

Girlhood Studies
Spring 2023
Online, Asynchronous Course

Instructor

Jessica Calvanico

Email

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Office Hours

Wednesdays 11am-12pm, via Zoom

Please sign up here

<https://calendly.com/jessica-calvanico-spring-2022/spring-2023-office-hours>

TA

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Course Description

This course explores key debates within the field of girlhood studies by interrogating the notion of ‘girlhood’ and its accompanying politics. Students will engage with multiple disciplinary perspectives to examine historical, cultural, social, and political dynamics shaping the way global girlhoods are imagined and lived. The course asks how ‘the girl’ and ‘girlhood’ are figured as sites of both promise and risk, inspiring various forms of celebration, regulation, and intervention.

By analyzing representations and experiences of girlhood in different types of texts, we will investigate how the girl figure is both imagined and embodied. Using academic, historical, institutional, literary, material, and mediated texts, we will trace how girls inhabit, rework, and resist binary notions of girlhood at the intersection of race, class, sexuality, and disability. This course will have a large focus on girls’ culture, and how it both plays into the devaluation of the girl figure and serves as a point of resistance for living out alternative girlhoods more broadly.

Course Objectives

- Introduce key theories relevant to the study of girlhood.
- Build and expand critical thinking and writing skills to analyze the girl figure as both an imagined and lived experience.
- Understand the role of race, age, gender, sexuality, and class in creating and circulating the idea of the girl and girlhoods globally.
- Explore the diverse ways girls engaged with, embody, and challenge normative understandings of girlhood.
- Engage in relevant and current conversations about girlhood in media and culture.

Learning Outcomes

- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of core ideas and theories of girlhood.
- Critically analyze media representations of girlhood.
- Develop and enhance critical thinking and writing skills.
- Design an original research project on a topic of their choosing related to the course material.
- Hone different writing skills and present their research for an intended audience.

Communication Policy

I will make every effort to ensure that your experience of this course is meaningful and pertinent. In return, please take the time to read this syllabus carefully (and often) and contact me right away if you have any questions or concerns. Regular communication is important to your success in this class and is a shared responsibility of both the instructor and the student.

Email is the quickest way to reach me. I will generally respond to your inquiries within 24 hours Mon-Fri, between the hours of 9am and 5pm. To expedite my response, please label the subject clearly and extra helpful to me is you placing the course name and number + the nature of your email in the subject line. If I do not reply in this time frame, please assume I did not receive your email and contact me again.

Content Warning

As with many courses exploring questions around identity, this class may deal with challenging, complex, and—at times—upsetting information. I will never show any images or videos of graphic and/or gratuitous violence, but please be aware that our readings will touch on some complex issues, like gendered violence, sex work, histories of slavery, criminalization and incarceration of girls. However, these topics will be handled by writers with the utmost care and thought—they will also be balanced by other readings and materials full of joy and pleasure. Please contact me if you have questions or concerns about the course content.

Commitment to Equity, Accessibility, and Anti-Racism

I am committed to ensuring all my courses and classrooms (whether in-person or virtual) are accessible, inclusive, and actively anti-racist spaces students can exchange ideas freely.

I also condemn cultural, institutional, and systemic racism, white supremacy, settler colonialism, as well as historical and contemporary anti-Black terror, violence, and state violence. No forms of hatred, bigotry, or discrimination will be tolerated in my courses.

As we will learn throughout the semester in our course, enacting equity through everyday practice is crucial for combating oppression and injustice everywhere. Therefore, I am dedicated to ensuring all students can access this course. By utilizing Universe Design Learning principles, I designed this course with multiple types of learning in mind; hopefully allowing an entry point for all different kinds of learners. For example, there are texts, videos, interactive assignments, sound recordings, individual and group work. Additionally, this course is designed using to ensure different learners have all the materials in various formats. I have tried my best to ensure these formats can be translated for broad accessibility. If there is an issue with access for you, please contact me via email or during office hours.

Academic Conduct

Students are expected to conform to the following class policies, regarding academic integrity. Any violations will result in an immediate failing grade for the course.

1. All papers, oral and written assignments are to be the work of the student presenting the material for course credit.
2. Any paraphrase, quotation, or summary (that is, any use of words, ideas, or findings of other persons, writers, or researchers) requires explicit citation of the source, **even if it is your own work that you have done previously or are doing for another (former or current) course.**
3. Deliberately supplying material to another student for purposes of plagiarism (to take and pass off as one's own ideas, writings, or work of another) is dishonest.

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>

Please Note: The conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means “engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor’s ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.” Please be aware of classroom and out-of-classroom expectations by making yourself familiar with and by following the Student Code of Conduct

Accommodations for Student with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability may contact the appropriate office privately to discuss their specific needs and coordinate reasonable accommodations. Please let me know if you need support in doing this, I am more than happy to work with you while you complete the paperwork.

Basic Needs Security

If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, lack a safe and stable place to live, and/or do not have regular access to technology, and believe this may affect your performance in the course, you are urged to contact the Dean of Students for support and/or can utilize the Rutgers University-Camden Food Pantry.

- **Dean of Students Office-** You can learn more about the free services by calling 856-225-6050, emailing 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 or visiting the website at <https://wellnesscenter.camden.rutgers.edu/ru-camden-raptor-pantry/>

Canvas Rutgers Shout Out

Within Canvas, turn on Rutgers Shout-Out to all students to type the phonetic spelling of their name, list their preferred pronouns, and pronounce their name in a video recording for your course

Dean of Student Office- CARES Team

College is a time when you may be testing your independence and/or striving to find yourself. It's not uncommon for these journeys to have rough points. The Dean of Students Office is here to assist you by strategically and effectively handling and referring student concerns/needs across all areas of the campus and University as needed. For some students, personal, emotional, psychological, academic, or other challenges may hinder their ability to succeed both in and outside of the classroom. The Dean of Students Office serves as your initial contact if you need assistance with these challenges. You can learn more about the free services by calling 856-225-6050, emailing deanofstudents@camden.rutgers.edu, or visiting the website at <http://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/>

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 or 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.

Please Note: Accommodations will be provided only for students with a Letter of Accommodation from ODS. Accommodation letters only provide information about the accommodation, not about the disability or diagnosis.

Office of International Students and Programs- International (F-1) Students.

If you are an international student at Rutgers University-Camden and you need assistance with documentation, travel, campus assistance and/or advising, the Office of International Students and Programs provides support services. You can find more information by calling 856-225-

6832, emailing ois@camden.rutgers.edu or by visiting the website at <https://international.camden.rutgers.edu/>

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>

Pronouns

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you have a preferred gender pronoun, feel free to inform me and the course, either privately or publicly. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Title IX and the Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance Office

If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. The Rutgers University-Camden community is committed to helping to create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. Rutgers University-Camden has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. If you wish to speak to a free, confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can speak to staff in the Office of Violence Prevention & Victims Assistance. You can learn more about these resources by calling 856-225-2326 or by visiting the website <http://respect.camden.rutgers.edu>. You can schedule an appointment to connect with a member of the office by using this website.

Please Note: *All Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 60.1.33) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University.* This means that if you tell me or any faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, we must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator

Undocumented and DACAmended Student Services.

Undocumented students enrich our university community. Rutgers University-Camden is steadfast in its effort to protect and support all members of our community, regardless of immigration status or personal circumstance. If you are in need of resources (legal, career and support) you can find more information and schedule appointments on the website <https://undocumented.camden.rutgers.edu/>

Wellness Center- Health and Wellbeing Resources

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in college, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, 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.

Writing and Design Lab-Writing Support and Services.

If you need assistance with writing, audio recordings, web creation or other creating software used in class, the Writing and Design Lab can help. They provides personal tutoring, workshops and online assistance. You can learn more by emailing rutgers.wdl@rutgers.edu or visiting the website <https://wdl.camden.rutgers.edu/about-2/>. On the website you can schedule an appointment.

National and State Resources for Wellbeing (Alphabetical Order)

Crisis Text Line: text HOME to 741741

Crisis Text Line for Students of Color: text STEVE to 741741

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522

the National Substance Abuse helpline, SAMHSA's National Helpline, [1-800-662-HELP \(4357\)](https://www.samhsa.gov/1-800-662-HELP)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

NJ HOPE line- <https://njhopeline.com/>

The Sexual Assault helpline at [1-800-656-HOPE](https://www.1-800-656-HOPE.org) (4673)

Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ+): 1-866-488-7386

and the National Substance Abuse helpline, SAMHSA's National Helpline, [1-800-662-HELP \(4357\)](https://www.samhsa.gov/1-800-662-HELP)

Course Structure

This course is an asynchronous online course that will be wholly held on Canvas. Each week's class will be organized into a module on Canvas that contain all the materials you need each week to complete your readings and assignments. Each module will open on Sunday at midnight the week before the module is set to begin. For example, Week 4 corresponds to Module 4 and will begin on Monday, February 6th, but Module 4 will open to students on Sunday, January 29th. While our class is online and asynchronous, you will have the opportunity to meet with me or Ella, via Zoom or on some occasions, in person, during office hours. I encourage and welcome even just dropping by to introduce yourself during office hours—it is fun way to meet you all!

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Percentage
Weekly Online Participation	20%
Short Reading Response	10%
Research Project: One on one meeting	5%
Research Project: Abstract	5%
Research Project: Annotated Bibliography	15%
Research Project: Presentation	10%
Research Project: Final Project	25%

Weekly Online Participation-20%

Participation is key to getting the most out of this class and is an important factor of your grade, but since this course is fully online, participation is a little different to assess than it would be in a regular classroom. Therefore, at the end of your module's each week, you will find an activity of some sort. It will be a discussion with the whole class on some weeks, a quiz on the readings on other weeks, or a short journal response. These activities all count toward your Weekly Online Participation, which adds up to 20% of your final grade. This should be an easy way for you to get points and succeed in this class—I will respond to your work, but you get full credit just for doing it.

Short Reading Response-10%

During the second week of classes, students will sign up for a week to write a short reading response on all the readings assigned for that week. Papers should be between 3-4 pages and present an analytical engagement with the texts. We will discuss this in more detail in the second week.

Research Project-60%

This course asks you to develop an original research project related to the course topic. Because research projects are multi-modal, ongoing, iterative projects, I have designed this substantial part of your grade to reflect the process of doing original research. Please see below for a breakdown of the Research Project:

One-on-one Meeting-5%

You will be required to discuss/meet with me about your interests and ideas for the research project. Details to come.

Abstract-5%

Students will be required to submit a short 200-word abstract outlining what you will be researching and some questions that will drive your project—you will attempt a thesis! Deadlines to come.

Annotated Bibliography-15%

Students will be required to submit an annotated bibliography on their research topic. Details to come.

Presentation of Project-10%

Students will present their research to the class via a virtual research symposium (details to come) to share their hard work and procure feedback on their final projects.

Final Project-25%

The final version of the research project can take different forms. What that looks like will be different for each of you and we will discuss possible avenues for the presentation of your research. Some of these may include: a traditional research paper, a lecture, a website, a digital exhibition, podcast, web series, digital activist campaign, community organizing, etc.—Let's get creative!

Required Readings

All your readings will be posted on our Canvas page in each week's modules, the reading schedule is listed below.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS

Week 1, Module 1: Welcome to Girlhood Studies!

Week Start: Tuesday, January 17th, 2023

Readings:

- Course Syllabus
- Module 1
- Course Canvas Site

Week 2, Module 2: What is "Girlhood Studies" and Who is the "Girl"?

Week start: Monday, January 23rd, 2023

Readings:

- Karishma Desai, "Girl," in *Keywords for Gender and Sexuality Studies*. NYU Press, 2021.
- Shauna Pomerantz, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Un/Defining the "Girl" in *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*, Volume 1, Issue 2, Winter 2009.

Week 3, Module 3: Theoretical Foundations of Girlhood Studies

Week start: Monday, January 30th, 2023

Readings:

- Jennifer Nash, "Intersectionality," in *Keywords for Gender and Sexuality Studies*. NYU Press, 2021.
- Judith Butler "Doing Justice to Someone," *GLQ* 7:4, pp. 621-636

Week 4, Module 4: Transnational Girlhoods

Week start: Monday, February 6th, 2023

Readings:

- The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group, *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* Duke UP, 2008.
- Ashwini Tambe, "Introduction," *Defining Girlhood in India: A Transnational History of Sexual Maturity Laws*, University of Illinois Press, 2019.

Week 5, Module 5: Historical Constructions of the Girl

Week start: Monday, February 13th, 2023

Readings:

- Saidiya Hartman. “A Note on Method.” *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2020: xiii-xv.
- Miriam. Forman-Brunell. “From the Margins to the Mainstream: Girls’ History and the U.S. History Curriculum” in *The American Historian*.
- Crista DeLuzio, “‘New Girls for Old’: Psychology Constructs the Normal Adolescent Girl in *Female Adolescence in American Scientific Thought, 1830-1930*, Johns Hopkins Press, 2007. (selections)

UNIT 2: GIRLHOODS AND INSTITUTIONS

Week 6, Module 6: Schooling Girls and Education

Week start: Monday, February 20th, 2023

Readings:

- Savannah Shange, “Black Girl Ordinary: Flesh, Carcerality, and the Refusal of Ethnography,” *Transforming Anthropology*, Vol. 27, Number 1, pp. 3-21.
- Aimee Cox, *Shapeshifters: Black Girls and the Choreography of Citizenship*, Duke University Press, 2015. (selections)

Week 7: Girlhood’s Entanglements with the Prison Industrial Complex

Week start: Monday, February 27th, 2023

Readings:

- Karin L. Zipf. “Chapter 1: A Place for White Girls: The Tricky Politics of Juvenile Reform,” in *Bad Girls at Samarcand: Sexuality and Sterilization in a Southern Juvenile Reformatory*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016.
- Kalaniopua Young. “From a Native Trans Daughter: Carceral Refusal, Settler Colonialism, Re-routing the Roots of an Indigenous Abolitionist Imaginary,” in *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*. AK Press (second edition) 2015.

UNIT 3: THE MATERIALITY OF GIRLHOOD

Week 8: Embodying Girlhood

Week start: Monday, March 6th, 2023

Readings:

- Ruth Nicole Brown, *Hear Our Truths: The Creative Potential of Black Girlhood*. University of Illinois Press, 2013. (selections)
- Jillian Hernandez. *Aesthetics of Excess: The Art and Politics of Black and Latina Embodiment*. Duke University Press, 2020. (selections)

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

March 11-19

No class! Have fun, be safe!

Week 10, Module 10: Girlhood Intimacies Across Space and Time

Week start: Monday, March 20th, 2023

Readings:

- Phoebe Gloeckner, *The Diary of a Teenage Girl: An Account in Words and Pictures*, Frog Books, 2002 (selections)
- Kearney, Mary Celeste. "Productive Spaces: Girls' Bedrooms as Sites of Cultural Production." *Journal of Children and Media* 1, no. 2 (July 2007): 126–41.

Week 11: The Girl in Theory Symposium!!!!

Week start: Monday, March 27th, 2023

Readings:

- **TBD, readings will correspond with the symposium!**

Week 12, Module 12: Graphic Girls and Mixed Media: Comics, Manga, and Zines

Week start: Monday, April 3rd, 2023

Readings:

- *Empower Yourself Before You Wreck Yourself: Native American Feminist Musings* (selections)
- Dame Darcy, *Meatcake* (selections)
- *Sailor Moon* (selections)
- *Rookie Yearbook One* (selections)
- Piepmeier, Alison. "Introduction. "Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism, 1-21. New York University Press, 2009.

UNIT 4: CULTURAL FORMATIONS AND GIRLHOOD

Week 13, Module 13: Girls on Film (and TV)

Week start: April 10th, 2023

Readings:

- Margaret Tally "Representations of Girls and Young Women in Film as an Entry Point to Studying Girl Culture" in *Girl Culture: An Encyclopedia*, 2008.
- Projansky, Sarah. 2014. *Spectacular Girls: Media Fascination & Celebrity Culture*. New York University Press. Selections: "What is there to Talk About? Twenty-first Century Girl films."
- Elaine Correa, "Whose Girlhood? Race, Representation, and Girlhood" in *Girl Culture: An Encyclopedia*, 2008.

Week 14, Module 14: Music Cultures and Girlhood

Week start: Monday, April 17th, 2023

Readings:

- Gayle Wald, "Just a Girl? Rock Music, Feminism, and the Cultural Construction of Female Youth" *Signs*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Spring, 1998), pp. 585-610.

- “Inside The Games Black Girls Play: An Interview with Kyra D. Gaunt” American Journal of Play, volume 13, numbers 2 and 3, 2021.

Week 15, Module 15: Research Symposium

Week start: Monday, April 24th, 2023

Readings:

- **No Readings! Just post your video and attend our virtual symposium!**

Week 16: Final Projects Due!

Week start: Monday, May 1st, 2023