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SocofEdu – Toussaint MWF 2pm

Due Date: March 16, 2015

Learning to Learn Assignment #5 – Mid Semester Reflection

As a Criminal Justice major with a minor in Sociology, I was interested to learn the relation between sociology and education because I aspire to eventually become a professor in a similar subject area. After much reading and thorough research, there is astonishing parallels between the structures of educational institutions and the hierarchy of a capitalist society that I was completely unaware of. Also, schools play an important role in preparing youths for social interactions by instilling proper behaviors, norms and values. Through the readings of Harry L. Gracie, Samuel Bowels and Herbert Gintis – I began to clearly see a symbolic connection between the resource, knowledge, and opportunity distribution among schools of our nation’s youth and our country’s system of social stratification. Just as the wealthiest people in United States with prestigious status hold substantial social advantage and acquire the majority of economic capital, the children of these affluent hold significant advantage within education institutions. In every community across the nation regardless of socio-economic status, there is unequal impediments faced by children of lower socio-economic class in schooling establishments and it is overlooked as it seems to be a normal function of modern society.

In *Kindergarten as Academic Boot Camp*, Gracie describes an underlying socialization process within the organization structure of schools which begins as early as kindergarten. As students are conditioned to conform to school procedures, they’re taught the difference between right and wrong, as well as informed of consequences and benefits of their behaviors. There is a common goal among kindergarten classes to prepare children for schooling procedures, teach children skills and knowledge necessary to succeed, and offer individual opportunities for physical, emotional, social, and academic growth. Kindergarten’s main objective is to teach children the student role, which is a collection of behavior and attitudes classified as appropriate by educators within schools. While those whom had the tendency to violate school rules were more likely to be deviant within society following academic involvement, those who could properly conform would accordingly adapt to social norms and values. Once students leave schools and enter bureaucratic organizations, they will be required to follow similar routines and sets of procedures that were instilled in early school days. Just as those who could conform to educational missions were more likely to be able to aspire in the field of academics, those who could also commit to occupational missions were more likely to aspire in bureaucratic organizations.

Samuel Bowels and Herbert Gintis further emphasized a connection between economic society and educational institutions. The sociologists pointed out four general points in which schools relate to the economic capitalist structure. First, schools play a central role in social reproduction of social classes. Next, schools were developed in the United States to serve the interest of the capitalist class. Then, mass education promotes the illusion of meritocratic selection; socializing working class youths to accept failure as a result of their own shortcomings. Lastly, schools result in a hindrance of social mobility since social reproduction among classes is so prevalent. The quality of resources and opportunities are limited by socio-economic situation of the institutions location. Bowels and Gintis introduced a concept known as The Correspondence Principle, which described the way that schools and other institutions socialize and educate individuals to take places and assume roles in a structure of social inequality. Also, the correspondence principle holds that the social relations of education (administration, teachers and students) reflect the hierarchy of the labor market. Students answer to teachers and administrative officials just as working class members are under the supervision of managers, owners and executives. Moreover, it is very clear to see how schools prepare students for the labor market in a capitalist economy and teach them how to assume specific social roles regardless of equality.