

Afroamerican and African Studies 331
World of the Black Child
Fall, 1987
T,Th 10-11:30

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WORLD OF THE BLACK CHILD

This course has two objectives. They are, first, to introduce key areas of research and theory related to the socialization of African-American children and second, to facilitate critical thinking regarding this body of research and theory. The course will focus on cultural and situational forces which affect the lives of African-American lower- and middle-class children in the United States. In order to highlight the factors which contribute to the social conditions of the African-American child, a section of the course will look at the lives of specific individuals through their personal accounts and will compare the converging and diverging features of the socialization of African-American children and South African children. Topics to be discussed will include (1) family, peers, and community socialization, (2) the development of a sense of self and racial identification, (3) portrayal of African-Americans in books for children, (4) school achievement and intellectual development, (5) language development, (6) teenage pregnancy, and (7) welfare, poverty, and father absence.

BOOKS AND ADDITIONAL READING MATERIAL

You are required to purchase the following two paperbacks:

1. Angelou, M. (1969). I know Why the Caged Bird Sings. New York: Bantam.
2. Mphahlele, E. (1978). Down Second Avenue: Growing Up in a South African Ghetto. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith Press.

These books have been ordered through the local bookstores. You are also required to purchase a course-pack from Albert's Copy Center.

EXAMS

You will be required to complete two take-home essay exams, each of which will count equally towards your grade. For each exam, you will probably be asked to prepare a three page answer for each of two or three essay questions. I will hand out the mid-term exam on Thursday, October 29 and your prepared answers will be due the following Tuesday, November 3. I will hold special office hours during the week of the exam to consult with any students who have questions. If your exam is late, the maximum score you can receive on the exam will drop automatically 5 points for each day the exam is late. For example, if you handed in your exam on Wednesday, one day after the exam was due and made a perfect score of 50, you would receive only 45 points. If you handed in your exam on Thursday, two days after the exam was due and made a perfect score of 50, you would receive only 40 points. Obviously, it is to

your advantage to hand in your exam by the announced deadline. Extensions without this penalty will not be made under any circumstances.

Your exams must be typed and I expect them to be well-prepared in a grammatical sense, as well as reflect an in-depth understanding of the course readings and lectures. Papers that are poorly prepared (e.g. full of misspelled words, typographical errors, incomplete sentences) and superficial in their analyses will result in a low grade.

In addition, you are required to write a 10-12 page paper on development, social policy, or social issues as they relate to Black children. You must talk with me prior to preparation of the paper. I may be able to help you narrow your topic, provide references, make suggestions about the organization of the paper, etc. In terms of preparing your paper and even your exams, you are encouraged to contact the writing workshop of the Comprehensive Studies Program, 1018 Angell Hall, if you believe you need help with your writing. Finally, you are expected to be prepared to discuss, challenge, and evaluate the reading materials assigned for each class period. Discussion which draws on your personal experiences and your understanding of the readings will make for an interesting, stimulating, and intellectually rewarding course.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

I. Introduction

September 15, 17

Edelman, M. (1985). "The Sea is so Wide and My Boat is so Small: Problems Facing Black Children Today." In H.P. McAdoo and J.L. McAdoo (Eds.), Black Children. Beverly Hills: Sage.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy (1986). "The 'Flip-side' of Black Families Headed by Women: The Economic Status of Black Men." In R. Staples (Ed.), The Black Family. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Staples, R. (1986). "Changes in Black Family Structure: The Conflict Between Family Ideology and Structural Conditions." In R. Staples (Ed.), The Black Family. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

II. The Determinants of Childrearing Practices in Afro-American Families: The Interplay of Economic Stress, Racism, and Culture

September 22, 24

A. Overview

Ogby, J. (1985). "A Cultural Ecology of Competence Among Inner-City Blacks." In M. Spencer, G. Brookins, and W. Allen (Eds.), Beginnings: The Social and Affective Development of Black Children. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Ray, S.A. and McLoyd, V.C. (1986). "Fathers in Hard Times: The Impact of Unemployment and Poverty on Paternal and Marital Relations." In M. Lamb (Ed.), The Father's Role: Applied Perspectives. New York: Wiley (esp. pp. 339-347; 335-361; 365-369).

Dill, B.T. (1980). "The Means to Put My Children Through: Childrearing Goals and Strategies Among Black Female Domestic Servants." In L. Rodgers-Rose (Ed.), The Black Woman. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Zelkowitz, P. (1982). "Parenting Philosophies and Practices." In D. Belle (Ed.), Lives in Stress: Women and Depression. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Longfellow, C., Zelkowitz, P., & Saunders, E. (1982). "The Quality of Mother-Child Relationships." In D. Belle (Ed.), Lives in Stress: Women and Depression. Beverly Hills: Sage.

September 29, October 1

B. The Socialization of Black Girls

Hale, J. (1982). Black Children: Their Roots, Culture, and Learning Styles. Provo, Ut: Brigham Young Press. Chapter 3: "Culture and Childrearing" (especially p. 45-54; 67-79).

Schulz, D. (1969). Coming Up Black: Patterns of Ghetto Socialization. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. Chapter 2: "Coming Up as a Girl in the Ghetto."

Lewis, D. (1978). "The Black Family: Socialization and Sex Roles." In R. Staples, The Black Family: Essays and Studies Belmont: Wadsworth.

Weiss, R. (1970). "Growing Up a Little Faster: The Experience of Growing Up in a Single Parent Household." Journal of Social Issues. 35, 97-11.

October 6, 8

C. The Socialization of Black Boys

Lamar, J. (1986). "Today's Native Sons." Time. December 1.

Liebow, E. (1967). Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Streetcorner Men. New York: Little, Brown, and Co. Foreword, Chapter 2, and Chapter 3.

Hannerz, U. (1969). Soulside: Inquiries Into Ghetto Culture and Community. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter 6: "Growing Up Male."

Chimezie, A. (1976). "The Dozens: An African Heritage Theory." Journal of Black Studies. 6, 401-420.

October 13, 15

D. Critique of Existing Research on Black Child Socialization

McLoyd, V.C., & Randolph, S. (1986). "Secular Trends in the Study of Afro-American Children." Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development.

Peters, M. (1981). "Parenting in Black Families With Young Children. A Historical Perspective." In H.P. McAdoo (Ed.), Black Families. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Herzog, E. (1980). "Social Stereotypes and Social Research." Journal of Social Issues. 26, 109-125.

Kohn, M. (1963). "Social Class and Parent-Child Relationships: An Interpretation." American Journal of Sociology. 68, 471-480.

October 20, 22

E. The Etiology and Consequences of Teenage Pregnancy in the Black Community

Wallis, C. (1985). "Children Having Children." Time. December 9.

Hulbert, A. (1984). "Children As Parents." The New Republic. September 10, 14-23.

Ladner, J. (1982). Tomorrow's Tomorrow: The Black Woman. Chapter 6: "Becoming a Woman."

Furstenberg, F. (1981). "Implicating the Family: Teenage Parenthood and Kinships Involvement." In T. Ooms (Ed.), Teenage Pregnancy in a Family Context. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Furstenberg, F. (1981). "The Social Consequences of Teenage Parenthood." In F. Furstenberg, R. Lincoln, and J. Menken (Eds.), Teenage Sexuality, Pregnancy, and Childbearing. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

October 27, 29

F. Poverty, Welfare, and Black Child Socialization

Stack, C. (1986). "Sex Roles and Survival Strategies in an Urban Black Community." In R. Staples (Ed.) The Black Family. Belmont, CA: Belmont.

Gilder, G. (1981). Wealth and Poverty. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 6: "The Nature of Poverty"; Chapter 11: "The Coming Welfare Boom."

Bernstein, B. and Meezan, W. (1975). The Impact of Welfare on Family Stability. New York: New School of Social Research. 1-9; 90-109.

Maloney, L. (1984). "Welfare in America: Is It a Flop?" U.S. News & World Report. December 24.

MID TERM DUE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 3

November 3, 5

G. Childrearing Practices and Family Socialization: An Introspective View Using Autobiography as a Medium.

Angelou, M. (1960). I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. New York: Bantam.

November 10, 12

H. Growing Up in an Afro-American Versus American Society: Points of Convergence and Divergence

Film: LAST GRAVE IN DIMBAZA

Mphahlele, E. (1978). Down Second Avenue: Growing Up in a South African Ghetto. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith.

November 17

I. Self-Concept, Self-Esteem, and the Portrayal of Blacks in Books for Children

Cross, W. (1978). "Black Family Identity: A Literature Review." Western J Journal of Black Studies. 2, 111-124.

Jenkins, A. (1982). The Psychology of the Afro-American. New York: Pergamon. Chapter 2: "Afro-American Self-Concept: Sustaining Self-Esteem."

MacCann, D. and Woodward, G. (1972). The Black American in Books for Children. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 57-62.

Alexander, R. (1972). "What is a Racist Book?" In D. MacCann and G. Woodard (Eds.), The Black American in Books for Children. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow. 57-62.

Suhl, I. (1982). "The 'Real' Doctor Dolittle." In D. MacCann and G. Woodard (Eds.) The Black American in Books for Children. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow. 78-88.

III. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

November 19, 24

J. A Macro-Structural and Cultural Analysis of Black Underachievement.

Boykin, A.W. (1983). "The Academic Performance of Afro-American Children." In J.T. Spence (Ed.), Achievement and Achievement Motives. San Francisco: Freeman.

Glasgow, D. (1981). The Black Underclass. San Francisco: Josey-Bass. Chapter 4: "Failure in School."

"Help! Teacher Can't Teach." Time. June 16, 1980.

Children's Defense Fund. (1975). Children's School Suspension: Are They Helping Children? Washington, DC. Chapter 2: "Why Children are Suspended and What it Means to Them."

Also review Ogbu's chapter, "A Cultural Ecology of Competence Among Inner-City Blacks," especially pp. 54-66. (See p. 2 of syllabus)