

Sociology 111C: The Sociology of Childhood

UC Berkeley, Spring 2021
Tues/Thur 11:00-12:30 PM
OH: Thurs. 4-5 PM; Fri. 10-12

Instructor: Dr. Caitlin Daniel
cdaniel@berkeley.edu

Course Description

What does it mean to be a child? What is it like to be a child? Drawing on the tools of sociology, we will see how children's lives and life chances are shaped by their social position, their social contexts, and the broad social structures in their society. We will examine how the very notions of "childhood" and "adolescence" are socially constructed, varying across history and cultures rather than stemming from biology alone. We will consider why contemporary constructions of children are so contradictory—sometimes framing them as victims needing protection, and sometimes as deviants needing correction—and what these views say about broader societal anxieties. Next, we will examine several key influences on children's socialization, highlighting how class, gender and race shape children's experiences. Throughout, we will consider how children actively shape their own social worlds, and how their existence shapes society itself. We will close by examining several social issues related to children.

Course Goals

- 1) To understand what it means to study childhood from a sociological perspective
- 2) To explain historical and cultural variation in the meaning of childhood and adolescence
- 3) To explain how social context and social institutions, especially family and school, shape children's lives and life chances
- 4) Understand how childhood experiences and opportunities vary according to social categories including race, social class, and gender
- 5) To understand how children actively and creatively shape their own social worlds
- 6) To understand a range of social issues facing today's children in the United States—and to appreciate how some issues are less about harm to children and more about adults' anxieties

COMPONENTS

20% Paper: Original Analysis of Children and Childhood in the World (**100 points**)

Goal: To use your new sociological insights to analyze how issues discussed in class are manifest in the "real" world and to refine your sociological perspective in the process. You will analyze cultural products or cultural representations in one of three categories: *products* for babies, children, or adolescents (e.g., baby gear, toys); an infant-care, childrearing, or pedagogical *practice* or *philosophy* (e.g., co-sleeping, free-range childrearing, Montessori); or a current *political issue* or other debate regarding children. Instructions and possible topics posted on 3/6. Paper due: 4/6 by 11:59PM

40% Two Take-Home Tests (**100 points each; 200 points total**):

Goal: To apply your new knowledge by developing a logical, well-substantiated argument in response to a prompt. Schedule and Timing: Prompts will be issued 10-14 days before the paper is due. Due dates:

Test 1: **2/23** by 11:59 PM (upload to “Assignments” in bCourses)
Test 2: **5/13** by 11:59 PM (upload to “Assignments” in bCourses)

Late assignments lose a letter grade for each day (or fraction thereof) that they are late.

20% Lecture Attendance and Participation (100 points):

Goal: To *reinforce* and *clarify* the assigned materials; to *broaden* and *deepen* your knowledge with complementary information; and to offer opportunities to *apply* this knowledge. Lectures will also help auditory and visual learners by presenting course content in a different format. Logistics: Lecture slides will be made available by 10PM the day before lecture so you can print them out and take notes as we go. Attendance is tracked via Zoom and an “exit ticket” submitted at the end of class. Exit tickets consist of a question, comment, or point of clarification to help me gauge your understanding and interest; they may sometimes include a summary or reflection. They are to be submitted to “Assignments” or “Modules” in bCourses. Exit tickets are graded as complete/incomplete, and there is no “right” or “wrong” answer. Links to each lecture will be posted as an Announcement to bCourses and sent out by email (so keep your eyes open!). Zoom links will be sent out before every session.

Because this course has no discussion section, three class periods will serve as a discussion and review session. I will split students into two “sections.” Each section will last 45 minutes and will begin either at 10:00 AM or 10:45 AM *sharp*. Logistics: So that these sessions address your concerns, you will submit three discussion questions to “Assignments” or “Modules” by 11:59PM two days before we meet. During the session, you should participate actively: be ready to be called on to pose your question.

This last year has been hard. We all need a break. You get one automatically excused absence. After that, absences are excused only for true emergencies or religious observances, and require documentation. You are still accountable for the material covered in missed classes.

20% Daily Quizzes (100 points):

Goal: 1) To keep you on top of assigned readings and videos and 2) to assess your comprehension of that material. Format: Three questions in yes/no, multiple-choice, and/or fill-in-the-blank format. Schedule and duration: every Tuesday and Thursday before lecture. Quizzes will be open 1:00-2:10 PM (from 60 minutes before class to 10 minutes into class).¹ Once you log on, you have 10 minutes to answer the questions. There will be 24 quizzes total. (No quizzes on first day or on discussion and review days.) The four lowest grades will be dropped (meaning you’ll be graded on 20/24 quizzes). No make-up quizzes. Content: Basic concepts and key arguments from readings and videos. You can look at your materials for the quiz, but you won’t have a ton of time to do so. Logistics: Find quizzes in the corresponding Module.

GRADING

This course has a total of **500 points:**

Analytic papers: **300 points** (100 each)

Attendance and participation: **100 points**

¹ This window lets you start early in case you tend to experience technological glitches, while also allowing you to use class time so you don’t *have* to find time outside class for the quiz

Daily quizzes: **100 points**

A	94-100%	B+	88%-89.99%	C+	78%-79.99%	D+	68%-69.99%
A-	90-93.99%	B	84-87.99%	C	74-77.99%	D	64-67.99%
		B-	80-83.99%	C-	70-73.99%	F	<63.99%

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes are the 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, and you must provide documentation of the reason for the request.

“Borderline” Grades: After you receive your final grade, please do not ask me to raise your grade if you feel that you are very close to the next highest grade. Because I drop four quizzes and offer one free unexcused absence, your grade has already been raised. I will only change grades if there has been a factual error in calculation.

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

MATERIALS

Course materials include academic articles, book chapters, news articles, and videos on YouTube. They are available online in three locations: E-Reserves (found under “Files” in bCourses); PDFs in bCourses; and links listed in the syllabus. The syllabus indicates each material’s location in **bold**. The e-Reserves list will be available in bCourses’s “Files” folder. (Note: This list, kindly created by the library, is not in any particular order... Use Command + F to search for the author if need be.) The PDFs in bCourses are under the relevant Module, as well as the “Files” folder.

The main requirement is that you have reliable access to an internet connection and an up-to-date computer. Please let me know if access to reliable technology is a problem for you.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

The course has three thematic sections: 1) Perspectives on Children and Adolescents; 2) Socialization and Socializing; 3) Social Issues. Childhood is a really big topic, so we can’t cover everything. I mean no offense by leaving certain topics out of the syllabus. My hope is that this class will prepare you to pursue learn about any lingering topics with greater skill and perspective.

Each class meeting is organized into a module. Modules will contain any uploaded readings; any reading guides; the daily quiz; the daily “exit ticket;” and, in the case of discussion and review sessions, the space to enter three discussion questions by 11:59PM two days before class. Please have the quiz and exit tickets ready to go at the appropriate time so you don’t miss the submission deadline. (This may mean having bCourses open as lecture is underway.)

The **weekly flow** is as follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thurs
--------	---------	-----	-------

-10 PM: lecture slides posted	-9:00–11:15 AM: Daily quiz open -11:15-12:30 PM: Lecture 12:20-12:55 PM: Exit ticket submission is open	-10PM: lecture slides posted	-9:00–11:15 AM: Daily quiz open -11:10-12:30 PM: Lecture 12:20-12:55 PM: Exit ticket submission is open
-------------------------------	---	------------------------------	---

For discussion and review sessions on 2/16, 4/1, and 4/29, discussion questions are due by 11:59PM two days prior.

POLICIES

Academic Integrity and Honesty:

Academic dishonesty of any kind (including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, falsification, copying and sharing individual work) will not be tolerated, as specified in UC Berkeley’s Code of Student Conduct: <http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity/addressing-misconduct>. All course assignments are checked by Turnitin, a plagiarism detection tool. You will get **no** credit for a paper with plagiarism. Other instances of dishonesty may result in **zero** points for the **entire** course component. Academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Note: it is possible to plagiarize without intending to do so (e.g., failing to cite references properly; sticking too closely to an author’s original wording). If you have any questions about plagiarism, just contact me.

Email

I will respond to emails once a day, excluding weekends, when I check email infrequently. If your question is answered on the syllabus or a handout, I may not reply. Keep your eyes out for emails from me. They will include announcements, updates, and any changes.

Devices and Distraction

Non-assistive devices like your phone—or activities on your computer other than attending lecture—compromise your learning by splitting your attention. Keep them out of sight while class is in session. Studies show that the mere presence of a cell phone can be distracting. Let’s focus!

Back Up Your Work

Save your paper and exam responses somewhere other than your computer, such a thumb drive, an external hard drive, Dropbox, or Google Docs—or just email yourself a copy when you’re done doing a chunk of work. Computers can fail, and we don’t want to lose the fruits of our effort. I expect you to back up your work. This means I will not be lenient in grading if you say your computer crashed and you lost what you wrote.

Zoom Etiquette

I will be posting guidelines for Zoom Etiquette, available in bCourses under “Files.” Read them, follow them!

Recording Lectures

Lectures will be recorded. If you speak up, this in mind.

OFFICE HOURS:

Don't be shy, come on by! Office hours can feel intimidating, but don't be scared and don't worry about asking "stupid" questions. There's nothing stupid about wanting to learn or just say "hi." Research shows that office hours can be especially intimidating for first-gen college students, who often think that academic success comes from toughing it out alone, or who feel unprepared to interact with authority figures. I've been there. I was a first-gen student, too, struggling with money and problems back home. Don't be afraid to come on by.

Sign-up sheet: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/eikcw>

Zoom Log In:

<https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/5308475197?pwd=NFBFT21yVWRialBKRFRjbUNNQIRBQT09>

Meeting ID: 530 847 5197

Passcode: 537704

"USER AGREEMENT"

A syllabus is like a contract that outlines the rights and responsibilities of instructor and student alike. Students are responsible for understanding the syllabus and its policies.

SCHEDULE AND TOPICS:

Below is a schedule of reading assignments and topics of discussion. **Readings must be completed by the time you come to class that day.** Some readings and videos are TBD, and others may change due to availability. Our pace and agenda may change somewhat throughout the term. I will keep you informed of any changes and updates.

Module, Date	Topic
1 1/19	Introduction: What is Childhood? No Reading
1. PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS	
Theoretical Approaches	
2 1/21	Developmental Perspectives Woodhead, Martin. 2005. "Chapter 1: Children and Development" in <i>Psychological Development and Early Childhood</i> , pp: 18-29. bCourses "The Functional Developmental Growth Chart and Questionnaire," Greenspan, pp. 47-51. bCourses Harkness, S and Super, C. 1983. "The Cultural Construction of Child Development: A Framework for the Socialization of Affect." bCourses
3 1/26	Sociological Approaches

		“Play, the Game, and the Generalized Other,” Mead, G.H. e-Reserves
		“A Window on the ‘New’ Sociology of Childhood,” Matthews, S.H. bCourses
4	1/28	Sociological Approaches
		“Interpretive Reproduction in Children’s Peer Cultures,” William Corsaro. bCourses
The Social Construction of Childhood		
5	2/2	Historical (Western) Constructions
		Mintz, Steven. “Prologue” and “Children of the Covenant” E-Reserves
		Wade, Lisa. 2009. “Child Labor in America 1908-1912.” <i>Sociological Images</i> . https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2009/12/03/child-labor-in-america-1908-1912/
		“20 Images of Child Labor:” https://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/these-20-images-child-labor-will-make-you-speechless.html
6	2/4	Contemporary (Western) Constructions
		Zelizer, “From Mobs to Memorials: The Sacrilization of Child Life,” Chapter 1 in <i>Pricing the Priceless Child</i> . pp. 22-55. E-Reserves
		Cohen, P. 2011. “Play, Supervision, and Pressured Parenting,” <i>Sociological Images</i> . https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2011/11/04/play-supervision-and-pressured-parenting/
7	2/9	Contradictory Constructions: What’s Going On?
		Jenkins, H. 1998. “Introduction: The Innocent Child and Other Modern Myths,” selected pages http://web.mit.edu/~21fms/People/henry3/innocentchild.html
		“Different Cultures, Different Childhoods.” https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/history/different-cultures-different-childhoods
8	2/11	Cultural Constructions of Adolescence
		Lesko, N. (2012). Chapter 2, “Making Adolescence at the Turn of the Century” in <i>Act Your Age! The Cultural Construction of Adolescence</i> . E-Reserves
9	2/16	DISCUSSION and REVIEW
		Reading and Video TBD
2. SOCIALIZATION and SOCIALIZING		
Mechanisms of Socialization		
10	2/18	Primary Socialization (Family)
		Quinn, N. (2005). “Universals of Child Rearing.” bCourses

11	2/23	Secondary Socialization (School) Chapter 6, "Schools." (2007) Handel, Cahill, and Elkin. E-Reserves
→	→	TAKE-HOME TEST DUE TO BCOURSES ON 2/23 BY 11:59 PM
→	→	
Domains of Socialization		
Gender		
12	2/25	Gender Shapes Kids' Lives "No Way My Boys are Going to be Like That': Parents' Responses to Children's Gender Non-Conformity," Emily Kane. bCourses "Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools," Karin Martin. bCourses
13	3/2	Kids "Do" Gender: Girls and Boys "Barbie Girls versus Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender," Michael Messner. bCourses "Creating a Sense of 'Opposite Sides,'" Barrie Thorne. E-Reserves
14	3/4	Kids "Do" Gender: Gender Non-Conforming Kids "When Children Say They're Trans," Jesse Singal https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/07/when-a-child-says-shes-trans/561749/ "The Loaded Language Shaping the Trans Conversation," Tey Meadow https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/07/desistance/564560/
Race and Ethnicity		
15	3/9	Race and Ethnicity Shape Kids' Lives Lewis, Amanda E. 2001. "There is no 'Race' in the Schoolyard: Color-Blind Ideology in an (Almost) All-White School," bCourses "See Baby Discriminate," Bronson, Po and Ashley Merryman. https://www.newsweek.com/even-babies-discriminate-nurtureshock-excerpt-79233
Third reading TBD		
16	3/11	Kids "Do" Race and Ethnicity "Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts: The Case of Very Young Children," Debra Van Ausdale and Joe Feagin. bCourses "The Collaborative Emergence of Race in Children's Play: A Case Study of Two Summer Camps," Valerie Ann Moore. bCourses

Social Class		
17	3/16	Class Shapes Kids' Experiences
		Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families," bCourses
		Rearson, Sean F.. 2013. "No Rich Child Left Behind," <i>New York Times</i> . https://ed.stanford.edu/in-the-media/no-rich-child-left-behind
→	→	Paper Topic Due by 11:59PM to bCourses
→	→	
18	3/18	Kids "Do" Class
		"I Need Help': Social Class and Children's Help-Seeking in Elementary School" Jessica Calarco. bCourses
		"Class Reproduction by Four-Year-Olds," Streib, Jessi. <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> . bCourses
NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK 3/22-3/28	NO CLASS
Peer Dynamics		
19	3/30	Status Shapes Youths' Experience
		Milner, Murray. Chapters 2 and 3, "Tools for Understanding" and "Fitting In, Standing Out, and Keeping Up" in <i>Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids</i> . E-Reserves
20	4/1	DISCUSSION and REVIEW
		Reading and Video TBD
3. SOCIAL ISSUES		
21	4/6	The Media and Technology
		Sternheimer, K. 2018. Chapters 1 and 2 "Media Phobia..." and "Popular Culture Is Ruining Childhood" in <i>Connecting social problems and popular culture: Why media is not the answer</i> . Pp. 1-46. E-Reserves
		Op Ed: Bakan, J. 2011. "The Kids Are Not All Right" <i>NYT</i> bCourses
→	→	PAPER DUE by 11:59PM to bCourses
→	→	
22	4/8	Consumer Culture: 1
		Pugh, Allison. 2009. Chapter 1, "Care and Belonging in the Market," in <i>Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children, and Consumer Culture</i> : pp. 1-26 e-Reserves
		Reading TBD
23	4/13	Consumer Culture: 2
		Pugh, Allison. 2009. Chapter 3, "Making Do: Children and the Economy of Dignity," in <i>Longing and Belonging</i> : pp. 48-82 e-Reserves

		Reading TBD
24	4/15	Bullying
		Peguro, Anthony. 2012. "Schools, Bullying, and Inequality: Intersecting Factors and Complexities with the Stratification of Youth Victimization at School," <i>Sociology Compass</i> : 402-412. bCourses
		Faris, Robert and Diane Felmlee. 2014. "Casualties of Social Combat: School Networks of Peer Victimization and their Consequences," <i>American Sociological Review</i> : 228-257. bCourses
25	4/20	"Delinquency" and Criminal Justice System
		Rios, V. (2011) <i>Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys</i> . Chapters TBD
26	4/22	Child Poverty
		TBD
27	4/27	Transition to Adulthood
		Furstenberg, F. et al. 2004. "Growing Up is Harder to Do," <i>Contexts</i> . bCourses
		Gonzales, R.G. (2011). "Learning to be illegal: Undocumented youth and shifting legal contexts in the transition to adulthood." Pp: 602-619. bCourses
28	4/29	DISCUSSION and REVIEW
		5/3 to 5/7 RRR Week
	5/13	→ FINAL EXAM DUE by 11:59PM to bCourses