

**FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN CHANGE
YORK UNIVERSITY**

COURSE: ENVS 6150A 3.0. – **Popular Education for Social Change: Theory/Practice**
TERM: Fall 2024

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Professor Muna-Udbi Ali
EMAIL: muali@yorku.ca

TIME: Thursdays 2:30PM – 5:30PM
LOCATION: HNES 142

OFFICE HOUR: Fridays 12:00PM–1:00PM OR by appointment via e-mail (ENVS 6150A in subject line)



Kennedy George and Ava Holloway, both 14 years old, at the Robert E. Lee monument in Richmond, Virginia (July 2020)

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examination of individual and social learning from a critical perspective. Based on a theoretical and practical examination of knowledge production and power relations, several streams of critical education are explored: popular education, critical pedagogy, Indigenous education, labour education, feminist pedagogy, queer pedagogy, anti-racist education, global/development education, direct action and activist education. Applied work will focus on the role of these approaches within schools, organizations and movements for social change.

EXTENDED COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course aims to offer a critical overview of popular education and related theories within the context of social and environmental change. Emphasizing praxis—where theory and action intersect—students

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will develop and refine practical skills such as facilitation, curriculum development, and collaboration. They will also learn to identify and reflect on key issues in popular education praxis, including equity, context, accessibility, participation, pedagogy, and community engagement. The course materials will have a strong focus on anti-oppression and anti-racism. Through readings, guest speakers, and case studies discussed in seminars, students will gain insights into popular education in applied settings, while assignments will allow them to practice and enhance their popular education skills.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To ground ourselves in the main concepts of popular education theory (power, hegemony, dialogue, ideology, praxis)
- To critically analyze the key assumptions of popular education, as well as its applications and critiques (from the point of view of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, human/environment relationships, etc.)
- To challenge ourselves as learners/educators within the class and beyond
- To gain an appreciation for the complexity of integrating theory and practice
- To emphasize learning through careful reading of texts, active participation and debate, and written assignments
- To actively listen, learn from each other, and share personal and professional knowledge and experience.

COURSE READINGS

All course readings are available in electronic format through eClass. Remember that it is your responsibility to obtain these required texts and read them carefully before the date listed on the syllabus. Please note, additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the [Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy webpage](#)

- Senate Policy on Academic Honesty and the Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation