

**Fall 2016**  
**Sociology 327: Youth and Society**  
**Dr. Karrie Ann Snyder**  
**Wednesdays and Mondays: 2:00 - 3:20pm**  
Swift Hall 107

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**Mailbox:** 1810 Chicago Avenue

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**Email:** [karrie-snyder@northwestern.edu](mailto:karrie-snyder@northwestern.edu) (best way to contact me!)

**Office hours:** 3:45 to 4:45 - Monday and Wednesdays (no appointment needed)

\*Office hours may change for Reading and Finals week. Please check Canvas!

**Contact info and office hours for teaching assistant:**

TA: Jun (Philip) Fang                      Email: [junfang2015@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:junfang2015@u.northwestern.edu)

Office Hours: 11-12 Tuesdays & 2-3 Thursdays                      Location: Café Bergson (located in the NU Library)

The course will be an examination of how “childhood” and “adolescence” have been defined in the U.S. We will consider how modern and historical conceptions of childhood and adolescence have evolved and how these definitions have been shaped by societal forces and institutions such as the economy, religion, and politics. We will also look at the lives of children/teens themselves and how individuals experience being children, kids, teens, etc. in a particular time and place.

As a class, we will also be very critical of cultural and media portrayals of children and teenagers and ask how these representations reflect and shape how society views youth. We will also look at how childhood itself has been viewed as a social problem throughout history and how this has shaped contemporary issues regarding children. Children and adolescents and their behavior have often been considered to be the root of many social concerns (such as teen pregnancy, gangs, and bullying), but many social problems arise because of society’s feeling that children and young people need to be protected (such as calls to end child labor and the “missing children” awareness movement).

The final topic for the course will be how adolescents make the transition to adulthood socially, emotionally, and economically, and how this transition has changed over time – particularly over the last several decades.

Learning objectives for the course:

- 1) To understand the historical and cultural development of youth life stages (such as teenager, 'tween etc.)
- 2) To critically think about how young people are portrayed in cultural stereotypes and debates, media/entertainment, and social science research agendas.
- 3) To understand how the experience of being a young person differs greatly by gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and generation.
- 4) To investigate how young people make the transition to adulthood today and how this transition is shaped by social status, social norms and current economic conditions.

**Grading and Course Policies**

**Student Evaluation**

Grades will be based on 4 components:

**1) Class Participation – 15%**

- Students are expected to do the assigned readings prior to class. Students are encouraged and expected to bring their insights, questions, and opinions to class. Students are also expected to participate in any online discussions on the course’s Canvas site, group exercises during class, and any discussion assignment given throughout the quarter not listed on the syllabus.

**2) In-Class Midterm – 30% - Wednesday, October 19**

### **3) Analytical Essay – 25% - Due by the beginning of class on Wednesday, November 23**

- Guidelines will be discussed later in the quarter and will be posted to Canvas. Emailed Analytical Essays will not be accepted. Essays must be turned in at the beginning of class on 11/23 or to Dr. Snyder's mailbox at 1810 Chicago Avenue by the due date/time.

### **4) Take-Home Final Exam – 30% - Due Monday, December 5th by 7pm and must be uploaded to Canvas.**

- The Take-Home Final Exam will be distributed during class on Monday, November 21 and will be posted to Canvas after class on November 21. Take-Home Final Exams must be uploaded to Canvas by the deadline.

**NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED and NO MAKEUP MIDTERMS WILL BE GIVEN.**

### **Course Materials – Available at Norris Book Center**

#### **Required Books:**

Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History*

Mintz, *Huck's Raft*

Gaines, *Teenage Wasteland*

Simmons, *Odd Girl Out*

Rios, *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*

Articles marked with \*\*are available through electronic Course Reserves at NU library (accessible through Canvas) OR are publically available on the web at the link following the reading/article.

Additional materials may be required as well and added throughout the semester. Any additional materials will be available electronically through the course website.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what was missed. Please take note of two other students' email addresses. Teaching staff's lecture notes are not available to students.

### **Academic Integrity**

Issues regarding academic integrity will be immediately referred to the Dean's Office. For further information regarding the academic integrity policy at Northwestern, please consult the *Student Handbook* and/or <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/uniprin.html>.

### **ACCESSIBLENU (Formerly the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities - SSD)**

Any student with a documented disability needing accommodations is requested to speak directly to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) (847-467-5530) and the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first two weeks of class.) All discussions will remain confidential.

### **Laptop Policy**

Laptops (along with other forms of technology including cell phones, iPods, etc.) are not to be used during lecture. This includes no texting during class.

***\*\*This syllabus is as of September 21, 2016. If there are any modifications to the assignments, course policies, and/or evaluation criteria, any updates will be posted on the course's Canvas site. Students are responsible for any changes and additions to the syllabus and course assignments and for any announcements made during lecture.***

**Week 1**  
**I. Introduction to the Sociology of Youth**

**Wednesday – September 21**  
Introduction to the Course

**Week 2**

**Monday – September 26**  
\*\*Matthews, "A Window on the 'New' Sociology of Childhood"  
\*\*Mils, "The Promise", excerpts

**II. Historical Variations in Childhood**

**Wednesday – September 28**  
Mintz, *Huck's Raft* - Chapters 1, 2, 5

**Week 3**

**Monday – October 3**  
Mintz, *Huck's Raft* - Chapters 4, 8, 10 (Chapter 9 Optional)

**III. Rise of the "Teenager"**

**Wednesday – October 5**  
Palladino, *Teenagers* - Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, and (read pages 81-82 and 92-93 only of Chapter 6)

**Week 4**

**Monday – October 10**  
Palladino, *Teenagers* - Chapters 7, 8, 11, 12

**IV. Studies of Youth Culture**

**Wednesday – October 12**  
Gaines, *Teenage Wasteland* - Page 1 - 114

**Week 5**

**Wednesday – October 17**  
Gaines, *Teenage Wasteland* - Pages 143 – 262  
(Skip Chapters "This is Religion I" and "This is Religion II")  
Generations!!! - Handout to be distributed during class time

**Wednesday – October 19**  
**IN-CLASS MIDTERM**

**V. The "Problems" of Youth**

**Week 6 – Panics and the Media**

**Monday – October 24**  
\*\*Sternheimer, "It's Not the Media: The Truth About Pop Culture's Influence On Children"  
Mintz, Chapter 16, "Parental Panics and the Reshaping of Childhood"

**Wednesday – October 26**  
\*\*Furstenberg, "Teenage Childbearing As A Public Issue And Private Concern"

## Week 7 – Bullying

### **Monday – October 31**

Simmons, *Odd Girl Out* - Introduction & Chapters 1, 2, 3 (reading assignment is the same for either edition)  
\*\*What's a 'tween?? - Reading To Be Announced

### **Wednesday – November 2**

Simmons, *Odd Girl Out* - Chapter assignment differs by edition:

**2011 Revised/Updated edition:** Chapter 6 (The Bully in the Mirror), Chapter 8 (Resistance) and Chapter 10 (Helping Her Through Drama, Bullying, and Everything In Between)

**Earlier edition (2002):** Chapters 5 (The Bully in the Mirror), 7 (Resistance) and 9 (The Road Ahead)

## Week 8 – Teens and the Criminal Justice System

### **Monday – November 7**

Documentary in class - To be announced

### **Wednesday – November 9**

Rios, *Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*, Preface and Chapters 1 through 4

**During class on 11/9 we will also discuss the election!!!**

## Week 9

### **Monday – November 14**

Rios, *Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*, Chapters 5 through 7, skim Conclusion

## VI. Transition to Adulthood and Young People Today

### **Wednesday – November 16**

\*\*Arnett, Excerpts from *Emerging Adulthood*

**Group Activity - Talk about your Analytical Essays!**

## Week 10

### **Monday – November 21 - Generation Stress or Generation Me?**

\*\*Huffington, "Millennials Come of Age as America's Most Stressed Generation"

\*\*Pew Research Center, *Millennials in Adulthood - Detached from Institutions, Networked with Friends*

\*\*Raphelson, "Getting Some 'Me' Time: Why Millennials Are So Individualistic"

\*\*Fern, "Why Gen-Y Is The Apathetic Generation"

(All of the articles are available on the Internet. Links will be on Canvas or just Google title/author. The list is preliminary - check Canvas to see if the readings/links for 11/21 are updated.)

**Take-Home Final Exam will be distributed during class and will be posted to Canvas after class time!**

### **Wednesday – November 23**

**Analytical Essay due at the beginning of class! (No emailed essays will be accepted! You may also turn your essay into Dr. Snyder's mailbox prior to class time).**

**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMS DUE: Monday, December 5th by 7pm  
TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMS must be posted to Canvas by the deadline**