Purpose:
This is a course about children and childhood. From that perspective, all of us should already be experts in this area, since we were all children. However, as we explore the dynamics of childhood, we will find that there are many aspects of it that we have taken for granted or that we just never understood, probably because we were children at the time. Scientifically, we know a great deal about children. There are numerous books on the market that tell us, practically, how to raise children. Psychologists have made children a central feature of their studies. Anthropologists have considered children from many different cultures. Biologists can tell us about the physical nature of children. Sociologists tell us a great deal about socialization, especially about how children learn the norms and values of society. However, most of the studies from all of the sciences consider children only from an adult's perspective, but in this class we will see how children are active interpreters of their own culture. We will, thus, treat children on their own terms.

The class will be run as a seminar. As such, you will be expected to have done the reading prior to class time so that you can be an active participant in our discussions. The atmosphere that we collectively create for the class is important. In order to allow each student full expression of his/her opinion, I hope that we will have an informal setting, filled with plenty of dialogue, debate, and discussion. The readings are intended to augment our discussion, while providing fodder for controversial topics.

Expectations:
I anticipate that the students in this class come from a variety of academic backgrounds. I do not expect, then, that you are equipped with a thorough training in sociological ideas and thinking. I do expect, though, that you have a broad-based liberal arts education, with some expertise in writing, analysis, and research techniques. In addition, as cultural actors, I expect that you are active participants in your everyday world and will be able to relate common experiences to the more generic ideas that we discuss in class.

Responsibilities:
You are expected to meet the rules of good classroom conduct -that is, to attend class regularly, to be attentive to others (including me) when they are talking; to keep up with reading assignments; and to be prepared to discuss issues in class. It is my responsibility to excite you, to inform you, and to educate you. It is my job to make course concepts and expectations clear, to be sensitive to student’s needs and desires, and to fairly assess your work. If, for any reason, you feel that I am not living up to
my end of the bargain, I invite you to raise these issues with me, either in class or privately. Students have rights; use them.

Readings:
Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler, Peer Power.
Donna Eder (with Catherine Evans and Stephen Parker), School Talk.
Barrie Thorne, Gender Play.
Frances Chaput Waksler, The Little Trials of Childhood.

Schedule and Assignments:
April 2: Introduction/Overview
April 8: Attend Distinguished Lecture, "Child's Play: The Serious Implications of Extracurricular Activities."
April 9: Methods of Studying Children
Read Waksler, Chapter 1-5
Come up with a technique for "getting inside the heads" of children. If you were to become a social scientist interested in children's behavior, what methodology would you use to learn more about how children behave, think, act, respond, etc.? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this method?

April 16: Theories of Socialization and Historical Understandings of Children and Childhood
Read Waksler, Chapters 6-10
Similar to what is discussed in the appendix in the Waksler book, discuss what is hard about being a child. Write a two page essay about a difficult time you had as a child and what you did in that situation. Why was it hard or unfair? Describe any strategy you used for coping with your hard time. You can use concepts from Waksler where appropriate. What does this anecdote and your reading of Waksler tell you about the constraints we put on children in society? Should we give children more or less liberties in society? Why or why not?

April 23: Children as Productive Actors in the Social World
Read Thorne, Chapters 1-5
Observe "at a distance" a scene where children are present (playground, practice, classroom, public setting such as an airport), devoting a brief (approximately 30 minutes) observational period to study it. These are to be scenes you can see but not hear -- or, if you can hear some things, they should in no way significantly improve the "informational input" of the data available to your eyes alone, e.g., the loud noises at a bus depot or large railroad station.

In your written account, no more than 3-4 double-spaced, typed pages, describe what you saw and then try to interpret, speculate, and extrapolate from the scene. I would like to see the paper laid out beginning with a description of the setting and ambience, then of the participants, and then what you can infer from their behaviors. Try to make judgments about the nature of the relationships, how children interact, adult-children behavior, or any more generic level of analysis. Provide an appropriate descriptive title for your observation.
April 30: Children's Peer Cultures: Infants, Toddlers, and Youngsters
Read Thorne, Chapters 6-9
Talk to a child about how he/she relates to members of the other gender. Pay careful attention to age, strategies, gender, and social class to see if these make a difference. Based on this interview (as well as your own cultural understandings), write a brief essay about the "rules" regarding cross-gender relations. Compare/contrast your "findings" with Thorne’s.

OR
If you cannot talk to a child, then observe the interactions between adult animals and young animals of the same species or two young animals of the same species. Data sources could include zoos, pet stores, homes, etc. What patterns do you notice? How does animal behavior compare/contrast with human behavior?

May 7: Children's Peer Cultures: Preadolescents and Adolescents
Read Adler and Adler, Introduction-Chapter 5
Write an autobiographical report about your inclusion or exclusion in a clique. Make sure that you deal with the emotional aspects as well as the techniques that were used to include or exclude. Compare your story with the ones told by the children in Adler and Adler's book. How do we, as adults, continue to use these techniques? What are the implications of these behaviors for society in general?

May 14: Children as Social Problems
Read Adler and Adler, Chapters 6-10
Observe children in an "adult" setting and identify rules for children in that setting. Explain why it is an "adult" setting (i.e., children are not supposed to be there, such as a bar or pub, or children are a disturbance, such as in an expensive restaurant). Consider adults' rules for children's behavior in such a setting and children's option or resources in that setting. Address the questions: Where do children fit in an adult world? What roles are they expected to play?

OR
Turn the tables on the above assignment. Observe adults in a children's setting (playground, team). How, if at all, do adults impinge on children's behavior? What aspects of behavior are constrained by the presence of adults? What are the implications of this relationship? Compare/contrast your observations with the behavior of the adults in the Adler and Adler book.

May 21: The Social Problems of Children
Read Eder, Chapters 1-5
Select a social problem that you feel is affecting children today and be prepared to discuss it. Find an article about this problem in a recent issue (last 2-3 years) of a national news magazine such as Time or Newsweek. Include the article with your report. Why is this a pressing concern for America? Do you think this is something about which we really need to worry or is it much ado about very little? How have we dealt with it? What do you think is the future of this problem?

May 28: The Future of Childhood/Wrap-Up
Read Eder, Chapters 6-10
The books by Thorne, Adler and Adler, and Eder, respectively, can be seen as a trilogy, chronologically tracing the lives of children from early elementary school, to later elementary school, to middle (or junior high) school. Choosing a concept discussed in class or in the readings, write 3-5 pages of the first chapter of the next book in the trilogy (now a quadrilogy). Make sure you refer to specific idea(s) from the books.
Course Description:
This course fulfills the Writing Proficiency Requirement for first-year undergraduate students. We will use writing as a way to explore concepts, theories, and empirical research in the sociology of childhood. In other words, we will rely on writing as a tool to improve our ability to read, understand, evaluate, and synthesize sociological literature on children. Students will discover how to sharpen their sociological skills by writing, revising, and giving feedback on critical review essays, a research report, and a collaborative web site. This course pays close attention to the linkages between writing—as a process and a product—and our ideas about children.

We will pursue the aforementioned course goals by concentrating on the following broad themes: (1) social structure and its consequences for children's lives; (2) children's agency; and (3) the diversity of childhood experiences. A major premise of this course is that time and place shape children's experiences and the ways we think about children. Therefore, we will examine the circumstances, meanings, and representations of childhood in different countries and time periods. Along the way, this course will offer a framework for understanding the problems that children face and what might be done to solve them, and it will anchor our knowledge of childhood in the larger theoretical, conceptual and methodological background of sociology.

Beyond conventional writing and content goals, this course also seeks to spark students' virtual imaginations and to lay the foundation for a new kind of literacy, that of web authoring. Working together in groups, students will create web sites that present their research findings on children's lives in another country. Don't panic! The professor assumes that most students have not had any prior experience in creating web sites. The professor will demonstrate all the necessary procedures; there will be ample opportunity for learning how to design web sites.

“... the crisis around children is really a crisis about ourselves.”
- Rosalind Coward, Observer, 28 March 1993

Course Format:
We will explore writing in the field of the sociology of childhood through a variety of formats: lectures, guided in-class discussions, collaborative applications, individual and group writing exercises, electronic discussions (email), and peer review. We will meet four times every week, including lab sessions on Fridays. All classes, including lab sessions, are mandatory. Writing is an integral part of all classes, not merely the lab sessions. The only difference is that we will use computer technology to facilitate the writing process during lab sessions, and therefore, lab sessions will be held in a different room—the sociology computer classroom.
Course Materials:

Selected Readings on Childhood. We will read a series of articles that the professor has assembled into a course reader. Refer to the course schedule for citations and reading assignments. We will also use two handy guidebooks throughout the semester:


Course Requirements:

Class Participation

Class attendance and participation is extremely important to your successful comprehension of course material. Participation includes careful listening, as well as sharing ideas and questions inside the classroom and through email discussions. The professor expects all students to create a comfortable environment that encourages the participation of everyone, regardless of ideology or personality.

Toward this goal students will earn class participation points by (constructively) speaking during class time, by posting (thoughtful) email messages to our electronic discussion list, and by providing written feedback on other students' essays. The professor expects each student to speak in class on a regular basis throughout the entire semester. Also, each student must **send at least one substantive email message to the electronic discussion list every other week, for a total of six messages.** Each comment should be about 1-2 paragraphs in length. Please limit your email messages to one screen; be concise. Otherwise, readers will tire quickly from the overload of lengthy messages. Brief questions of clarification and minor statements of 1-2 sentences will not count toward this requirement.

Each student must have an email address to subscribe to the automated discussion list and to complete the web project (described elsewhere). **The professor requires that you check your email messages on a regular basis throughout the semester (i.e., at least three times per week).** Otherwise, you will miss important announcements, discussions, and relevant course information. Students are responsible for reading all email messages posted to the automated discussion list as well as any private messages sent by the professor or teaching assistant.

**You must also space out your email messages throughout the semester.** Students will not receive credit for a series of last-minute messages sent right before the midterm examination or right before the end of the semester. Messages sent to *Viewpoint* after midnight of December 7th will not receive participation credit. This automated list is a discussion list, which requires active participation and reaction to messages in a timely fashion.

**What type of messages should you send to Viewpoint?** You can continue discussions that began during class time by adding your perspective or by posing a related question. You can comment on, or ask questions about, lecture material or the assigned readings. You can share observations, news, or applications that
are relevant to this course. Remember that you are "speaking" to the entire list of subscribers (i.e., the class), not just the professor. Viewpoint discussions are not moderated or controlled by the professor. All subscribers share responsibility for the direction and tone of the discussions.

Another important dimension of class participation is the peer review process. With the professor's guidance, students will read and give feedback on each others' essays throughout the semester. Constructive and thought-provoking comments from the professor, the teaching assistant, and peers will help students carry out required revisions of their written work. How will the peer review process work? When students turn in essays to the professor and the teaching assistant, students also will give copies to at least two peer reviewers—classmates—to take home to read, re-read, and write responses to several questions about the essay. Refer to the peer review form at the end of the syllabus. Students will return their written reviews to the authors at the next class session.

**Six Critical Review Essays and Two Graded Revisions.** Writing essays about the assigned reading helps facilitate lively classroom discussions, and it helps students gain experience in reading as an interactive process. With these goals in mind, students will write critical reviews of the assigned reading on six occasions during the semester. Students will revise both Essay #1 and Essay #2 based on feedback from the professor, teaching assistant, and two other students. For Essays #4 and #5, the professor will divide the class into two alternating groups, meaning that half of the students will write Essay #4 one week and the other half of the class will write their Essay #4 on different readings in the following week. We will use the same alternating procedure for Essay #5. For Essays #1 -3 and Essay #6, all students will submit their assignment at the same time. Refer to the course schedule for the essay dates and reading assignments.

With the exception of Essay #3, each essay must **integrate** two essential components:

- a summary of central points, arguments, or findings presented by the assigned author(s); and
- an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the major landings or arguments of the author(s).

Your evaluation should be the driving force behind the essay; develop an argument about the reading and supply appropriate evidence—illustrations from the reading—to support your assertions. As long as you don't get side-tracked by minor points, you'll discover that you've summarized the central points of the reading via your evaluation. In other words, your evaluation should focus on the central ideas, major findings, research methods, or the fit between theory and evidence in the assigned reading. Although this objective may appear daunting at first, your evaluation skills and your ability to articulate your evaluations will improve with practice.

I recommend that you organize each essay (except Essay #3) in the following manner. The first paragraph should introduce the reader to the general topic, summarize the central argument or theme of the assigned reading, and present
your general argument about the assigned reading. The last sentence of the first paragraph should clearly articulate your own central thesis about your overall evaluation of the readings. Please note that your thesis statement--your argument--is not the central thesis of the assigned reading. Each paragraph in the body of the essay should begin with a concise topic sentence that supports your central thesis. Finish the essay with a conclusion that brings the reader back to your central thesis without merely repeating it. Refer to the evaluation checklist at the end of the syllabus for additional guidance.

You must turn in five copies of each essay: two for the professor, one for the teaching assistant, and two for peer review. You should also make one additional copy for yourself; it is wise to keep a copy of everything you give to professors and teaching assistants in all of your courses throughout your college career.

Follow these stylistic directions: (1) all essays must be double spaced and type-written with a reasonable font (10-12 point) and with 1 inch margins on all sides; (2) center the title of your essay on the first line; (3) place your name, essay number, and date at the end of your essay; and (4) staple it together in the upper left-hand corner. Essays should be 2-21/2 pages in length; do not exceed 3 pages.

Essay #3 is different. In this essay, you will develop a personal "statement of intent" about doing research on children's lives in a particular country. This is the first step in the collaborative web project (see below). The professor will divide students into three groups, with five students per group. Each group will select a single country from a list of possible countries in an assigned region. For Essay #3, each student will write an independent essay about his/her group's chosen country.

You must accomplish three goals in this essay: (1) explain why you think your country may serve as an interesting case study of children's lives; (2) propose how you will use the three course themes--social structure, agency, and diversity--to guide your research; and (3) integrate ideas from the assigned reading for that week (Hernandez's article). Follow all the same stylistic instructions for the other essays, including the location of your name and the page limit. Bring eight copies of this essay to class: two for the professor, one for the teaching assistant, one for each member of your country group, and one for yourself.

Sole-Authored Country Profile. This assignment builds on Essay #3--the country selection essay--and it creates an independent base of knowledge for each student in conjunction with the collaborative web project (see below). Each student must write a research report on children's lives in a particular country (the same country of Essay #3 and the collaborative web
project). Your country profile must address the following research questions:

- What is the overall status of children, or what is the structural context of children's
- How do children's experiences vary by gender, race/ethnicity, grant status, or class? (diversity)
- What social problems do children face, and what is being done to alleviate these problems? (social structure & diversity)
To what degree are children treated as autonomous beings in research, social movements, and/or “national policy” (agency)

You may discuss these issues in separate sections of your country profile, but a more sophisticated strategy would attempt to integrate these issues throughout the entire paper. I recommend that you offer a central thesis that addresses most of these questions simultaneously in the introduction of your country profile, and then use the body of the paper to expand, explain, and provide evidence. Refer to the evaluation checklist at the end of the syllabus.

Follow these stylistic directions: (1) all country profiles must be 5-6 pages in length, double spaced and type-written with a reasonable font (10-12 point) and with 1 inch margins on all sides; (2) you must attach a cover page with the title of your country profile, your name, course name and number, and date; (3) all tables, figures, and charts (if you have any) must be printed on separate pages and must be placed after the text of the country profile; (4) references must be typed on a separate page at the very end of the report, and you must use APA format for all references (both within the body of your report and in the list of references at the end); and (5) all parts of the country profile must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Do not exceed the six-page limit. Bring eight copies of your country profile to class: two for the professor, one for the teaching assistant, one for each member of your group, and one for yourself.

Collaborative Web Project on Childhood around the World:

This project will help students develop concrete skills in data collection and synthesis (using conventional library resources and the World Wide Web), critical thinking, collaboration with other student researchers, and web page design/construction.

As stated above, the professor will divide students into three groups, with five students per group. Each group will select a single country from a list of possible countries in an assigned region.

Each group will meet outside of class to do library/web research and to construct web pages. The professor recommends that students work together frequently outside of class - to discuss research strategies, to divide up responsibilities, to share research findings, and to design web pages.

Each group will investigate various dimensions of childhood for their chosen country, using the three broad themes of the course—social structure, agency, and diversity—as an implicit framework to guide the group's selection and presentation of information. In addition, each web site must have the following components:

- **Authorship information.** List the names of all group members, and briefly state the purpose of web site.
- **Contextual overview.** Summarize the national context of children's lives, including children's demographic situation, the education system, and the general cultural milieu. Also present relevant statistics in table format. Do not overwhelm readers with too many numbers or pages of text. Be concise. All information should be sociologically relevant, and it should be presented in a visually appealing way.
Major social problems. Identify the most pressing social problems that children face, and briefly describe what is being done about these problems.

Children's organizations. Identify and describe 2-3 national organizations that deal with children's issues. Provide contact information for each organization.

Links to relevant web sites. Integrate linkages as appropriate throughout your web site; do not merely list/link a bunch of sites in a separate section. Every group must include a link to a map of the country. Do not get carried away with these links. Quality is much more important than quantity. Ask yourself: How is this site relevant to the assignment?

References. Identify all sources of information at the bottom of each web page. (Note: only cite references that you use for that particular page.) Give complete citations, and use APA format.

Each group must design web pages that synthesize sociological information from the World Wide Web and the library. Students cannot scan published images, such as maps or photographs, into their web accounts because of potential violations of copyright laws. Instead, students can create links to existing web images or create new ones.

To create the group web pages, each student must get an account on the student web server. After you have an rs/6000 account (your email account), connect to http://studentweb.tulane.edu and follow the instructions to register online for your student web account. You must supply your rs/6000 user ID and password, and then a web account will automatically be created within 24 hours. If you have any questions, send an email message to help@studentweb.tulane.edu. Also, students can attend an extra HTML workshop to learn how to design and link web pages. These workshops are usually held every other Saturday; check http://studentweb.tulane.edu for the exact dates, times, and locations.

The professor will evaluate each group's web site on its visual appeal sociological sophistication, use of conventional library resources and existing web resources, and the degree to which the web site fits into the broad themes of the course. Each group must turn in a hard-copy, color printout of its completed web pages on December 2nd.

Students who do not adequately fulfill their group responsibilities will be penalized; uncooperative or irresponsible students will receive a much lower grade than everyone else in their group. Each student will fill out a confidential evaluation form to identify the individual contributions of each group member.

In-Class Midterm Exam. The midterm exam will be a two-part essay exam, which the professor will administer during class time on two separate days in the computer classroom. The first part of the exam will be without notes and reading materials. The second part will be with notes and reading material. The midterm exam will potentially cover all assigned readings, handouts, regular lectures, guest speakers, in-class discussions, email messages, films, and other class activities, or in other words, everything affiliated with this course. The professor will give blank diskettes to each student at the beginning of the exam, and students will type their essays, using Microsoft Word software—the same software that we will use in lab sessions throughout the semester.
**Course Policies:**

**Honor Code**

The professor expects all students to abide by the university’s honor code. You may use statistical data or paraphrase other published works, but only if you provide the complete citation. If you quote someone's exact words, you must use quotation marks and provide the complete citation. The professor requires that all students use APA (American Psychological Association) style guidelines for citing and documenting sources. Refer to Chapter 6 in *Online! and Section 51 in The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*. Here are several examples of how to format references:

**For a journal article:**


**For a book:**


**For a chapter in a book:**


**For a web site (use guidelines in Online!, Chapter 6):**


You may not plagiarize other web sites or library materials. The professor will file formal charges against suspected violators. If you have any questions concerning the honor code policy for this course, please direct your questions to the professor. When in doubt, ask the professor or teaching assistant.

**Attendance**

The professor expects students to demonstrate professional responsibility by regularly attending class. Excessive absences or tardiness will affect your final grade negatively. The professor does not look favorably on students who routinely skip class and/or show up late. In fact, the university policy is to report any student who has more than three unexcused absences to his/her Dean's office. You are responsible for all announcements made during class, whether or not you are present. Although there will be no opportunity to make up in-class exercises if you are absent, it is your responsibility to get class notes from another student and to seek clarification about the nature of the missed material from the teaching assistant. Both the teaching assistant and the professor are more than willing to answer questions about classroom activities, whether or not you were present for the activities. However, neither the professor nor the teaching assistant will regurgitate lectures, discussions, or exercises.
Classroom Electronic Discussions

To create a comfortable and productive classroom atmosphere, please follow these ground rules:*

- Every person in this course is mutually responsible for the learning environment and our intellectual journey throughout the semester.
- Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on gender, race/ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, physical differences, religion, region, and nationality exist.
- Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups. We will not blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but we will accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can’t disagree, only that you must do so respectfully. Toward this goal we will not use antagonistic language and we will not scapegoat anyone or any group.
- Listen to other students. We will give each person room to voice his/her opinion in her/his own communication style. All thoughts are worth hearing in their entirety; avoid interrupting others (students or professor). However, please refrain from monopolizing the conversation to the exclusion of others.

*These ground rules are adapted from Amanda Konradi’s list ("Teaching about Sexual Assault: Problematic Silences and Solutions," Teaching Sociology, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 13-25, January, 1993) and from suggestions made by several sociologists on the Sociologists for Women in Society electronic discussion group.

Midterm Exam

The professor will give a late make-up exam only with proof of extreme illness, death in the immediate family, or some other severe circumstance. Travel plans (especially in the form of previously-purchased airline tickets) do not constitute a severe circumstance.

Essays, Country Profile, & Group Project

The professor never accepts late assignments unless there is a verifiable and legitimate reason (e.g., car accident, death extreme illness). Computer problems (hard drive crash, printer trouble, etc.) do not qualify as legitimate reasons. Remember, in particular, that your web site must be completed on time. Plan ahead; do not wait until the last minute to complete any assignment.

Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student to prepare assigned materials on time and to discuss problems with the professor. If you miss a deadline without promptly presenting a valid excuse and without conferring with the professor (i.e., within 24 hours), you will receive a zero for that requirement. The professor, not the teaching assistant, makes all decisions about make-up exams and grades.
Course Schedule:

**Week 1: Defining Childhood**


**Sept 2** Images & Representations  
**Sept 4** Critical Reading as the First Step in Writing: Identifying & Evaluating Thorne's Thesis  
Lab: Writing on the computer: word processing, the web & email (audience exercise) *Bring your rs6000 user ID to lab

**Week 2: Finding a Place for Children in Sociology**

**Sept 7** Labor Day holiday-- no class meeting  
**Sept 9** *Essay #1 for everyone / Getting Started: Key Sociological Concepts & First Drafts  
**Sept 11** *Peer Review on Essay #1 / Using Feedback to Re-read, Re-think, and Lab: Rewrite - Improving sentences (active voice and clarity exercise)

**Week 3: Socio/Historical Analysis & the Creation of Childhood**


**Sept 14** Deconstructing Aries' Thesis & Pollack’s Critique via Collaborative Writing  
**Sept 16** *Revision of Essay #1 / Evaluating Historical Documents  
**Sept 18** Working with Diaries from a Sociological Perspective  
Lab: Improving paragraphs (collaborative writing exercise)

**Week 4: Methodological Issues**


**Sept 21** *Essay #2 for everyone / Doing Sociological Research - Part I  
**Sept 23** *Peer Review on Essay #2 / Doing Sociological Research - Part II
Sept 25  Understanding Quantitative Data (country selection day)
Lab:  Summarizing findings (research narrative exercise)

Week 5: Contemporary Attitudes Toward Children

Sep 28  *Revision of Essay #2 / Evaluating Zelizer's Thesis and her evidence
Sep 30  Yom Kippur holiday - no class meeting
Oct 2  Library Workshop 9-10:50am in Howard-Tilton Library

Week 6: The Structural Context of Children’s Lives

Oct 5  Identifying Comparative Dimensions of Social Structure
Oct 7  *Essay #3 on country selection
Oct 9  *Peer Review on Essay #3
Lab:  Finding & evaluating web resources

(Read section 49a in The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, and Chapters I & 4 in Online!)

Week 7: Raising Kids Today


Oct 12  Essay #4 for Group 1 / Maternal Thinking
Oct 14  Peer Review from Group 2 / Men in Child Care
Oct 16  Questions / Review for Exam / Meet in Computer Lab at 9am

Week 8: Time for Reflection
Oct 19  *In-Class Midterm Exam - Part I - meet in Computer Lab
Oct 21  *In-Class Midterm Exam - Part II - meet in Computer Lab
Oct 23  Web Workshop 9-10:50am in Computer Lab

You must discuss a draft- of your country profile with a writing tutor at the Writing Workshop in the Educational Resource Center, and then revise it at least once before you turn in the final report on Monday, November 16th. The professor recommends that you meet with a writing tutor at least one week before the country profile is due. You should call for an appointment several weeks in advance of when you would like to meet with a tutor, or else there may not be any appointments left.
Week 9: Peer Cultures


Oct 26 Discuss Midterm Exam
Oct 28 *Essay #4 for Group 2 / Gendered Worlds
Oct 30 *Peer Review from Group 1 / Issues of Race, Ethnicity & Nationality
Lab: Integrating citations & acknowledging sources (reference exercise)
(Read sections 49 & 51 in The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, and Chapter 6 in Online!)

Week 10: Children’s Work

Nov 2 *Essay #5 for Group 1 / Definitions of Work
Nov 4 *Peer Review from Group 2 / How to Do Collaborative Research
Nov 6 Collaborative Research Day

Week 11: Children’s Rights
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (http://www.unicef.org/crc/text.htm)

Nov 9 The UNICEF Story
Nov 11 *Essay #5 for Group 2 / Exploring Children's Rights - Part I
Nov 13 *Peer Review from Group1 / Exploring Children's Rights - Part II
Lab: (Re)writing for the web (audience exercise revisited)

Week 12: International Explorations
Online! Chapter 9b, 10, Appendix.
The Little, Brown Compact Handbook, section 6c.
Web references
Nov 16 *Country Profile / Web Planning Session
Nov 18 *Peer Review on Country Profile / Web Authoring in Computer Lab
Nov 20 Web Authoring in Computer Lab

Week 13: International Explorations
Nov 23 Web Authoring in Computer Lab
Nov 25 Thanksgiving holiday - no class meeting
Nov 27 Thanksgiving holiday - no class meeting
**Week 14: International Explorations**

Nov 30  Web Authoring in Computer Lab

Dec 2  *Collaborative Web Pages Are Due Today/Peer Review in Computer Lab

Dec 4  Meet in Computer Lab for More Peer Review

**Week 15: Looking Toward the Future**


Dec 7  Web Revisions in Computer Lab

Dec 9  *Essay #6 for everyone/Where Do We Go From Here?

**Celebrating Children’s Lives Around the World**

December 18th, Friday @ 10am until noon

Final versions of collaborative web pages are due at 10am sharp!

Meet in the Computer Lab for final presentations.

You must present the final version of your group’s web site during the scheduled final exam period. Otherwise, the professor will severely lower your individual grade on the collaborative web project.
EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR ESSAY #: _____

Author: __________________________________________
Overall Evaluation: ____________________________

Content:
_____ Essay summarizes and describes the central points, arguments, or findings of the assigned reading.
_____ Essay evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the assigned reading.
_____ Author supports all assertions with illustrations or data.
_____ Author reflects on her/his own reactions to the reading without simply inserting her/his unsupported opinions.
_____ Author presents only relevant illustrations or data; all information proves a point.
_____ Author goes beyond simply summarizing the reading and listing the strengths and weaknesses; the author explores the relationships between concepts in the reading or the relationships between evidence and conclusions.

Organizational Structure:
_____ The essay has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
_____ Author clearly presents the central thesis of the essay in the opening paragraph.
_____ Each paragraph has a clear topic sentence and focuses on a single, albeit sometimes complex, idea.
_____ Each paragraph furthers an argument/thesis advanced in the introduction.
_____ Paragraphs are about the right length.
_____ Sequence of paragraphs follow logical order.
_____ Sentences are not superfluous; sentences have direct relevance to the paragraph.
_____ Author followed all technical instructions (e.g., margins, font, length, location of name).

Overall Comments:
TA REVIEW

Author of Essay: ______________________________

Central Thesis: Does the author take a stand on the reading and clearly present it in the opening paragraph?

Evidence: Is the author's use of evidence appropriate, sufficient, and clear?

Conclusion: Does the author provide a sense of completion without restating the introduction?

Revision: What should the author do as the first step in the revision process?
PEER REVIEW

Author of Essay: ____________________________

Read the first paragraph and then pause. In your own words, paraphrase the author's central thesis in one sentence.

Now finish reading the essay. How well does the body of the essay support the author's central thesis? How clear is the author's line of argument? How appropriate and sufficient is the author's evidence?

What did you like best about this essay? What aspect most impressed you?

Now read the essay again. What feature of this essay most needs improvement?
EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR COUNTRY PROFILE

Author: _____________________

Grade: _____________________

Sociological Content:
_____ All content explicitly relates to children's lives.
_____ Easy to identify three broad themes - social structure, agency, and diversity - as guiding framework.
_____ Provides contextual overview of children's national status.
_____ Explains how children's experiences differ by gender, race/ethnicity, immigrant status, or class.
_____ Identifies and describes children's major social problems and what is being done to solve these problems.
_____ Explores children's autonomy in research, social movements, and/or national policy.
_____ Supports all assertions with appropriate illustrations or data.
_____ Reasonable amount of high-quality academic references. ____ # library references ____ # web

Organizational Structure:
_____ The report has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
_____ The introduction specifies the purpose and central thesis of the report.
_____ The introduction grabs the readers' attention in an engaging way.
_____ Author uses transitions and/or headings to guide the reader through the report.
_____ Each paragraph concentrates on one central idea (unity) and is easy to follow (coherence).
_____ The body of the report develops the central thesis in an effective and convincing fashion.
_____ Author integrates information from various sources to support assertions; the report is not merely a linear narrative about each separate reference.
_____ Author appropriately and effectively cites and paraphrases other writers in the body of the report.
_____ The conclusion provides a sense of completion without restating the introduction.
_____ Author followed all technical instructions, including APA citation format.

Revision:
_____ Author consulted tutor at the Writing Workshop.
_____ Author revised draft based on comments from writing tutor.

Overall Comments:
EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR WEB PROJECT

Student: ____________________________________

Country: ____________________________________

Sociological Content:

_____ Content explicitly relates to children's lives, not merely general country characteristics.

_____ Easy to identify three broad themes - social structure, agency, and diversity - as guiding framework.

_____ Clearly summarizes national context of children's lives (demographics, education, culture).

_____ Clearly identifies and describes children's major social problems.

_____ Clearly summarizes social action to solve children's social problems.

_____ Identifies and describes 2-3 national children's organizations, with contact information.

_____ Presents relevant statistics in table format as part of contextual overview.

___ Reasonable amount of high-quality academic references. ___ # library references

___ # web

___ Brief, relevant annotations for outside links. ___ # outside links ___ country map

Stylistic Presentation & Structure:

_____ Pages are well coordinated, fitting into a coherent and integrated site; pages are not merely independent components linked together.

_____ Every team member has his/her own web page.

_____ Each page focuses on a single, albeit sometimes complex, topic.

_____ Each page is well written in the students' own words.

_____ Pages are about the right length (not too long, not too short).

_____ Clearly identifies authorship, date, and purpose on each web page.

_____ Port of entry page exists as separate introductory page.

_____ Each page links to port of entry page AND Childhood Around the World page.

_____ Visual display is appealing, easy to read, and has uniform layout across pages within site.

_____ Correct APA citation/reference format.

Miscellaneous Issues:

_____ Interesting links to pre-existing web sites.

_____ Extra perks.

_____ Every team member turned in confidential evaluation form.

Overall Comments:

Country Grade: __________

Your Grade: __________
**Course Description:**

This course will:

- explore concepts, theories, and empirical research in the sociology of childhood;
- provide a sophisticated understanding of the problems that children face and what might be done to solve them; and
- anchor one's understanding of childhood in the larger theoretical, conceptual, and methodological background of sociology.

The field of childhood sociology is much bigger than what we can cover in a single semester. Therefore, we will pursue the aforementioned course goals by concentrating on the following broad themes: (1) social structure and its consequences for children's lives; (2) children's agency; and (3) the diversity of childhood experiences. We will examine how the circumstances, meanings, and representations of childhood differ across cultures and centuries because time and place shape the texture of children's lives.

Another major goal of this course is to spark students' virtual imaginations by expanding their skills in the technology of the World Wide Web. Working together in groups, students will design web sites that present their research findings on children's lives in a visually appealing way.

No prerequisites are required; the professor assumes that most students in this course have had minimal exposure to the World Wide Web or to sociology as a discipline. Thus, the orientation of this course is most suitable for students in their first or second year of college.

“... the crisis around children is really a crisis about ourselves.”
Rosalind Coward, *Observer*, 28 March 1993

**Course Materials:**

**Books**


**Selected Readings**

We will also read a series of articles that the professor has assembled into a course reader. Refer to the course schedule for citations and reading assignments.

**Course Requirements:**

**Classroom & Virtual Participation**

Class attendance and participation is extremely important to your successful comprehension of course material. The professor includes verbal participation in your grade, not to intimidate those of you who are reluctant to speak in public, nor
to reward those who do so with ease. Participation includes careful listening, as well as sharing ideas and questions inside the classroom and through email discussions. The professor expects all students to create a comfortable environment that encourages the participation of everyone, regardless of ideology or personality.

Toward this goal, students will earn class participation points by speaking during class time and by posting email messages to our electronic discussion list. Each student must speak in class at least three times during the semester, and each student must post at least two substantive comments to the electronic discussion list. On top of this, each student must participate at least three more times, via his/her choice of oral participation or email messages. Thus, each student must contribute to our on-going discussions at least eight times throughout the semester. Each comment should be about 1-2 paragraphs (length/time wise). In other words, questions of clarification and minor statements of 1-2 sentences will not count toward this requirement.

You must also space out your email messages throughout the semester. For example, if you wait until the end of the semester to send most of your messages, you will not receive credit. Messages sent to Viewpoint after December 4 will not receive participation credit. This automated list is a discussion list, which requires active participation and reaction to messages as they are posted, that is, in a timely fashion.

What type of messages should you send to Viewpoint? You can continue discussions that began during class time by adding your perspective or by posing a related question. You can comment on, or ask questions about, lecture material or the assigned readings. You can share observations, news, or applications that are relevant to this course. Remember that you are "speaking" to the entire list of subscribers (i.e., the class), not just the professor. Viewpoint discussions are not moderated or-controlled by the professor. All subscribers share responsibility for the direction and tone of the discussions.

Reading Quizzes
To facilitate informed classroom discussions, there are eleven reading quizzes scheduled on a regular basis throughout the semester. Quiz format consists of multiple-choice, true/false, or short-answer questions. The professor will drop the three lowest quiz scores from your final course grade. Each quiz covers the assigned reading of that particular week (e.g., Quiz 1 covers reading from Week 1-2; Quiz 2 covers reading from Week 3). Refer to the course schedule for the quiz dates and reading assignments.

To aid your reading comprehension and to facilitate thoughtful discussions, you should refer to the “Children & Society” web site (www.tulane.edu/~rouxbee/children.htm) for a list of reading questions. The professor recommends that you look at these questions before and after you read the assigned materials.

Midterm Exam
The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, matching, and short-answer questions, which the professor will administer during class time. The midterm exam will cover all assigned readings, handouts, regular lectures, guest
speakers, in-class discussions, email messages, films, and other class activities, or
in other words, everything affiliated with this course.

**Group Web Project on Childhood around the World**

This project will help students develop concrete skills in data collection and
synthesis (using conventional library resources and the World Wide Web), critical
thinking, collaboration with other student researchers, and web page
design/constructor.

The professor will assign students (with five or six students per group) to one of
these ten countries: Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, Mexico,
Russia, South Africa.

Each group will meet outside of class to do library/web research and to construct
web pages that integrate their sociological research with links to other existing
web sites. The professor recommends that students work together frequently
throughout the second half of the semester: one meeting to discuss research
strategies and to divide up responsibilities; two meetings to share research
findings; and several meetings to design and create web pages.

Each group will investigate various dimensions of childhood within their assigned
country, using the three broad themes of the course - social structure, agency, and
diversity - as an implicit framework to guide the group's selection and
presentation of information. In addition, each web site must have the following
components:

**Authorship information.** List the names of all group members, and briefly state
the purpose of web site.

**Contextual overview.** Summarize the national context of children's lives in terms
of the demographic situation, education system, and cultural milieu. Also present
relevant statistics in table format. Do not overwhelm readers with too many
numbers or pages of text; be concise. All information should be sociologically
relevant, and it should be presented in a visually appealing way.

**Map of social problems.** Identify the most pressing social problems that children
face, and briefly describe what is being done about these problems.

**Children’s organizations.** Identify and describe 2-3 national organizations that
deal with children's issues. Provide contact information for each organization.

**Links to relevant web sites.** Integrate linkages as appropriate throughout your
web site; do not merely list/link a bunch of sites in a separate section. Every group
must include a link to a map of the country. Do not get carried away with these
links. **Quality** is much more important than quantity. Ask yourself: How is this
site relevant to the assignment?

**References.** Identify your sources of information in a separate section. Give
complete citations; refer to examples in the honor code section of this syllabus.

Each group must design web pages that synthesize sociological information from
the World Wide Web and the library. Students cannot scan published images,
such as maps or photographs, into their web accounts because of potential
violations of copyright laws. Instead, students can create links to existing web
images or create new ones.
The professor will evaluate each group's web site on its visual appeal, sociological sophistication, use of conventional library resources and existing web resources, and the degree to which the web site fits into the broad themes of the course. Each group must turn in a **hard-copy**, color printout of its completed web pages on Nov. 24.

Students who do not adequately fulfill their group responsibilities will be penalized; uncooperative or irresponsible students will receive a much lower grade than everyone else in their group. Each student will fill out a confidential evaluation form to identify the individual contributions of each group member.

**Comprehensive Final Exam**

The professor will administer the final exam during the scheduled examination period. The format of the final exam will consist of multiple-choice, true/false, matching, and short-answer questions. The cumulative final exam will cover all assigned readings, handouts, regular lectures, guest speakers, in-class discussions, email messages, films, and all other class activities, from the first day to the last day of the course.

**Classroom Electronic Discussions**

Every person in this course is mutually responsible for the learning environment and our intellectual journey throughout the semester. To create a comfortable and productive classroom atmosphere, please follow these ground rules (adapted from Amanda Konradi’s list in "Teaching about Sexual Assault: Problematic Silences and Solutions," *Teaching Sociology*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 13-25, January, 1993, as well as from suggestions made by several sociologists on the *Sociologists for Women in Society* electronic discussion group):

- Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on gender, race/ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, physical differences, religion, region, and nationality exist.
- Acknowledge that all of us have learned misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups. We will not blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned in the past, but we will accept responsibility for not repeating information after we have learned otherwise.
- Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This does not mean that you can't disagree, only that you must do so respectfully. Toward this goal, we will not use antagonistic language and we will not scapegoat anyone or any group.
- Listen to other students. We will give each person room to voice his/her opinion in her/his own communication style. All thoughts are worth hearing in their entirety; avoid interrupting others (students or professor). However, please refrain from monopolizing the conversation to the exclusion of others.
Course Schedule:

Week 1: Defining Childhood
Corsaro. Chapter 1: “Social Theories of Childhood” (pp.2-27).
Aug 27 Images of Children
Aug 29 Linkages between Women & Children

Week 2: The Sociological Perspective
Corsaro. Chapter 2: The Structure of Childhood and Children's Interpretative Reproductions (pp.29-44).
Sept 3 Quiz 1/ What is Society? What is Sociology?: Issues of Social Structure & Agency
Sept 5 Influential Ideas from the Past

Week 3: Socio-Historical Analyses & The Creation of Childhood
Corsaro. Chapter 3: “Historical Views of Childhood and Children” (pp. 45-67).
Sept 8 Quiz 2 / Aries' Thesis & Pollock's Critique
Sept 10 Postman's Argument & Evidence
Sept 12 Professor Linda Pollock on Children & History

Week 4: Contemporary Adult Attitudes Toward Children
James & Prout. Woodhead, Martin. "Psychology and the Cultural Construction of Children's Needs" (pp. 63-84)
Sept 15 Quiz 3 / Paradoxes of Childhood & Modern Society
Sept 17 Current Ideologies & Conceptualizations of Children
Sept 19 Group Activity = Quiz 4: Doing Quantitative Analysis with the Eurobarometer Survey

Week 5: Methodological Issues


Sept 22  Quiz 5 / Methodological Options
Sept 24  Research Ethics
Sept 26  Group Activity: Doing Content Analysis on Contemporary Magazines

Week 6: Social Change & Structural Context
Corsaro. Chapter 4: "Social Change, Families and Children" (pp. 69-89).

Sept 29  Quiz 6 / Cross-National Trends
Oct 1   Louisiana in Focus
Oct 3   The Social Demography of Child Care

Week 7: Raising Kids


Oct 6   Maternal Thinking
Oct 8   Men in Child Care
Oct 10  Review for Midterm Exam

Week 8: Time for Reflection
Corsaro. Chapter 5: “Children's Peer Cultures and Interpretive Reproduction” (pp. 92-115).

Corsaro. Chapter 6:“Sharing and Control in Initial Peer Cultures” (pp. 117-141).

Oct 13  Midterm Examination
Oct 15  Workshops / Groups 1-5 meet in Computer Lab, Groups 6-10 meet in Library
Oct 17  Workshops / Groups 1-5 meet in Library, Groups 6-10 meet in Computer Lab
Week 9: Children’s Cultures
Corsaro. Chapter 7: “Conflict and Differentiation in the Initial Peer Culture” (pp. 143 - 161).

Oct 20  Quiz 7 / Gendered Worlds
Oct 22  Issues of Race, Ethnicity & Nationality
Oct 24  Professor Jeff Lockman on Children of Gay Parents

Week 10: Children’s Work
Corsaro. Chapter 8: “Preadolescent Peer Cultures” (pp. 163-188).
James & Prout. Solberg, Anne. “Negotiating Childhood: Changing Constructions of Age for Norwegian Children” (pp. 126-144).

Oct 27  Quiz 8 / Schoolwork
Oct 29  Domestic Labor
Oct 31  Paid Labor

Week 11: Children’s Rights & Organizational Activism
Corsaro. Chapter 9: “Children as Social Problems” (pp. 190-206).

Nov 3  Quiz 9 / The UNICEF Story
Nov 5  Ms. Judy Watts, Executive Director of Agenda for Children
Nov 7  Ms. Petrice Sams-Abiodun, former director of speaker’s bureau for Planned Parenthood

Week 12: Violence: Abuse, Poverty & War

Nov 10  Professor James D. Wright on Street Children in Honduras
Nov 12  Quiz 10 / Child Welfare & Protection
Nov 14  Childhood in War Zones
**Week 13: International Explorations**

**Nov 17**  Web Work in Computer Lab  
**Nov 19**  Web Work in Computer Lab  
**Nov 21**  Web Work in Computer Lab

**Week 14: International Explorations**

**Nov 24**  Web Sites due / Meet in Computer Lab

**Week 15: Social Policy**


**Dec 1**  Quiz 11 / International Comparisons  
**Dec 3**  Where Do We Go From Here? And How Do We Get There?  
**Dec 5**  Closing Remarks  
**Dec 11**  FINAL EXAM
SOCIOL OGY OF C H I L D H O O D
Edythe Krampe
University Of California, Irvine

Course Description:
The child's place in society historically, cross-nationally, and in the contemporary United States. Childhood socialization, social class, and ethnic variation will be addressed, as well as social problems and recommendations for social policy regarding children.

Course Objectives:
To provide:
• a supportive environment where students can engage in active, reflective and collaborative learning;
• opportunities for students to practice critical thinking and writing skills.
• learning experiences that will enhance students' understanding of the child in society.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be expected to demonstrate:
1. Knowledge of the status of children in cross-cultural perspective, history, and contemporary society
2. Knowledge of social class and subcultural variation
3. Development of a sociological perspective on children in society
4. Examination of the nature of the child
5. Knowledge of socialization, including gender role socialization
6. Examination of risk factors for children
7. Understanding and development of social solutions and policy on behalf of children and families

Required Texts:
There are also required readings on reserve in the library

Instructor Expectations
As a courtesy to your classmates, I expect you to be on time to class. I will assume that you have read and thought about assigned readings prior to coming to class so that you may actively participate in class activities.

You are expected to complete all preparation assignments and participate in class discussions. I view learning as a “participatory sport” rather than a “spectator sport.” You must be actively engaged in order to benefit from your experience in the same way that you would expect to participate in an exercise class rather than merely listen to or observe the instructor!
It is your responsibility to let me know about any existing conditions or potential problems that might affect your ability to fully participate or succeed in this class.

**Course Requirements:**

**Participation**

Much of what you learn in this class will derive from your participation in class activities. If you are not present, you will not be able to benefit from these experiences. Participation grades will be assigned based upon the *quality* of participation on preparation assignments, small group activities, in-class assignments, and class discussion. No make-ups will be available on participation assignments.

**Exams**

There will be a mid-term and a final exam that will test your *understanding* of the concepts contained in the assigned readings and class activities. Exams will consist of multiple choice and comprehensive essay questions. Comprehensive study guides will be distributed prior to each exam.

**Papers (2)**

There will be two short papers required for this course. These papers will be based-on your own experience, lectures, reading material, and a review of the literature. Instructions will be given in class.

**Reading Assignments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 27</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
<td>Garbarino, Ch. I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children in Society</td>
<td>Synnott reading</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cross-National Perspectives</td>
<td>Handel, Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical Perspectives</td>
<td>Damon &amp; Handel readings (H, Ch. 1,2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociological Perspectives on Childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Social Class, Subcultures, and Childhood</td>
<td>Garbarino, Ch. 2</td>
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<td>Garbarino, Ch. 7</td>
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<td>LeMasters &amp; Rainwater</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Bell reading(H, Ch.6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Nature of Child</td>
<td>Karen reading (reserve)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PAPER #1 DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>The Child</td>
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<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 25</td>
<td>Agents of Childhood Socialization</td>
<td>Garbarino, Ch. 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Family</td>
<td>Review Damon and Handel readings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Nov 1  The Family  Garbarino (Ch. 4, 6 to p. 164)
   The School  Handel, p. 45-47
   Eiduson et al. reading (H, Ch. 5)
   Garbarino, Ch. 6 (pp. 164-168)

Nov 8  The School  Lewis/Jacks readings (H, Ch. 7, T)
   The Peer World  Garbarino, Ch. 6, pp. 159-161
                  Ch. 7, pp. 185-186
                  Handel, pp. 191-192
                  Fine readings (H, Ch. 11)

Nov 15 Television, Other Agents  Garbarino, Ch. 6 (pp. 169-170)
        Gender Role Socialization  Pearl, et al. readings (H, Ch. 12)
                                      Basow reading (reserve)
                                      Lever reading (H, Ch. 16)

PAPER #2 DUE

Nov 22 Children “at Risk”  Garbarino, Ch. 3
   Social Problems and  Schorr, Ch. 1-6
   Solutions
   HOLIDAY

Nov 29 Social Problems and  Schorr, Ch. 7-12
   Solutions
   Social Policy for Children
   and Families  Garbarino, Ch. 10, 11, Afterword
SOCIOMETRY OF CHILDHOOD
Elizabeth Osborn
St. Mary’s College of Maryland

“The most important meaning of this Nobel award is the solemn recognition that the welfare of today’s children is inseparably linked with the peace of tomorrow’s world.”

Henry R. Labouisse, Executive Director of UNICEF (1965-1979), in his acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965 for UNICEF.

“The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.”
Attributed to Diogenes (412-323 BC).

Course Goals & Objectives:
The primary objective of this course is to introduce you to the sociological concepts, methods and theoretical perspectives for understanding the relationship between children and their environment. Understanding this environment requires us to examine not only micro-level socialization processes but also macro-level structural environments. The goal of this class is to familiarize you with some of the questions and problems that are being addressed by sociologists and examine some of the research on the child and society. We will be taking a global perspective to explore the diversity of children’s experiences across (among other categories) family structure, ethnicity, race, social class, and gender.

Required Reading:
Course Packet: Collection of Readings.

Course Requirements and Student Evaluation:
You are expected to attend all class meetings having read the appropriate materials and prepared to contribute to group and class discussions. Attendance and participation will be taken into consideration in calculating grades.

Your grade will also be determined on the basis of two exams, in-class reaction essays, a research paper and a final exam. The format of the exams will be short answers and essays. We will discuss this format in more detail before the exams. The in-class reaction essays will be short (one page) written responses to a question about the readings, or other topics. There will be six of these essays and your best five grades will be used in calculating your final grade.

The last component of your grade will be based on a research paper. We will discuss the format and topic of this paper in class.
**Class Schedule:**

**Week 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readings:</th>
<th>Packet</th>
<th>Etzioni, “Children of the Universe”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corsaro</td>
<td>Chapter 1 pp. 2-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Introduction to the Child and Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>Childhood and Socialization Defined and Redefined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td>Traditional Theories of Childhood</td>
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**Week 2**

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<tr>
<th>Readings:</th>
<th>Packet</th>
<th>Mead, “The Self”</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Goffman, “The Presentation of Self”</td>
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<td>Lynott and Logue, “The ‘Hurried Child’: The Myth of Lost Childhood in Contemporary American Society”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corsaro</td>
<td>Chapter 2 pp. 29-44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td><strong>Reaction Essay 1</strong></td>
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<td>The Structure of Childhood and Children’s Interpretive Reproductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td>Collective Actions in Peer Cultures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Secondary Adjustments</td>
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**Week 3**

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<tr>
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<td>Alanen, “Rethinking Socialization, The Family and Childhood”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corsaro</td>
<td>Chapter 3 pp. 46-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Sept. 14</td>
<td><strong>Reaction Essay 2</strong></td>
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<td>Historical and Cultural Views of Childhood and Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td>New History of Childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>“Traditional Families”</td>
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**Week 4**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Readings:</th>
<th>Packet</th>
<th>Zinsmeister, “Are Today’s Suburbs Really Family Friendly?”</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Whitmore and Gibbs, “Working Harder, Getting Nowhere”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corsaro</td>
<td>Chapter 4 pp. 69-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>Listening to Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sept. 23</td>
<td>Family Changes From the Child’s Perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>SES Changes on Children and Childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings:</td>
<td>Packet</td>
<td>Shapiro, “Guns and Dolls”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Corsaro Chapter 5 pp. 92-115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>Peer Culture from Children’s Perspective</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>Symbolic and Material Aspects of Children’s Culture</td>
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<td><strong>Week 6</strong></td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
<td>Packet</td>
<td>Adler and Adler, “The Carpool: a Socializing Adjunct to the Educational Experience”</td>
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<td>Corsaro Chapter 6 pp. 116-142</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>Central Themes</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>October 7</td>
<td>Friendship, Sharing and Social Participation</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>Autonomy and Control in Peer Culture</td>
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<td><strong>Week 7</strong></td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
<td>Packet</td>
<td>Carrier, “Homosexual Behavior in Cross-Cultural Perspective”</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>October 12</td>
<td><strong>Reaction Essay 3</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>October 14</td>
<td>Social Differentiation in Initial Peer Cultures</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>Fall Break - No Class</td>
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<td><strong>Week 8</strong></td>
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<td>Corsaro Chapter 8 pp. 163-188</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Friendship Processes</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>October 21</td>
<td>Autonomy and Identity</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>Children’s Games as Situated Activities</td>
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Week 9
Readings: Packet Kozol, “Poverty’s Children: Growing Up in the South Bronx”
Corsaro Chapter 9 pp. 190-206
Monday October 26 Reaction Essay 4
Society’s Problems in Children’s Lives
Wednesday October 28 Power of Rhetoric
Friday October 30 Blaming the Victim

Week 10
Readings: Packet Popenoe, “The Decline of Marriage and Fatherhood”
Amato, “Children’s Adjustment to Divorce: Theories, Hypotheses, and Empirical Support”
Corsaro Chapter 10 pp. 207-252
Monday Nov. 2 Exam 2
Wednesday Nov. 4 Poverty and Children
Friday Nov. 6 Changing Family Structures and Children’s Lives

Week 11
Readings: Packet Heath, “Parents’ Socialization of Children In Global Perspective”
Eitzen, “Dismantling the Welfare State: Is it the Answer to America’s Social Problems?”
Corsaro Chapter 11 pp. 253-277
Monday Nov. 9 Class of 2000
Wednesday Nov. 11 Challenges to the Future of Childhood
Friday Nov. 13 Proposals to Enrich Children’s Lives

Week 12
Lewis, “The Legal Rights of Children in the United States”
UNICEF First Call For Children, pp. 1-75
UNICEF pp. 9-14
Monday Nov. 16 Reaction Essay 5
The Rights of Children
Wednesday Nov. 18 Convention on the Rights of the Child
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Friday Nov. 20</td>
<td>New Era for Children</td>
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<td><strong>Week 13</strong></td>
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<td>Monday Nov. 23</td>
<td><strong>Paper due</strong></td>
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<td>Discussion of Papers</td>
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<td>Wednesday Nov. 25</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break - No Class</td>
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<td>Friday Nov. 27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break - No Class</td>
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<td><strong>Week 14</strong></td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
<td>UNICEF pp. 17-32</td>
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<td>Packet Dorkenoo and Elworthy, “Female Genital Mutilation”</td>
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<td>Monday Nov. 30</td>
<td><strong>Reaction Essay 6</strong></td>
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<td>Myth and Reality</td>
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<td>Wednesday Dec. 2</td>
<td>What is Child Labor?</td>
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<td>Friday Dec. 4</td>
<td>Roots of Child Labor</td>
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<td><strong>Week 15</strong></td>
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<td>UNICEF pp. 32-73</td>
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<td>Monday Dec. 7</td>
<td>Shapes of Child Labor</td>
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<td>Wednesday Dec. 9</td>
<td>Ideas and Actions</td>
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<td>Friday Dec. 11</td>
<td>Leftovers and Review</td>
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<td><strong>Final Exam Week</strong></td>
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Course Description:
This course involves three broad topics. First, we focus on understanding the social construction of childhood. We examine how socio-historical circumstances shape the perception of children and of childhood as a distinct life stage. The second portion of the course moves from this broad focus on cross-cultural and cross-historical experiences of childhood to a narrow focus on the process of socialization in Western societies, particularly the U. S. We examine theoretical perspectives on socialization and discuss how the various agents of socialization including the family, the education system, and the media shape contemporary childhood socialization. This section includes a consideration of the culture of children as manifested in peer groups interactions, and games and toys. We also consider how variation in socialization and the experiences of childhood are shaped by ethnicity, race, class, and gender. The third portion of the course focuses on social problems associated with childhood and children. We consider some contemporary issues involving children's lives, including daycare, and poverty and child abuse.

Required Reading:
Reading Package

Evaluation:
Final grades will be based on two midterms, a final exam and an essay assignment. Here are the details:
1. Three Exams: Two midterms, on October 2 and November 2, and a final exam on December 15. Exams will cover both material from the lectures and from the text and will be multiple choice and short answer. The final exam is not cumulative.
2. An essay assignment of 7-10 pages in which you will apply some of the ideas we have discussed in class. You will be given a choice of topics somewhat closer to the due date. You also have the option of selecting your own topic, but need to check with me, to make sure it is a suitable subject. The paper is due immediately after the Thanksgiving holiday on December 2.

Course Content and Schedule:
Section 1:
August 31. Introduction
Thorne: Chapter 1, 2

Section 2:
September 2-14. The Social Construction of Childhood: Historical Perspectives


Section 3:
September 16-23. The Social Construction of Childhood: Contemporary Views and Issues


Section 4:
September 25-30. Childhood Socialization: Theoretical Perspectives


Section 5:
October 5-14. Family as Socializing Agents


Section 6:
October 16-21. School as a Socializing Agent

Thorne: Chapter 3

Section 7:
October 23-30. Peers as Socializing Agents
Section 8:
November 4-9. Toys and Games
Thorne: Chapter 5

Section 9:
November 13-18. Gender Socialization
Thorne: Chapter 6 - 7, Pages 56 - 61

Section 10:
November 20-25. Child Poverty and Abuse

Section 11:
November 30 - December 4. Mass Media

Section 12:
December 7-9. Daycare

Section 13:
December 11. Working with Children
Thorne: Chapter 9
Overview:
Children.... The word brings up thoughts of our own childhood, of children we've known, of children we've seen on television and in the movies. This course goes beyond our own experience to explore what it means to be a child in the United States today. While many of those meanings are fun and uplifting, others are sad and problematic. We will go back and forth in these two directions, trying to weigh their relative social significance. A special focus is children's culture and how it is created, both by and for children. While we'll be watching Disney movies and going to McDonald's, we'll also be debating the welfare of poor and abused children. We'll ask what it takes to overcome the negative influences to be able to participate in the positive cultural elements. The relative influence of gender, race, and social class will be debated throughout. As a special project each student will observe children through the lens of the course on a topic of their choice, sharing their findings with the class.

Requirements:
The written requirements for the course include the completion of four question memos, three debate outlines, a paper written from observations of or interviews with children, a mid-term exam, and a final exam. Your class participation grade will depend on attendance, the quality and number of question memos and debate outlines submitted, and amount of interaction in the classroom with both other students and with the professor.

The discussion nature of this class makes class participation extremely important. Not attending class regularly, for ANY reason, will affect your class participation grade, as well as your ability to answer the questions on the exams. I will verbally take attendance until I know all of your names, then rely on a sign-in sheet. My memory is not perfect; YOU are responsible for making sure that your attendance was recorded.

The question memos are to be 1-2 pages long, typed and double-spaced, with font no larger than 12 point and margins no larger than 1-1/4" all around. Seven opportunities for submitting these memos are noted below in the schedule. You must complete at least four. Their purpose is to make sure that enough people do the reading so that we can have meaningful discussions in class. Each should give at least one question or issue, based on the readings, which you would like to discuss in class. I will try to reserve time during each class for such questions and issues, and may well call on you to learn what you found interesting or problematic in the readings. They will be graded more on content than on grammar, with grades of check-plus, check, and check-minus. Because they will be discussed in class, I will not accept them late, period. If you cannot make it to class, you may send them in with someone else or give them to me ahead of time. I will not accept them by fax or e-mail.

The debate outlines should also be 1-2 pages long, on two short readings which answer yes and no to a controversial question in the Taking Sides book below. You will sign up for them ahead of time. They should be in outline form, with "bullet points"
from which you can speak in class, summarizing the yes arguments, the no arguments, and your positions based on both the arguments and other considerations. Because they're "talking papers," they will be graded only on content. The late and submission policies for question memos also apply. While your grade will be on only two readings of eight or ten to be discussed during each debate class, you are required to have read and be ready to comment verbally on all of the readings in the particular debate, whether you outlined them or not.

**Field Research Paper and Presentation**

The field research paper will apply course concepts to data obtained by either participant observation of or interviews with at least five children. It is to be roughly 10-12 double-spaced, typewritten pages, with font no larger than 12-point and margins no larger than 1-1/4" all around. Your paper should describe your observations or interviews, finding and writing about a theme which you develop from the observation/interview data and tie to the course material.

It will be graded by **averaging** four grades - writing (spelling, grammar, sentence structure, documentation, and theme), the quality of the data you obtain, the extent to which you draw on material from the course, and the applicability of that material. You must take detailed notes during the observations or interviews and attach them to the end of the paper. Because I have assigned similar papers before, I will NOT accept papers without these notes, period. Plagiarism is punishable by an “F” in the course.

To share your findings, you will each be required to give a 3-5 minute presentation to the rest of the class. Handouts on field research, as well as the paper and presentations, will be given out and discussed at length on the same night as our mid-term exam. Because you will have half of the semester to work on it, I will only accept late papers for very important reasons of which you provide written proof.

**Mid-term and Final Exams (Format by Your Vote)**

The format of the exams will be determined by class vote. Some people prefer take-home, others in-class, exams. I can go either way, but whichever is the choice, they will both be of the same kind.

If they are in-class, one week ahead of time I will give you review questions from which to study and allow you to bring in one 8-1/2" piece of paper on which you may make notes to which to refer while taking the exam. You will be required to hand in that paper with your exam. If they are take-home, I will hand out the question or questions one week ahead of the date due, when the class session will be spent discussing and comparing your answers. (This includes the exam during finals week.) I will only accept late take-home exams or give make-up in-class exams for very important reasons of which you provide written proof.

**Extra Credit Paper**

Should you wish extra credit or feel that you blew either the paper or one of the exams, I will accept and grade a 4-6 page sociological analysis of a book or film relevant to the topics of the course. The paper's grade will replace half of your poorest non-class-participation grade, unless that would hurt rather than help
your grade. I'll accept such a paper only through the last day of class, so that I have time to grade it. It will be graded as describe above.

**Required Reading:**


**Acknowledgments to Serve as Ground Rules for Class Discussion:**
1. It is very likely that, whatever communities we've lived in, we have been informally and possibly formally taught misinformation about ourselves and about people in our own and other communities.

2. As members of groups who are numerical majorities and minorities in different contexts, it's also very likely that we've been informally and possibly formally taught misinformation about our own groups and other groups of different numerical size and power.

3. And as both men and women, it's very likely that we've been informally and possibly formally taught misinformation about members of our own and the opposite sex.

4. We can't be blamed for the misinformation we've learned, but should be held responsible for not repeating misinformation once we've learned that it is false.

5. We agree to assume, at least in class, that people are always doing the best that they can, under their particular circumstances.

6. We agree that in class we will actively pursue information about our own groups and about those of others.

7. We agree to share information about our own groups with other members of the class, and never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences.

8. We agree to create a safe atmosphere for open discussion in class.

9. At times, a member of the class may wish to make comments that she or he does not wish repeated outside the classroom. When requested by another student, we agree not to repeat such remarks.

[Adapted from guidelines developed by Lynn Weber Cannon, Memphis State University]

**Schedule of Readings and Activities:**

America's Children, Past and Present
January 28 Introduction
Overview and Lecture; "Define Child" Exercise
February 4  Socialization and Children’s Play  
Thorne, Chapters 1-2; Lecture; Exercise with Children’s Games; S&K Introduction  
General Memo

Children in Middle Childhood
February 11  Children in Peer Groups  
Thorne, Chapters 3-6. Group Work and Discussion; General Memo

February 18  Children in School  
Thorne, Chapters 7-9; Lecture and Discussion; Sign-ups and Instructions for Debates; General Memo

February 25  Debate on Middle Childhood  
TS Part 3; Debate (Outline); Lecture and Discussion; Wrap-up of Issues

March 4  Mid-Term Exam  
No Reading; Exam; Project Planning

Children’s Culture vs. Early Childhood
March 11  Childhood and Walt Disney  
S&K Chapters 1,2; Lecture and Discussion; Film Clips; General Memo

March 18  Spring Break

March 25  TV and Video Games  
S&K Chapters 3 through 6; Group Work & Discussion; TV and Video Clips; Sign-ups For Debate; General Memo

April 1  Debate on Early Childhood  
TS Part 2; Debate (Outline); Lecture and Discussion; Wrap-up of Issues

Children’s Culture vs. Adolescence
April 8  Children’s Fiction and Magazines  
S&K Chapters 7 through 10; any current children's magazine

April 15  McDonald's and Children's Culture  
S&K Chapters 11 through 14; visit McDonald's; Group work and discussion of McDonald’s visits; Debate sign-ups; General Memo

April 22  Debate on Adolescence  
TS Part 4; Wrap-up of Issues; Debate (Outline); Lecture and Discussion

America’s Children, Present and Future
April 29  Project Presentations  
No Reading; Student Project Presentations; Field Research Paper Due

May 6  Wrap-up and Summary  
Rubin (all); Wrap-up; Lecture and Discussion

May 13  Final Exam
SOCIOLOGY OF CHILDREN: SENIOR SEMINAR
Sue Marie Wright
Eastern Washington University

Course Description:
This course addresses children and childhood (from the preschool years through adolescence). We start by examining historical shifts in the meanings of childhood and the methods used for studying the worlds of children. Students become familiar with theoretical approaches to child development and socialization and learn to use these perspectives to explain children’s behavior in various cultural settings. In the latter part of the course, we will give attention to the interaction between children and adults with regard to specific issues (e.g., sexuality, crime and delinquency, children’s rights).

Throughout the course, we examine questions about how children are socialized and how they influence others. Students are encouraged to present and critically examine their own experiences and beliefs regarding childhood and to observe and analyze children’s interactions in different settings. There will be two integrative written assignments. In the first assignment, students will use theoretical constructs to understand childhood experiences of an autobiographical nature. In the second assignment, students will use ethnographic methods to produce an analysis of children’s interactions and children’s culture.

Each student will also be required to make at least one presentation from the optional reading list on children and childhood. Students will volunteer for a specific week and will choose from the optional reading list for that week (Note: Readings not on the list will need to be approved by the instructor.) These presentations should expand our understanding of the required readings. Students will also participate in weekly “lab projects,” requiring a one-page paper that will be used to promote student discussions. I will provide feedback on these weekly assignments, but they will not be individually graded. Students will also be expected to participate in small group discussions on a weekly basis.

Assignments:
Directions for weekly lab assignments, oral presentation, and both projects will be handed out separately. It is your responsibility to obtain assignments missed during any absence.

Written Assignments
• Weekly assignments (8). Due in class on Tuesdays. Ungraded, but must be completed.
• Mid-term Project. DUE TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, IN CLASS.
• Final Project. DUE THURSDAY MARCH 11, IN CLASS.

Oral Assignments
• Presentation. Due on the day for which you sign up.
• Active participation in both large group and small group discussions.
**Required Readings:**


**Weekly Schedule:**

**Week 1. Perspectives on Childhood**

What do we mean by the terms “child” and “childhood”? We begin by exploring the “construction” of childhood as a concept and how this has changed over time.


Thorne. Chapter 1, pp. 1-10.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**


**Week 2. Children Across Cultures and Societies**

What do children need to thrive? What elements are common to children across cultures? Understanding the universal elements of childhood will help us understand what it means to be a child in a particular culture.


Steinberg. Chapter 1. “Home Alone and Bad to the Bone.”

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**


**Week 3. Theories of Childhood**

So what do we know about children’s understandings of themselves and their place in society? This week we cover a variety of theoretical perspectives.
**Week 4. Research Designs for Studying Children and Youth**

How do we go about studying children’s lives? This week we examine how sociologists go about studying children’s worlds and how they connect this field to other fields of study, both within sociology and in other disciplines.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**


**Week 5. Children in the Larger Picture: The Early Years**

What do children understand of gender, race, and class? How do they come by this knowledge? And how do they use it? For the next three weeks we will explore children’s worlds as they exist within larger structural and cultural frameworks, beginning with the earliest years.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**


**Week 6. The Middle Years**
Thorne. Chapter 6-7, 89-134.
Adlers. Chapters 2-8.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**

**Week 7. Adolescence**
Thorne. Chapter 8, pp. 135-173.
Eder. Chapters 2-5, pp. 19-82.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**

**Week 8. Issues of Childhood and Youth**
In the final three weeks, we will explore a number of issues concerning children and youth. In each instance, we will incorporate the perspectives of children and youth, as well as adult perspectives.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**

**Week 9. Kids Problems and “Problem” Kids**
Eder. Chapter 9-10, pp. 149-170.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**


**Week 10. Children’s Rights**

Should children be able to divorce their parents? Just how far should children’s rights go? In this final week, we will wrestle with the policy implications of constructing childhood in different ways. Our goal will be to develop dialogues about childhood as a protected status vs. children’s rights and children as the responsibility of their parents vs. governmental responsibility to all children.

Thorne. Chapter 9, pp. 157-173.

**Optional Readings for Presentations:**


II. SYLLABI FOR RELATED COURSES

SEMINAR ON AT-RISK CHILDREN
Rosalyn Darling
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Course Objectives:
"At-risk children" have been cited by professionals in the fields of health, education and the social sciences as a growing problem in the United States today. Although definitions vary, professionals have used this label to suggest that children exposed to factors such as poverty, disability, violence, drug abuse, and teen parenting have a higher probability than other children of poor developmental outcomes. However, some have suggested that the at-risk label can disadvantage children by lowering expectations for their success. Students in this course will come to understand the meaning of this label in society today. They will also understand the effects of various "risk factors" on children's development and the reasons why these factors exist in our society. Finally, they will explore the implications of this understanding for social policy and programs.

Required Books:
In addition, each student is expected to read three books, one from each of the groups below (assignments will be made in class to ensure that a sufficient number of students read each book):

Group I (Effects)

Group II (Causes)

Group III (Solutions)
B.R. Bergmann, Saving Our Children From Poverty, Russell Sage, 1996.

**Course Requirements:**
Because this course will be conducted in a seminar format, student attendance at every class is important, and students are expected to contribute to class discussions. All students are required to come to class prepared to discuss assigned readings, as indicated on the class outline below.

Each student will be required to write three papers during the semester. These papers will be critical reviews of each of the three books chosen from the list above. Each paper will be 10-12 (double-spaced, 10-12 point font, 1” margins) pages in length and will be organized as follows:

1. **Summary** (no longer than three pages). This section will summarize the contents of the book and present the author(s)’ main point(s).

2. **Analysis.** This section will critically assess the author's findings/arguments as follows:

**Group 1:**
Did the book increase your understanding of effects of one or more risk factors on children's well-being? Why or why not?
Do you think that the cases presented are representative of the general population of children of this type? Why or why not?
Does the book make a convincing case for the need for reform/social change? Why or why not?
How does this book relate to other material covered so far in the course?

**Group II:**
Did the book increase your understanding of the causes of risk to children's well-being? Why or why not?
Evaluate the quantity and quality of the evidence used by the author to support his or her arguments. Were the arguments convincing (i.e., based on good, research evidence)? Why or why not?
How does this book relate to other material covered so far in the course?
What policy changes or initiatives are suggested by the book's conclusions? How might these be implemented?

**Group III:**
Does this book present one or more potential solutions to the problem of at-risk children? Or is it a critique of a solution proposed by others?
Evaluate the author's arguments. Does he or she make a good case (based on evidence)? Why or why not?
What is the relationship between the solutions proposed and the causes of the problem (as suggested by other course readings and class discussions)? Does the solution address the right cause?
How feasible is the solution? Could it be implemented in the United States today? Why or why not? If not, can you propose an alternative solution that would work better?
All of the students reading each book will jointly participate in a panel discussion, during which they will present their summary and analysis of the book to the class and answer questions. This presentation should be 45 minutes to one hour in duration.

**Class Outline:**

**Classes 1-2**

I. Who is "at risk"? The scope of the problem.
At risk for what?: Possible outcomes. **Read:** CDF Yearbook, pp. ix-xix
Evolution of the label.
Ethics and politics of the definition.
II. The sociological perspective.
Risk as a social construction.
Socio-cultural determinants of children's well-being. **Read:** Bowman article and Gans excerpt (to be distributed in class)

**Classes 2-3**

III. Background: Conditions commonly associated with risk.
Poverty: A problem primarily affecting children. **Read:** CDF Yearbook, pp. 1-50
Video: *One Paycheck from Poverty* (excerpt)

**Class 4**

Teen-parents. **Read:** CDF Yearbook, pp. 81-90
Education. **Read:** CDF Yearbook, pp. 71-80
Child abuse and neglect. **Read:** CDF Yearbook, pp. 51-60
Violence. **Read:** CDF Yearbook, pp. 61-70

**Class 5**

IV. Understanding effects.
**Student Presentations:** *Amazing Grace* (poverty); *Rachel and Her Children* (homelessness)
Video: *Down and Out in America* (excerpt)

**Class 6**

**Student Presentations:** *There Are No Children Here* (violence); *Savage Inequalities* (education)

**Class 7**

**Student Presentation:** *Turning Stones* (child abuse)

V. Understanding causes.
**Student Presentation:** *Keeping Women and Children Last* (poverty)

**Class 8**

**Student Presentations:** *Dubious Conceptions* (teen pregnancy); *Succeeding Generations* (various risks)

**Class 9**

**Student Presentations:** *Children and Families "At Promise"* (education) *Ghetto Schooling* (education)
Class 10
VI. Evaluating solutions.
Human service approaches: Intervention at the "micro" level.

Student Presentations: Protecting Children and Supporting Families (child abuse); The Book of David (child abuse--an alternate view)

Class 11
Video: Growing Up Poor
Policies and programs: "macro" level initiatives.

Student Presentation: Common Purpose

Class 12

Student Presentations: Starting Right; Saving Our Children From Poverty

Class 13-14
Policy and ethics: The role of values. Who “owns” the child--society or the family? (Does it really "take a whole village to raise a child"? Does society owe children a minimum standard of living?)

The future of “welfare reform”: Where do we go from here? Read: Wilson excerpt (to be distributed in class)

Video: Stopping the War Against America’s Children

Students will share their policy recommendations from their third papers, resulting in a consensual class policy agenda and a plan for its implementation.
Teaching the Sociology of Children/Childhood in a variety of courses is challenging and beneficial, and I have incorporated the child/youth theme in such diverse courses as Cross Cultural Analysis, the Sociology of Culture, as well as more familiar courses in social psychology and family. Most recently, I developed the youth/child theme in the Sociology of Communications Media course, which I have developed over the last twenty years. I found that student interest and a high level of undergraduate research to be encouraging. The course specializes in helping students understand the system of mass communication in contemporary society, providing a context for understanding the messages and meanings in the content of the media. The representation of youth/children/childhood in print, broadcast, and on-line media is a research topic for student projects in this course. The project (the analysis of child representation in the media) may be usefully applied in most other courses that seek to incorporate and integrate the sociology of children/childhood.

The full course syllabi is attached, along with the essay assignments that preceded the research, writing and presentation of the research project. The developmental model enables students to learn concepts and material from the course through readings, lecture, and essays. The research project is introduced after the midpoint of the semester, requiring students to follow guidelines provided in and out of class meetings.

The course does not assume that students (who may include sociology, education, psychology, American Studies, business, and other majors) are familiar with the history, theories, methods, sociological and cross cultural perspectives in the study of children/youth. Examples from my research and that of others are introduced, primarily to familiarize students with the diversity of topics that may be chosen for their projects. Among those outlined include studying representations in the media on ageism patterns, particularly those that tend to blur or combine definitions and boundaries between "childness" and "adultness"; the child/youth image by class, in poverty and affluence, in health/illness, in war & peace, in crime, and violence and related themes; the image of youth by race/ethnicity and or nationality/international; by gender (in its modern diversity); as victims or as empowered; in relations to physical attributes, including physical disabilities/abilities; as commodities, icons and "stars"; images of children in relationship with others (parents, siblings, friends/peers, figures of authority ... ) and images of children in a variety of social settings (family, school, neighborhood, community, peer groups, at work, at play, in athletics, gangs, and others ... ); are described. The topics may be chosen and students develop research proposals that move them to begin their research, working on themes that they choose and seeing forms of media that they can access.
Basic content analysis research methods are presented and I work closely with each student on her/his topic to develop the media/data base and to develop distinct categories to code their documents. The pleasure in "discovery", finding patterns in images over time, sustains the intensive amount of work expected of students in these projects.

Oral presentations as well as written papers are required. The presentations pose opportunities to make comparisons from topic to topic and from medium to medium. For example, students found stereotypic patterns of age/youthfulness to vary by gender, race/ethnicity, and by class. Advertising and print media provided the most access, and students found greater diversity in representation, except along gender lines. Film and television forms offered stereotypes of children and youth, particularly as victims. Student choices of topics will vary from term to term. Offering this project for the first time in this form in the Spring 1998, I found that the themes of child/youth in crime, violence, and as commodities and "stars" dominated (not surprisingly given the sensational coverage of youth crime and child star victimization). I was pleased that all topics suggested were approached; some students combined themes, including gender and violence, and included settings and relationship patterns in their codes of content analysis.

The final papers included several model papers for undergraduate student research, which I will use to present to students in the future to help them prepare their projects. More than one paper has publishable value, and I have encouraged these students to pursue sociological research. Student comments and evaluations were encouraging as well. I was reassured that our classes of diverse students (by age, race/ethnicity, gender) would find the child/childhood theme so compelling. I certainly would continue to develop this type of research project in the sociology of communications and media. A similar project in other sociology courses, as well as in courses specifically on the Sociology of Children and Childhood will help students to learn concepts, theories, applications of research, and a critical analysis of mass media and its powerful representations of youth. Policy issues may be raised as well, enabling students to questions the "agenda-setting" effect of frequently stereotypic images of youth and the challenge of embracing sociological perspective and the more enlightened theories of children in society.

**Note:** SY 4651 is an upper division elective for Sociology majors and for Media and Communications majors; it is an upper division General Education course and a 4000-level elective for Sociology concentrations for Education major.
SYLLABUS
SOCIOLOGY OF COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

Objectives:
The sociological perspective is used in this course for the study of communications and media in contemporary society. Special emphasis and critical analysis is given to the social, political, and economic contexts of mass media. We study media communication in an information society, the media and the social world, reviewing the importance of media, and sources of theory, critical analysis on media and social change. Media content and the issues of cultural patterns and stereotypes are studied, including major categories of age, class, gender, race/ethnicity, and others. Current media issues and active involvement in media will be included this term along with an assessment of the meaning of globalization and the media.

Required Reading:

Recommended Readings:
Scholarly books and articles will be recommended for research purposes. Current media, including daily and weekly news media, and other on-line services are encouraged for class discussion

Audio-Visual and Computer Resources:
Documentary sources are scheduled for class. Additional titles and services are available at the Old Westbury Library, audio-visual department and ETC.

Course Requirements:
1. Class preparation on all assigned work and class participation
2. Two Essay Papers
3. One Research Paper

Dates: Topics: Assignments Due:
Week 1
January 27 Introductions UMLA/S (NVS)
January 29 Concepts & Models MASS MEDIA(MM)

Week 2
February 3 Media & the Social World M/S (Part One)
February 5 Models & Context Issues MM (Unit 1 & 7)

Week 3
February 10 The Media Industry M/S (Part Two)
February 12 Politics/Economics of Media

Week 4
February 17 Media History & Future
February 19 Media Systems & Technology M/S Chapter 9
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>February 24</th>
<th>Media Power &amp; Ideology</th>
<th>MM (Unit 2)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>February 26</td>
<td>Rules &amp; Ethics</td>
<td>MM (Unit 3)</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Discussion of Essays</td>
<td>Essays #1 DUE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Current Themes &amp; Debates</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>The Power of Images</td>
<td>MM (Unit 4)</td>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td>Content: Messages, Meanings</td>
<td>NVS(PAA Mw &amp; Four)</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>March 17 &amp; 19</td>
<td>(Spring Recess/No Classes)</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>March 24</td>
<td>Content Analysis Research</td>
<td>MM (Unit 5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>Youth/Children Theme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>Essay Themes/Debates</td>
<td>Essay #2 DUE</td>
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<td>April 2</td>
<td>Research Themes</td>
<td>Research Proposal DUE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>Global Communications</td>
<td>MS (Part Five)</td>
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<td>April 9</td>
<td>Global Media</td>
<td>(progress on research)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>Media &amp; Visual Sociology</td>
<td>(progress on research)</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
<td>Alternative Media</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>Media Debate</td>
<td>(progress on papers)</td>
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<td>April 23</td>
<td>Open Session/Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>April 28 &amp; 30</td>
<td>Research Presentations</td>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Research Presentations</td>
<td>Oral Presentations</td>
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<td>May 7</td>
<td>Summation Session</td>
<td>Research Paper Due</td>
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Congratulations!
SOCIOLOGY OF COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

Outline Essay Assignment #1:

Objectives
The main purpose of the first of two written essays this term is to apply major concepts from the course. Writing the essay will enable you to demonstrate your understanding of these concepts from the class readings and materials. Discussing the essays in class will foster informed communication.

Format
Essay Style - 5 typed pages with an introduction to your essay, paragraphs that develop your main essay theme, using a minimum of 7 concepts from the list below and using examples from your readings and class materials; add a concluding paragraph that summarizes your main essay theme. Underline each of the concepts in your essay paper, making sure that you have explained each and applied each in an appropriate manner.

Due: March 3, 1998 - all written essays and in class reports and discussion. (See syllabus)

Essay Themes
(Choose among the following themes to develop your essay)
1. The mass media are pervasive of our social world and impacts on our daily living in society in this "information society". Discuss from your readings in the course the ways the mass media are important in our social world, particularly the convergence of news, information, and entertainment forms. Include in your essay a section on how you "imagine life without the mass media".

2. Mass communication media, using the production perspective in sociology, is shaped by the technology, economics (commercial goals), and politics (laws and rules). Include in your discussion the projections of new media technology. Analyze how the incorporation and conglomeration of these industries will increase diversity or decrease diversity. What advantages and disadvantages do you foresee?

3. All societies have "regulations" over the media industries. Communications workers (writers, producers, editors, and others who work in the mass media) must work with these regulations. Discuss the rules and ethics that effect the media; you may use recent debates about the media debate about the alleged scandals & the investigations involving the President/White House along with your readings.

Concepts
(Use a minimum of 7 in your essay; underline them each time they are used)
media/mass media, technological change, production perspective, effects of media; information society, politics, power, ideology, economics, corporations/conglomerates; impact of conglomeration, communications media effects, homogenization thesis, press monopoly, media systems, interpersonal and mass mediated communications; laws, rules, ethics.
Outline Essay Assignment #2:

Objectives
The main purpose of the second essay assignment is to enable you to develop a persuasive argument on a media content theme. Drawing from your readings in MM and MS, and using your impressions & ideas from the diversity of media that you use will be the basis for your essay. You will develop an argument for turning a "negative" idea/image to "positive" one. Learn to identify the negative "stereotype" and to develop the positive "alternative" media image.

Format
Outline with argumentative essay style in 5 typed pages.
Page 1: Make 2 single-spaced lists: List A - "stereotypical" attributes of your theme List B - "alternatives" that could turn the "negative" image to one you consider "positive"
Page 2,3, 4: In sentences & paragraphs, describe the journalistic and fictional sources of your "stereotypes" and make a strongly persuasive argument for how and why the negative stereotype should change to the positive image/idea.
Page 5: Describe the specific media you would use to make an alternative image. Then assess if you think your "alternative" would have the power to influence public ideology.

Themes
Choose your theme among the "cultural portrayals" or "issue themes" that are listed as examples below. You may select one that is not listed; however, check with the professor.
Examples:
- Ethnic and/or racial stereotypes (from Anglo-Americans to Zuni-Americans)
- International stereotypes (nations & peoples in other societies)
- Gender stereotypes (females, males, & other sexualities)
- Age stereotypes (the child/children, the elderly, and others)
- Physical stereotypes (disability; fat/thin & other attributes)
- Occupational stereotypes (journalists, teachers, politicians, lawyers, athletes others)

Research Paper Outline:
Objectives & Purposes
The research paper will enable you to understand the messages & meanings of mass communication content; to learn about content analysis research and its applications; to explore the compelling theme/cultural portrayal of youth/children; to develop analytical and critical skills by doing sociological research and analysis; to practice communicating your ideas based on research.

Steps for Doing the Research
1. Choose the media portrayal from the list of options of greatest interest to you. Possibilities include age (youth/children/childhood) along with class, ethnicity/race, gender, occupational, physical, and other social
status/categories. Media images of children in international war/peace; children in crime/violence; and related themes may be developed.

2. Choose a newspaper, magazine, radio station/program, television station/program, taped recordings and/or film as one medium to sample. These should be accessible to you in your daily use and/or available through the College or another library.

3. Sample/Select the specific news, ads, clips that represent your theme; your time frame will be current coverage and past coverage over a time frame accessible to you. Certain media that have an index (e.g., the New York Times and Newsday) allow for sampling over several years.

4. You will develop content analysis categories, the specific language and graphics items to be counted to establish the pattern. Using the charts, you will code your media.

5. Your paper will be a description of the patterns you found in your analysis; and you will discuss the significance of this pattern by reviewing possible stereotypes and alternative images that are represented. Your charts & samples will be attachments.

6. Your paper will conclude with an explanation for the pattern that you found. You may speculate about the producers and the social effects in your conclusions. It's important to distinguish the content (messages) from the production perspective and social effects issues.

Format

- Proposals (1 typed page presenting items 1-2 above DUE April 2.
- Oral Presentations (from drafts with materials to show class) April 28, 30; May 5.
- Term Paper (10-12 typed pages with cover page; descriptive and analytic text of your paper with an introduction and conclusions; references from other research studies if used; attachments listing all of the media sources that you content analyzed and samples from print; video should be attached also. DUE May 7.

AGE - Youth & Children Theme-List of Media Portrayal Topics (See Step 1)

Ageism Patterns - The Sharp & Blurred Line between the Child/Adult Image
Child/Youth Image - in Poverty, Affluence
Child/Youth Image - in Illness, Health
Child/Youth Image - in War & Peace
Child/Youth Image - in Crime, Violence, other related themes
Child/Youth Image - by Race/ethnicity; Nationality/International
Child/Youth Image - by Gender (female/male/other)
Child/Youth Image - Victims/Empowered
Child/Youth Image - with Physical Disabilities/Abilities
Child/Youth Image - as Commodities, Icons, "Stars"
Child/Youth Image - In Social Settings (e.g. Family; School; Neighborhood, Community; Peer Groups; "Gangs"); at Work; at Play; Athletics; others ...)

Child/Youth Images - In Relationships (with parents; siblings; friends; classmates; figures of authority; objects/things)

**Sample Media (See Steps 2 & 3)**

One newspaper type (e.g. *Newsday*): Whole issues over a selected time period to sample all media portrayals in the news, editorials, ads, cartoons - both word/text and photographs.

One magazine: Choose one (e.g. general interest magazine like *Newsweek* to analyze whole issues of the publication; or choose more than one magazine to analyze whole issues or to analyze sets of feature stories or advertisements).

Other Print Media: Children/Youth Text and Story Books; Child/Youth Produced Magazines/Newsletters (e.g. *KIDS*)

Television: Sample current time block (e.g. Saturday morning programming; other day or other evening blocks and sample type of programming (e.g., TV dramas; TV news; TV talk shows; children's programming).

Films/Movies: Sample dramatic and/or documentary films that feature children/youth as central characters (e.g., *Home Alone; Mommie Dearest; Cinema Paradiso; KIDS*).

Other Broadcast Media: Recorded music by and for youth to analyze the lyrics & music

Other Documentary Media: Personal Family Albums; School Yearbooks; Agency Publicity/Public Relations Booklets/Brochures

**Categories & Codes (See Step 4)**

Each project will have distinct categories & codes. Help will be provided after your proposal is submitted. We’ll review how to chart the categories and code the media on your theme in class.