

The University of Maryland, College Park
College of Education

EDCI 788I:
Cultural Texts, Critical Theories, and American Youth
Course Syllabus
Fall, 2005

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Marshall
Office: 2304 Benjamin Building
Office Hours: 3:00-4:00 Wednesdays & by appointment
Phone: 301.405.2985
Email: emarshal@umd.edu

Course Overview

This graduate seminar draws on a variety of critical theories to examine the multiple and contradictory representations of American youth in cultural texts read by, and/or produced for or about children and adolescents. The questions that guide this course include,

- In what ways are childhood and adolescence represented in cultural texts across time?
- How are femininities and masculinities constructed in cultural texts for children and adolescents?
- In what ways do the various textual representations of American youth resist or conform to dominant cultural narratives about coming-of-age?
- How are class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity constructed within cultural texts written about, read by, and/or produced for American youth?

Required Texts

Harterter, B. (2003). Geography club. NY: HarperTempest.
Hernández, D. and B. Rehman (Eds.). (2002). Colonize this!: Young women of color on today's feminism. WA: Seal Press.
Hidier, T. Born confused. NY: Scholastic Press.
Inness, S. A. (Ed.). (1998). Delinquents and debutantes. NY: New York U Press.
Lesko, N. (2002). Act your age! NY: Routledge.
Kaysen, S. (1993). Girl, interrupted. NY: Turtle Bay Books.
Keene, C. (1991/facsimile). The hidden staircase. MA: Applewood. ISBN: 1557091560.
Salinger, J. D. (1951). The catcher in the rye. NY: Little Brown & Co.
Sapphire. (1996). Push: A novel. NY: Random House.

Additional Texts

Austin, J. and M. N. Willard. (Eds.). (1998). Generations of youth: Youth cultures and history in twentieth-century America. NY: New York U. P.
Bruhm, S. and N. Hurley. (Eds.). (2004). Curiouser: On the queerness of children. MN: U of Minn. P.

- Driscoll, C. (2002). Girls: Feminine adolescence in popular culture and cultural theory. NY: Columbia U. P.
- Foucault, M. (1995/reprint). Discipline and punish. NY: Vintage.
- Kidd, K. (2004). Making American Boys: Boyology and the Feral Tale. MN: U. of Minn. P.
- Leadbeater, B. and N. Way. (1996). Urban girls: Resisting stereotypes, creating identities. NY: New York U. P.
- Palladino, G. Teenagers: An American History. NY: Basic Books.

Course Requirements

Participation/Class Discussion: 200 points

I expect you to attend all scheduled classes. Be on time. Late arrivals disrupt other students and our class time.

Completing course readings and attending class means you meet the basic requirements for the class (a "C"). My expectation is that you will do outside reading and research, and come to class prepared to make a unique contribution to our seminar. Your participation grade also includes periodic informal class presentations.

Theory Assignment 100 points

You will attend at least two theoretical talks relevant to your work during the fall semester. You will provide a 1-2 page write up that includes a summary of the speaker's argument, theoretical perspective, evidence, as well as an annotated bibliography of 3-5 relevant readings you might pursue after hearing the talk.

Course List-serve 100 points

Each week you will contribute a short response (1-2 paragraphs) about the assigned readings. Address one or two issues that intrigue you and support your responses with evidence from the text. Craft at least one question for us to consider. I invite you to draw on previous class readings and/or outside readings (biographies, academic articles, etc.). Think of these entries as a chance to develop questions for class discussion and as a place to begin developing paper ideas. These responses should be posted by 3 pm the day of class to, edci788i-0101-fall05@coursemail.umd.edu.

Paper Presentation 100 points

We will create a conference like environment in which you will have 15 minutes to present your work to the class. You will distribute a copy of your paper to your other classmates one week before you present so that they may serve as respondents.

Final Paper: 500 points

You will write a scholarly paper (at least 15-20 pp.) on a topic of your choosing that relates to the course topic. An overview of your final paper (3-5 pages) and an initial bibliography are due on 10/05.

I grade papers according to the following criteria:

- A: A well-organized, well-developed paper that makes an original and compelling argument; uses primary texts and at least five secondary sources
- B+: A well-organized, well-developed paper that includes some originality; uses primary texts and at least three secondary sources
- B: A competent essay that summarizes or compares themes and/or a paper that needs more complex development or clearer focus; uses primary texts and at least two secondary sources.
- C: Paper suffers from lack of development, poor structure, and/or grammar; uses primary texts and at least one secondary source.
- D: Paper doesn't meet the expectations of the course. Suffers from lack of development, poor structure, and/or grammar. Uses only primary texts.

Grading Scale

A = 910-1000

B = 810-900

C = 710-800

D = 700 and below

Note: Please let me know how I can assist you if you require any special accommodations in the course.

Course Outline

*Full text Articles available through UMD's ResearchPort.

All other articles/chapters available on reading reserve in the Benjamin basement curriculum lab under my name.

Aug. 31 **Introductions**

Sept. 07 **Constructing "adolescence"**

Foucault, M. Selections from Discipline and Punish

Zipes, J. Selection from The trials and tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood

Lesko, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2

Visit Kay Vandergrift's history of childhood readings

<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/%7Eekvander/HistoryofChildLit/childhood.html>

14 **Constructing "American" Girlhood**

Keene, C. The Hidden Staircase

Hall, S. "The education of girls." Download at

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/9173>

Delinquents, Chapter 10

Choose one for small group discussion, Delinquents Chapters 1, 2, 5, 9, 11

- 21 **Constructing “American” Boyhood**
 G. Stanley Hall Chapter 1
 *Dean, C. (2000). “Boys and Girls and ‘Boys’: Popular depictions of African American children and childlike adults in the United States, 1850-1930.” Journal of American Culture, 23, 17-35.
****Guest Speaker Nazera Wright**
- 28 **Teenagers**
 Salinger, Catcher in the Rye
Rebel without a Cause
 *Cohen, R. (1997). “*The Delinquents: Censorship and Youth Culture in Recent U.S. History.*” *History of Education Quarterly*, 37, 3, 251-270.
Committee on the Judiciary. “Comic books and juvenile delinquency.”
****In class film analysis, Blackboard Jungle.**
- Oct. 05 Kaysen Girl, Interrupted
Delinquents, Chapter 4
 Brown, L. “A Feminist Critique of the Personality Disorders.”
 Kramer, R. (1969). “Adolescent Stage: It’s for real.” New York Times Magazine, 7 Dec. 116+.
****Paper proposal due.**
- 12 **Contemporary Re-Inventions**
 Pipher, M. “Saplings in the storm”
 * Prose, F. (1990) “Confident at 11, troubled at 16.” New York Times, 7 Jan. 22+
 Harris, A. “The can-do” girl versus the “at risk” girl
 *Hall, S. (1999). “The troubled life of boys: The bully in the mirror” The New York Times. 22 Aug. 31.
 *Kantrowitz, B. & C. Kalb. (1998). “Boys will be boys.” Newsweek, 11 May, 55-60.
 Kidd, K. Selection, Making American Boys.
 Sommers, C. H. (2000). “The war against boys.” Atlantic Monthly
- 19 **Sexualities and American Youth**
Geography club
 Davies, B. (1993). “Beyond dualism and towards multiple subjectivities.”
 Foucault, M., Selection from History of sexuality.
 Halberstam, J. “Oh bondage up yours! Female masculinity and the tomboy.”
 Holland, P. “Gender sexuality and a fantasy for girls.”
 Sedgwick, E. K. “How to bring your kids up gay: The war on effeminate boys.”

- 26 Push: A novel
 Berlant, L. "Live Sex Acts (parental advisory: explicit material.)"
 Fine, M. "Missing Discourse of desire Sexuality, Schooling, and
 Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire."
 Levine, J. "Crimes of passion."
 Tolman, D. "Adolescent girls' sexuality: Debunking the myth of the urban
 girl."
- Nov. 02 **Youth cultures**
 Lesko, Chapter 5 & 6
Delinquents, Chapter 12
 *Mahiri, J. and E. Conner. (2003). "Black youth violence has a bad rap."
 Journal of Social Issues, 59, pp. 121-140.
 *Guzetti, B. and M. Gamboa. "Zines for social justice: Adolescent
 girls writing on their own." Reading Research Quarterly, 39, 408-436.
 Select one for group discussion, Delinquents, Chapters 3, 6, 7, 8, 13
- 09 Born Confused
Colonize This!
 Anzaldúa, G. "La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a new
 consciousness"
 Collins, P. H., selection Black feminist thought
- 16 Colonize This!
 Bhabha, H. (1983). "The Other question: Stereotype, discrimination, and
 the discourse of colonialism." From, The location of culture.
- 23 Paper Panel Presentations/Responses
- 30 Independent Research Day
- Dec. 07 Paper Panel Presentations/ Responses
- 14 Final papers due in my box by 12pm.