

Winter 2012

Sociology 102: Introduction to Sociology: Children and Childhood
TTH 10-11:30
UMMA AUD

Professor Karin A. Martin
Email: kamartin@umich.edu
Office hours Thurs 1-2:00 or by appointment in 4126 LSA

GSI Jon Atwell (Sections 2, 3, 7)
Email atwell@umich.edu
Office hours TBA

GSI Sara Gram (Sections 4, 5, 6)
Email gramsara@umich.edu
Office hours TBA

GSI Hiroe Saruya (Section 8)
Email hsaruya@umich.edu
Office hours TBA

Course Description

Through studying children and childhood in this course you will learn some of the fundamentals of sociological theory, analysis, methods, and research. We will ask, what does it mean to be a child in the contemporary United States? Who is a child? How do children as social actors shape the worlds in which they live and how do their social worlds shape them? We will pay particular attention throughout the course to how race, class, and gender shape experiences of childhood. We will look at children's media, schools, families, and friendships and ask questions like: How does consumer culture shape childhood? How is children's free time (playing, watching TV, athletics) shaped by class? Is daycare good for children or harmful? How do preschoolers learn about race and racism? How do peer cultures and cliques shape kids' lives? Assignments will include readings in the sociology of childhood and several short writing assignments analyzing aspects of children's social contexts, children's culture, and the construction of social problems around childhood.

Required Texts:

All readings available on the CTools site.

Grading and Assignments

Grading Points:

Section attendance and participation = 15

Homework= 15

Paper 1= 15

Paper 2 = 15

Mid-term exam = 20

Final exam = 20

Section attendance and participation: attend all classes on time, participate in discussions and activities. **Sections will NOT meet the first week of classes.**

Homework: There will be 5 homework assignments. Homework assignments will be graded:

- 3 = Excellent work. Demonstrated thoughtfulness and understanding and was thorough in their work.
- 2 = Good work, the student demonstrated thoughtfulness and understanding, may have missed a point or two.
- 1 = The student did the assignment but did not fully accomplish the task or demonstrate thoughtfulness and understanding.
- 0 = The student did not turn the assignment or did not make a sincere effort.

***All homework assignments must be uploaded to your GSI's CTools site by 10:00 am on the due date. No late assignments will be accepted or graded.

1. **January 18:** Mini research proposal.
2. **January 27:** Raising children below the poverty line.
3. **February 8:** Gender at the toy store.
4. **March 10:** Peer status and *American Teen*.
5. **April 5:** The consumption and marketing of toys.

Assignment 1: Interviewing Project: How Social Inequality Shapes Childhoods. You will interview people about their childhoods and write a 5 page paper analyzing the role of social inequality in shaping their childhood. Details provided in class. **Due to your GSI's CTools site by 10:00 am Feb 16th.**

Assignment 2: Op Ed on a Childhood Issue. In the second half of the course we will be studying social problems associated with childhood. You will choose a social problem and drawing on sociological material, write a 750-800 word op ed (opinion editorial) piece that can be submitted to a newspaper. Throughout the second half of the course you will be presented with multiple examples of such pieces. Guidelines for writing op eds will be provided in class. **Due to your GSI's CTools site by 10:00 am, April 17th.**

Mid-term exam: An in class, closed-book exam with multiple choice and short answer questions. Practice questions and a review sheet will be given in class.

Final exam: A closed-book exam with multiple choice and short answer questions. Practices questions and a review sheet will be given in class. **April 25th, 10:30-12:30.**

Extra Credit: A range of extra credit projects are available for students who have turned in all regular course work. These projects have two deadlines. One set must be completed by 2/23, the other by 4/17. See handout and CTools for more information.

Course Expectations, Guidelines, and Routines

- **Getting the most out of lectures:**
 - Readings should be completed before you come to class.
 - You should take detailed notes on the lectures. While lecture slides will be posted by the end of each week, all of the material that we cover is not contained solely in the words on the lecture slides. Students also do better if they take notes rather than just listen.
 - Please show basic respect by observing the following:
 - Silence all electronic devices.
 - Do not talk or whisper with others during lecture.
 - 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 during lectures or section. 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 lecture without my permission.
- **Due dates: All assignments must be uploaded to your GSI's CTools site by 10:00am on the dates they are due.**
 - You may be granted an extension to the due date only for extraordinary circumstances that you can document, such as physician-certified illness, death or serious illness in the family, hospitalization, or UM-sponsored travel or activities such as band or athletics. Religious observances will also be accommodated as per University policy.
 - If you are unable to meet a due date due for one of these reasons you must contact us **within 24 hours** of the due date to request an extension. Even better is to contact us before the deadline.
 - 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.

Unexcused late work will be dropped a grade for lateness, and then a further grade for each day it is late. (A-→B+).

- Early or late exams will not be arranged to accommodate student travel.
- **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.
- **Grade contestations:** If you wish to dispute a grade you must submit a statement in writing **to your GSI** explaining the mistake you think has been made. You must do this **within one week** of receiving the grade. Your GSI will then make a decision and will let you know the outcome of your appeal. If you still think the matter was not resolved, then you may send your appeal (the exam/paper and the statement describing the mistake) on to me. I will then re-grade your paper or exam in its entirety. Please note that your grade may go up or down. We do not “cherry pick” re-grades. **We will not re-grade homework at all.**
- **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.

READING AND CLASS SCHEDULE

The College estimates that 100 and 200 level courses average about 50-100 pages of reading per week. The readings are well within this range. However, there is much variability in the difficulty level of the reading depending on the style of the piece –theoretical, empirical, essay, etc. Please ask if you have difficulty understanding how to read any of them or in discerning the important take away points. Both section and lecture should be resources for understanding the readings.

Introductions: What is Sociology? What is Childhood?

Th Jan 5

Sociological Understandings of Children and Childhood

T Jan 10 James and Prout, from *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*. p. 7-14

Th Jan 12 Thorne, Ch 1 and 2 from *Gender Play*

History of Children and Childhood

T Jan 17 Prologue from *Huck's Raft: A History of Childhood*, by Steven Mintz, Harvard University Press, 2004

Th Jan 19 “Revolt of Modern Youth,” from *Huck's Raft*

Power, Status, and Inequality: Class

T Jan 24 Annette Lareau, “Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families” *American Sociological Review*, 2002, p.747-776

Th Jan 26 Jessi Streib, “Class Reproduction in Preschool” *Qualitative Sociology*, 2011

Elizabeth Weil, “When Should a Kid Start Kindergarten?” *NYT* 2007

Power, Status, and Inequality: Race

T Jan 31 Debra Van Ausdale and Joe R. Feagin, “Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts: The Critical Case of Very Young Children,” *American Sociological Review*, 1996, Vol. 61, No. 5, pp. 779-793.

Th Feb 2 Amanda Lewis, “Everyday Race-Making” *American Behavioral Scientist*, 2003

Recommended: Listen to story about Clark doll studies:
www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1544636&ps=rs

Power, Status, and Inequality: Gender

T Feb 7 Martin, “Becoming a Gendered Body: The Practices of Preschool” *ASR* 1998

Th Feb 9 Thorne, Chapter 5, “Creating a Sense of Opposite Sides” from *Gender Play*

Power, Status, and Inequality: Gender AND Sexuality

T Feb 14 CJ Pascoe, Ch. 4 from *Dude, You’re a Fag*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press, 2007

Power, Status, and Inequality: Sexual Identity

Th Feb 16 CJ Pascoe, Ch. 3 from *Dude, You’re a Fag*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press, 2007

T Feb 21 Benoit Denizet-Lewis, “Coming Out in Middle School” NYT, 2009

Th Feb 23 ***EXAM***

Feb 28th and March 1 **“SPRING” BREAK**

Power, Status, and Inequality: Peer Cultures

T March 6 Murray Milner, Ch. 5 “Exchanges, Labels, and Put Downs” from *Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids: American Teenagers, Schools, and the Culture of Consumption*, Routledge, 2006.

Film: *American Teen*

Th March 8 Katherine Newman et al, Ch 6, “The Strangehold of Adolescent Culture” from *Rampage: the Social Roots of School Shootings*, Basic Books, 2004.

Op Ed: Susan Engel and Marlene Sandstrom, “There’s Only One Way To Stop A Bully” NYT, July 2010

Social Issues: Abuse, neglect, and violence

T March 13 Georgsson, Almqvist, and Broberg. “Naming the Unmentionable: How Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence Articulate Their Experiences,” *Journal of Family Violence* (2011) 26:117–129.

Th March 15 Kathryn Backett-Milburn, Sarah Wilson, Angus Bancroft and Sarah Cunningham-Burley, "Challenging Childhoods: Young Peoples Accounts of "Getting By" in Families with Substance Use Problems" *Childhood* 2008; 15: 461-477.

Social Issues: Children's Care

T March 20 Barrie Thorne, Ch 18 "Pick-up Time at Oakdale Elementary School: Work and Family from the Vantage Points of Children," in *Working Families*, edited by Rosanna Hertz, UC Press, 2001

Social Issues: Medicalization

T March 22 **Op Ed:** "Room for Debate: ADHD in America" : 4 very short pieces from the NYT, October 2011:
Breggin, "A Misdiagnosis, Anywhere";
Ford, "Rushing to Label Black Boys";
Vickers, "A Role in Admissions";
Watters, "An Expression of Our Culture"

Social Issues: Media

T March 27 Henry Giroux, "Are Disney Movies Good for Your Kids?"

Th March 29 Dan Cook, "The Dichotomous Child in and of Commercial Culture" *Childhood*, 2005.

Op Ed: Bakan, Joel, "The Kids Are Not All Right" NYT August 21, 2011

Social Issues: Consumption or "Mom, Can We Buy That?"

T April 3 Allison J. Pugh. 2009. Ch 1 from *Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture*. University of California Press.

Film in class: *Consuming Childhood*

Th April 5 Allison J. Pugh. 2009. Ch 3, "Making Do: The Economy of Dignity," from *Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture*. University of California Press.

Social Issues: Children's Rights

T April 10 Hava Rachel Gordon, "Gendered Paths to Teenage Political Participation: Parental Power, Civic Mobility, and Youth Activism" *Gender & Society*, 2008.

"Minors Face Earlier Curfew" Ann Arbor.com, July 2010

Op Ed: Alan Xie, “The Case Against the Montgomery Curfew”
The Washington Post, July 23, 2011.

Th April 12 Review website: UN Rights of the Child

Conclusions

T April 17 **Op Ed:** Charles Blow, “Failing Forward” NYT Aug 2011.

Final Exam: Wed April 25th 10:30-12:30