

The Sociology of Childhood

Sociology 111C, Spring 2018, UC Berkeley

Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-11:00, 277 Cory Hall

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Course Description:

This course will examine how children shape and are shaped by the social worlds in which they live. We will consider the experiences of children in the different contexts and institutions that make up the landscape of contemporary childhood, and to a lesser extent, experiences of the adults charged with their care. We will consider how childhood and adolescence have been defined and have changed over time and why. We will explore social life from the perspectives of children and teens, paying particular attention throughout the course to how class, gender and race shape experiences and to the ways that children's agency shapes institutions. In the first part of the course, we will consider childhood as a historically constructed category as well as from a developmental perspective, and the social and material environment in which contemporary childhood takes place. In the second part of the course, we will study two important institutional cornerstones of childhood: family and school experiences, and the different ways these are connected. Finally, we will consider topics that may be considered as problems of childhood, including commercialization and technology, the medicalization of different aspects of children's life experiences and crime and delinquency.

Course Materials:

We will read five books this semester. There is also a course reader. I have also set up a bCourses site for our class. All books are available for purchase from the bookstore. All but one (*Life at Home*) are also available through the UC Berkeley Library website as e-books. To access the books this way, look them up on OskiCat and click on the "electronic resource" option. All required books are also on 2-hour reserve at Moffitt Library.

Life at Home in the Twenty-First Century: 32 Families Open their Doors (2102) by Jeanne Arnold, Anthony Graesch, Enzo Ragazzini, Elinor Ochs. Cotsen Institute Press, UCLA ISBN: 978-1-931745-61-1

Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan and the United States (2009) by Joseph Tobin, Yeh Hsueh, Mayumi Karasawa. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, ISBN:978-0-226-80503-0 (e-version at library)

Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life (2003) by Annette Lareau. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. ISBN: 0-520-23763-3 (e-version at library)

Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys (2011) by Victor Rios. New York: New York University Press. ISBN: 978-0-8147-7638-4 (e-version at library)

Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture (2009) by Allison Pugh. Berkeley: University of California Press. ISBN: 978-0-520-25844-0 (e-version at library)

Course Reader. This is available for purchase at the Copy Central Store on Bancroft St. Readings included in the reader will be available on bCourses, under “files” in a folder called “course readings”. Articles that are available on-line or through the library will also be posted on bCourses in files.

Evaluation:

25% Midterm Exam, in class on Feb. 13

20% Read, Explore and Reflect Paper, due. Mar. 20

25% Library Research Paper

Paragraph on paper topic due Mar. 1

Paper due April 20th

20% Take-home Final Exam, due May 9

10% Participation and Attendance, ongoing

Midterm exam (250 points): The midterm will be an in-class exam consisting of short answer and longer essay questions. A study guide will be provided one week prior to the exam.

Read, Explore and Reflect Paper (200 points): There are a few options for this paper. All require students to focus on one of the assigned books, conduct some exploratory research on their own, and then bring the two together to answer some questions in a 5 to 7 page paper. The purpose of this paper is to explore a course text and topic with greater depth while applying course concepts and theories to real-life situations. Please see the document called “Read, Explore and Reflect Paper Prompt” on bCourses for more details on this assignment.

Library Research Paper (250 points): In this assignment, you will write a literature review on a topic of interest to you. The only requirement for the topic is that it is relevant to the study of childhood and children and grounded in a discipline of social science. You will be expected to incorporate at least 10 academic sources in your paper and write a synthetic review. The purpose of this paper is to gain experience in doing library-based research: finding and evaluating sources, getting an overview of the body of research findings that exist on a particular topic, as well as being able to summarize the main perspectives, themes and controversies in a field. A librarian will

visit our class mid-semester to provide guidance on how to find appropriate and relevant materials and orient the class to the different resources the library has to help you in your work. You will turn in a 1-2 paragraph description of your topic on Mar. 1, and the paper itself will be due at near the end of the semester.

Take-home Final Exam (200 points): This will be an essay exam. Essay prompts will be released one week prior to the exam due date on bCourses.

Participation and Attendance (100 points): The purpose of devoting a portion of your grade to participation and attendance is to encourage regular attendance at lecture, as well as increase engagement with the class. This portion of your grade will be assessed from a combination of participation in various activities during class, such as pop quizzes, periodic in-class “discussion sections”, and short writing responses as well as random attendance checks. I will keep track of these points during the semester, and the final participation and attendance grade will be entered in the bCourses gradebook after RRR week. Before spring break, I will post a spreadsheet showing the tally of points so far. I will drop a few points before assessing final participation and attendance grades to allow for occasional absences. There will also be some opportunities for extra-credit to make up missed points throughout the semester.

Grading: Two readers, working in close collaboration with me, will do most of the hands-on grading for this course. We try very hard to maintain consistency and fairness in grading. The process for grading is as follows: I develop a rubric for the exams and papers and discuss it with the readers. We then grade several papers/exams together to make sure the grading is consistent, and checking grading averages as we proceed. We will try to return exams and papers to you within two weeks. Readers may decide to hold regular office hours, or will meet with students by appointment after an assignment is handed back. Please understand that readers are not GSIs and their responsibilities are limited to grading and meeting with students only after assignments are returned.

Grading Problems: While we make every effort to grade fairly and consistently, mistakes in grading can occur. If you believe a mistake was made on your assignment, and want me to review it, write a paragraph explaining what you think the mistake was and why you think your assignment deserves a different grade, making sure to reference the assignment rubric. You can email this to me, or give it to me in person. I will then re-grade your paper and determine the final grade for the assignment. Please be aware that if I re-evaluate your work, it is possible that your grade could go down, so consider these requests carefully. Please keep in mind that re-grade requests should be made based on the quality and merits of the work submitted, not based on effort, or feeling that you “deserve” a higher grade. All re-grade requests must be made within a week of when an assignment is handed back. Per University policy, no re-grades are possible for final exams.

Course Policies:

Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture, including announcements, and for keeping up with the readings as indicated on the syllabus. It is your responsibility to keep up and ask questions. You will be expected to integrate materials from lecture and readings on exams and papers. Do not enroll in this class if you will not be able to (or do not plan to) attend the lectures regularly.

If you require **accommodations** for a disability or medical condition, university athletics, or have a conflict due to the observance of religious holidays, please email or speak with me early in the semester to discuss appropriate arrangements.

Exams and assignments must be taken and turned in on time. If you have a personal emergency or are ill, contact me at the *earliest opportunity* to discuss alternative arrangements. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each day they are late (including weekends) beginning shortly after an assignment is due. Check assignment due dates and times carefully. Extension requests made on due dates will not be considered unless there is documentation of an illness or other emergency. The final must be turned in on time.

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes are an option of last resort for students experiencing true medical or other emergencies that make it impossible for them to complete their coursework on time. To be considered for an incomplete grade, students need to speak with me about it **DURING** the semester, have completed about half of the coursework, and provide documentation of the reason for the request.

Academic honesty is expected of all students. It is extremely important that everyone does their own work and acts with integrity. Suspected violations relating to this course will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and dealt with according to university policies. *Be aware of plagiarism.* Word for word use of even a single sentence from any author (except yourself), publication or website without quotation marks and proper citation is plagiarism and is unethical and unacceptable. So is very closely following the structure and wording of another author's work. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade on the paper or exam in question with no opportunity to rewrite, as will any other kind of dishonesty. Many students have questions about how to properly cite materials, or how to paraphrase appropriately. Please consult Ch. 6 of the writing guide "Writing for Sociology", available on the Soc. department website and posted on the Soc. 111C bCourses site. To discourage plagiarism, all assignments submitted to bCourses for this course are checked by "Turnitin", a plagiarism detection tool.

Email: Email is a good way to get in touch with me, but keep in mind that I cannot always respond right away. Do not expect a response during evenings or weekends. It is best to ask questions about class materials and assignments before or after class or during office hours. Please check the course syllabus and announcements before emailing me about an administrative matter.

Office Hours: I urge students to talk with me sometime during the semester. I enjoy getting to know you and your interests in the course and this is a way to make a large class more personal. Please come see me especially if you are having trouble with the course. I can't help you if you don't communicate with me! I have both sign-up and drop-in office hours. Please sign up for office hours appointments on the sign up sheet posted outside my office door at 479 Barrows. You are free to drop by during this time as well, but I'll give priority to people who have appointments. My office is shared, so if you need to speak with me confidentially, please try to let me know ahead of time so I can try to ensure privacy.

Coffee hours: On a few dates (TBA) during the semester, I will invite students to join me for coffee somewhere on/near campus. I'll have coffee for the first five or so people who show up and bring some snacks.

Laptops, etc.: Did you know that taking handwritten notes might improve your grade in this class? If you want to use a laptop or tablet to take notes, please sit in the back of the classroom to reduce distractions to other students. Do I need to tell you not to text, check email or social media, shop, make travel plans, etc. during class? You already know that. If you do not plan on participating and listening, please do not come to class.

Lecture Slides: Lecture slides will be available on bCourses just before class.

Course Schedule: *

Part 1: Defining Childhood and Adolescence: Historical and Developmental Perspectives

Week 1: Jan. 16: Intro: what is childhood?

Jan. 18: Historical Perspectives on Childhood

Readings: Mintz, S. (2004) *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Prologue

Zelizer, V. (1985) *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children*. New York: Basic Books. Ch. 2 "From Useful to Useless: Moral Conflict Over Child Labor", and Ch. 3 "From Child Labor to Child Work"

Week 2: Jan. 23 & 25 : Historical Perspectives on Childhood and Adolescence

Readings: Zelizer, V. (1985) *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children*. New York: Basic Books. Ch. 6 “From Baby Farms to Black – Market Babies: The Changing Market for Children”

Mintz, S. (2004) *Huck’s Raft: A History of American Childhood*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Ch. 14 “In Pursuit of the Perfect Childhood”, Ch. 15 “Youthquake”

Week 3: Jan. 30, Feb. 1: Developmental Perspectives on Childhood

Readings: Brazelton, T & Greenspan, S. (2000) *The Irreducible Needs of Children: What Every Child Must Have to Grow, Learn and Flourish*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing. “The Touchpoints Model” (pp. 183-193), “Functional Developmental Growth Chart and Questionnaire” (pp. 195- 201)

Spock, B. & Needlman, R. (2004) *Dr. Spock’s Baby and Childcare*. New York: Pocket Books. “Your Preschooler” (pp. 163-174), “School Age” (pp. 177-185), “Adolescence” (pp. 191-211)

Week 4: Feb. 6 & 8: “Kids Today”: Environments and Characteristics

Readings: Arnold, J., Graesch, A., Ragazzini, E. & Ochs, E. (2012) *Life at Home in the 21st Century: 32 Families Open Their Doors*. Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA. Read entire book, but especially Chs.1, 2, 4, 8

Twenge, J. (2017) *iGen: Why Today’s Super-Connected Kids Are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—And Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (and What That Means for the Rest of Us)*. New York: Atria Books. Introduction (pp. 1-16)

Part 2: Institutional cornerstones of childhood: family and school experiences

Midterm exam in class on Feb. 13.

Week 5: Feb. 15: Early Childhood Education

Readings: Tobin, J., Hsueh, Y., Karasawa, M. (2009) *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan and the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch, 1-4

Week 6: Feb. 20 & 22: Early Childhood Education and Elementary School

Readings: Tobin, J., Hsueh, Y., Karasawa, M. (2009) *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan and the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch, 5 (finish)

Lareau, A. (2003) *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Start reading...

Week 7: Feb. 27, Mar. 1: Elementary School

Paragraph about the topic for your library research paper due Mar. 1 at the beginning of class.

Readings: Lareau, A. (2003) *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Finish reading...

Week 8: Mar. 6 & 8: Gender at School and Home

Readings: Thorne, B. (1994) *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. Ch. 4 "Gender Separation, Why and How?", Ch. 5 "Creating a Sense of Opposite Sides"

Meadow, T. (2011) "Deep Down Where the Music Plays': How Parents Account for Childhood Gender Variance". *Sexualities* 14(6)725-747

Part 3: Children in the world: controversies and problems

Week 9: Mar. 13 & 15: Childhood and the Market

Readings: Pugh, A. (2009) *Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Start reading...

Week 10: Mar. 20 & 22: Childhood and the Market, Technology

Explore, Read and Reflect Paper due Mar. 20th, 5 pm.

Readings: Pugh, A. (2009) *Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Finish reading...

Twenge, J. (2017) *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—And Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (and What That Means for the Rest of Us)*. New York: Atria Books. Ch. 2 "Internet: Online Time—Oh, and Other Media Too"

SPRING BREAK, March 26-30

Week 11: Apr. 3 & 5: Childhood and Medicalization

Readings: Twenge, J. (2017) *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—And Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (and What That Means for the Rest of Us)*. New York: Atria Books. Ch. 4 "Insecure: The New Mental Health Crisis"

Smith, M. (2017) "Hyperactive Around the World? The History of ADHD in Comparative Perspective". *Social History of Medicine*, Vol. 30(4)767-787

Week 12: Apr. 10 & 12: Social Problems and Childhood: Medicalization, "Delinquency"

Readings: Rafalovich, A. (2005) "Relational Troubles and Semiofficial Suspicion: Educators and the Medicalization of Unruly Children". *Symbolic Interaction*, Vol. 27(1)

Rios, V. (2011) *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York: New York University Press. Start reading...

Week 13: Apr. 17 & 19: Youth and Social Control

Library Research Paper due April 20th, 5 pm. (This is not a day that class meets!)

Reading: Rios, V. (2011) *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York: New York University Press. Finish reading...

Week 14: Apr. 24 & 26: Catch up, no new reading

Week 15: May 1 & 3: RRR Week

Take-home Final Exam due Wed. May 9th at 6 pm.

* The course schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.