

HIST 4863/6863: History of Childhood in America

Fall 2011, Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:20-11:15 AM
Mitchell Hall 315

Professor Sarah Potter
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Office hours: Monday, 3-5:00 PM, and by appointment

Course Description:

This course examines the history of children and youth from the colonial period to the present. In this course, we will outline changing ideas about children and childhood: who is a child? What role do children play in society? We will also consider this history from children's point of view: how have children's lives, experiences, games, and expectations changed? Finally, we will explore the changing politics of childhood: who speaks for children and has authority over them? What is the relationship between children/childhood and citizenship?

This course has two primary goals: 1) Students will be able to describe the key changes in American childhood since the colonial period, and will be able to articulate how social differences of race, class, and gender intersect with these transformations. 2) Students will practice reading and analyzing both primary and secondary texts. Students will gain experience interpreting primary sources in historical context. They will also consider historical evidence and argumentation in secondary texts.

Books:

The following books are required and have been ordered at the University of Memphis Bookstore:

- Thomas Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2000)
Wilma King, *Stolen Childhood: Slave Youth in Nineteenth-Century America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995)
Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (1968; reprint, New York: Dell Mass Market Paperback, 1992)
David Nasaw, *Children of the City: At Work and At Play* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)
William M. Tuttle, Jr., "*Daddy's Gone to War*": *The Second World War in Lives of America's Children* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993)

In addition, a number of required readings will be posted on this course's website (denoted by an asterisk on this syllabus). You are expected to print these readings and to bring them to class with you.

You also must purchase one 8.5"x11" blue book for the final exam.

You may also purchase and read Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2004) if you would like more background on course material. This book is not required.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Class participation

You are expected to attend this class regularly and to participate respectfully and thoughtfully in class discussions. Although I will provide contextualizing information in my lectures, at least one entire class each week will be spent discussing the assigned readings together as a group. You are required to do the readings and to come to class prepared to talk about them. Your class participation grade will have two parts: weekly quizzes and your verbal participation in our class discussions.

Weekly Quizzes, 100 points

Every Friday (except where noted in the syllabus) there will be a quiz on the reading. These quizzes will vary in their format—some will be multiple choice, some True/False, some short writing assignments. You may not use your reading or notes on the quizzes. Two quiz grades will be dropped.

Verbal Participation in class discussions and activities, 100 points

I also expect you to contribute to our class discussions and activities. You should participate regularly, but talking simply to talk will not boost your grade. Instead, your contributions to class discussions will be evaluated for their thoughtfulness and content as well as their frequency. Everyone will begin the semester

with a B/B- (83 points) for participation. If you come to class regularly and pay attention, but only rarely participate, your score will remain a B/B-. Your score will go up as you participate in course activities and discussions. It will go down in response to disruptive and/or rude class behavior, sleeping in class or other forms of inattentiveness, or if you miss more than 6 class sessions (see Professional Standards below).

Midterm paper, 200 points

You will write a 3-5 page midterm paper on material from the first half of the course. I will give you a choice of questions the week before the paper is due, and we will review the elements of a good paper in class. This paper is due Friday, October 21, at 5:00 PM. Late papers will be penalized 15 points for each 24 hours they are late. In addition to handing in a hard copy of the paper at my office, you are also to turn in your paper to the online dropbox on the course website. Your assignment is not complete until I have received both copies.

Final paper, 300 points

You will write a final paper in which you will historicize the childhood of an older family member or friend. This paper should be 6-8 pages. More details on this assignment will be provided later in the semester. This paper is due Wednesday, December 7, in class. Late papers will be penalized 15 points for each 24 hours they are late. In addition to handing in a hard copy of the paper in class, you are also to turn in your paper to the online dropbox. Your assignment is not complete until I have received both copies.

Final exam, 300 points

There will be a final, cumulative exam for this course. This exam will involve short and long answer essay questions. It will assess your knowledge and comprehension of the materials and skills we are learning in this class, and you should be well prepared for it if you keep up with ongoing assignments and activities. More information will be provided to help you prepare as the exam approaches. No make-up exam will be offered, so do not take this course if you know in advance that you cannot attend the exam on Thursday, December 12, 8:00-10:00 AM.

Extra Credit, 30 points

Students who wish to earn extra points in this course may do a small research project and presentation on the history of the toy of their choice. Each student must research a different toy and the toy cannot be something we have already discussed at length in class, so students wishing to do this assignment must consult with me via email about their plans by 5:00 PM on Monday, November 14. For the extra points, you will do a 5-minute presentation to the class about the history of your toy and turn in a 2-page paper about your toy. Your paper and presentation will be graded for up to 30 points of extra credit. You may not use Wikipedia or similar sites for your research, and you must cite at least one scholarly source in your paper (ie, a book or journal article). This assignment is due in class and to the online dropbox on Monday, November 28. Late papers or presentations will not be accepted.

You can earn a total of 1030 points in this course. Grades will be translated into letter grades on the following scale: A: 930-1030; A-: 900-929; B+: 870-899; B: 830-869; B-: 800-829; C+: 770-799; C: 730-769; C-: 700-729; D+: 670-699; D: 600-669; F: 0 -599

Graduate Students:

Graduate students are expected to attend all class sessions and complete all assignments on the syllabus except for the final paper and the extra credit. In addition, please refer to the separate sheet of graduate student assignments to see additional requirements and assignments.

Professional standards:

I expect you to always be *respectful to your colleagues and to me in class*. We are on this intellectual journey together, and we will treat each other fairly and kindly to make this a rewarding experience for everyone. I will penalize rude, inattentive, disrespectful, or disruptive behavior in the class participation portion of your grade.

I expect you to *attend class regularly and on time*. You are allowed 6 absences in this class. There are NO EXCUSED ABSENCES IN THIS CLASS. At your 7th absence, your class participation grade will go down 50 points. At your 9th absence, you will fail the course. If there are extenuating circumstances, it is at my discretion as to whether adjust this penalty. You are responsible for making up any material you miss while absent. If you are late and I count you absent, it will remain counted as an absence. You are also expected to stay in class during class time.

Cell phones must be turned off and remain out of sight during class. No texting.

No laptops may be used in this class. If you have a learning disability or there is some other reason you need to use a laptop, you must come talk to me in the first two weeks of class.

You should *check the course website* and your *University of Memphis email account regularly*. Emails to me should be from your University of Memphis account. They are professional correspondence, and should include a salutation (Dear or Hi Dr. Potter) and your reason for writing in complete, grammatically correct sentences. Emails should close with a “Thank you,” your name, and the number/name of this course.

Any student who may need class or test accommodations based on *the impact of a disability* is encouraged to speak with me privately to discuss your specific needs. Students with disabilities should also contact Student Disability Services (SDS) at 110 Wilder Tower, 678-2880. SDS coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

I expect you to *adhere to the University of Memphis Code of Student Conduct regarding academic misconduct*, which “defines academic misconduct as all acts of cheating, plagiarism, forgery and falsification.” For the details of this policy, please see the “University of Memphis Code of Student Conduct – Academic Dishonesty” online at <http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/dishonesty/definitions.htm>. For more information and for guidelines on how to appropriately cite materials written by other authors in your work, please see the History Department’s policy on academic misconduct (http://history.memphis.edu/misconduct_policy.html) and the Department’s “Advice about plagiarism and using sources” (http://history.memphis.edu/misconduct_plagiarism.html). You should also feel free to talk to me if you have questions about my policies and expectations for the papers and exam. If you commit academic dishonesty I will report the infraction.

University Statement on Turnitin.com: “Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.” (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

Course Schedule

Below is the schedule of assigned readings for the course. I might make substitutions, additions, or other changes to this syllabus. I will announce all changes in class and post them on the class website.

Week 1: Introduction to the Course, Colonial Childhoods

Monday, August 29: Introduction to the course

Wednesday, August 31: Introductions, Colonial Childhood

Friday, September 2: Discussion of Reading

Be ready for your first quiz on the readings today!

Readings:

Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, chapter 4 (pp. 57-76)*

Fass & Mason, Document 77, Colonial Document, Family Instruction in Early Massachusetts (1648), pp. 286-87*

Fass & Mason, Document 137, Colonial Document, The Family in the Social Order (1642), pp. 537-38*

Fass & Mason, Document 64, Colonial Documents, Apprentices, Servants, and Child Labor (1659-1740), pp. 244-47*

Week 2: Early American Childhoods

Monday, September 5: Labor Day, No Class

Wednesday, September 7: Childhood in the American Revolution and the early Nineteenth Century

Friday, September 9: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, Chapters 5 and 6 (pp. 76-119)*
Fass & Mason, Document 12, John Locke, "The Use of Reason in Child Rearing" (1690), pp. 45-48*
Fass & Mason, Document 66, Benjamin Franklin, "Choosing a Trade" (1791), pp. 249-250*
Fass & Mason, Document 13, Maria Edgeworth, "Toys" (1825), pp. 49-51*
Fass & Mason, Document 56, Horace Bushnell, "A Milder and Warmer Family Government" (1849), pp. 216-17*

Week 3: Childhood in the Slave South

Monday, September 12: Enslaved Childhood,

Wednesday, September 14: Children and the Civil War

Friday, September 16: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

King, *Stolen Childhood*, Chapters 1-3 (pp. 1-65)

James W. C. Pennington, excerpt from *The Fugitive Blacksmith; or, Events in the History of James W. C. Pennington, Pastor of a Presbyterian Church, New York, Formerly a Slave in the State of Maryland* (1849), pp. 207-228*

Kate Stone Holmes, excerpts from *Brokenburn: The Journal of Kate Stone, 1861-1869*, pp. 13-31, 364-78*

Week 4: Poor, Working-class, and Immigrant Children in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Monday, September 19: Immigration, Poverty, and Child Labor

Wednesday, September 21: Childsavers: Orphanages, Institutions, and the State

Friday, September 23: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Nasaw, *Children in the City*, chapters 1-3 and 9-10 (pp. 1-47, 130-157)

Fass & Mason, Document 98, Charles Loring Brace and His Critics, "Placing Orphan Children with Farm Families" (1880-1894), pp. 359-66*

Fass & Mason, Document 141, Government Documents, The Children's Bureau (1906-1915), pp. 555-58*

Fass & Mason, Document 159, Rose Cohen, "A Russian Jewish Girlhood on the Lower East Side" (1918), pp. 627-31*

Week 5: Turn-of-the-Century Kid Culture and Parental Anxiety

Monday, September 26: Children's Toys

Wednesday, September 28: Psychology, Advice Literature, and Parental Anxiety

Friday, September 30: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, Chapters 9-10 (pp. 158-202)

Lisa Jacobson, *Raising Consumers: Children and the American Mass Market in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), Chapter 5 (pp. 160-182)*

Fass & Mason, Document 14, L. Emmett Holt, "The Cry" (1903), pp. 52-53*

Fass & Mason, Document 38, G. Stanley Hall, "The Physiology and Psychology of Adolescence" (1904), pp. 139-141*

Fass & Mason, Document 15, John B. Watson, "Too Much Mother Love" (1928), pp. 54-55*

Week 6: Growing up Jim Crow

Monday, October 3: Emancipation, Growing Up Jim Crow

Wednesday, October 5: Scottsboro

Friday, October 7: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

King, *Stolen Childhood*, Chapter 7 (pp. 141-167)

Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Parts I and II

Week 7: Childhood During the Depression

Monday, October 10: Conditions of the Great Depression, Youth and the New Deal

Wednesday, October 12: Riding the Rails

Friday, October 14: Discussion of Reading

I will give out the midterm paper topic today.

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, Chapter 11 (pp. 203-224)

Bradford W. Wright, *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), Chapter 1 (pp. 1-29)*

Week 8: Fall Break, MIDTERM PAPERS DUE!!!

Monday, October 17: Fall Break, No class

Wednesday, October 19: Office hours to discuss papers

Friday, October 21:

MIDTERM PAPER DUE TODAY BY 5:00 PM!!! Slide a hard copy under my office door (111 Mitchell Hall) if I am not there to take it. You also must post a copy to the online dropbox.

Week 9: Childhood Across Race in the 1940s

Monday, October 24: Children and World War II

Wednesday, October 26: Japanese Internment

Friday, October 28: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Tuttle, *Daddy's Gone to War*, Chapters 1-3 and 12-13 (pp. 3-48, 212-235)

Stanley Hayami Diary from Zlata Filipovic and Melanie Challenger, *Stolen Voices: Young People's War Diaries, From World War I to Iraq*, pp. 135-43*

Week 10: Children and Teenagers in the 1950s

Monday, October 31: The Baby Boom: Childhood in the Age of Suburbs and Dr. Spock

Wednesday, November 2: Teenagers in an Era of Conformity

Friday, November 4: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, Chapter 12 (pp. 225-248)

Susan J. Douglass, *Where the Girls Are: Growing up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), Chapters 1-2 (pp. 21-60)*

Benjamin Spock, M. D., *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1946), pps. 1-31*

Week 11: Childhood and Civil Rights

Monday, November 7: Children, Youth, and Civil Rights

Wednesday, November 9: Voices of Civil Rights

Friday, November 11: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, Parts III and IV

Week 12: Childhood and Youth in the 1960s

Monday, November 14: Changes in Childhood in the 1960s

If you wish to do the extra credit assignment, you need to email me about your toy by 5:00 today.

Wednesday, November 16: Youth Activism in the 1960s

Friday, November 18: Discussion of Reading

Reading quiz today.

Reading:

Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (1987; revised edition, New York: Bantam Books, 1993),
Chapters 1-2 (pp. 11-44)*

“Declarations for Changing Times: Student Protest Manifestos from the 1960s” from *Going to the Source: The Bedford Reader in American History, Volume 2: Since 1865* (revised edition, New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007),
Chapter 13 (pp. 289-316)*

Week 13: 1970s and Beyond: Parental Panics

Monday, November 21: Parental Panics

I will give more information on your final paper assignment today.

No reading quiz this week, but there is required reading.

Reading:

Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, Chapter 1 (pp. 10-26)

John Demos, *The Enemy Within: 2,000 Years of Witch-hunting in the Western World* (New York: Viking, 2008), pp.
274-292*

Fass & Mason, Document 20, T. Berry Brazelton, “Mothers and Fathers Working and Rearing Children” (1995), pp.
72-74*

Fass & Mason, Document 102, Arlene Skolnick, “Solomon’s Children: The New Biologism, Psychological Parenthood,
Attachment Theory, and the Best Interests Standard” (1998), pp. 381-86*

Wednesday, November 23: Class canceled for Thanksgiving Holiday

Friday, November 25: Thanksgiving Holiday, no class

Week 14: Contemporary Issues in Childhood, Extra Credit Presentations

The class plans and required readings for Wednesday and Friday of this week will be announced later in the semester.

We will meet for all three classes.

Monday, November 28: Extra Credit Presentations and Papers Due!

Wednesday, November 30: TBA

Friday, December 2: TBA

Reading quiz today. Reading TBA.

Week 15: Catch Up Day, Final Exam Review, FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS!!!

Monday, December 5: Catch Up Day

Wednesday, December 7: FINAL PAPERS DUE IN CLASS!!!, Final Exam Review

FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 8:00-10:00 AM