

**Childhood Studies 101**  
**Introduction to Childhood Studies**  
**(50:163:101:01)**  
**Fall 2021**

Prof. Dan Cook, Instructor  
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Class: Tuesday and Thursday  
Room: Fine Arts 217  
Time: 2:00-3:20

Office: 329 Cooper, Room 116  
Phone: 856-225-2816  
Office Hours:  
Weds 1:30-3:30 and by  
appointment

**Teaching Assistant**

Ketaki Prabha  
Office: 329 Cooper St., Room 217  
Email:  
Office Hours: Thursday 3:30-4:30 or by appointment

\*Note: If you cannot make office hours for instructor or the TA, contact them to make arrangements to meet at a different time.

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In this course, we will examine various ways that childhood has been discussed, researched and understood as a social phenomenon and social institution. Course materials were selected to illustrate how various notions of childhood and “the child” impact cultural understandings regarding the “nature” of children and the meanings of age and the life course. The course makes use of historical materials and transnational perspectives to address contemporary issues and understandings of children and childhood such as changing and diverse definitions of childhood, children as social actors, children’s rights and child labor and work in a global context.

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**This course fulfills General Education requirement: US and the World (USW) and Diversity (DIV)**

**Course Objectives**

This course seeks to:

- introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of childhood studies, including its methods and theoretical frameworks
- encourage students to reflect upon, question, and critique socially constructed beliefs about children and childhood
- explore the diversity of children's experiences within and across historical, cultural and national contexts
- help students to understand how childhood studies research and approaches can inform work relating to children in a variety of professional and academic contexts

## Learning Outcomes

Through this course, students will:

- understand different ways that childhood is addressed as a social and historical “invention”
  - explore how notions of childhood and children’s experiences may differ according to historical contexts, social circumstances and social identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class and national/cultural contexts
  - appreciate the diversity of children's lived experiences
  - analyze and engage with current debates surrounding children's rights, both globally and in the context of US politics and culture
  - use course concepts to analyze, question, and deconstruct cultural ideas and narratives of childhood
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### Course materials:

All readings are available on the course Canvas site <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/> under the specific Module for the class day.

## REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

**Attendance is mandatory.** Any absences must be accounted for in terms of a legitimate, documented excuse (illness, death in the family or prior arrangement). We will have sign-in for attendance. Signing the attendance sheet is a statement by you that you intend to stay for the entire class. If you sign the attendance sheet and then leave before the end of class, it is a form of cheating and will be dealt with in that manner.

If you need to leave class early, you must let the instructor or TA know ahead of time.

**Note: Any absence after two absences, whether excused, unexcused or some combination thereof, will count against your grade.**

**Class** will begin on time every day. Plan to stay the entire time every day. Please, as a courtesy to others, turn off all mobile phones and pagers during class. Please do not text, email, IM or electronically communicate with others during the class.

**All readings** that are required must be completed by the beginning of the class for which they are assigned. Assignments will be given in class and posted on the course website. Reading assignments are designed to augment class discussions, give greater detail in some areas, or to fill in areas not specifically covered in class.

Classroom discussion is welcome and no question in anyone's mind should be left unasked. Interactive discussions are always more interesting than lectures, so I hope that we can work together to integrate lecture and discussion and make this course as interesting and useful as possible. Come to class with reflections, questions and observations on our reading and topics.

Often during class, reference will be made to specific readings and passages. You need to **bring your readings to class** (-physically or digitally) to facilitate discussion and instruction.

I will have material to present almost every day, some days more than others. The course will be managed through the Canvas site <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/> where lecture outlines, assignments, announcements and space for student discussion can be found.

**Assignments.** There will be three in-class examinations and a paper. In addition, sporadic **Pop Quizzes** will be given from time to time to help students avoid getting too far behind.

- **Assessment Exercise** There is a short exercise to be completed at the beginning and the end of the course to assess your knowledge and view on the course and on the field of childhood studies. **It will not be graded** and there are no right or wrong answers. You will receive **extra credit** for doing this exercise and handing it on time.
- **The exams** will be short answer and essay questions, **not multiple choice**. The emphasis in the class is the understanding and application of ideas, not their mere repetition. Hence, this is why you need to attend class and pay attention
- **Reaction papers/posts (various)** will be short responses to particular readings/class discussions from time to time. Prompts will be given. To be assigned.
- **The paper** will be short, 5-6 pages or so, and will require you to analyze and discuss course readings in relation to materials presented in class.
- **The quizzes** will be given at the beginning of selected classes. They may be given many days in a row, or we may go weeks without giving them, but they will be given.

## Grading

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of grade</u>
<b>Sep 9</b>	<b>Assessment Exercise I</b>	<b>3 points to Exam 1</b>
Sep 23	Exam 1	20%
Oct 19	Exam 2	20%
Nov 11	Paper 1	20%
<b>Dec 8</b>	<b>Assessment Exercise II</b>	<b>3 points to Exam 3</b>
Dec 9	Exam 3	20%
Ongoing	Reaction Papers/Posts (various)	10%
Ongoing	Attendance	5%
Ongoing	Quizzes	5%

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

**Unexcused absences** from examinations will result in an automatic 10% grade penalty. Exams can be rescheduled so long as reasonable excuses are presented prior to the scheduled date for the exam. However, an unexcused absence from an exam may result in the student forfeiting the entire percentage of the grade for that exam.

**Late papers** will be penalized one-half a grade **for each calendar (not class) day late**. Any paper more than 5 calendar days later will not be accepted, unless prior arrangements were made. All papers should be handed in as hardcopies, unless other arrangements are made with the instructor. **Note:** Papers are due at the *beginning* of class. ***Once papers are collected and class begins, the paper will be considered late.*** It is your responsibility to take into account the time and logistics involved in printing the paper out as well as bus schedules and potential computer glitches.

### **Chosen Name (Preferred Name)**

If you have a chosen name or preferred name other than what is listed on the roster, kindly let me know. If you would like to have your name changed officially on the Rutgers University-Camden rosters please visit: <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/chosen-name-application>

### **Face masks are required to be worn during class**

As per University policy at the present time, **everyone present in class is required to wear a face covering to mitigate the spread of COVID-19**. Please be sure you have an appropriate covering that cover BOTH mouth and nose. It is unclear if and when the policy will change. This is a new situation for all of us and we will find a way to work our way through it. Your cooperation is expected and appreciated.

### **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>

**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.

**Please Note:** Accommodations will be provided only for students with a Letter of Accommodation from ODS. Simply telling me you need accommodations will not suffice. Accommodation letters only provide information about the accommodation, not about the disability or diagnosis.

**Topics and Readings Schedule**

Sep 2 Introduction: Course syllabus, expectations regarding reading, attendance, participation and assignment.

**Part I:****Understanding Childhood as a Social and Historical “Invention”****Inventing “the child” in images and things**

Sep 7 Gittens, Diana “The Historical Construction of Childhood” in Mary Jane Kehily (ed.) *An Introduction to Childhood Studies*. Open University Press. 2004.  
**\*read pages 25-28 only**

“Child” in James and James *Key Concepts in Childhood Studies* **pp 8-9.**

**Material Cultures of Anglo-European Childhoods: 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

Sep 9 Gittens, Diana “The Historical Construction of Childhood” in Mary Jane Kehily (ed.) *An Introduction to Childhood Studies*. Open University Press. 2004.  
**\*read pages 28-38 only**

“Childhood” in James and James *Key Concepts in Childhood Studies* **pp 14-16.**

**\*NOTE: Extra Credit Assessment Exercise due by 11:55 pm for extra credit; no extensions**

- Sep 14 Calvert, Karin 1992 “The Upright Child: Swaddling Clothes and Walking Stools,” (pp. 19-38) in *Children in the House*
- Sep 16 Brewer, John. 1980. “Genesis of the Modern Toy.” *History Today*, 30: 32-39.
- Sep 21 **Discussion/Review for Exam**
- Sep 23 **Exam 1** (in class)

### **Children as Workers and Consumers in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

- Sep 28 Nasaw, David. 1985. “At Play in the City.” Pp 17-38 in *Children of the City*. NY: Doubleday
- Sep 30 Nasaw, David. 1985. “All That Money Could Buy,” pp 115-129.
- Recommended Reading:** “The Battle for Spending Money, pp 130-137 in *Children of the City*. NY: Doubleday
- Oct 5 Shuman, Michael. 2017. “History of Child Labor in the United States—part 1: little children working.” *Monthly Labor Review*, January, pp. 1-14.
- Zelizer, Viviana 1985 Excerpt, “From Child Labor to Child Work” on the case of child actors, pp. 89-97 in *Pricing the Priceless Child*.

### **Experiences of Black Childhoods in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries**

- Oct 7 Rittenhouse, *Growing Up Jim Crow*, pp. 108-132.
- Oct 12 Simmons, LaKisha Michelle, Excerpts from *Crescent City Girls*.
- Oct 14 **Discussion/Review for Exam**
- Oct 19 **Exam 2 (in class)**
- Oct 21 TBA

## Part II:

### One Childhood or Many? Multiple Childhoods

#### The “New” Childhood Studies: Children as Social Actors

Oct 26 Leonard, Madelaine. 2016. Excerpts from *The Sociology of Childhood and Generation*. pp 21-26

**Recommended reading:** James, Allison and Alan Prout, “Introduction” and “Chapter 1,” pages 1-14 in *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*

**\*Assign Paper 1**

#### Lived Childhoods

Oct 28 Thorne, Barrie “Unpacking School Lunchtime,” read 63-68 and 70-87; you can skim the section “From Context to Interaction”

#### Space, Stigma and Pride

Nov 2 Cairns, Kate 2018, “Youth, Temporality, and territorial Stigma: Finding Good in Camden, New Jersey” in *Antipode*, Read pages 1-2 and 6-17

#### Translating Childhoods

Nov 4 Orellana, Marjorie. “Home Work” in *Translating Childhoods*,  
Orellana, Marjorie. “Public Para-phrasing,” in *Translating Childhoods*,

Video—when your parents speak broken English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFlxDuNC6OU>

Nov 9 **\*Breakout Paper Review Sessions** (2 sections) NOTE: SOME OF THE CLASS WILL MEET IN A DIFFERENT ROOM. TO BE ANNOUNCED.

#### Global Childhoods: Questions and Issues of Children’s Rights

Nov 11 Video: Required

**\*Paper 1 Due** at the *beginning* of class

Nov 16 Woodhouse, Barbara “Ain't I A Person?” in *Hidden in Plain Sight*. 2008

Read the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

<http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/uncrc.asp>

Nov 18 Readings To Be Announced

Nov 23 Topics and readings To Be Announced.

Nov 25 THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

Nov 30, Dec 2 **Readings and Topics To Be Determined**

**Who Gets to be a Child? The politics of Innocence.**

Dec 7 Cooper, Britany “‘More Than Just Tragic’: Ma’Khia Bryant and the Burden of Black Girlhood” <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/24/us/makhia-bryant.html?smid=url-share>

Bernstein, Robin “Let Black Kids Just Be Kids.” July 26, 2017 *New York Times*.

McGough, Michael. 2013 “Was Trayvon Martin a 'child' or a 'youth'?” *LA Times* July 12, 2013 <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/12/news/la-ol-martin-zimmerman-teenagers-20130712>

Patton, Stacey. “In America, black children don’t get to be children.” *Washington Post*, November 26, 2014

Dec 9 **Exam 3** (in class)

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