

# Educational Studies 308: Cities, Suburbs, and Schools

Trinity College Fall 2007 (final version)

W 1:15-3:55pm LSC 138-139

<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ>

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Office Hours: Tues 2-4pm and Wed 10am-Noon

Teaching Assistants:  
Jesse Wanzer '08 (full-time)  
Christina Ramsay '09 (part-time)

Additional resource people:

Rachael Barlow, Social Sciences Data Coordinator (office in library, level 1)  
David Tatem, Academic Computing Specialist (office in library, level A)

**Description:** This upper-level undergraduate seminar operates as a team research workshop. First, we closely examine a noteworthy study on some aspect of cities, suburbs, and schooling in the United States. Next, we design and conduct a small-scale parallel research project to test whether the author's claims apply to the metropolitan Hartford area. Students develop three types of research skills: historical (interpreting archival source materials), qualitative (analyzing oral interviews), and quantitative (generating descriptive statistics and GIS computer maps from large datasets). For the community learning experience, the seminar partners with a local organization to develop the research study, present the findings, and discuss their significance.

Another goal of the seminar is to prepare students to design and conduct their own independent research projects during their senior year. For examples of senior research projects that have been done by students across a variety of different majors, see the Cities, Suburbs, and Schools website: <<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/css>>

In fall 2007, our seminar will consist of three units:

a) Home and School Buying simulation: to understand deep connections between public schools, the private real estate market, and the growth of suburbia

b) Qualitative research project: interviews with parents and students on their experiences of Project Choice city-suburb school transfers (administered by CREC)

c) Quantitative research project: computer mapping of school reform data, to compare the Sheff II integration proposal and the ConnCAN achievement gap agenda

Prerequisite: Ed 200 or Psyc 225 or the Cities Program or permission of instructor.

## Readings to acquire:

- Amy Stuart Wells and Robert Crain, *Stepping Over the Color Line* (1997). Paperback.  
- Susan Eaton, *The Children of Room E4* (Algonquin Press, 2007). Hardcover only.  
Additional readings will be made available in seminar.

**Assessment:**

Home and School Buying simulation 2-page analysis paper	5
Qualitative Research Project data exercises (transcribing, thematic coding) 5-8 page analysis paper	10 20
Quantitative Research Project data exercises (Excel, ArcGIS) 5-8 page analysis paper	10 20
Special Events attend one event (see list below) and write 2-page reaction paper	5
Final Project research proposal OR public outreach project paper	15
Class Participation (graded by classmates) discussion facilitator -- organize an engaging, focused dialogue on assigned topic, with partner; prep with instructor or TA	5
overall contribution to the seminar	5
TOTAL	100

Be advised that adequate work earns a C, good work earns a B, and outstanding work earns an A in this class. Students are expected to engage in academic honesty in all forms of work for this course. If this is unclear to you, ask me for clarification.

The penalty for overdue assignments will be 10% for every 12-hour period beyond the deadline, with exceptions granted only for documented medical or family emergencies.

Please notify me during the first week if you require any special accommodations.

Your classmates and I expect your regular and prompt attendance at every session, since we rely upon our collective efforts to succeed in this team-based seminar.

NOTE about seminar schedule:

Since this project-based research seminar involves real-world situations, the instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus schedule at any time.

### **Sept 5th**

Intro to syllabus and CSS research project

Home & School Buying simulation part A: Given a demographic profile of a Hartford family, how would you obtain information and make decisions about buying versus renting in the city or surround suburbs, and the type of school your child would attend?

### **Special Event: Sat Sept 8th, 9:30-11am**

Sheff Movement planning meeting on new Project Choice report (see later in syllabus)

### **Sept 12th**

Read: Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (Oxford University Press, 1985), chapter 11 ("Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream") and chapter 13 ("The Baby Boom and the Age of the Subdivision").

Facilitators 1 & 2 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Read: "Confidential Report of a Survey in Hartford, Connecticut," Division of Research and Statistics, Home Owners' Loan Corporation, Washington DC, 1936 & 1937; and "Residential Security Map" for Hartford and West Hartford, 1937, from the National Archives. [Read on Trinity network: \\zep\docex\EducResearch\Ed308\_CSS\_Fall07]

Facilitators 3 & 4 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Christopher Howard, *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States*. Princeton University Press, 1997, introduction and chapter 5, "Home Mortgage Interest."

In seminar: Home & School buying simulation part B (maps, mortgages, and taxes).

### **Sept 19th**

Jennifer Jellison Holme. "Buying Homes, Buying Schools: School Choice in the Social Construction of School Quality." *Harvard Educational Review* 72 (Summer 2002): 177-205.

Facilitators 5 & 6 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Christina Ramsay, Cintli Sanchez, Jesse Wanzer, and the Ed 308 seminar, "Shopping for Homes and Schools: A Qualitative Study of West Hartford, Connecticut." Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Research Project report, Trinity College, December 2006. <<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/css>>

Facilitators 7 & 8 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Dougherty, Jack, and Jeffrey Harrelson, Laura Maloney, Drew Murphy, Russell Smith, Michael Snow, Diane Zannoni. "School Choice in Suburbia: Public School Testing and Private Real Estate Markets [1996-2005]." Conference paper delivered at the American Educational Research Association, 2007. <<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/css>>

In seminar: Home & School buying simulation part C; Paper #1 DUE Sunday 9pm.

**Special Event: Sunday Sept 16th and Sunday Sept 23rd, 1-3pm**

City-Suburb bike tours to see and talk about housing and schooling in metro Hartford

**Sept 26th**

Amy Stuart Wells and Robert Crain, *Stepping Over the Color Line: African American Students in White Suburban Schools* (Yale, 1997).

Read: Introduction

Skim: Chapters 1, 2, 3 (background on metro St. Louis)

Read carefully:

Chapter 4 (Black students in urban schools)

Chapter 5 (Black students succeeding in suburban schools)

Chapter 6 (Black students who withdrew from suburban schools)

Facilitators 9 & 10 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Read: Jack Dougherty, Jesse Wanzer, and Christina Ramsay, *Missing the Goal: A Visual Guide to Sheff vs. O'Neill School Desegregation, June 2007*. Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Research Project at Trinity College. <<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/css>>

Read on-line: Background material on Project Choice (aka Capital Region Choice Program), located in our docex folder.

Facilitators 11 & 12 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

In seminar: PC interview contacts assigned; interview guide prep; IRB ethics; practice

**Oct 3rd**

Read: Erica Frankenberg, *Project Choice Campaign: Improving and Expanding Hartford's Project Choice Program* (Washington, DC: Poverty & Race Research Action Council <<http://www.prrac.org>>, September 2007).

In seminar: Discussion with Renita Satchell, Project Choice staff person at CREC

Facilitators 13 & 14 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Read: Wells and Crain, *Stepping Over the Color Line*, chapters 7, 8, 9, conclusion, and methodology appendix.

In seminar: interview transcribing guidelines

**Oct 10th**

Read: Dana Banks and Jack Dougherty. "City-Suburban Desegregation and Forced Choices: Review Essay of Susan Eaton's *The Other Boston Busing Story*." *Teachers College Record* 105 (2004): 985-998

In seminar: Thematic coding of interview transcripts; paper #2 assignment distributed

Speakerphone conversation with Amy Stuart Wells

**Special Event Thursday, Oct 11th, 6-7pm**

Erica Frankenberg and Philip Tegeler present "Hartford's Project Choice Campaign" at the New England Conference on Multicultural Education, Connecticut Convention Ctr. Room 21 (Ballroom level, City-Side) -- free and open to the public

**Oct 17th**

Paper #2 due at beginning of seminar

Read: Joel Best, *More Damned Lies and Statistics: How Numbers Confuse Public Issues* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), chapter 2.

In seminar: Bring *Visual Guide to Sheff*; data exercise with Microsoft Excel

Start reading: Susan Eaton, *The Children in Room E4* (need to read all by the next class)

**Special Event: Friday Oct 19th**

Trinity College's Day of Dedicating the Center for Urban and Global Studies (CUGS) 1:15-3:45pm, Mather Hall welcoming and presentations [including one by Ed 308 TAs]

**Oct 24th**

Read: Susan Eaton, *The Children in Room E4* (2007).

- to be facilitated by students who have previously read book in other class:

Facilitators 15 & 16 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitators 17 & 18 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Read: Sheff Stipulation and Order [proposed Sheff II settlement], May 29, 2007.

Sheff plaintiff's Motion for Order Enforcing Judgment and to Obtain a Court-Ordered Remedy [topic of the November hearing], July 5, 2007.

In seminar: Speakerphone conversation with Erika Frankenberg

**Oct 31st**

Read: Alex Johnston and Marc Porter Magee, *The State of Connecticut Public Education: A 2007 Report Card for Elementary and Middle Schools*. ConnCAN, September 2007.

Review: ConnCAN (Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now) website  
<http://www.conncan.org>

Read: Mark Monmonier. *How to Lie with Maps, second edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, chapter 3 excerpts.

In seminar: Visit by Marc Porter Magee, Director of Research, ConnCAN

In seminar: Computer mapping exercise with ArcGIS

**Nov 7th**

In seminar: Project #3 paper assignment distributed

Note: Our seminar will attend the afternoon session of the *Sheff v O'Neill* hearing, Hartford Superior Court, HHD-CV-89-4026240-S  
See more at State of Connecticut, Judicial Branch website: <http://www.jud.ct.gov/>

**Week of Nov 7th**

Additional evening workshops for data mapping and analysis

**Nov 14th**

Paper #3 due at beginning of seminar

In seminar: Planning session on final projects & proposals (see requirements below)

**Nov 28th**

Our seminar has been invited to attend the afternoon session of this conference at UConn-Storrs:

**Conference:**

Public school choice in a post-desegregation world:  
What have we learned and where are we going?

Sponsored by:

Magnet Schools of America &

University of Connecticut's Center for Education Policy Analysis

1:30 – 3:00 PM

Session II: Effects of Choice on Student Segregation I

*Private Choices, Public Consequences: School Choice and Segregation by Race and Poverty*  
Salvatore Saporito, College of William and Mary

*School Choice Beyond District Borders: Lessons Learned from Inter-district Desegregation and Open Enrollment Plans*

Jennifer Jellison Holme, University of Texas, Austin  
Amy Stuart Wells, Teachers College, Columbia University

Discussant: Jack Dougherty, Trinity College

**Special Event: Monday Dec 3rd**

Jerry Frug, Louis D. Brandeis Professor of Law, Harvard University  
"Boston Bound" [on city and suburban governance and regionalism in New England]  
70 Vernon St., 4:15-5:15pm, co-sponsored by CUGS and Public Policy and Law

**Dec 5th**

Read: Jesse Wanzer, [Draft of Ed Studies senior research project on mapping of magnet school choices and race in Hartford, title TBA].

Facilitators 19 & 20 \_\_\_\_\_; prep meeting \_\_\_\_\_

In seminar: Student presentations of final projects and proposals, 5 minutes each, with PowerPoint. No scored evaluation, only comments.

Read: Gerald Frug, "The Legal Technology of Exclusion in Metropolitan America," in Kevin Kruse and Thomas Sugrue, eds., *The New Suburban History*. University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Eddie Perez, Mayor of Hartford, "Schools Should Be Under One District," *Hartford Courant* op-ed essay, November 18, 2007.

**Special Event: Tuesday Dec 11th**

A Community Discussion: Sheff -- What's In it for Hartford Parents?  
United Methodist Church, 571 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, 7-8:30pm  
Co-sponsored by Greater Hartford Interfaith Coalition for Equity and Justice, and ConnCAN

**Final Project options:**

A) Design and write a **research proposal** for a senior-level project on any topic related to this seminar on cities, suburbs, and schools, to be evaluated on these criteria:

- Does the author pose a thought-provoking, researchable question (or hypothesis) and explain its significance?
- Does the author connect the question to the existing research literature (secondary sources) and move beyond into new territory?
- Does the author identify the most appropriate primary sources and research methods for this study?
- Is the author's proposal well organized, and does it include sufficient background for audiences unfamiliar with the topic? Does the author cite sources in an acceptable format so that future readers may easily locate them?

B) Design and carry out a **public outreach project** that introduces real audiences to some research findings from our seminar. For example, you may:

- deliver a research presentation and lead a discussion with community partner
- produce a user-friendly research report to be used by a community partner
- write and submit a research-based op-ed essay to a local periodical
- organize a political protest or public speak-out, based on research findings

Students choosing this option must write a paper that describes the planning and results of the outreach project, reflects on the lessons learned, and links the experience to at least one of the seminar readings.

For either option A or B, the suggested length is approximately 5 double-spaced pages. In lieu of a final exam, the **final paper is due on Wed, Dec 19th at 3pm.**