

SOCb 2504 SOCIOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD

Autumn semester 2019

Lecturer:

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Office: 3.59

Time and place: Thursdays 10:00 – 11:40, U42

Course description

The course introduces students into sociological and cultural perspectives of childhood. Students become familiar with the concepts of child and childhood and their variability within and across societies. The course shows the concept of child and childhood not as biological, universal and natural social entities but as historically and culturally formed social institutions. We will examine childhood in various social and cultural contexts through readings, discussions and seminar projects.

Teaching methods

1. Lectures
2. Seminars
3. Readings
4. Reflection and discussion of readings/movie
5. Student reports/presentations
6. Group discussion leadership
7. Final paper

Evaluation of student's work in the course

Conditions for passing the course:

1. Regular attendance of seminars and active participation in seminar discussions and group work (active participation can be bonified by +2 points for each session)
2. Regular preparation of short reflections on compulsory readings/movie/given topic (150-300 words) (20 %)
3. Report/presentation of recommended readings (20 %)
4. Group discussion leadership (15 %)
5. Final paper (45 %)

Evaluation scale:

96 – 100 points A
90 – 95 points B
80 – 89 points C
70 – 79 points D
60 – 69 points E
59 and less points F

Study materials

Students find study materials as well as instructions to each assignment in the IS – Study Materials or in the library.

Deadlines

Written reflections of readings/movie must be uploaded to Homework Vaults (Reflections) till **Wednesday 12:00** and bring them to the class. Late reflections will not be given points.

Deadline for final paper delivery: **January 15, 2020** (Late submissions will be marked down by 2 points for each day they are late).

Course sessions

Week 1 September 19
Introduction to the course

Week 2 September 26
Childhood in a historical perspective I: Childhood discovered

Compulsory reading:

Ariès, P. (1996). *Centuries of Childhood*. Pimlico. Chapter I. The Idea of Childhood, pp. 15-49 + 128 – 133 (39 p.)

Recommended reading:

Ariès, P. (1996). *Centuries of Childhood*. Pimlico. Chapter I, parts: Childrens' Dress (50-61), A Modest Contribution to the History of Games and Pastimes (62-99), From Immodesty to Innocence (100-127).

deMause, L. (1995). The Evolution of Childhood. In L. deMause (Ed.), *The History of Childhood* (pp. 1-83). Northvale: Jason Aronson.

Cunningham, Hugh. (2005). *Children and childhood in western society since 1500* Pearson Longman.

Zelizer, V. (1994) *Pricing the Priceless Child: The changing social value of children*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Week 3 October 3

Childhood in a historical perspective II: Disappearing childhood

Compulsory reading:

Postman, N. (1994). *The Disappearance of Childhood*. Vintage Books. Chapter 1: When There Were No Children, pp. 3 -19 (16 p.)

Recommended reading:

Postman, N. (1994). *The Disappearance of Childhood*. Vintage Books. Chapters 2, 5, 7, 8.

Hoikkala, T., Rahkonen, L., Tigerstedt, C. and Tuormaa, J. 1987. Wait a minute, Mr. Postman! Some critical remarks on Neil Postman's childhood theory. *Acta Sociologica* 30(1), s. 87 -99.

Week 4 October 10

Cross-cultural perspectives on childhood I

Compulsory reading:

Lancy, D. F. (2008). *The Anthropology of Childhood. Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition. Chapter 2: Valuing children, pp. 26 – 74 (48 p.)

Recommended reading:

Lancy, D. F. (2008). *The Anthropology of Childhood. Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition. Chapters 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Week 5 October 17

Cross-cultural perspectives on childhood II

Compulsory reading:

Lancy, D. F. (2008). *The Anthropology of Childhood. Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition. Chapter 4: It takes a village, pp. 120 – 163 (43 p.)

Homework: Movie Babies (2010) + written reflection (150-300 words)

Recommended reading:

Folber, N., Bittman, M. (2004). *Family Time. The Social Organization of Care*. Routledge.

Douglas, S. and Michaels, M. (2004) *The Mommy Myth: The idealization of motherhood and how it has undermined all women*. New York: Free Press.

Week 6 October 24
Cultural politics of childhood

Compulsory reading:

James, A., & James, A., L. (2004). *Constructing Childhood. Theory Policy and Social Practice*. New York: Palgrave, Chapter 2, pp. 29 – 47 (18 p.)

Recommended reading:

James, A., & James, A., L. (2004). *Constructing Childhood. Theory Policy and Social Practice*. New York: Palgrave, Chapters 3 and 4

Week 7 October 31
Reading week - no class!

Week 8 November 7
Childhood and education

Compulsory reading:

James, A., & James, A., L. (2004). *Constructing Childhood. Theory Policy and Social Practice*. New York: Palgrave, chapter 5, s. 117 – 139 (22 p.)

Recommended reading:

Kaščák, O. & Pupala, B. (2013). "Buttoning up the gold collar — The child in neoliberal visions of early education and care." *Human Affairs* 23 (2), s. 319 - 337
Illich, I. 1995. *Deschooling Society*. Marion Boyars Publishers Ltd.

Week 9 November 14
Childhood in socialism and post-socialism

Compulsory reading:

Mead, M.A., Silova, I. (2013) "Literacies of (post)socialist childhood: alternative readings of socialist upbringings and neoliberal futures." *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 11:2, 194-222 (28 p.)

Recommended reading:

Tesar, M. (2013) „Socialist memoirs: the production of political childhood subjectivities“ *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 11:2, 223-238
Kašparová, I. (2018). "Growing up as Vicar's Daughter in Communist Czechoslovakia: Politics, Religion and Childhood Agency Examined." In *Silova Iveta; Piattoeva Nelli; Millei Zsuzsa. Childhood and Schooling in (Post)Socialist Societies: Memories of everyday life*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. s. 87-105.

Week 10 November 21
Childhood, education, socialism

Movie Buried Letters, director Tomáš Kudrna (screening and discussion)

Homework assignment: written reflection of the movie (deadline November 24)

Recommended reading:

Zsuzsa Millei (2013) Memory and kindergarten teachers' work: children's needs before the needs of the socialist state, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 11:2, 170-193.

Week 11 November 28
"Other" childhoods

Compulsory reading:

Bezzi, C. (2013) Romanian 'Left Behind' Children? Experiences of Transnational Childhood and Families in Europe. *Martor. Revue d'Anthropologie du Musée du Paysan Roumain* 18: 57-74. (17 p.)

Recommended reading:

Kašparová, I. *Free to learn? Homeschool and Cosmology of Education in the current Czech Republic* (manuscript)

Lareau, A. (2003) *Unequal Childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Week 12 December 5
How to research children and childhood?

Compulsory reading:

Hunleth, J. (2011). Beyond on or with: Questioning power dynamics and knowledge production in 'child-oriented' research methodology. *Childhood*, 18(1), 81-93. (12 p.)

Recommended reading:

James, A. (2001). Ethnography in the Study of Children and Childhood. In Atkinson, P. Coffey, A., Delamont, S. Lofland, J., Lofland, L. (eds.) *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: SAGE, s. 246 - 257.

Levine, R. A. (2007). Ethnographic Studies of Childhood: A Historical Overview. *American Anthropologist* 109 (2), s. 247 - 260.

Week 13 December 12
Conclusion of the course