

FW22 AP/HIST 3855 3.0A "Bad" Kids: History, Culture, Media, and the Law in Canada and the U.S. Since the 1880s (Fall term)

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Expanded Course Description (expanded from course calendar description):

We think of children as innocent, pure, and society's hope for the future, but we are also bombarded with images of youngsters who are violent, spoiled, or out of control. This course analyzes the social and cultural construction of "bad" kids in the U.S. and Canada since the 1880s. It explores the mutually constitutive relationship between the ideal of innocent childhood and the belief that some children are fundamentally bad. It. We look at adult constructions of "bad" children and how "bad" children saw themselves. A central question is: how have conceptions of "bad" children been shaped by race, gender, sexuality, class, and ability? Further, how have beliefs about why a child is "bad" and what constitutes "badness" changed over time?

Required Course Text/Readings: ***TENTATIVE***

Weekly reading consists of academic articles, personal narratives, and films available through eClass. We will also read one book, Joan Jacobs Brumberg's *Kansas Charley: The Story of a 19th-Century Boy Murderer*.

Weighting of Course:

TENTATIVE Grade Breakdown

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| Weekly Participation | 15% |
| Presentations | 20% |
| 2 Papers | 50% |
| Take-home final exam | 15% |

Organization of the Course:

Lecture and discussion

Course Learning Objectives: Students who complete this course will: (1) learn to think historically about discourses of childhood; (2) acquire an understanding of some biological, social, and cultural explanations for children's behaviour, and how they have changed over time; (3) improve their ability to critically engage and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary sources pertaining to the history of children and youth; (4) develop evidence-based arguments in written and oral presentations; (5) write a cogent and well-argued research essay using primary sources; (6) gain an appreciation for the limits of knowledge and the processes of change over time; (7) improve their ability to respond to different perspectives with sensitivity, compassion, and respect.