

Youth and Work: 37:575:215:01
Spring 2017 Labor Studies and Employment Relations
Tuesday 8:40-11:40 am
Levin 003

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Course Overview

This course examines the current situation of young workers, reviews the history and policy responses to child labor in America and considers the challenges of youth and work today.

Some of the core questions we will explore include: What counts as “work”? Why do young people work and how has that changed over time? How does young people’s preparation for and participation in the labor market differ from that of previous generations? What are some of the challenges that young workers face at work? What kinds of policies, organizational practices, and legal changes can improve young worker’s experience in the work force?

We will examine the work experiences of children and youth in the 19th and early 20th century. We will look at how “child labor” is defined in social and economic contexts and investigate several industries including coal mining, manufacturing, textiles, homework, street work, retail and service and agriculture—to better understand the causes and effects of child labor in U.S. history—and how reform programs and laws emerged to address the issue. We will also look at whether the U.S.’s response to the child labor problems contributes to understanding global labor problems.

The course next explores contemporary experiences of young people in the labor market. We will explore how young people prepare for work, view their education and workforce development pathways; and view their work and future careers. Here we will focus on the experiences of young workers across racial, class and gender lines and pay particular attention to the growing working poor in the youth labor market, and how public policy can address some of these inequalities. Central to this will be an analysis of the experiences of young people in the current economic recession, and various policies and programs that can improve their experiences and economic security, especially in the midst of the current economic crisis.

Relationship to School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) Learning Goals

A. This class has the following 21st Century Challenge objectives:

- a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience and perspectives on the world.
- b. Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.

B. It also has the following Social Analysis objectives:

- a. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
- b. Understand different theories in social and historical analysis.
- c. Apply Concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Students will demonstrate their understanding of these concepts via class readings, discussions, assignments, and exams which focus on historical and contemporary issues of youth and work.

Academic Integrity. Familiarize yourself with the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy which can be found online at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. Your written assignments will be submitted to "Turnitin.com" to insure that your assignment is yours and not gleaned from the web, another student or source. Use proper citations and quote marks around any material that is not yours. Be careful not to "copy" phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. The goal is to put the ideas into your own words.

Course Requirements

Class attendance: You are expected to attend each class session, and to be on time. An attendance sheet will be passed out during each class; it is your responsibility to sign the sheet. Be punctual and plan to stay for the entire class. Students who repeatedly arrive late and leave at break will have their grades lowered. If you need to leave early, see me before class; otherwise you are expected to remain until the class is over. As the class is three hours long, we will have periodic breaks built into the scheduled time.

Participation: This class will utilize a variety of formats, with weekly discussion sessions one of the more important of these. You are expected to have completed the readings assigned before coming to class each week and be ready to take an active role in these discussions. Class participation includes active, respectful listening and well as talking. Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. If you have a laptop computer, please feel free to bring it to class as a useful tool to augment in class readings and You Tube clips. Do not use any recording devices in this class.

Missed Exams: All students are expected to take the scheduled in-class exams (midterm and final) at the designated times. Documented emergencies and personal matters will be taken into account for possible cases of rescheduling that arise.

Unless otherwise specified, all writing assignments should be submitted to me via email attachment before class the day that they are due. Out of respect to those who meet this expectation, all late papers will be subject to downgrading.

Accommodations: This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirement for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of disability should refer to the Rutgers Office of Disability Services and then contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible.

"Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:
<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form> The Rutgers Office of Disability Services can also be reached at 848-445-6800.

Statement on Academic Freedom: Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. This class will introduce an array of sometimes conflicting ideas and interpretations of U.S. history, and all who partake in the course should feel encouraged to express their views in an open, civic forum.

In Class Exercises

This class is highly participatory and requires that you attend and that you work in groups or teams. Coming to class prepared (with readings and assignments up to date) is key to participating effectively in your discussion group. Throughout the course, there will be in class group exercises, including some hands-on projects related to the readings done in groups or pairs. There are NO make-up class exercises and they must be completed during the class period. Of course, if you do not attend class, you will lose points for participation in these exercises as well as for attendance.

Mall Assignment and Youth Worker Survey

Students will each conduct a fieldwork project in a local mall to analyze the work experience of young people today, as well as a survey of contemporary work experiences. Details for these assignments are located on the course website.

Class Grade Distribution:

Your final grade is based on the following distribution:

Class Exercises/Participation	15%
Survey	20%
Mall Assignment	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%

Professors reserve the right to add or change readings or otherwise change the structure of the course.

Required Book

Other course readings are available on the Sakai course website or from me directly. Please note that additional readings—mostly contemporary op-ed essays from newspapers, magazines and the web will be introduced to weekly class sessions.

Cassino-Besen, Yasemin. 2014. **Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America**. Temple University Press

Course Schedule

Part One: Overview and Framing

Week 1—January 17: Introduction to Studying Youth and Work; Syllabus Review

In Class Exercise: “First Work Experiences”. We are going to start to get to know each other and also start to think about our own work experiences. We will discuss our first paid work experiences, how we got hired, how we felt about it, how much we earned, etc.

Week 2—January 24: The Current Situation of Young Workers

EPI Briefing Paper, “The Class of 2015: Despite an Improving Economy, Young Grads Still Face an Uphill Climb.”

Boston College Center for Work and Family Briefing Paper, “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: The Expanding Role of Millennials in the Workplace.”

UCLA Labor Center, “Young Workers in Los Angeles: A Snapshot,” September 2015

Short film and discussion: *Eyes on the Fries: Young Workers in the Service Economy*

Week 3—January 31: Working and Growing Up in America

Jeylan Mortimer, 2003. *Working and Growing Up in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Introduction

AFL-CIO Working America Briefing Paper: “Young Workers: A Lost Decade.”
Andrew J. Cherlin, (2014) “The Fall of the Working Class Family: 1975-2010,” from
Labor’s Love Lost: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class Family in America.

In Class presentation on research methods: Julie Peters, Director, SMLR Library.

Part Two: The “Child Labor Problem”

Week 4—February 7: What is “child labor”?

Hugh Hindman, 2002. *Child Labor: An American History*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.
Chapters 1, 2 and 9

Videos: Fingers to the Bone: Child Farmworkers in the U.S.; Made in the USA: Child
Labor and Tobacco; Children of the Fields; U.S. Child Labor, 1908-1920 and The
Dark Side of Chocolate

Week 5—February 14: U.S. Policy Responses to Child Labor

Hindman, *Child Labor*, Chapter 3.

John M. Herrick and James Midgley, “The United State.” Pp. 187-216 in *The State of
Social Welfare: The Twentieth Century in Cross-national Review*, edited by John Dixon
and Robert P. Scheurell (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood).

In Class Exercise: The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire

Week 6—February 21: **In class Midterm Exam**

Part 3. The Challenges of Youth and Work Today

Week 7—February 28: Young Workers: Service Sector Employment

Yasemin Besen-Cassino, 2014. *Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America*. Philadelphia:
Temple University Press, Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Stuart Tannock, “Why Do Working Youth Work Where They Do?” A Report from the
Young Worker Project.

Stuart Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 2: On the Front Lines of the Service Sector

Week 8—March 7: Young Workers: Race, Class and Gender

Besen-Cassino, *Consuming Work*, Chapter 5: “They Need Me Here”: Work as a
Perceived Alternative to School; Chapter 6: “White Young, and Middle Class”:
Aesthetic Labor, Race, and Class in the Youth Labor Force; Chapter 7: Origins of the
Gender Wage Gap: Gender Inequality in the Youth Labor Force.

Think Progress.org, “There’s Even a Gender Gap in Children’s Allowances”
<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/04/23/3430025/gender-gap-allowance/>

In Class Exercise: *Gender Wage Gap*

Week 9—March 14: **Spring Break**

Week 10— March 21: Young Workers Today—Case Study

Mall Assignment--No Class Meeting due to Mall Assignment

Besen-Cassino, *Consuming Work*, Chapter 8: The Economic Recession and the Future of Youth Labor

Mall Observations: Visit the course website and find the section that details the Mall Observation assignment. Download the observation sheets and start your observations. You must bring this material to class next week. I have given you this 3-hour period to complete the assignment. You may do it during this time or at another time but there are no late assignments.

Week 11— March 28: Education, Stagnant Pay and Increasing Debt Load

Mall Observation and Paper Due by class meeting.

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapters 1: Higher and Higher Education; Chapter 2: Paycheck Paralysis; and Chapter 3: Generation Debt

Week 12—April 4: The Intern Economy

Ross Perlin. *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*. New York: Verso. Chapter 2, “The Explosion”

The Economist. 2014. “The Internship: Generation I.” *The Economist*, Sept. 6, International 1-9

Josh Eidelson, “Legal Protections for Interns: A Guide”

Week 13—April 11: How Young Workers Will Change Work

Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 7: “The Youth Union”

Ray B. Williams, “How the Millennial Generation Will Change the Workplace”

Lauren Stiller Rikleen, Esq., “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: the Expanding Roles of Millennials in the Workplace”

John Schmitt, 2008. Center for Economic and Policy Research, “Unions and Upward Mobility for Young Workers”

Survey Assignment Due in Class

Week 14—April 18: An Agenda for Change

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapter 7: Changing Course: An Agenda for Reform

Week 15—April 25: **Final Exam (In Class)**

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