

SOCY 31 Youth and Society

Winter Quarter 2016

Class Meets in Carson 60, 10A: TR 10:00–11:50pm (X-hour: W 3:00-3:50pm)

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Office hours: Mondays 10:00-12:00 or by appointment

Course Description:

This course is about childhood and youth in everyday life. Throughout the term, we will focus on central themes and features of children’s preschool, preadolescent, adolescent, and college peer cultures. We will discuss research methods for studying childhood and consider the importance of family and peer experiences for children’s social development. Among the questions we may explore are: What does it mean to be a child or adolescent historically and in contemporary society? How are experiences throughout childhood both different and similar for boys and girls? How do socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality shape children’s experiences? What does it mean to be “popular” in elementary school? How do kids’ lives change with the move to high school? How do they change with the move to college? Where do parents fit into children’s lives? What role does the corporate construction of childhood (through toys, games, books, music, television, movies, etc.) play in children’s lives? Throughout this course, we will think critically about childhood and children’s influence on society.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Recognize and explain how sociologists conceptualize and study children and childhood.
2. Describe and compare key theories and concepts related to the sociological study of childhood.
3. Apply these theories and concepts to peer cultures of the five age groups examined in this course in order to analyze children’s behavior and interactions.
4. Develop the skills necessary to read and understand scholarly articles, books, and book chapters on the sociology of childhood.
5. Think critically about childhood and children’s influence on society.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Students are encouraged to check the course Canvas site weekly for messages from the professor. In addition, selected handouts, related materials, and many course readings will be available for downloading.

READINGS: The following required books are available at the Dartmouth Bookstore and Wheelock Books. They are also available on 2-hour reserve in Baker Library.

- (1) William A. Corsaro. 2003. *“We’re Friends, Right?”: Inside Kids’ Culture*. Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press. ISBN: 0309087295

- (2) Amy Schalet. 2011. *Not Under My Roof: Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0226736199
- (3) Michael Moffatt. 1989. *Coming of Age in New Jersey: College and American Culture*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press. ISBN: 0813513596

Other readings are available on our Canvas site.

Another useful resource (not required reading) is *The Sociology of Childhood* by William A. Corsaro (any edition), published by Pine Forge Press.

As you complete the readings, I encourage you to consult the “Reading Guide for Academic Work” posted on Canvas. This contains a list of questions to answer as you read sociological work, and it will help you make the most out of the time you spend reading.

PARTICIPATION: Your attendance and active participation are crucial to this seminar. Active class participation has many dimensions, including enthusiastic and intellectually-rigorous discussion (talking and listening), coming to class prepared by having completed the readings, work on in-class assignments, weekly reflection journal posts, and regular class attendance. Please note that regularly attending class is necessary but not sufficient for an A in class participation.

To supplement our in-class discussions, I set up reflection journals on Canvas. At the end of every week (by Sunday at 11:59pm), you will post a 250-500 word reflection to Canvas. These reflections should each be responses to a prompt, provided the week before. Although these are reflections, you should use examples from class discussions, activities, lectures, and readings to support your points. Writing these reflections will help you more deeply engage with the course, track your personal learning and growth. They will also help me to get to know each of you and to adjust the course in order to make it the best learning experience for the class as a whole. To receive credit, each reflection should (a) be reflective, not merely a summary of course content, (b) respond to this week’s prompt, (c) use examples from course content – this can be from class discussions, activities, lectures, or readings, (d) be the appropriate length (250-500 words) and submitted on time (posted to Canvas by Sunday night at 11:59pm).

Participation also includes completing the surveys at the beginning and end of the course. A link will be emailed to you from me or Joshua Schoenbart. The first survey is a personal introduction, which asks about your background and expectations for the course. The second survey asks you to reflect on the course. These will be used to provide useful background on students for class discussions (information will only be provide in the aggregate, meaning that I will never reveal information about any particular individual’s responses) and for a research study that I am completing. Opting in to the study is optional, but completing the surveys is part of course participation.

In the event that you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for getting class notes for that class from another student. As a general policy, I do not make my notes available. After you review your classmate’s notes, I would be happy to meet with you to talk about the material or answer questions about anything that is unclear.

EXAMS: Two exams are required. Lectures, films, video clips, discussions, in-class assignments, activities, and readings will be covered on the exams. The midterm exam will be an in-class exam and the final will be a take-home exam. You may study together; in fact, I encourage it. However, exams should be completed independently; you should not discuss the exam or your answers with classmates or anyone else while completing it. The final exam will be open notes, meaning that you may consult your notes, handouts, and readings to answer exam questions, but you should put materials into your own words when answering questions.

PAPERS: Students will write one 7-8 page, double-spaced paper. The purpose of this assignment is for you to think about how status impacts the social groups of students at your high school. In other words, you will be applying insights from the course to your own sociological examination of aspects of your high school experience. This paper is based on Chapter 3 “Fitting in, Standing Out and Keeping Up” in Murray Milner’s *Freaks, Geeks and Cool Kids*. You must demonstrate understanding and application of material from “Fitting in, Standing Out and Keeping Up” to your own experiences. You will be referring back to his data and comparing and contrasting to your own experiences. More specific guidelines are included in the paper assignment handout.

Percentage of Final Grade

Class Participation	15%
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Paper	25%

Final Course Grade

A = 94.0-100	C+ = 77.0-79.99
A- = 90.0-93.99	C = 74.0-76.99
B+ = 87.0-89.99	C- = 70.0-73.99
B = 84.0-86.99	D = 60.0-69.99
B- = 80.0-83.99	E < 60.0

Course Guidelines and Policies:

Honor Principle: Assignments will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor detailed in the Dartmouth Organization, Regulations and Courses. I encourage you to discuss ideas from class with your classmates. However, unless otherwise noted, the paper and exams should be completed independently and all work turned in should be your own. Your paper should include citations to ideas and direct quotes from course readings as well as outside sources. I encourage students to read Dartmouth’s statement on Sources and Citations: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/>

Religious Holidays: Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me ASAP to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible, and no later than the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested. Information about Student Accessibility Services is available at: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~accessibility/>

Letters of Recommendation: I get many requests for letters and I have a handout describing the materials I need at least two weeks prior to your deadline. If you expect to need a letter from me after the term ends, please let me know while you’re still in the class so that I can have more

detailed notes to write a stronger letter on your behalf. I enjoy writing letters for students who have stood out in some way and I take writing these letters quite seriously.

Late Submissions: The submission of assignments is expected on the indicated “due date” during that day’s class meeting (unless otherwise stated). Requests for extensions should be made prior to the due date. Please note that grades on non-approved late submissions will be penalized. Any work turned in more than 10 minutes after the start of class is considered late and the grade will be reduced by one step (for example, from a B to a B-). The grade will be reduced by an additional step for each day it is late. Work turned in after class begins is considered one day late. Work turned in the day after class is considered two days late.

Grade Disputes: Any student who wishes to dispute a grade earned on any written assignment, exam short answer, or exam essay question may do so by submitting a written memo detailing specifically why the assignment should receive a different grade. The memo should explain how the assignment met the requirements or how the answer as written (and not based on what could be inferred from what was written) addressed the question. The memo should be submitted within one week of receiving the grade. Your graded assignment should also be attached.

Classroom Etiquette: Disruptions to class negatively affect everyone’s ability to learn. If you must arrive late or leave early, please notify the instructor in advance and sit by the door to minimize disruptions. It is inappropriate to use cell phones or use laptops for activities outside of taking notes (such as email or facebook). Disruptions will reduce your participation grade.

Class Schedule:

Readings from the Corsaro, Shalet, and Moffatt books are marked by the author’s last name and the chapters for that day. Other readings are available on Canvas.

DATE		TOPIC AND READINGS
1/5 1/7	T R	<i>Week 1: Introduction to Course and to the History of Childhood</i> No Readings Corsaro, Introduction & Chapter 1 Pamela Druckerman, “French Children Don’t Throw Food”
1/12 1/14	T R	<i>Week 2: Studying Children and Childhood: Theoretical Approaches</i> Corsaro, Chapter 2-3 Corsaro, Chapter 4 -5
1/19 1/21	T R	<i>Week 3: Preschool Children</i> Corsaro, Chapters 6-7 Bernice Pescosolido et al., “Culture and Conflict” Debra Van Ausdale and Joe R. Feagin, “Play Groups and Racial-Ethnic Matters”
1/26 1/28	T R	<i>Week 4: Preadolescents/Elementary School Students</i> Barrie Thorne, “Creating a Sense of ‘Opposite Sides’” Patricia Adler and Peter Adler, “Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion” Malcolm Gladwell, “Do Parents Matter?” Ruthann Mayes-Elma, “From Miley Merchandising to Pop Princess Peddling: The Hannah Montana Phenomenon”

DATE		TOPIC AND READINGS
2/2	T	<i>Week 5: Early Adolescents/Middle School Students</i> Lottie Baker, "What It Takes to Succeed" Claire Cain Miller, "Class Differences in Child-Rearing Are on the Rise"
2/4	R	MIDTERM EXAM
2/9	T	<i>Week 6: Adolescents/High School Students</i> C. J. Pascoe, "Dude, You're a Fag: Adolescent Male Homophobia" Murray Milner, "Fitting in, Standing Out and Keeping Up"
2/11	R	Schalet, Chapters 1-3
2/16	T	<i>Week 7: Adolescents/High School Students (cont.)</i> Schalet, Chapters 4-6
2/18	R	Schalet, Chapters 7, 8 and Conclusion
2/23	T	<i>Week 8: Late Adolescents and College Students</i> MEET IN RAUNER LIBRARY – Activity on Dartmouth College Culture Moffatt, Chapters 1-3
2/25	R	MEET IN RAUNER LIBRARY – Activity on Dartmouth College Culture Moffatt, Chapters 4, 6 and 7 (Chapter 5 not required)
3/1	T	<i>Week 9: Late Adolescents and College Students (cont.)</i> Michael Kimmel, "The Rites of Almost-Men: Binge Drinking, Fraternity Hazing, and the Elephant Walk" Janet Reitman, "Confessions of an Ivy League Frat Boy: Inside Dartmouth's Hazing Abuses" PAPER DUE (BRING HARDCOPY TO CLASS)
3/3	R	Janice McCabe, Chapters from <i>Connected in College</i>
3/8	T	<i>Week 10: The Future of Childhood</i> Corsaro, Chp 8 2-4 recent newspaper articles (exact readings TBA – will be posted on Canvas at least one week before this date) RECEIVE TAKE-HOME EXAM
3/12	S	FINAL EXAM DUE BY 3:00PM on Saturday, March 12