

**Psychology 43217** Sociology 43017   Education, Schooling & Society 40250   Peace Studies 43904

**Children & Poverty: Developmental Implications**

University of Notre Dame

Spring 2008

Tuesdays

143 Center for Social Concerns (now by the lake and Rockne Memorial!)

Office Hours: By Appointment

3:30 to 6:00 PM

Phone: 631-5293   Fax: 631-4171

Room: 141 Center for Social Concerns

E-mail: jbranden@nd.edu

Electronic Syllabus via ND Vista or http://www.nd.edu/~jbranden/chpov/

*The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children.*

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German theologian who died opposing the Holocaust

## Course Overview and Objectives

Every fifth child in America faces hunger or poverty. This course examines the impacts of youth poverty and related concerns from the perspectives of developmental and social psychology. Key topics will include conflict resolution and violence prevention, moral development and resiliency within challenging contexts, and educational inequalities/potentials. Central to the course will be an emphasis on children’s developing cognitive perceptions of self in relation to society, and an examination of potential solutions, model programs, and relevant social policy. Readings will be drawn from a variety of sources and discussed in seminar format. Active student participation and community-based learning/research are fundamental to the course.

**Objectives include:**

- To examine the impact of poverty, violence, and related concerns on children’s physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development (through relevant research, class and media presentations, personal observation and community involvement)

- To examine/evaluate (from a developmental perspective) educational efforts, social policies, and model programs attempting to resolve the dilemmas of child poverty and youth at risk.

- To build on student involvement in youth concerns, and encourage active, student-directed, and cooperative learning through student research and community-based or service-learning.

## Required Texts


Course readings will be primarily accessed through eReserve:
https://www.library.nd.edu/reserves/ereserves/search.cgi
https://www.library.nd.edu/reserves/ereserves/course.cgi?course=2008_SPSY_43217_01

We will also read excerpts from the following recommended books. See course bibliographies for additional suggestions.

Recommended Books
Jonathan Kozol: *The Shame of a Nation* (Crown, 2005)
Annette Lareau: *Unequal Childhooods: Class, Race, and Family Life.*
(University of California Press, 2003)
Jonathan Kozol: *Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope* (2001)
Alex Kotlowitz: *There are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America* (1998)

Requirements
This is a student-centered course with an important mission. The course presents an opportunity to make a community contribution while learning. You will be challenged to direct your own learning and contribute to the class overall.

Community Action Research Project ➔ A central focus of the course will be a student-directed research/writing project. The semester-long project will enable students to actively examine questions arising from community concerns, and to integrate relevant research and experiential observations in a manner that benefits both the class and the community.
Students will be encouraged to work collaboratively in teams, and to develop a project that contributes directly to children’s concerns. An annotated bibliography (due in February) will help you begin. Projects will be due mid-April. Further details will be given in class.

**Brief Writing Assignments** → Brief writing assignments (1 page) will be required weekly in response to readings or other course components. Students are asked to reflect on key texts prior to class discussion. Each will count for 5 points. There is a one-page maximum for each assignment. Please use word-processing.

**Examination(s)** → A mid-term evaluation will assist the learning process. Details will be given in class. Students may also take some mastery quizzes.

**Portfolio** → A final portfolio will integrate learning for the course. Students will be asked to demonstrate their learning for the course, and to include an integrative final essay. Portfolios will likely be developed electronically. The portfolios will be due during the final week of class, and presented at the final. Further details will be given in class.

**Service-Learning and Community-Based Research** → Direct involvement with children in poverty situations via a service or community research is required for the course (potential sites, agency contacts, and the like will be offered). Positive, consistent involvements have the potential to contribute reciprocally to the learning process, the children in need, and the organizations that work with them. It is hoped that student involvement will link naturally with the action research component of the course. Approximately 1-3 hours per week (or 25-30 hours per semester) in the community is required (many students attracted to the course will already be working in various community placements). Optional journal assignments will assist the reflection process.

**Class Participation** → Class attendance and participation are essential to creating meaningful dialogue among learners. The first component of a successful seminar is attendance; please do not take this component lightly. Attendance is expected each class period, especially since this is a course that meets once per week. In the rare occurrence that you would need to miss class, please email the instructor, and follow up with a colleague in the class for notes, handouts, and information. Class absences will lead to lower grade.

Students are encouraged to contribute ideas, questions, readings, etc., and to take an active role in learning. The course will present opportunities for skill development in the following areas: 1) listening ability, 2) research techniques, 3) critical thinking, 4) verbal/written expression, and 5) creative response/imagination with respect to the concerns studied. Students will be asked to lead discussion and present findings as appropriate.

**Class Travel/Engagement** → Not everything can be learned on campus. We will have the opportunity to visit relevant sites as a class to enhance our learning via direct contact. Possible site visits: The Robinson Community Learning Center, The Center for the Homeless, the Juvenile Justice Center, and the welfare office. Details will be given in class. Your patience with scheduling, punctuality and flexibility will be appreciated.
**Course-Related Opportunities** → A variety of outside-of-class opportunities for enhancing understanding and involvement (some are listed at the end of the syllabus) will be presented. Students are encouraged to attend those events relevant to their interests. Some events may be required. Details will be given in class.

**Student Evaluation/Grades**

Active, consistent engagement in the course should lead to positive evaluation. Students will be asked to critique their own learning and give input on grades. Specific components will contribute the following approximate percentages to the overall course grade:

- Exam/Portfolio: 20%
- Misc writing assignments: 25%
- Research/Writing Project: 35%
- Class Participation: 20%

**Electronic/Internet Resources**

A variety of resources are included on a Psychology 43217 web page via ND Concourse, including direct links to sites focusing on children and poverty issues. Use such resources to augment research projects and other course components.

**WebCT Concourse:** [https://concourse.nd.edu/webct/logon/32610077021](https://concourse.nd.edu/webct/logon/32610077021)

Enter your login info (regular NetFile ID and password), then click on Psych 43217 or crosslist (e.g., Soc 43017)

**Electronic Reserves** for course readings:
[https://www.library.nd.edu/reserves/ereserves/search.cgi](https://www.library.nd.edu/reserves/ereserves/search.cgi)

If needed, contact the Reserve Book Room: 631-7578 or 631-6824   Email: ereserve.1@nd.edu

**Course webpage** (in development):  [http://www.nd.edu/~jbranden/chpov/](http://www.nd.edu/~jbranden/chpov/)

If you would like to assist in the further development of this page, let instructor know.

**Listserv:** A class listserv will be used to further class dialogue, announce schedule and room changes if needed, and clarify assignments. Please check email frequently for news from the class.

The Listserv email address is:  <psy43217-01-sp08@listserv.nd.edu>

All mail to the list will be archived at:
[http://listserv.nd.edu/archives/psy43217-01-sp08.html](http://listserv.nd.edu/archives/psy43217-01-sp08.html)
### Class Schedule

**Psych 43217 • ESS 40250 • Soc 43017 • IIPS 43904**

**Spring 2008**

**Final Version: March 11, 2008**

**J. Brandenberger**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Class Preparation/Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>January 15</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overview of Course and Introduction to Youth Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=15) (Tues.)</td>
<td>- Where we are going, and why</td>
<td>Come ready to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Student Introductions</td>
<td>Build learning community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Youth issues and concerns</td>
<td>Read: SBT: Jan. 14, 2008 Lead Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Status of children/youth</td>
<td>Download and <strong>read</strong> document from CDF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Methods of study</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> R. Coles (pp. 64- in readings bk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- History of childhood</td>
<td>Zigler (pp. 98-99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>January 22</strong></td>
<td><strong>Human Development in Challenging Contexts</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Toxic Environments</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> J. Garbarino – Chpt. 1,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Envir</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Culture and child development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Fact Sheet at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> J. Gilligan, pages 23-34 in rdgs. Bk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structural Violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Defining Poverty and Why it Matters:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Consider project options &amp; service-learning:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attend Jan. 23rd Social Concerns Festival 6:00-8:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>January 27</strong></td>
<td><strong>William Julius Wilson:</strong> <em>Poverty and Inequality in Urban America</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sunday)</td>
<td>Attend this campus-wide presentation sponsored by the CSC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 PM in 101 DeBartolo Hall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jan. 29  Risk Factors, Health, and Developmental Assets

Physical Development  Read by email: Chafel et al., chpt. 19, pgs. 15-18
Consult: Schorr, 1988, chpt. 5
Health Challenges  Consult: Bolig, Borkowski, & Brandenberger chpt.
Interaction of Risk Factors  Consult: Schorr, 1988, intro & chps 1, 2
Homeless Children & Families  Consult: Kozol, Rachel & Her Children

ABC News Video
Waiting for the World to Change
http://www.abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=2819991&page=1
Meet at CSC or 1035 Notre Dame Ave 289-7017

Feb. 5  Social Cognition: Thinking about Self, World, and Potential

Attitudes Toward Poverty and Justice  Read: Chafel: Societal Images of Poverty

Just World Phenomena

Locus of control  Read Myers, pgs. to be distributed
Self perspectives and the future  Complete Locus of control instrument
Achievement Motivation  Read Payne, Framework…, Intro and Chapter 1

Hidden Rules of Class  Read Payne, chapters 2 and 3
Language and Social Class

Feb. 12  Social Cognition: Views of Children

Listen to: Ghetto Life 101  Consult: Our America
(Jones & Newman)
Consult: Payne, chapters 5 and 6
Consult: Day et al., pgs. 95-105

Possible Selves

Feb. 19  Family Life: Class, Parenting, and the Strain of Living Poor

Generational Poverty  Read Whitehead, Coontz in Rdgs. bk., pp. 100-101
Consult Payne, chapt 4 (generational poverty)

Parent – Child Interactions
• Attachment and parenting styles  Read: McLoyd & Wilson, on reserve: 126-141
• The Strain of Living Poor
• Psychopathology
• Child Abuse & Neglect

Unequal Childhoods:  Class & Parenting  Read: A. Lareau, chpts frm Unequal Childhoods
Class & Parenting

Mid-Term Evaluation
Feb. 26  **Violence and Youth**  
Violence as a public health issue  
View B. Moyers *Frontline* video, part 1  
Review: APA on Youth Violence:  
The Development of Aggression  
The Role of Shame/Class  
Violence: Misc Topics  
Gangs / Alternatives  
Role of Television (Frontline video)  
Prevention  
Consult: Garbarino, *Lost Boys*  
Read: J. Gilligan: pp 53-58 in rdgs bk  
Read: Osofsky, pp. 124-130 in rdgs bk  
Consult: excerpts from Monster, pp 89-94  
Read: Gilligan, *Preventing Violence*, eReserve  

March 4  **Spring Break: No Class**  
Enjoy, renew  
Observe youth in contexts, news  

March 11  **Resilience, Mentoring, and Ethical Development of Youth at Risk**  
Video: *Listening to Children* by R. Coles  
Read Coles, *The Moral Live of Children*  
Read Haan, on resliency  
Read: Challener, on eReserve  
Mentoring  
Ethical Development & Youth at Risk  
Consult: Coles, *The Moral Intelligence of Children*  

March 18  **Violence Prevention: Juvenile Justice and Beyond**  
**Visit to Juvenile Justice Center**  
1000 S. Michigan St.  235-5437  
**Presenter: Vicki McIntire**  
Arrive at 3:45 PM  
Vicki Mc: 235-5424  
Consult: Osofsky, chpts. 1-3  

March 25  **Education: Learning and Critical Pedagogy**  
Child Care and Head Start  
Consult: Schorr, 1988, chpts. 8, 9  
Read: Schorr, 1997, Chpt. 8  
Consult Escalante, on eReserve  
Critical Pedagogy  
Read: Freire, pp. 354-361  
Consult: McLaren, pp. 215-218  
Consult: *Waging Peace in Our Schools*
April 1 Education: Schools and Teachers
Presenter (3:45 to 4:45pm):
Alyssia Coates, Director
Upward Bound
College Preparatory Program at ND
Read Coles, rdgs. bk, p. 47-50
Further readings to be outlined

April 8 No Formal Class Meeting This Week
Use regular time on Tuesday to work on projects: focus, write, edit
Draft of project due to exchange for feedback
Meet as groups in CSC 141 or elsewhere

April 15 An International Perspective
View: Born Into Brothels, Invisible Children, or Innocent Voices
and Dinner with Class
Child Advocacy, Successful Programs, Social Policy, and Welfare
US Catholic Bishops' Writings
Rdgs. bk., pages 74-80 and 115-119
Social Policy
Read: Schorr, L.
Plan Action Research Presentation
Please plan ahead if you need access to PowerPoint
Plan to use the presentation time creatively

April 22 Colleague Presentations
Youth and Mentors, by A. Mathew, B. Johnson, L. Miller, N. Rauch, G. O'Donnell, & B. Gorman
Nutrition & School Performance, by T. Hancock, A. Breuer, P. Nava, K. O'Leary, K. Annen, & E. Gonzales

April 29 Colleague Presentations
Foster Care: Creative Alternatives, by M. Neville, J. Faarup, & S. Walorski, K. Dinnebeil, & J. Kaczmarek

May 2nd Portfolios Due by noon, May 2nd

May 9 (Friday) Final Exam/Portfolio Presentation
10:30 am to 12:30 pm Meet at 141 Center for Social Concerns
Course-Related Opportunities

The following activities and opportunities will augment classroom learning. Student participation may be required at some. Other opportunities will be announced.

Children's Defense Fund

Consider attending a CDF conference or regional workshop. Individuals and groups from the class have attended before, with strong reviews. Financial support may be available from departments, residence hall, and the like. And use CDF as an overall resource: For more information:

http://www.childrensdefense.org

http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/PageServer?pagename=studentoutreach_shout_movement

Consider joining the Children’s Defense Fund chapter at Notre Dame: CDF-ND
http://www.nd.edu/~cdf/main.htm
Contact: Cici Zhang

Children and Poverty Seminar

Spring 2008

This one-credit experiential Social Concerns Seminar will be offered this spring concurrent with our course. This Seminar centers around an immersion in New York City, and would provide rich additional learning. Applications are available via the Center for Social Concerns web site. Contact Elizabeth Sauer at <esauer@nd.edu>.

Consider other Center Seminars with a focus on youth (i.e., the David School site of the Appalachia Seminar): Apply online:
http://socialconcerns.nd.edu/academic/spring/spring.shtml
Seminar applications are due January 17, 2008.
Bibliography/Additional Readings: Brief List


There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.

— President Nelson Mandela, South Africa

We are guilty of many errors and many faults but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made, and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer “Tomorrow.” His name is “Today.”

— Gabriela Mistral, Nobel Laureate