

The Sociology of Childhood

Sociology 111C, Spring 2020, UC Berkeley
Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-11:00, 101 Morgan

Instructor: Joanna Reed, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:15-3:15 (drop-in) and Thursday 2:15-4:15 (appointments), 479 Barrows Hall. Sign up for appointments here: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/uzaly>

Mailbox: 410 Barrows Hall

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, the experiences of 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 four books this semester. There is also a course reader. All books are available for purchase from the bookstore. All 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.

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:

20% Take-Home Midterm Exam, due. Feb. 20th, at noon to bCourses

25% Read, Explore and Reflect Paper, due Mar. 19th , 5 pm to bCourses

25% Library Research Paper due April 23rd, 5 pm to bCourses

Paragraph on paper topic due April 2nd, 5 pm to bCourses

20% Take-home Final Exam due May 13th, 6 pm to bCourses

10% Participation and Attendance, ongoing

Take-Home Midterm exam (200 points): This will be an essay exam. The prompt for the exam will be available to you one week before the assignment is due. You can expect questions that ask you to integrate reading and lecture materials and apply ideas and concepts.

Read, Explore and Reflect Paper (250 points): There are a few options for this paper. All require students to focus on one of three course texts, conduct some exploratory research on their own, and analyze these materials and answer some questions in a 5 to 7 page paper. You will also turn in either an interview write-up or ethnographic field notes, depending which option you choose. 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 and gaining some exposure to conducting qualitative research. 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, centered around answering one research question. The topic must be relevant to the sociological study of childhood and children. You will be expected to incorporate at least 8 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 earlier in the semester. The paragraph is not graded, and we won’t hold you to your original topic, but you will lose points on the paper itself if you do not turn one in.

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 (announced in class and completed on bCourses within 24 hours), periodic in-class “discussion sections” and activities, and random attendance checks. I will drop one point before assessing these grades, and there will also be opportunities to make up missed points and/or earn extra credit to be applied at the end of the semester.

Grading: Two readers, working in close collaboration with me, will do most of the 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 the readers and I discuss and revise it together. 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 re-grade 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 two weeks 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.

Formal **accommodations** are available for students with a DSP letter, who participate in 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. If you do not have official accommodations, but are experiencing difficulties that are affecting your academic performance, please let me know about it so we can work together to ensure your success in the class.

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 after the due date and time. 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.

Make sure to check that the file you have submitted to bCourses is the correct one for the assignment in question and in a format we can read. Documents must be submitted as MS word or PDF documents. Failure to do this may result in points lost and delays in grading.

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 and self-plagiarism.* Word for word use of even a single sentence from any author, 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. All work submitted for credit for this class also must be original and created specifically for a particular exam or assignment. 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: Make sure to check the course syllabus and announcements before emailing me about an assignment or administrative matter. It is best to ask questions about these things before or after class or during office hours. Please understand that I receive many emails from students and am not always able to respond right away. Do not expect a response after working hours or on weekends.

Office Hours: Tuesdays, drop-in, from 2:15-3:15 and Thursdays, by appointment, from 2:15-4:15 pm. I encourage you to visit me in office hours 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! **Please sign up for office hours appointments here:** <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/uzaly>. 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. If you cannot make these office hour times, please contact me to make another arrangement.

Laptops, technology, 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 towards back of the classroom to reduce distractions to other students. Please put your phones away during class. 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 after class. Slides are for your reference as a study aid, not as a substitute for attending lecture.

Your Health and Well-Being: Being a Berkeley student can be full of excitement and possibilities, but at times may feel overwhelming or be difficult in other ways. Some degree of this is to be expected, but if you are experiencing a lot of distress, anxiety or have a pre-existing mental health issue, there are resources on campus to help. You are not alone; many others share your difficulties. Even if you don't think you need them, I encourage you to look at these websites now, so you know what is available: counseling appointments, web tutorials and videos, support groups and mindfulness classes and more. These groups and classes can be a great resource for self-care and may help you get the semester off to a good start. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), (510) 642-9494, <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling>. More general resources on mental health, services are at <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/health-topics/mental-health>.

Notes and Circulation of Course Materials: DO NOT reproduce course materials or post them on-line or anywhere else. This includes the syllabus, lecture slides, your notes, handouts, rubrics and exams. While you may share your notes with other students in this semester's class, it is against university policy to share your notes broadly or attempt to use them for commercial purposes. It is also a violation of the policy to record lectures without my consent, and/or try to use recordings for commercial purposes. Please see <http://campuspol.chance.berkeley.edu/policies/coursenotes.pdf> for a detailed version of the policy.

Course Schedule: *

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

Week 1: Jan. 21 & 23: Intro: what is childhood? Historical Perspectives

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. 28 & 30 : 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: Feb. 4 & 6: 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. & Needleman, 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)

Duncan, G. & Magnuson, K. (2011). "The Long Reach of Child Poverty". *Pathways*, Winter 2011, The Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality

Sacks, V. & Murphey, D. (2018). "The Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences, Nationally, by State, and by Race/Ethnicity". *Child Trends Research Brief*, 2018-03 (Feb. 2018)

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

Week 4: Feb. 11 & 13: "Kids Today": Environments for childhood

Readings: Ochs, E. & Kremer-Sadlik, T., eds. (2013). *Fast-Forward Family: Home, Work and Relationships in Middle Class America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Ch. 6, 7 and 12. Ch. 6 "Chores" by Klein, W. & Harness Godwin, M., Ch. 7 "Homework and Recreation", by Kremer-Sadlik, T. &

Gutierrez, K., and Ch. 12 “The Good Enough Family”, by Ochs, E. & Kremer-Sadlik, T.

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)

Week 5: Feb. 18 & 20: Early Childhood Education

Take-home midterm exam due at noon on Feb. 20. There will be no lecture that day.

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. 25 & 27: 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: Mar. 3 & 5: Elementary School

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

Week 8: Mar. 10 & 12: 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 9: Mar. 17 & 19: Childhood and the Market

Read, Explore, Reflect Paper due Mar. 19 at 5 pm

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

Rideout, V. & Robb, M. (2018) *Social Media, Social Life, Teens Share Their Experiences*. Common Sense Media Research Report. Pp. 3-13, skim other parts, focusing on part most interesting to you.

SPRING BREAK, March 23-2

Part 3: Children in the world: challenges and controversies

Week 10: Mar. 31 & Apr. 2: Changing ideas of gender and childhood

Library Research Paper topic idea paragraph due Apr. 2, 5 pm.

Readings: Meadow, T. (2018) *Trans Kids: Being Gendered in the Twenty-First Century*. Ch. 2, 3, 5

Week 11: Apr. 7 & 9: Childhood and Medicalization

No lecture on Apr. 9th—there will be an alternative assignment that will count for participation.

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”

Coyne, S.M*. et al. (2019) “Does time spent using social media impact mental health? An eight-year longitudinal study”. *Computers in Human Behavior*, Online publication in Oct. 2019

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

*we will read this if I can get access to it

Week 12: Apr. 14 & 16: 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. 21 & 23: Youth and Social Control

Library Research Paper due April 23rd, 5 pm.

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

Week 14: Apr. 28 & 30: Catch up, no new reading

Week 15: May 4-8: RRR Week

Take-home Final Exam due May 13th at 6 pm.

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