

PHIL 3303 - 001

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

Spring 2016

Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 am until 10:20am

Liberal Arts Building 209

Professor: Amy Reed-Sandoval

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Office Hours: Mondays 2-4 and by appointment

Office Location: Worrell Hall 304

COURSE DESCRIPTION

It is often assumed that children and young adults are incapable of doing philosophy. Indeed, children are said to lack the requisite intellectual and emotional skills for loving wisdom, reflecting upon life's most important and perplexing questions, and engaging in the reasons-giving process that generally characterizes philosophical dialogue. Plato went so far as to argue in the *Republic* that young people *should not* do philosophy before the age of thirty. He claimed that it is dangerous to teach children and young adults how to argue philosophically before they are older and thus equipped to love wisdom for wisdom's sake.

However, as you will learn in this course, Plato was wrong.

In fact, children and young adults are in many respects "natural philosophers". They flourish when given opportunities for philosophical exploration and debate. You will learn about this through reading important academic works in the areas of Philosophy for Children and K-12 pedagogy (more broadly understood), and also through leading your own Philosophy for Children classes in the El Paso community. *This is a course about Philosophy for Children in theory and in practice.*

In this class you will receive training that will enable you to become a Philosophy for Children teacher. We will pay special attention to the unique ethical and pedagogical issues that arise when doing Philosophy for Children in bilingual and multicultural settings such as El Paso. In order to bolster and complicate this discussion of multicultural and even "cross-cultural Philosophy for Children" we will explore important texts in the Anthropology of Childhood, and films that depict childhood in a variety of historical and

cultural settings. We will put these anthropological readings and films into dialogue with Philosophy for Children texts that strive to paint a particular picture of “the philosophical child”.

SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To learn about the history of the Philosophy for Children movement, particularly in the United States and Mexico
- To get acquainted with important academic Philosophy for Children scholarship
- To gain “hands-on experience” leading dynamic, interactive philosophy sessions with children and youth at the K-12 level
- To analyze the unique pedagogical and ethical challenges that arise when doing Philosophy for Children in bilingual and multicultural settings (including and particularly El Paso)
- To gain familiarity with philosophical cross-cultural understandings of childhood through: (1) reading articles from the anthropology of childhood; and (2) viewing films that represent childhood in variety of historical and cultural contexts
- To improve analytic reading and writing skills by completing regular, structured writing assignments throughout the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

(1) Satisfactory attendance and participation in all classes (including the Philosophy for Children classes that you will teach in the El Paso community). This is very much a “hands on” course; thus, attendance and quality participation are extremely important. Here are some specific guidelines:

- a.) You are allowed only two unexcused absence over the course of this class (and only one of these absences can be for your Philosophy for Children teaching in the community). After that, you will be dropped **one full letter grade** for attendance for each unexcused absence.
- b.) Excused absences are those that either: (i) are justified with a doctor’s note (or other acceptable documentation as approved by Dr. Reed-Sandoval); or (ii) are discussed in advance with, and approved by, Dr. Reed-Sandoval during her office hours.
- c.) Satisfactory participation in the class involves: (i) thoughtful participation during classes held at UTEP; and (ii) preparing for, traveling to, and leading Philosophy for Children classes in the community as assigned on this syllabus. (You will need to get a signature from your on-site

supervisor for each Philosophy for Children session you teach in the community); (iii) writing a reflection on each Philosophy for Children teaching experience you conduct via the website of the Center for Civic Engagement (through which you will also log your hours)

d.) You are ultimately responsible for transportation to and from the Philosophy for Children classes you will teach in the community. However, you will be teaching these classes as part of a small team, and we will make every effort to make carpooling options available to all when we formulate the teams.

(2) You will co-facilitate, as part of a small group, **one** 20-30 minute Philosophy for Children session for your UTEP class (that is, an in-class presentation in a class held at UTEP) based upon the *Plato Was Wrong!* lesson plan assigned as reading for the day of your presentation. You are required to bring in any materials specified in that lesson plan. This exercise is designed to give you and the class ideas and practice for the Philosophy for Children classes you will teach.

(3) You will submit a **1-2 page** overview/reaction paper for each day of class at UTEP for which there is assigned reading or film viewing (not for the days that you teach in the community). In these papers, you must:

(a) Provide a clear overview of the reading assignments and/or film for the day; and

(b) Provide a critical reaction to what you have read or viewed (this can include specific questions that the readings and/or films inspired for you).

These papers will be graded on a pass/fail basis. They must be printed out and given to Dr. Reed-Sandoval at the beginning of each class. You are allowed to “skip” or “fail” **two** of these reaction papers. After that, you will be dropped a letter grade (for this assignment) for each reaction paper you fail to turn in.

(4) You will attend an upcoming Philosophy for Children exhibition at the Museo Urbano in El Paso (tentatively scheduled for the first week of May -- to be discussed in class), and then write a one-page reflection on that exhibition.

(5) You will submit **two final essays** of approximately four pages each. In the first essay you will discuss and analyze your experiences teaching Philosophy for

Children in the El Paso community. You must engage relevant course readings in this essay. In the second essay, you will articulate the conception of “the philosophical child” that motivates a great deal of Philosophy for Children literature, and put it into dialogue with course readings and films on cross-cultural understandings of childhood. **Final essays will be due on May 12th, 2015 at 5pm via email.**

GRADES

- Attendance and Participation (includes written reflections on teaching) – 60%
- Reaction Papers – 15%
- In-class (UTEP) presentation of lesson plan – 10%
- Final Essays – 15%

REQUIRED TEXTS

- bell hooks. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Gareth Matthews. 1996. *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- David Shapiro. 2012. *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education.
- All additional readings have been made available via Blackboard.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We are fortunate be able to teach Philosophy for Children courses in cooperation with the following El Paso community partners:

- Rayito de Sol Daycare and Learning Center (run by La Mujer Obrera)
- Aliviane, Inc.
- YWCA
- Austin High School

GENERAL POLICIES

1. *Respect and open-mindedness*. This is a space for an open exchange of ideas; you are encouraged to voice your opinions and explain them philosophically. You should, however, do so with a spirit of respect and open-mindedness—not only towards the varied philosophical texts you will read for class, but also toward your

classmates (whose views may differ from your own). Furthermore, in choosing to take this class you agree to engage respectfully with the views we shall explore throughout the course.

2. *Academic Integrity.* Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UTEP community, students accept the expectations of the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the morally sound path. Students enrolling in UTEP assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UTEPs function as an educational institution. Students should review the university's policies at:

<http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?PageContentID=2084&tabid=30292>

3. *Students with Disabilities Act.* UTEP seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for persons with disabilities. If the student has a systematic physical, cognitive, or psychological disability and requires accommodations, she or he should contact the instructor by the second week of classes so arrangements can be made with the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 915-747-5148 or cass@utep.edu.

4. *University Writing Center.* If you would like help writing papers for this course (from brainstorming ideas to revising for grammar and content), please contact by email uwc@utep.edu or by phone 915/747-5112, or visit the University Writing Center located in Library 227.

5. *Miscellaneous Privacy Policies.* Photos of children involved in the Philosophy for Children classes can only be taken and/or posted online (which includes posting to personal social media sites such as Facebook) **if you have received written permission from your community partner.** Lectures and teaching sessions can only be recorded with the permission of Dr. Reed-Sandoval. Publishing notes and other class materials from this class on websites is prohibited (even if you consider these materials to be "your own interpretation" of class lectures, etc.)

6. *Criminal Background Checks.* Some of our community partners require that their volunteers complete criminal background check. You may therefore be required to receive a criminal background check in order to participate in this class.

READING AND TEACHING SCHEDULE¹

Wednesday, January 20th

- Introduction to course
- In-class watch: *Picture Book Philosophy* (Julie Akeret, 2011)
- Brief presentation from the Center for Civic Engagement

Monday, January 25th

- Getting the Idea
- At home watch: Sara Goering on TEDxOverlake. Philosophy for Kids: Sparking a Love of Learning. Access at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DLzXAjScXk>
- Gareth Matthews. 1996. "Introduction: Getting the Idea," "Chapter 1: A Philosopher's View of Childhood," and "Chapter 2: Theories and Models of Childhood." In *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Are You a Philosopher?" In *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 14-20.

Wednesday, January 27th

- Theater and Philosophy for Children
- Guest lecture from Jessica Gruver on using theatrical techniques in Philosophy for Children classes.

Monday, February 1st

- Philosophical and Methodological Foundations
- Matthew Lipman. 1980. "Chapter 7: Guiding a Philosophical Conversation," in *Philosophy in the Classroom*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Gareth Matthews. 1996. "Chapter 3: Piaget and Philosophy," in *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: 1 Rule Game," in *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 20-25.
- In-class watch: *The Oaxaca Philosophy for Children Initiative* (Julia Reihls and Amy Reed-Sandoval, 2013)

Wednesday, February 3rd

¹ This schedule is subject to revision at Dr. Reed-Sandoval's discretion.

- Foundations, continued
- Gareth Matthews. 1996. "Chapter 4: Piaget and Conservation," and "Chapter 5: Moral Development," in *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Energizer Activity: Word Association" in *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*, pages 28-31.
- At home watch, In-class watch: *Los Olvidados* (Luis Buñuel, 1950)

Monday, February 8th

- Philosophy for Children and Liberation Pedagogy
- Paulo Freire. 1970. "Chapter 2." *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., pages 71-86.
- bell hooks. 1994. "Introduction: Teaching to Transgress" and "Chapter 1: Engaged Pedagogy" in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Blind Painter," in *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education. pages 31-34.

Wednesday, February 10th

- Philosophy for Children and Liberation Pedagogy, continued
- bell hooks. 1996. "Chapter 2: A Revolution of Values: The Promise of Multicultural Change," and "Chapter 3: Embracing Change: Teaching in a Multicultural World," in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Gareth Matthews. 1996. "Chapter 6: Children's Rights," in *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Which Story is True?" in *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 73-76

Monday, February 15th

- Philosophy for Children and Liberation Pedagogy, continued
- bell hooks. 1996. "Chapter 4: Paulo Freire" and "Chapter 5: Theory as Liberatory Practice," in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Reality Scavenger Hunt" in *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 83-85.

Wednesday, February 17th

- **UTEP has cancelled all classes today. Please complete the readings below, and do a response paper that you will turn in on February 22nd along with your response paper for the 22nd.**
- Feminism and Philosophy for Children
- bell hooks. 1996. "Chapter 7: Holding My Sister's Hand: Feminist Solidarity," "Chapter 8: Feminist Thinking: In the Classroom Right Now," and "Chapter 9: Feminist Scholarship: Black Scholars" in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Monday, February 22nd

- Teaching to Transgress: Concluding Thoughts
- bell hooks. 1996. "Chapter 10: Building a Teaching Community: A Dialogue," "Chapter 11: Language: Teaching New Worlds/New Words," "Chapter 12: Confronting Class in the Classroom," "Chapter 13: Eros, Eroticism and the Pedagogical Process," and "Chapter 14: Ecstasy: Teaching and Learning without Limits," in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Hand Dealt." In *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 132-139.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: What is the Meaning of Life? (Game)." In *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 153-155.

Wednesday, February 24th

- First day of Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, February 29th

- Guest lecture on the "School to Prison Pipeline" by Dr. Aurelia Lorena Murga, Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Texas at El Paso
- In-class reflection on your first day of Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Wednesday, March 2nd

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, March 7th

- No class – enjoy Spring Break!

Wednesday, March 9th

- No class – enjoy Spring Break!

Monday, March 14th

- Race/Ethnicity and Philosophy for Children
- Darren Chetty. 2014. "The Elephant in the Room: Picturebooks, Philosophy for Children and Racism." *childhood & philosophy* 10, no. 19, pages 11-31.
- Nell Rainville. 2000. "Philosophy for Children in Native America: A Post-Colonial Critique," in *Analytic Teaching* vol. 21, no. 1 pp. 65-77
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Fair or Equal?" in *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 140-142.

Wednesday, March 16th

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, March 21st

- Does "Children's Philosophy" Exist?
- Gareth Matthews. "Chapter 7: Childhood Amnesia," "Chapter 8: Childhood and Death," and "Chapter 10: Child Art." In *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge: The President and Fellows of Harvard College.
- Amy Reed-Sandoval. 2014. "The Oaxaca Philosophy for Children Initiative as Place-Based Philosophy: Why Context Matters in Philosophy for Children." In the *APA Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy*, fall 2014.
- David Shapiro. 2012. "Lesson Plan: Could Anything Else Have Happened?" In *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 95-97.

Wednesday, March 23rd

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, March 28th

- What is “Philosophical Sensitivity” in Philosophy for Children?
- Jana Mohr Lone. 2013. “Philosophical Sensitivity.” In *Metaphilosophy* 44 (1-2), pages 171-186.
- David Shapiro. 2012. “Lesson Plan: Ring of Gyges Diary.” In *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education, pages 113-115.
- In-class watch (to be finished later, at home; accessible via Blackboard), *Lord of the Flies* (Peter Brook, 1990)

Wednesday, March 30th

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, April 4th

- Introduction to cross-cultural perspectives on childhood
- Franz Boaz. “Plasticity and Childhood Development.” In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 18-21.
- Margaret Mead. “The Ethnography of Childhood.” In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 22-27.
- Bronislaw Malinowski. “Childhood in the Trobriand Islands.” In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 28-32.
- At home watch: *Ezra* (Newton Aduaka, 2007) (available via Blackboard)

Wednesday, April 6th

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, April 11th

- Cross-cultural perspectives on childhood, continued
- Meyer Fortes. “Tallensi Childhood in Ghana.” In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 34-41.

- Ruth Benedict. "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning. In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages
- David Shapiro. "Lesson Plan: Assassin Game." In *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Education pages 66-69.

Wednesday, April 13th

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, April 18th

- Cross-cultural perspectives on childhood, continued
- Patricia M. Clancy. "The Acquisition of Communicative Style in Japanese." In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 165-181.
- Sara Harkness and Charles M. Super. "Why African Children Are So Hard to Test." In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 182-186.
- Rebecca S. New. "Child's Play in Italian Perspective." In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 213-221.

Wednesday, April 20th

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, April 25th

- Conclusion: cross-cultural perspectives on childhood
- Suzanne Gaskins. "Children's Lives Amongst the Yucatec Maya." In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 280-289.
- Barbara Rogoff et al. "Age and Responsibility." In Robert E. Levine and Rebecca S. New (eds). 2008. *Anthropology and Child Development: A Cross-Cultural Reader* Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pages 251-263.
- In-class watch (to be continued at home; available via Blackboard), *The Birds* (Hitchcock, 1963)

Wednesday, April 27th

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Monday, May 2nd

- Philosophy for Children teaching at your community organization

Wednesday, May 4th

- Wrap-up/last day of class
- In-class preparation for final essays