

INTS 312 – 002 *Images & Experiences of Childhood*

Fall 2016 Thursdays 10:30am – 1:10pm

Innovation 209

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Enterprise 406

Office Hours by appointment

This multidisciplinary course considers childhood from a number of different perspectives, with the goal of realizing the various images and experiences of childhood throughout history. Using the humanities and social sciences, as well as contemporary media and popular culture, students will examine the cultural beliefs and values which define this crucial stage in human development and explore issues of adversity and resiliency in childhood. *This course earns 1 credit of experiential learning and students must successfully complete the experiential learning component to pass the course.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Comprehend that the images and experiences of childhood have varied throughout history, as well as culturally and geographically.
- Understand how demographics, politics, religion and economics have shaped our changing images and experiences of childhood.
- Discuss the various dimensions of adversity in childhood and investigate children's levels of vulnerability and resiliency in the face of these difficulties.
- Examine the interventions of adults, historical and contemporary, to improve children's lives.
- Develop a range of skills, tools and questions for analyzing various texts relating to childhood.
- Demonstrate college-level oral and written communication skills.
- Apply skills that will facilitate collaborative learning.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Children & Childhood in Western Society Since 1500* (2nd edition), Hugh Cunningham
- *Wonder*, R.J. Palacio
- *How Children Succeed*, Paul Tough

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

- Participation 10%
- In-class Test 30%
- Analytic Essay 20%
- Experiential Learning 25%
- Final Essay 15%

Participation = 10%. Collaborative learning is an important feature of learning communities. Students are expected to attend class (arriving on time and remaining until the end of the session), to participate actively and responsibly, and to hand in all assignments when due. Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts. ***Laptops or tablets are permitted for the purpose of note-taking only. Engaging in activities that are unrelated to class show disrespect to your peers and instructor and will result in a deduction in your participation grade.

In-class Test = 30%. There will be an in-class exam on prior material covered (historical context).

Analytic Essay = 20%. This essay will analyze your learning in the course using textual evidence. A detailed description of requirements will be given out.

Experiential Learning = 25%.

You will interview in-person fifteen people, males and females, of varying ages. You will submit fifteen interview transcripts and a final summary & analysis paper. Included in your interview group should be at least two people that fall into each of the below categories. One person may “count” toward two categories (e.g. over the age of 60 and raised outside of the USA).

- Between the ages of 19 - 30
- Between the ages of 31 - 45
- Between the ages of 46 – 59
- Over the age of 60
- Raised outside the USA

You need to ask the following questions of everyone during your interviews, and you may ask others that are relevant to the conversation and our class themes.

- How would you describe yourself as a child (shy, energetic, studious, serious, silly, scared, etc.)?
- What is a pleasant memory from your childhood?
- Do you feel you faced any sort of adversity as a child (poverty, bullying, illness, violence, danger, etc.)? If so, do you mind sharing that experience?
- Who were major influences or role models for you as a child?
- Can you remember a specific experience or incident when you realized you were no longer a child? Tell more if so.
- On a scale of 5 – 1, with 5 being “excellent” and 1 being “poor”, how would you rate your childhood overall?
- Has the world changed since you were a child? How so or not?
- Do you have any regular interaction with children in your life? How so?
- Are children today different then when you were a child? How so or not?

After each interview you should have a typewritten transcript of the interview that includes the questions and answers in their entirety (either tape record the interview – with the interviewee’s permission – and then transcribe the recording, or take detailed notes of the interviewee’s responses to your questions and type the responses up immediately afterward).

Upon conducting all fifteen interviews, you will write a 4 - 6 page summary and analysis of the entire interview process. In this, you will reflect on the interviews themselves:

- Discuss how you chose your participants and each person’s comfort-level during the interview.
- What was difficult, what was easy, what was surprising, what was expected, etc.?
- Were any questions particularly hard for them to answer?
- Did any seem “favorites” that they enjoyed answering?
- What similarities and differences do you see among all answers given?
- Can you detect any patterns, and if so, what are they and what do you think produced them?
- How did this exercise connect to course topics and/or texts?
- What did this exercise add to your understanding of the images and experiences of childhood?

Final Assignment = 15%. The final assignment will demonstrate integrative learning and should include analysis of your learning in the course using textual evidence. A detailed description of requirements will be given out and the assignment will be due on **December 15 by 10:30am**.

Last Day to Add = September 6, 2016

Last Day to Drop = September 30, 2016

Elective Withdrawal Period = October 3-28, 2016

POLICIES:

Late Work. Assignments are to be turned in to the instructors at the beginning of class on the day due.

Assignments will be reduced one letter grade per day late (including Saturdays & Sundays). No work will be accepted over one week late a prior approved extension, a without a valid written medical excuse, or notice of death in the family. Please do not plan to turn work in to your instructor's mailbox unless you have specific permission to do so. Unless specifically stipulated, work should be submitted in class in hard copy format; emailed and faxed material is not acceptable.

Academic Integrity

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. **No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.** Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of theft of intellectual property and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me by the second week of class to discuss your accommodation needs.

Privacy

Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of any course. For that reason, students are required to use their Mason email to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I cannot respond to messages sent from, or send messages to, a non-Mason email address.

Diversity & Inclusion

The School of Integrative Studies, an intentionally inclusive community, promotes and maintains an equitable and just work and learning environment. We welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and disability.

- We value our diverse student body and desire to increase the diversity of our faculty and staff.
- We commit to supporting students, faculty and staff who have been the victims of bias and discrimination.
- We promote continuous learning and improvement to create an environment that values diverse points of view and life experiences.
- We believe that faculty, staff and students play a role in creating an environment that engages diverse points of view.
- We believe that by fostering their willingness to hear and learn from a variety of sources and viewpoints, our students will gain competence in communication, critical thinking and global understanding, aware of their biases and how they affect their interactions with others and the world.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT GRADING STANDARDS

All assignments are due at the beginning of class as noted in the daily schedule and must be typed using 11 or 12 point font and one-inch margins, double-spaced, and stapled. You must correctly and consistently use a recognized citation style, such as MLA, APA, Chicago Manual, etc. For a summary of the styles, visit <http://classweb.gmu.edu/nccwg/researchguide.htm>. As in all classes, you should keep a copy of all work submitted for possible use in your graduation portfolio.

Score of A: Superior

- Addresses the topic fully and explores the issue thoughtfully.
- Shows substantial depth, fullness and complexity of thought.
- Demonstrates clear, focused, coherent, and logical organization.
- Is fully developed and detailed. The point is clear and well stated.
- Good introduction with clear thesis statement, and an effective conclusion.
- Evidences superior control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition between paragraphs; only a few minor flaws.
- Integrates evidence from texts to support ideas and arguments.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

Score of B: Strong

- Clearly addresses the topic and explores the issue.
- Shows some depth and complexity of thought.
- Is effectively organized. Easy to follow and understand.
- Is well developed, with supporting detail. Logically coherent.
- Demonstrates control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition; may have a few minor mechanical flaws.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

Score of C: Competent

- Adequately addresses the topic and explores the issue.
- Shows clarity of thought but may lack complexity.
- Is organized. Can be followed with some difficulty.
- Is adequately developed, with some detail. Some logical fallacies or incoherent sentences/paragraphs.
- Demonstrates competent writing; shows some flaws in syntax and grammar.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

Score of D: Weak

- May distort or neglect parts of the topic.
- May be simplistic or stereotyped in thought.
- May demonstrate problems in organization.
- May have generalizations without supporting detail or detail without generalizations; may be undeveloped. Logically flawed; several incoherencies.
- May reveal patterns of flaws in language, syntax or mechanics.
- Improper citation method.

Score of F: Inadequate

- Demonstrates serious inadequacy in addressing the topic.
- Fails in its attempts to discuss the topic. Illogical.
- May be deliberately off-topic. Extremely difficult to follow.
- Is so incompletely developed as to suggest or demonstrate incompetency.
- Is wholly incompetent mechanically.
- Improper citation method.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Some adjustments to the assignments and/or weekly schedule may be made during the semester and it is the responsibility of students to stay informed about possible changes in activities or assignments.

- 9/1: **Introduction to the course / Expectations**
Discuss Cunningham Introduction & Chapter 1
- 9/8: **Historical Perspective of Childhood**
Discuss Cunningham Chapters 2 & 3
- 9/15: Discuss Cunningham Chapters 4 & 5
Images of Childhood: Middle Ages – 19th Century
- 9/22: Discuss Cunningham Chapter 6
Images of Childhood: Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine
View & discuss *Orphan Trains*
- 9/29: Discuss Cunningham Chapters 7
- 10/6: View & discuss *Consuming Kids* and *The End of Childhood?*
Discuss Cunningham Chapters 8
- 10/13: In-class test
- 10/20: **Adversity & Resiliency**
View & discuss *DNA Is Not Destiny*
View & discuss *Using Science to Coach Caregivers* (Harvard Center for Child Development)
Discuss Tough Introduction & Chapter 1
- 10/27: Discuss Tough Chapter 2
View & discuss *Hyper Parents & Coddled Kids*
- 11/3: Review the adversity & resiliency handout
View *Ma Vie En Rose*
*Analytic Essay assigned
- 11/10: Discuss *Wonder*
* Analytic Essay due
- 11/17: Discuss Tough Chapter 3
- 11/24: *Thanksgiving Holiday – class does not meet*
- 12/1: Discuss Tough Chapters 4 & 5
View & discuss *Are We Crazy About Our Kids*
*EL Project due
- 12/8: View & discuss *Children of Heaven*
Course Evaluations
*Final Essay assigned
- 12/15 Final Essay due by 10:30am in Enterprise 406 (class does not meet)