally incorporated in the rest of the material to be read and discussed. You will be encouraged to contextualise readings and critically reflect both on your personal educational experiences and your regional/national institutional educational environment in relation to the issues discussed.

Learning goals and outcomes

By the end of the course you will be familiar with key concepts and debates in the field of gender and education and have an overview of the role of education in the re/production of gendered, raced/ethnic, classed and sexual subjectivities and inequalities in education. You will also be able to theorise your own gendered, raced/ethnic, classed and sexual educational experiences and put them into the larger conceptual framework of social re/production through education. Through active discussions in the class you will improve your argumentation skills. Through the course assignments you will develop your writing and presenting skills and will be able to reflect on education issues from an intersectional perspective.
Course requirements

1. Attendance

Attending all the classes is mandatory. Since the readings and the class sessions in this course complement and build on each other, it is extremely important that you participate in class, are on time and prepared, each time. Please do the day’s reading before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss and ask questions about the reading assignments. If you cannot come to class, let the professor know in advance. You can miss one class without compensatory work to do, but if you miss more than one class, you will be required to make up for it by writing an extra reaction paper about the assigned readings for the missed class.

2. Reaction paper

You are required to produce one reaction paper (400-800 words) on one or all of the assigned readings of the given week. It is your choice which texts you will write reaction papers about, just make sure they are all submitted before the beginning of class on the day of the readings you wrote about. The reaction paper is to be submitted no later than in Week 9. The reaction paper has to be submitted via email, in a word format, and you will receive feedback on it via email.

A reaction paper for this course is expected to be a short piece of writing which includes (1) a brief (1 paragraph) summary of the main points of the text(s) you chose, and (2) picking an argument or two from the text(s) and writing a reflection on that/those argument(s). The reflection can be something the text(s) made you think about, some question that occurred to you while reading, some reflection on a personal educational experience or institutional phenomenon through the argumentation of the text(s). So it is rather a reflexive piece of writing, not a simple summary or a literature review paper.

3. Presentation

In order to make the course more interactive and responsive to students’ contexts and interests, you are required to browse through available literature in your local/national/regional context related to one of the topics of the course, and prepare a 10-15-minute long presentation for the class. The presentations will be delivered between Week 5 and Week 11. The presentations are to be based on one text you found interesting (preferably in English, but other languages the presenter is fluent in are also okay), or several texts, or policy or media debates about a given educational issue. You are requested to submit suggestions for presentations to the professor by the beginning of Week 4, indicating which week’s topic they are related to. Prezi or ppt are welcome but not mandatory. In case too many presentations are planned for the same week, other options are negotiable. Comparative presentations, with collaboration between several students is also negotiable.
4. Take-home exam

At the end of the course you are required to do a take-home exam. You will receive two questions, both of which you will have to answer in a three-page long mini essay. The essays will have to be sent to the professor within 48 hours. The date of the exam will be announced later.

Assessment

Grading will be based on the following criteria:
- active class participation (20%)
- reaction paper (20%)
- presentation (20%)
- take-home exam (40%)

Week 1
18 September
Introduction: gender and sexuality in compulsory education

Required reading:

Recommended readings:

Week 2
25 September
Theories of gender socialisation in education

Required readings:
Recommended reading:

Week 3
2 October
Disciplinary power, discourse and docile bodies in education

Required readings:


Recommended reading:

Week 4
9 October
The re/production of social inequalities in education – class, habitus and cultural capital

Required readings:


Recommended readings:

Week 5  
*date to be scheduled later*

**The reproduction of racial inequalities in education**

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


Week 6  
*date to be scheduled later*

**Re/producing gender and sexuality in primary and middle school**

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


Week 7
30 October

Re/producing gender in secondary/high school 1 – Constituting femininities

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

Week 8
date to be scheduled later

Re/producing gender in secondary/high school 2 – Constituting masculinities

Required readings:

Recommended readings:
**Week 9**

**13 November**

*Re/producing sexualities in secondary/high school*

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


**Week 10**

**20 November**

*Sex education as a means of re/producing gender and sexuality in secondary school*

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


Week 11
27 November

Gender, sexuality, teachers and pedagogies

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

Week 12
4 December

Social inequalities in education from an activist perspective

In this class, we will not be discussing readings. Instead, local activists from non-governmental organisations will be invited to discuss their work with various gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, class, disability issues in schools. Be prepared to ask them questions based on what you have learned throughout the course. The name of the invited people and organisations will be confirmed later.