

Soc 495
Gender, Sexuality, and Childhood
MW 10-11:30

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Office hours: M 11:30-12:30

This course is intended for sociology majors who want an opportunity for in-depth study of the multiple intersections of gender and sexuality in childhood. Through primary research we will examine how gender and sexuality are constructed in childhood. We will ask: What are the roles of parents and children in this construction? What are the roles of media, schools, and peers? How do race and class shape these constructions? We will also examine contemporary issues such as the sexualization of children, especially girls; raising gender non-conforming children; and parallels between childism and sexism. The work for the course will include a series of short assignments leading to the completion of an original research project to be presented at the end of the course.

Required Texts

All readings available on the CTools site.

Assignments and Grading

The main assignment for this course will be a **research project** that you conduct, **present findings** of to your peers at the end of the term, and on which you write a sociological research **paper**. Because research projects are complex and can take a long time, we will use two strategies to make this do-able in a term. First, you will choose one of a set of projects that I have broadly outlined. Each of these projects has a data set and broad question associated with it. This solves the problem of your having to find data and having to figure out what to research -- both lengthy parts of research. Second you will work in research teams of 3 or 4. More people can get more done! Also, it has the added advantage of helping you hone your teamwork skills and increase your learning. Finally, I have broken the process down into manageable steps that will walk you through the process of research. Each of these steps is one of **5 short assignments**, and an early **draft** of the first half of the paper. We will also “workshop” -- talk through-- your projects in class as a way for you to trouble-shoot and get feedback.

The course also requires 3 **short quizzes** and 2 **short essays** (at least one in class) to assess your reading and learning of the course material.

Finally, as you may have guessed by now, this will be active class. I expect you to be engaged, participating, helping and learning from each other. Thus, you will also be

graded on **class participation** (are you prepared, do you contribute to discussion, have you done any small homework I've asked?) and you will be graded and have a chance to grade your peers on their participation in your group.

All out of class assignments are posted on CTools and will be turned in via CTools. Details about each assignment will be given out in class. Your final grade will be determined out of 100 points, distributed like this:

- Homework, group and class participation= 13
- 3 quizzes/5pts each=15
- Two short essays/5pts each= 10
- 5 short assignments working toward research paper/3pts each=15
- Draft of first half of research paper=10
- Presentation of research=12
- Final paper=25

Course Expectations, Guidelines, and Routines

- **Getting the most out of class:**
 - Please show basic respect by observing the following:
 - Silence all electronic devices.
 - I have no problem having students use laptops in class as long as you do so respectfully – that is, they should be quiet, and they should be used for course material – taking notes or referencing the readings. **They should not be used for email, web-surfing, Facebook, texting, etc.** This is distracting for others!
 - No reading, sleeping, or working on other materials. Such behavior is disrespectful.
 - Do not begin to pack up your belongings before the end of class. This makes it difficult for others to hear, think, and concentrate. I will end class on time. Do not audio- or video- record the class without my permission.
 - **Due dates: All assignments must be uploaded to the CTools site by the date and time due. Anything turned in within the next 24 hours will be eligible for up to half credit. After that, late work will not be accepted.**
 - If you have any issues about attending class or submitting work on time, let me know as soon as possible, preferably before a class or assignment is missed.
 - Extensions will NOT be granted for computer or printer malfunction, car trouble, over-sleeping, traffic court, vacation, work for other classes, travel plans and plane ticket issues, employment, professional school application deadlines, and etc.
- **Athletes:** As per LSA policy, student athletes who will miss section must notify the GSI in advance in writing or the absence will not be excused. Athletes who are going to miss an exam must notify me or their GSI at least two weeks in advance.

- **Special Accommodations:** If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this course, please call the University of Michigan Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at (734) 763-3000 to set up an appointment with a SSD staff person, or stop by the office in G-664 Haven Hall, 8:00-5:00PM, Monday through Friday. Students must register with the Office if they wish to receive services. In addition, please **let me know as soon as possible** if you need modifications or accommodations for testing, assignments, note taking or other aspects of the course so that I can make the necessary adaptations. I need to know **at least 3 weeks in advance of the exams** if you need accommodations to the testing environment and/or time.
- **Email:** I am happy to respond to brief questions via email, but I would greatly appreciate it if you would **check the syllabus** before emailing about a logistical question (e.g. “what pages are we supposed to read for Thursday?” or “what’s your re-grade policy?”). Also, please put the course number in the subject line of the email for quicker turn around. I will try to answer all emails within 24 hours during the week. For a good resource see: <http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html>

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic grade of “E” for the course. In LSA **academic misconduct includes but is not limited** to the following:

CHEATING

Cheating is committing fraud and/or deception on a record, report, paper, computer assignment, examination, or any other course requirement. Examples of cheating include:

- Obtaining work or information from someone else and submitting it under one’s own name.
- Using unauthorized notes, or study aids, or information from another student or student’s paper on an examination.
- Communicating answers with another person during an exam.
- Altering graded work after it has been returned, and then submitting the work for regrading.
- Allowing another person to do one’s work and submitting it under one’s own name.
- Preprogramming a calculator to contain answers or other unauthorized information for exams.
- Submitting substantially the same paper for two or more classes in the same or different terms without the expressed approval of each instructor.
- Taking an exam for another person or having someone take an exam for you.
- Fabricating data which were not gathered in accordance with the appropriate methods for collecting or generating data and failing to include a substantially accurate account of the method by which the data were gathered or collected.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is representing someone else’s ideas, words, statements, or other work as one’s own without proper acknowledgment or citation. Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying word for word or lifting phrases or a special term from a source or reference, whether oral, printed, or on the internet, without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing, that is, using another person’s written words or ideas, albeit in one’s own words, as if they were one’s own thought.
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, or other illustrative material without proper reference, unless the information is common knowledge, in common public use.

UNACCEPTABLE COLLABORATION

Collaboration is unacceptable when a student works with another or others on a project and then submits written work which is represented explicitly or implicitly as the student’s own individual work. Using answers, solutions, or ideas that are the result of collaboration without citing the fact of collaboration is improper. Students also engage in unacceptable collaboration when they expressly have been instructed to do their own work and have not been given prior approval by the instructor to collaborate.

Please review the following for more information: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/> .
I strongly suggest taking the quiz on the left-hand side of this page.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>In Class</u>	<u>Due this day</u> <i>(Readings should be done for every class by the day they are listed)</i>
I. Constructing Gender, Sexuality, and Childhood: Introductions			
<u>Introduction to course</u>			
3-Sep		Review syllabus	
<u>Ages and Stages, Gender Development</u>			
8-Sep		Introduction to research projects, discuss reading	Sign up for project by sending me your top 3 preferences via email by midnight 9/9.
<u>Sociology of Childhood</u>			
10-Sep	Blumberg, from <i>The Body Project</i>	Quiz on ages and stages and gender development; discuss reading; what's a good research question discussion; group time to make a plan	Sign up for project by sending me your top 3 preferences via email by midnight 9/9.
II. Constructing Gender and Sexuality in Childhood: Family			
<u>Gender</u>			
15-Sep	Kane, "No Way My Boys Are Gonna Be Like That"	Discuss reading	Have met with research group and submitted 3-5 possible research questions on Ctools by 7am
	McGuffey, "Saving Masculinity: Gender Reaffirmation, Sexuality, Race, and Parental Responses to Male Child Sexual Abuse," <i>Social Problems</i> , 2008		
17-Sep	Meadow, "Deep Down Where the Music Plays," <i>Sexualities</i> , 2013.	Discuss reading; Group time I'll have returned Qs with suggestions	
<u>Sexuality</u>			
22-Sep	Robinson, Ch. 5 "Children's Sexual Subjectivities," from <i>Innocence, Knowledge, and the Construction of Childhood</i> , 2013.	Discuss reading	Submit 12 citations to help with project toward lit review on Ctools by 10am
	Martin, "Normalizing Heterosexuality: Mothers' Assumptions, Practices, and Strategies," <i>American Sociological Review</i> , 2008.		
24-Sep	Martin et al., "Privates, Pee-pees, and Coochies: Genital Naming with and for Children," <i>Feminism & Psychology</i> , 2011	Reading Quiz ; Discuss readings	
	Martin and Torres, "Where did I come from?: US Parents and Preschool Children's Participation in Sexual Socialization" <i>Sex Education</i> , 2014.		
III. Constructing Gender and Sexuality in Childhood: Schools and Peers			
<u>Gender</u>			
29-Sep	Martin, "Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools" <i>American Sociological Review</i> , 1998	Discuss reading	
1-Oct	Michela Musto, "Athletes in the Pool: Girls and Boys on Deck," <i>Gender & Society</i> , 2014.	Discuss readings; group time to re-formulate Q	Submit summary of 10 pieces (annotated references) to Ctools by 10am
<u>Sexuality</u>			
6-Oct	Martin, "Managing Sexuality in Child Care" <i>Child Abuse & Neglect</i> , 2014 Renold, "What else can a kiss do?"	Discuss reading	
8-Oct	Renold, "Girls, Girlfriends, and (Hetero) Sexualities: Pleasure, Power, and Danger" from <i>Feminites, Masculinities, and Junior Sexualities</i>	Quiz; Discuss reading	
Fall Break			
15-Oct	Film: <i>It's Elementary!</i>		
20-Oct	Methods reading to be determined based on student projects and needs.	Methodology lecture-discussion, workshop ideas	Submit draft of: Intro, lit review, revised research Q on Ctools by 5pm

IV. Constructing Gender and Sexuality in Childhood: Media

- 22-Oct Martin and Kayzak, "Heterosexiness and Heteronormativity in Children's G- Rated Movies"
Giroux, "Are Disney Movies Good for Your Kids?"
Discuss readings for half of class/workshop research ideasfor second half
- 27-Oct No Class -- Work on data analysis
- 29-Oct Film Discussion: Consuming Childhood
Discuss film for half of class/workshop research ideasfor second half

V. Social Issues of Gender, Sexuality, and Childhood

Sexualization of Children

- 3-Nov Zubriggen and Roberts, Chapters 1and 6 from *The Sexualization of Girls and Girlhood*, 2013
The Society Pages,
<<http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/?s=sexualization+boys>>, "
Discuss readings for half of class/workshop research ideasfor second half
Submit research update on CTools by 10am.
- 5-Nov Lerum and Dworkin, "Bad Girls Rule"
Renolds, selection from "Boys and Girls Speak Out"
Discuss readings for half of class/workshop research ideasfor second half
Essay: What are pros and cons of each side of this debate?

Bad Boys and Mean Girls:

- 10-Nov *Gendered Trouble in Preschool*
Gansen, "Mean Girls and Trouble Making Boys," 2014
Preschool Expulsion data, Readings Discussion and Workshopping
- 12-Nov *Mean Girls*
Simmons, *Odd Girl Out*, p.1-39
Readings Discussion and Workshopping
- 17-Nov *School Violence*
Kimmel and Mahler, "Adolescent Masculinity, Homophobia, and Violence: Random School Shootings, 1982-2001," *American Behavioral Scientist* 2003
Newman, "The Roots of Rampage," 2013
Submit draft of your methods section to Ctools by 10am

Domestic Violence is to Sexism what Child Abuse is to....Childism?

- 19-Nov Young-Breuhl, *Childism*, selections
- 24-Nov Whittier, Chapter One from *The Politics of Child Sexual Abuse*
In class essay childism and links to sexism
- 26-Nov Thanksgiving: No class

VI. Research Projects

- 1-Dec Final Presentations
- 3-Dec Final Presentations
- 8-Dec Final Presentations
- 10-Dec Final Presentations

Final paper due to Ctools by December 15, 6pm

Research Projects for Soc 495: Gender, Sexuality, and Childhood

<u>Broad Starting Research Question</u>	<u>Data</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Group size</u> (up to)
A How are gender and sexuality portrayed in “where did I come from books”?	set of picture books, about 10-20	I can give you most if not all of the books. You will analyze text and pictures, can count things and qualitatively analyze, interpret. Final paper should provided detailed analysis.	3
B What do mothers say to their 3-6 year olds about sexuality and where babies come from?	answers to qualitative and quantitative survey questions	I can give you the data -- about 20 pages of answers mothers of 3-6 year olds gave on an open-ended survey. Some willingness to learn SPSS might be helpful, but is not be necessary. Even one person on the team with this skill/willingness would be great.	3
C How are diverse families, including LGBT families, portrayed in young children's media?	set of picture books	I have a set of 10-12 picture books; you may be able to track down more -- I may be able to get funds for buying more if necessary. This will focus on preschool or early school-aged.	3
D What do the accounts of parents who are raising trans or gender creative kids tell us?	about 5-10 blogs and websites of parents	Here are leads on several of these sites. You may be able to find more. This one might offer the opportunity to compare parents with young children with parents with older children. myprincessboy.com ; raisingmyrainbow.com ; labelsareforjars.wordpress.com/ ; http://open.salon.com/blog/girlyboymama ; www.sarahandianhoffman.com/blog/	3
E How are gender, race, and sexuality portrayed in popular, hegemonic toys?	Lego website and products and advertising	You will have to decide what to use as data here; what part of Lego to focus on; what age kids. The Lego site is a good place to start.	4
F How are gender and sexuality portrayed, understood in anti-cyberbullying campaigns offered by the State?	The state of Michigan's curriculum for K-5, http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-18155_48889_53869---,00.html ; lots of videos and their transcripts, etc -- content analysis	All the data is on the web. This project is school-aged kids.	3
G How is gender constructed in/through sports in early childhood?	Fieldnotes from your attendance and observance of at least 10 kids' soccer games, 5 girls and 5 boys or perhaps a couple co-ed	You will need to take the initiative to find soccer games (or other youth sports) to attend. You will need to learn how to take good, deep field notes. It will likely mean more than 10 games, as you'll need to watch a couple to see what is interesting, what to observe, etc. It may require permission from others to watch. Try this as a starting place: http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/reced.home/team_sports	4
H How are race, gender, and sexuality constructed in preschool television programming on PBS v Nick Jr.?	Fieldnotes from your watching lots of PBS and Nick Jr.	You will need to do systematic watching of TV shows -- breaking episodes into pieces. Counting things, looking for themes, etc.	3
I How are gender and sexuality portrayed in "My Little Pony" such that 8 year old girls and teenage boys/young adult men (Bronies) both comprise the audience??	Fieldnotes from your watching lots of "My Little Pony" and reading online blogs by Bronies, looking at marketing, content analysis of MLP website.	Same as above, but with added data from blogs and websites.	4