

**PO 548  
POLITICS OF EDUCATION**

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Office Hours: 4-6 Wednesday, 12-1 Friday

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This course will examine the political and social characteristics of the educational process and its economic consequences. We will begin with an examination of the relationship of the public school system to the political, economic, and social system, the culture of the school and the classroom, comparisons of the U.S. to Europe and Japan. Finally, we will end with a discussion of specific educational controversies and proposed reforms such as school choice and privatization, bilingual education, teacher pay schedule, gender differences in math and science, and the race gap in achievement.

**Course Requirements:**

1) **Discussion and Attendance-10% of grade.** Talking to your classmates or sleeping in class can lower your attendance and participation grade or negate the positive aspects of it. If you have a question, please ask me rather than your neighbor. I LOVE QUESTIONS!!

-If you come in late, you are forgiven, but it is your responsibility to see that you are marked present. Please do not surf the internet or text message during class, even to do research on some issue raised during lecture, unless you are specifically asked to do so. If I notice that you are surfing the internet or text messaging, I will ask you to stop. Repeated violations will lower your participation grade. In other words, we should all try to be polite to each other as difficult as that can sometimes be in this crazy world we live in.

-An A grade for attendance and participation is given only to students with both excellent attendance AND participation. Excellent participation means having the answers to questions, asking intelligent questions that show you have done the readings, or asking clarifying questions or rebuttals that show you are listening and thinking.

2) **Midterm Exam 40-50%** of grade, Oct. 12, 14 **1 hour 20 min. exam**

3) **Final examination 40-50%** of grade, Dec. 20, 9-11 AM, **1 hour 20 min. exam (over two hour period)**

Your lowest grade on the two exams will count for 40% and the highest grade for 50%.

Holidays Affecting This Class: Mon. Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, Thanksgiving Nov. 23-27

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**MAKEUP EXAMS ARE NOT AUTOMATIC. THEY MUST BE INDIVIDUALLY SCHEDULED AND PROCTORED.**

Students who miss the exam and want to take a makeup must call or email me before the exam or immediately after explaining their absence. Because the makeup exams are individually scheduled and proctored, the absence must be for a serious reason such as a medical or other emergency. The following rules must be adhered to:

- Call or email me BEFORE or immediately after the time of the exam explaining absence
- Call or email within 3 days of the exam to schedule a face-to-face meeting
- The makeup exam must be taken within 10 days of the original exam
- If you miss one makeup exam, you will not be given another one.
- It is your responsibility to contact me. If you do not meet the above guidelines, you will receive an F on the exam you missed.

**FORMAT OF EXAMS:** The format of the exams is TF/MC, fill in the blank plus one long essay. You will always have a choice of essays (there will be two) as well as extra TF/MC/Fill-in-the-Blank questions you can miss with no penalty. The possible essay questions will **NOT** be handed out before the exam as they are in PO 241.

**GRADING FORMULA:** I use an 11 point scale to convert letter grades into number grades. This corresponds exactly to the 4 point scale that is more commonly used. I just find it is easier to work with whole numbers. I reject completely the 100 point

scale for grading essays. I think it is silly to think a grader is capable of making 100 distinctions when grading an essay. HOWEVER, ALL LETTER GRADES MUST BE CONVERTED TO NUMBER GRADES IN ORDER TO BE AVERAGED OR SUMMED OR WEIGHTED. In my scale, 11=A, 10=A-, 9=B+, 8=B, 7=B-, 6=C+, 5=C, 4=C-, 3=D+, 2=D, 1=D-, 0=F. I create a curve for the entire class for the TF/MC part of the exam based on the number right starting with 47 (3 free questions). The curve ranges from A to F (using the number scale above). Please note that I do not feel any obligation to actually give Ds or Fs and in more than three decades of teaching have given only a handful. The average grade on my exams is typically a B and the lowest grade is typically a D and often higher than that. The essays are also graded from A to F and converted to the same 11 point number scale. Then the two parts of the exam are averaged. For example, if you received a C+ (6) for the TF/MC part and an A (11) for the essay, your exam grade would be  $(6+11)/2=8.5$ . Individual exam grades are NOT rounded up. The formula for the final course grade is  $=((S3*0.40)+(T3*0.50)+(U3*0.1))$  where S3=your lowest exam, T3=your highest exam, and U3=your attendance/participation grade. The result of this formula is a grade ranging from 11 to 0. If your final course grade is .5 or higher, it will be rounded up to the next higher grade. In computing As for the course grade, I round up from 10.3 and for A-s from 9.4.

## **Course Required Readings: THESE READINGS ARE ONLINE**

### **BOOKS**

- PO 548; individual articles **COURSEPACK**, ON LINE AT **WEB PAGE**. (Bound copy can be purchased at GradeANotes: <http://www.gradeanotes.com/>, click on **Purchase ONLINE (top right)**, then in search box insert **Boston University and this should come up**
- Gerald Bracey, Put to the Test: an Educator and Consumer's Guide to Standardized Testing, Phi Delta Kappa International, 2002. (ISBN 13: 978-0873675321) (Bound copy can be purchased at GradeANotes: <http://www.gradeanotes.com/>, click on **click on Purchase ONLINE (top right)**, then in search box insert **Boston University and this should come up**; individual chapters ON-LINE AT **WEB PAGE**.
- Christine Rossell and Keith Baker, Bilingual Education in Massachusetts: The Emperor Wears No Clothes, Boston: Pioneer Institute, 1996. Bound copy can be purchased at GradeANotes: <http://www.gradeanotes.com/>, click on **click on Purchase ONLINE (top right)**, then in search box insert **Boston University and this should come up**; individual chapters ON-LINE AT **WEB PAGE**.

The course has a web page that can be found at <http://blackboard.bu.edu> where you must look for this course on the top right. You will need a BU login ID and Kerberos password (takes 5 minutes to get it from IT at 111 Cummington St.) and Adobe Acrobat Reader (4.0 or later to read the files). Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded for FREE at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>.

## **READINGS AND COURSE OUTLINE**

**Note: Readings are to be completed *before* the class for that week in the order they are listed.**

### **PART I: THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL AND ITS ROLE IN SOCIAL SELECTION**

#### **A. EDUCATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO INCOME AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Week of Sept. 5, 12: CONTROVERSIES OVER THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION

#### **Required Readings:**

- Linda S. Gottfredson, "Education as a Valid But Fallible Signal of Worker Quality," Research in Sociology of Education and Socialization, 1985, 5, 123-169 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Nie, Norman H. and Saar D. Golde, "Does Education Really Make You Smarter" Miller-McCune, June/July 2008, 56-64
- Bracey, Gerald, "What if Education Broke Out All Over?" Education Week, March 30, 1994 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Eric Hanushek, "The Seeds of Growth," Education Next, Fall 2002, 10-18. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- William Easterly, "Barren Land," Education Next, Fall 2002, 18-23 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Eric Hanushek, "Our School Performance Matters," Education Week, Feb. 2, 2005, p. 50, 40. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Anthony P. Carnevale, "If We're So Dumb, Why Are We So Rich?," Education Week, Feb. 2, 2005, p. 50, 40. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Rothstein, "A Nation at Risk" 25 Years Later," 2008. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Bainbridge, W., "Workers with Technical Skills May Not Need College Education," 2007 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Steinberg, Plan B, Skip College, NY Times, 2010. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Lee, Don, "Is a College Degree Still Worth it?," LA Times, June 12, 2010. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Sullivan, J. "Great Jobs Mismatch," Newsweek.com, June 20, 2011. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

■ Redovich, D. "289 Math & Science Employment and Employment Projections by Required Education and Training Levels in the United States 2006-2016," 2007 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

**NOTE: PLEASE PRINT OUT DIAGRAM ON THEORIES FROM COURSE WEB SITE AND BRING TO CLASS!**

Recommended:

- Hanushek, E. & Woessmann, L., *The Role of School Improvement in Economic Development*, 2007. **WEB PAGE**
- DeYoung, Alan, *Economics and American Education : A Historical and Critical Overview of the Impact of Economic Theories on Schooling in the United States*, 1989. (Chapts. 8, 9 **WEB PAGE**)
- Thurow, Lester, "Education and Economic Equality," in Karabel and Halsey (eds.) *Power and Ideology in Education* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1977). **WEB PAGE**

**B. TEST SCORES AND STANDARDS**

Week of Sept. 12, 19:

Required Readings:

- Gerald Bracey, *Put to the Test: an Educator and Consumer's Guide to Standardized Testing*, Phi Beta Kappa International, 2002 **GRADEANOTES/WEB PAGE**
- MCAS Figures 2006-09 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Gerald Bracey, "Does Higher Tech Require Higher Skills?" 2001. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Gerald Bracey, "Those Misleading SAT and NAEP Scores" 2003. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Murray, Charles, "Intelligence in the Classroom," *Wall Street Journal*, January 16, 2007. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Brady, Marion, "The Juggernaut," 2-2-2011 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Mathis, William J., "The 'Common Core' Standards Initiative: an Effective Reform Tool,?" *EPRU*, July 2010 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended:

- Barton and Coley, "The Family, America's Smallest School," Educational Testing Service, Sept. 2007, **WEB PAGE**
- Levin, Henry, "Educational Performance Standards and the Economy," *Educational Researcher*, (27) May 1998, 4-10. **WEB PAGE**

<b>PART II: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE</b>
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Week of Sept. 26, Oct. 3

Required Readings:

- Bracey, Gerald, "The TIMMS "Final Year" Study and Report: a Critique," *Educational Researcher*, (2000) 29, 4-10. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, Deborah, "Most Nations Seen Falling Short of NAEP Proficiency," *Education Week* (2007). **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Lowell and Salzman, "Into the Eye of the Storm," 2007 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Honawar, "Study: U.S.-Asian Engineering Gap Overstated," *Education Week*, Jan. 4, 2006, p. 6. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Lemonick, "Are We Losing Our Edge," *Time*, Feb. 13, 2006. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Keegan, "Looking for a Lab-Coat Idol," *Time*, Feb. 13, 2006: 26-27. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Krauthammer, "Don't Believe the Hype. We're Still Number 1," *Time*, Feb. 13, 2006. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Tienken, "Common Core State Standards: an Example of Data-less Decision Making," *AASS Journal of Policy and Practice*, Winter 2011. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Baker, K. "Test Scores and National Success," Eddra2 Email, 2010. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Gardner, "Be Wary of Test Score Comparisons," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 3-5-2011. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Cyranoski, D., Gilbert, N., Ledford, H., Nayar, A., Yahia, M.. "Education: the PhD Factory," *Nature*. 2011 Apr 21;472:276-9. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended:

- Murray, C., "An Elite that is Already Smart," *Washington Times*, 9-3-2008 **WEB PAGE**
- Bracey, Gerald, "Countering the Fear Mongerers," 2009 **WEB PAGE**
- Bracey, Gerald, "April Foolishness," *Phi Delta Kappan*, (2003) 84, 616-621. **WEB PAGE**
- Bracey, Gerald, "International Comparisons and the Condition of American Education," *Educational Researcher*, (1996) 25, 5-11. **WEB PAGE**

- Bracey, Gerald, "The 16<sup>th</sup> (and earlier reports) Bracey Report on the Condition of Public Education," Phi Delta Kappan, Oct. 1993 (75), 104-117. Note: earlier Bracey Reports on Condition of Education are available on **WEB PAGE**
- Westbury, I., "Comparing American and Japanese Achievement: Is U.S. Really a Low Achiever?," Educational Researcher, 21 (5) June-July 1992: 18-24. **WEB PAGE**
- NSF, Science and Engineering Indicators, 2000, <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind00/> **WEB PAGE**
- Gary Gereffi and Vivek Wadhwa, "Framing the Engineering Outsourcing Debate: Placing the United States on a Level Playing Field with China and India," Durham, N.C., Duke University, Dec. 2005. **WEB PAGE**

<b>Midterm Exam Wed., Fri. Oct. 12 and 14 on Above Material</b>
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**PART III: EDUCATIONAL CONTROVERSIES AND REFORMS**

**A. SCHOOL CHOICE, PRIVATIZATION, AND HIGH STAKES TESTING**

(3 hours)

Required Readings:

- Wikipedia, "Charter Schools, 2009, **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, "NYC Charter Schools-Hoxby Research," Education Week, 2009.pdf **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, "Blog on Hoxby Charter School," Inside School Research, Ed. Week, 2009.pdf **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, "Raymond v. Hoxby," Educ. Week, 10-09 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Paulson, A. "On Average Charter Schools Do No Better than Public Schools," Christian Science Monitor, June 29, 2010. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Gill, et al., "State Takeover, School Restructuring, Private Management, and Student Achievement in Philadelphia: Executive Summary," Rand Report, 2007. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, Debra, "Research Doesn't Offer Much Guidance on Turnarounds," Education Week, Aug. 4, 2009 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Howell, et al., "Vouchers in NY, Dayton, and D.C.," Education Next, (2), Summer 2001. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Goldhaber, "Significant, but Not Decisive.," Education Next, (2), Summer 2001. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended:

- Hoxby lecture on her NYC charter school study (video) **WEB PAGE**
- Raymond, CREDO Hoxby Rebuttal, 2009.pdf **WEB PAGE**
- Hoxby, Murarka, Kang, "How NYC Charter Schools Affect Achievement," Sept. 2009.PDF
- Raymond, Multiple Choice (Charter Schools), CREDO, 2009.pdf **WEB PAGE**
- GFBrandenburg's Blog, 'Correlations: Pass Rates and Poverty Rates [D.C. Charter Schools v. D.C. Public Schools] **WEB PAGE**
- Greene, "Vouchers in Charlotte," Education Next, (2), Summer 2001. **WEB PAGE**
- Caroline Hoxby, "Rising Tide," Education Next, (1), Winter 2001: 69-74. **WEB PAGE**
- Gill, et al., "State Takeover, School Restructuring, Private Management, and Student Achievement in Philadelphia: Complete Report," Rand Report, 2007. **WEB PAGE**
- Peterson, Paul and Howell, William G, "Voucher Research Controversy," 2004. **WEB PAGE**
- Chapter 7 of Carol Ascher, Norm Fruchter, and Robert Berne, Hard Lessons: Public Schools and Privatization. N.Y.:20 C. Fund, 1996. **WEB PAGE**
- Hanushek, Eric and Margaret Raymond, "High Stakes Research," Education Next, Summer 2003: 48-55 **WEB PAGE**.

**B. TEACHER PAY AND EVALUATION**

Required Readings:

- Podgursky, "Fringe Benefits," Education Next, Summer 2003. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Podgursky & Mishal, "Are Teachers Underpaid?" NCTQ Square-Off, 2006 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Costrell and Podgursky, "Teacher Retirement Benefits," Education Next, Spring 2009 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Stergios, J., "What's a retiring teacher's pension worth?," 2011 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Ballou and Podgursky, "Let the Market Decide," Education Next, Spring 2001. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Jacob and Lefgren, "When Principals Rate Teachers," Education Next, Spring 2006. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Marshall, "Is Supervising the Heck out of Teachers the Answer?" Education Week, May 7, 2008 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Kane, Taylor, Tyler and Wooten, "Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness," Education Next, Summer 2011. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

- Di Carlo, Matthew, “What we don’t know about new teacher evaluation systems (and why it’s a problem),” **8-18-2011 WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Sawchuk, Bonus Pay, Education Week, 9-29-10, pp. 1, 12-13; Ravitch Blog appended 9-29-10. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, Debra, “Value Added Gauge of Teaching Probed,” Education Week, July 15, 2009 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended

- Jay Greene, “The Teacher Pay Myth”, NY Post, Sept. 22, 2005. **WEB PAGE**
- Frederick Hess, “Teacher Quality, Teacher Pay,” Policy Review, 124, April 2004. **WEB PAGE**
- Caroline Hoxby and Andrew Leigh, “Wage Distortion,” Education Next, Spring 2005 **WEB PAGE**
- Podgursky, “Is there a Qualified Teacher Shortage?,” Education Next, Spring 2006. **WEB PAGE**

**C. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SCIENCE AND MATH**

Required Readings:

- Xie and Shauman, Gender Differences in Math and Science, 2005 presentation from their book **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Saletan, W. “The Pseudo-Feminist Show Trial of Larry Summers,” Slate, Jan. 21, 2005 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Young, C. “Women, Science, and Gender Bias,” Boston Globe, Oct. 20, 2007 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Viadero, “Researchers Mull STEM Gender Gap, Education Week, June 17, 2009. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Levitt and Dubner, SuperFreakonomics, 2009, pp. 44-49. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Weisul, K., “The true cost of motherhood for women,” BNET, the CBS Interactive Business Network, May 9, 2011. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended

- Yu Xie and Kimberlee Shauman, Women in Science: Career Paths and Outcomes, Harvard U. Press, 2005.
- Cavanagh, “Educators Revisit Girls’ Loss of Math, Science Interest,” Education Week, 2005 **WEB PAGE**
- Andrew Helwig, “Gender-role stereotyping: testing theory with a longitudinal sample,” Sex Roles: A Journal of Research, 1998 **WEB PAGE**

**D. BILINGUAL EDUCATION:**

Required Readings:

- Chapt. 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 of Rossell and Baker, Bilingual Education in Massachusetts: the Emperor Has No Clothes Boston: Pioneer Institute, 1996. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK (Rossell and Baker article on achievement on WEB PAGE**

**recommended readings)**

- Christine Rossell, “The Near End of Bilingual Education,” Education Next, vol. 3(4), Fall 2003: 44-52. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Christine Rossell, “The Flawed Requirements for Limited English Proficient Children of the No Child Left Behind Act,” The Journal of Education, 186 (3), journal date 2005 (actual publication Nov. 2006), pp. 29-40. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended:

- C. Rossell and Julia Kuder “Meta-Murky: A Rebuttal to Recent Meta-Analyses of Bilingual Education.” In: Janina Söhn (Ed.) The Effectiveness of Bilingual School Programs for Immigrant Children. Berlin: Social Science Research Center (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung), 2005, pp. 43-76. **WEB PAGE**
- C. Rossell, “Teaching English Through English,” Educational Leadership, Dec. 2004/January 2005: 32-36. **WEB PAGE**
- C. Rossell, “Educating Limited English Proficient Students,” American Language Review, September/October 2000 (4): 15-19. **WEB PAGE**
- C. Rossell, "Different Questions, Different Answers: A Critique of the Hakuta, Butler and Witt Report, 'How long does it take English learners to attain proficiency?'," READ Perspectives, Volume VII, October 2000: 134-154. **WEB PAGE**
- C. Rossell, “The Federal Bilingual Education Program: Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act,” in Brookings Papers on Education Policy, 2000, edited by Diane Ravitch, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2000: 215-244. **WEB PAGE**
- C. Rossell, “Teaching Language Minorities: Theory and Reality,” in City Schools: Lessons From New York, edited by Diane Ravitch and Joseph Viteritti, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000: 187-218. **WEB PAGE**
- C. Rossell and K Baker, "The Educational Effectiveness of Bilingual Education," Research in the Teaching of English, February 1996, 30 (1): 7-74. **WEB PAGE**

**E. RACE GAP IN ACHIEVEMENT:**

Required Readings:

- Ronald F. Ferguson, “Can Schools Narrow the Black-White Test Score Gap?,” 318-374, Chapt. 9 in C. Jencks and M. Phillips, eds., The Black-White Test Score Gap, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- William Julius Wilson, “The Role of the Environment in the Black-White Test Score Gap,” 501-510, Chapt. 15 in C. Jencks and M. Phillips, eds., The Black-White Test Score Gap, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998. **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Gladwell, M. “None of the Above,” *The New Yorker*, Dec. 17, 2007 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**
- Hanushek, E., “How Well Do We Understand Achievement Gaps?” *Focus*, 27(2) 2010 **WEB PAGE/COURSEPACK**

Recommended:

- Abigail and Stephen Thernstrom, No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning, Simon and Schuster, 2004.
- Abigail and Stephen Thernstrom, *America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible*, Touchstone 1999, Simon & Schuster 1997).
- The rest of the chapters in Jencks and Phillips, The Black-White Test Score Gap. The following are on-line:
- Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips, “The Black-White Test Score Gap: An Introduction,” 1-55, Chapt. 1 in C. Jencks and M. Phillips, eds., The Black-White Test Score Gap, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998. **WEB PAGE**
- Ronald Ferguson, “Teachers’ Perceptions and Expectations and the Black-White Test Score Gap,” 273-317, Chapt. 8 in C. Jencks and M. Phillips, eds., The Black-White Test Score Gap, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998. **WEB PAGE**
- William R. Johnson and Derek Neal, “Basic Skills and the Black-White Earnings Gap” 481-497, Chapt. 14 in C. Jencks and M. Phillips, eds., The Black-White Test Score Gap, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998. **WEB PAGE**
- David Armor, “Black Achievement 50 Years After Brown,” April 2004 **WEB PAGE**

**LAST DAY OF CLASS: Monday, Dec. 12th**

<b>FINAL EXAM Dec. 20, 9-11</b>
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