

# **SOCY 31 Youth and Society**

Spring Quarter 2014

Class Meets in Carson 060, 2A: TR 2:00–3:50pm (X-hour: W 4:15-5:05pm)

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

## ***Course Description:***

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

## ***Learning Objectives:***

By the end of this course, students will:

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

## ***Course Requirements and Evaluation:***

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

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

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

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

Other readings are available on our Blackboard site (marked by “BB” in the class schedule).

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

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

To supplement our in-class discussions, I set up weekly discussion boards in Blackboard. I encourage you to post questions and comments on the readings, lectures or discussions as well as news articles related to class. I will check the discussion board an hour before class begins (at 1:00), so I particularly value questions and comments on that day’s readings posted by that time.

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

**PAPERS:** Students will write one 5-6 page, double-spaced paper. The purpose of this assignment is for you to think about how status impacts the social groups of students at your high school. In other words, you will be applying insights from the course to your own sociological examination of aspects of your high school experience. This paper is based on Chapter 3 “Fitting in, Standing Out and Keeping Up” in Murray Milner’s *Freaks, Geeks and Cool Kids*. You must demonstrate understanding and application of material from “Fitting in, Standing Out and Keeping Up” to your own experiences. You will be referring back to his data and comparing and contrasting to your own experiences. More specific guidelines are included in the paper assignment handout.

Percentage of Final Grade		Final Course Grade	
Class Participation	10%	A = 93.0–100	C = 73.0–76.99
Midterm Exam	30%	A– = 90.0–92.99	C– = 70.0–72.99
Final Exam	30%	B+ = 87.0–89.99	D+ = 67.0–69.99
Paper	30%	B = 83.0–86.99	D = 63.0–66.99
		B– = 80.0–82.99	D– = 60.0–62.99
		C+ = 77.0–79.99	F < 60.0

## ***Course Guidelines and Policies:***

*Honor Principle:* Examinations and assignments will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor detailed in the Dartmouth Organization, Regulations and Courses. I also encourage students to read Dartmouth's statement on Sources and Citations:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/>

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

*Students with Disabilities:* Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible, and by the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested. Information about Student Accessibility Services is available at: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~accessibility/>

*Missed Classes:* Students should notify the instructor of any anticipated absences. In the event that you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for getting class notes for that class from another student. As a general policy, I do not make my notes available. If you miss more than three days of class, your course grade will decrease by one whole letter grade, and decrease by one step (e.g., B to B-) for each additional absence.

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

*Classroom Etiquette:* Disruptions to class negatively affect everyone's ability to learn. Everyone should arrive to class on time and not leave early. If you must arrive late or leave early, please notify the instructor in advance and sit by the door to minimize disruptions. It is inappropriate to use cell phones in class or use laptops for activities outside of taking notes (such as email or facebook). Doing so will negatively impact your participation grade.

## ***Class Schedule:***

<b>DATE</b>		<b>TOPIC AND READINGS</b>
3/25 3/27	T R	<u><i>Week 1: Introduction to Course and to the History of Childhood</i></u> No Readings Corsaro, Introduction & Chapter 1
4/1 4/3	T R	<u><i>Week 2: Studying Children and Childhood: Theoretical Approaches</i></u> Corsaro, Chapter 2-3 Corsaro, Chapter 4 -5
4/8 4/10	T R	<u><i>Week 3: Preschool Children</i></u> Corsaro, Chapters 6-7 (BB) Bernice Pescosolido et al., "Culture and Conflict" (BB) Debra Van Ausdale and Joe R. Feagin, "Play Groups and Racial-Ethnic Matters"
4/15 4/17	T R	<u><i>Week 4: Preadolescents/Elementary School Students</i></u> (BB) Barrie Thorne, "Creating a Sense of 'Opposite Sides'" (BB) Gary Alan Fine, "Moral Socialization: Peer Concerns" (BB) Malcolm Gladwell, "Do Parents Matter?" (BB) Ruthann Mayes-Elma, "From Miley Merchandising to Pop Princess Peddling: The Hannah Montana Phenomenon"
4/22	T	<u><i>Week 5: Early Adolescents/Middle School Students</i></u> (BB) Donna Eder, Chapters 5 & 7, "Tough Guys, Wimps and Weanies" and "Learning to Smile through the Pain"
4/24	R	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>
4/29 5/1	T R	<u><i>Week 6: Adolescents/High School Students</i></u> (BB) C. J. Pascoe, "Dude, You're a Fag: Adolescent Male Homophobia" (BB) Murray Milner, "Fitting in, Standing Out and Keeping Up" Schalet, Chapters 1-3
5/6 5/8	T R	<u><i>Week 7: Adolescents/High School Students (cont.)</i></u> Schalet, Chapters 4-6 Schalet, Chapters 7, 8 and Conclusion
5/13 5/15	T R	<u><i>Week 8: Late Adolescents and College Students</i></u> MEET IN RAUNER LIBRARY – Activity on Dartmouth College Culture Moffatt, Chapters 1-3 MEET IN RAUNER LIBRARY – Activity on Dartmouth College Culture Moffatt, Chapters 4, 6 and 7 (Chapter 5 not required)

DATE		TOPIC AND READINGS
5/20	T	<u>Week 9: Late Adolescents and College Students (cont.)</u> (BB) Michael Kimmel, “The Rites of Almost-Men: Binge Drinking, Fraternity Hazing, and the Elephant Walk” (BB) Janet Reitman, “Confessions of an Ivy League Frat Boy: Inside Dartmouth’s Hazing Abuses” <b>PAPER DUE (BRING HARDCOPY TO CLASS)</b>
5/22	R	(BB) Janice McCabe, Chapters from <i>Friends with Academic Benefits</i>
5/27	T	<u>Week 10: The Future of Childhood</u> Corsaro, Chp 8 2-4 recent newspaper articles (exact readings TBA – will be posted on Blackboard at least one week before this date) <b>RECEIVE TAKE-HOME EXAM</b>
6/2	M	<b>FINAL EXAM DUE BY 11:30AM</b>