

# 163:388 Children's Geographies

**Tuesday and Thursdays, 4:20-5:40**  
**ATG-223**

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## Course Description

This course introduces students to the field of children's geographies, with a focus on dynamics of space, place and identity in childhood studies. Engaging with multiple disciplinary perspectives, the course will challenge students to look critically at taken-for-granted spaces of children's lives, such as the home, classroom, playground, and city. We will examine a range of institutions (e.g., family, schooling), practices (e.g., play, migration), and discourses (e.g., nature, citizenship) through which the places and spaces of childhood are imagined, regulated, and experienced. A range of case studies will be used to situate American childhoods in a broader global perspective. Particular attention will be paid to how children create and navigate space in their everyday lives, as well as how children's geographies are shaped by social structures, such as gender, race, and class.

## Course Objectives

This course seeks to:

- introduce students to the study of children's geographies, a subfield within childhood studies;
- demonstrate how an analysis of space and place can advance understandings of children's lives;
- explore diverse ways in which children create and navigate space, as well as how children's geographies are shaped by institutions and social structures.

## Learning Outcomes

Through this course, students will:

- develop and demonstrate an understanding of core concepts in children's geographies;
- draw connections between scholarly research in the field of children's geographies and their own experiences of childhood;
- critically analyze taken-for-granted spaces in children's lives, such as the home, school, playground, and city, across a range of local and global contexts;

- apply course concepts to a specific area of interest within children’s geographies, and share this analysis through verbal and written communication.

## Course Readings

All required readings will be available on Canvas. Students are expected to come to class having read the required reading and prepared to discuss its main points. Please bring required readings to each class (hard copies or on a tablet/laptop – not your phone).

## Evaluation Components

<u>Type</u>	<u>Date(s) Due</u>	<u>Weight</u>
<b>Discussion Starter</b>	Throughout (to be assigned)	10%
<b>Tests (2)</b>	Oct 12 and Nov 23	50% (2 x 25%)
<b>Reflection Paper</b>	Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	15%
<b>Pecha Kucha Presentation</b>	Dec 7th or Dec 9th (to be assigned)	15%
<b>Participation</b>	Throughout the course	10%

### Discussion Starter (10%) – Date to be determined (sign up in class on Tuesday September 7)

During the first 10-15 minutes of each class, two or three students will be responsible for generating initial discussion by presenting an artifact related to the required readings (e.g., a toy, book, newspaper article, television clip, advertisement, song, map, food, etc.). The purpose of the Discussion Starter is to **draw connections between the artifact and key themes in the readings**, and then to raise questions for discussion.

Within the Discussion Starter, you should:

- 1) Introduce the reading. (What did we read? Who wrote it? What was it about? This should be a **VERY BRIEF** summary of key ideas.)
- 2) Introduce the artifact you are sharing, and draw links to **one or two key ideas** in the reading.
- 3) Raise at least **TWO** questions for discussion.

(These three elements do not necessarily need to happen in that order.) Each member of the group must speak during the presentation. The Discussion Starter will be evaluated on preparation, creativity, integration of relevant readings, and interactivity. Further instructions will be provided in class. **Please DO NOT summarize the entire reading during your Discussion Starter.**

### Tests (2 x 25%) – Oct 14 and Nov 23

Two in-class tests will evaluate students’ comprehension of course material. The tests will cover material from both the readings and the in-class sessions (including group work), and will include a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The second test is not cumulative; it will focus on material covered *after* Test 1.

### Reflection Paper (15%) – Due Nov 2nd

In this short reflection paper (4 typed pages, double-spaced), students will analyze the geographies of a specific space or place from their own childhood. The goal of this paper is to draw connections between course concepts and personal experiences. Detailed instructions will be provided in class.

### **Pecha Kucha Presentation + script (15%) – Dec 9th or Dec 11th (to be assigned)**

Students will work in groups of three or four to develop a Pecha Kucha – a style of presentation that derives from the Japanese word for “chit chat”. A pecha kucha includes exactly 20 powerpoint slides shown for exactly 20 seconds each. In groups, you must develop a pecha kucha presentation analyzing a specific site; you are asked to draw from what you have learned in the course to analyze the geographies of a space or place relating to childhood. Please title your presentation as follows: “The Geographies of \_\_\_\_\_” (e.g., “The Geographies of the Cherry Hill Mall,” “The Geographies of Johnson Park”). Drawing upon course concepts, your pecha kucha should develop a critical analysis of this site – e.g., its history and design; its gendered, racialized or classed dimensions; its use by different groups of young people; its surveillance/regulation by authorities, etc. Students are expected to combine external research and course readings to prepare the pecha kucha, and **must submit a written script** on the day of their presentation. Further instructions will be provided in class. NOTE: Students are expected to attend both days of pecha kucha presentations, and to complete peer evaluations for their classmates’ presentations.

### **Participation and Attendance (10%)**

Active participation is essential for success in this course and will be recorded throughout the term. Students are expected to come to class on time having completed the assigned readings and prepared to engage in respectful discussion with their classmates. Class sessions will often involve work in small groups, as well as full class discussion. Periodically, students will be required to complete an “entry ticket,” in which they will write a brief response to a question about the readings posed at the beginning of the class period. During class discussions, please keep in mind that participation is not only about talking, but also about listening and making room for other perspectives. Thus, in addition to personal contributions to class dialogue, the participation grade also reflects students’ attendance, attention, and respectful participation during classmates’ presentations. NOTE: Open disengagement from in-class learning (e.g., arriving late, texting, sleeping, or other disrespectful behavior) will *lower* your participation grade.

**Attendance** is a crucial component of course participation, and will be recorded throughout the semester. **Missing more than 3 classes (whether excused or unexcused) will negatively impact your participation grade.**

### **Grading**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

90 — 100% = A

86 — 89% = B+

80 — 85% = B

76 — 79% = C+

70 — 75% = C

60 — 69% = D

59% and below = F

### **Due Dates and Late Penalty**

Assignments are due in class on the date indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day, up to a total penalty of 30%. If you are unable to submit an assignment or attend a test due to reasons beyond your control, you are expected to **inform the instructor prior to the due date in order to request an extension**. Extension requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Mask Policy

In keeping with Rutgers policy, masks are to be worn at all times during class meetings.

## Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity

Rutgers University-Camden seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community, including in classroom space, and a community in which students respect academic integrity and the integrity of your own and others' work.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity Policy. To review the academic integrity policy, go to <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity> To review the code, go to: <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/student-conduct>

## Learning Center- Learning Specialists and Tutoring

I am committed to making course content accessible to all students. The Learning Center provides Learning Specialists who can help you build a learning plan based on your strengths and needs. Tutors, study groups and more services are available you for free. Many services are available in virtual formats and after normal business hours. In addition, if English is not your first language and this causes you concern about the course, the Learning Center can help. You can learn more about these services by calling 856-225-6442, emailing [rclc@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:rclc@camden.rutgers.edu) or [learningcenter@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:learningcenter@camden.rutgers.edu), or visiting the website <https://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/> [You can schedule an appointment with](#) Learning Specialist to create a plan of action using the website.

## Office of Disability Services (ODS)- Students with Disabilities

If you are in need of academic support for this course, accommodations can be provided once you share your accommodations indicated in a Letter of Accommodation issued by the Office of Disability Services (ODS). If you have already registered with ODS and have your letter of accommodations, please share this with me early in the course. If you have not registered with ODS and you have or think you have a disability (learning, sensory, physical, chronic health, mental health or attentional), please contact ODS by first visiting their website <https://success.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>. The website will further direct you who to contact and how to contact them depending on the free, confidential services you are in need of.

## Preferred Name and Pronouns

If you have a chosen name or preferred name other than what is listed on the roster, please let me know. If you would like to have your name changed officially on the Rutgers University-Camden rosters visit: <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/chosen-name-application>. This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If I have not used your preferred gender pronouns, please correct me. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

## Basic Needs Security

When students face challenges securing food, housing, and/or technology, it can be difficult to learn. If you are in this situation, please contact the Dean of Students. If you feel comfortable, please also let me know, and I will do what I can to connect you with appropriate resources. Our campus offers various services and supports for students; know that you are not alone in dealing with these issues.

- **Dean of Students Office-** You can learn more about the free services by calling 856-225-6050, emailing [deanofstudents@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@camden.rutgers.edu), or visiting the website at <http://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/>
- **Rutgers-Camden Food Pantry-** You can learn more about this free service by calling 856-225-6005, emailing [scarlet-raptor-foodpantry@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:scarlet-raptor-foodpantry@camden.rutgers.edu) or visiting the website at <https://wellnesscenter.camden.rutgers.edu/ru-camden-raptor-pantry/>

### **Wellness Center- Health and Wellbeing Resources**

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. You may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success, such as illness, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug issues, feeling down, or loss of motivation. The Wellness Center Medical and Counseling staff can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential medical and mental health services available on campus by calling 856-225-6005, visiting the website at <https://wellnesscenter.camden.rutgers.edu/> or visiting the Wellness Center on the 2nd Floor of the Campus Center.

## Schedule of Topics and Readings

NOTE: Every attempt will be made to follow this schedule, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students must complete the assigned readings before class.

### Introducing Children's Geographies

#### **THURS Sept 2 – Introduction to the Course**

*No assigned readings*

#### **TUES Sept 7 – What (and where) are children's geographies?**

Holloway, Sarah L. and Gill Valentine. 2001. Children's Geographies and the New Social Studies of Childhood. In *Children's Geographies: Playing, Living, Learning*, edited by S.L. Holloway and G. Valentine, 1-26. London: Routledge.

In-class: Sign up for Discussion Starter date.

### Space, Place, and Childhood

#### **THURS Sept 9 – Conceptualizing Place**

Cresswell, Tim. 2013. Introduction: Defining Place. In *Place: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

#### **TUES Sept 14 – Place and Childhood**

Rasmussen, Kim. 2004. Places for Children – Children's Places. *Childhood* 11(2): 155-173.

#### **THURS Sept 16 – Children's Places in Global Perspective**

Dyson, Jane. 2015. Life on the hoof: Gender, youth and the environment in the Indian Himalayas. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 21: 49-65.

#### **TUES Sept 21 – Geographies of Play**

Aberg-Riger, Ariel. 2019. The surprising history of politics and design in playgrounds. *CityLab*, May 16, 2019. Visual essay available online: <https://www.citylab.com/design/2019/05/playground-design-ideas-history-nyc-parks-healthy-kids/589591/>

Wainright, Oliver. 2021. Set children free: Are playgrounds a forms of incarceration? *The Guardian*, Feb 25, 2021.

#### **THURS Sept 23 – Play, Risk, and Protection**

Rosin, Hanna. 2014. "The Overprotected Kid." *The Atlantic*, 19 March 2014. [www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/03/hey-parents-leave-those-kids-alone/358631/](http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/03/hey-parents-leave-those-kids-alone/358631/)

### Geographies of Family

#### **TUES Sept 28 – Histories of the Teen Bedroom**

Reid, Jason. 2012. "My Room! Private! Keep Out! This Means You!": A Brief Overview of the Emergence of the Autonomous Teen Bedroom in Post-World War II America. *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* (5.3): 419-443.

**THURS Sept 30 – Bodies and Boundaries: Privacy, age, and family life**

Lewis, Ruth. 2010. Shutting the bathroom door: Parents, young teenagers and the negotiation of bodily boundaries at home. In *Geographies of Children, Youth and Families: An International Perspective*, edited by Louise Holt. Routledge.

**TUES Oct 5 – Transnational families**

Francisco-Menchavez, Valerie. 2018. Introduction: Filipino Transnational Families and New Caring Strategies. In *The Labor of Care: Filipina Migrants and Transnational Families in the Digital Age*, 1-28. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

**THURS Oct 7 – REVIEW**

*No assigned readings*

**TUES Oct 12 - TEST 1**

**Young People and the City**

**THURS Oct 14 – Conceptualizing Public Space**

Valentine, Gill. 1996. Contested Productions of Public Space. Excerpt from “Children should be seen and not heard: The production and transgression of adults’ public space” *Urban Geography* 17(3). Pp. 43-49.

**TUES Oct 19 – Race, Place and Surveillance**

Wallace, Derron. 2018. Safe Routes to School? Black Caribbean Youth Negotiating Police Surveillance in London and New York City. *Harvard Educational Review*, 88(3): 261-286.

**THURS Oct 21 – Disability, Mobility and Interdependence**

Fritsch, Kelly, Anne McGuire and Eduardo Trejos. 2021. *We Move Together*. AK Press.

Fritsch, Kelly, Anne McGuire and Eduardo Trejos. 2021. Excerpt from A Learning Guide for *We Move Together*, pp. 1-14.

**Geographies of Schooling**

**TUES Oct 26 – Designing Schools**

McGregor, Jane. 2004. Space, Power and the Classroom. *FORUM* 42(1):13-18

**THURS Oct 28 – Geographies of Educational Inequality**

Shedd, Carla. 2015. “Introduction: Crossing Boundaries of Race, Class and Neighborhood” (pp. 1-18) and “Chapter 4: The Universal Carceral Apparatus,” (pp. 80-119). In *Unequal City: Race, Schools, and Perceptions of Injustice*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

**TUES Nov 2 - Informal Geographies of Schooling**

Best, Amy. 2017. The Cafeteria as Youth Space: Social Bonds and Barriers. In *Fast Food Kids: French fries, lunch lines, and social ties*, 78-98. New York University Press.

Assignment: Reflection Paper Due

## **Political Geographies of Childhood**

### **THURS Nov 4 – Youth Movements Claiming Space**

Magaña, Maurice Rafael. 2020. Introduction (pp.1-25) and excerpt from “Chapter 1: Building Youth Counterspaces (pp. 37-54). *Cartographies of Youth Resistance: Hip-Hop, Punk and Urban Autonomy in Mexico*. Oakland: University of California Press.

### **TUES Nov 9 – Geographies of Migration**

Judge, Ruth Cheung. 2020. Transnational Childhoods. In *The Sage Encyclopedia of Childhood Studies*, edited by Daniel T Cook. Sage.

### **THURS Nov 11 - Young People, Borders, and Citizenship Status**

Gonzales, Roberto G. 2015. Contested membership over time. In *Lives in Limbo: Undocumented and Coming of Age in America*, 1-34. University of California Press.

### **TUES. Nov 16 – Children and Environmental Justice**

Milman, Oliver. 2018. Air pollution: black, Hispanic and poor students most at risk from toxins. *The Guardian*, 1 February 2018.

### **THURS Nov 18 - Review**

### **TUES Nov 23 – Test 2**

### **THURS Nov 25 – NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)**

### **TUES Nov 30 – Pecha Kucha Work Period**

*No Assigned Readings. Come to class prepared to work on your Pecha Kucha Presentations. Bring laptops or other materials required.*

### **THURS Dec 2 – Guest lecture by Anusha Iyer**

*Readings TBD*

### **TUES Dec 7 – Pecha Kucha Presentations - Day 1**

*No Assigned Readings*

### **THURS Dec 9 – Pecha Kucha Presentations - Day 2**

*No Assigned Readings*