

Youth and Work
Labor Studies and Employment Relations
37:575:215:01 Fall 2015
Mondays: 1:40 p.m. to 4:40 p.m.
Livingston Campus, Levin Bldg. Room 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 experiences 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 mines, manufacturing, textiles, homework, street work and agriculture---to better understand the causes and effects of child labor in U.S. history, and reform programs and laws that 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 child 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 Challenges objectives:
 - a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experiences and perspective 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 about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
 - 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 for 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 another 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.

Absences

All students are expected to attend all classes except in the event of illness and/or emergencies. If you are absent, you are still responsible for the course materials you missed. In class exercises, which require your participation, cannot be made up.

Accommodations

"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.

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.

Quizzes:

There will be two (2) quizzes based on the readings, lectures and discussions. The quizzes will require you to construct thoughtful, informed answers to the questions.

Mall Assignment

Students will each conduct a fieldwork project in a local mall to analyze the work experience of young people today. Details for this assignment are located on the course website.

Briefing Paper to Labor Secretary Perez

Students will write a briefing paper directed to the U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez on the challenge of young workers with a focus on race and socio-economic status. Details for this assignment can be found on the course website.

Final Exam

This class will have an in class final examination covering all material in the course.

Class Grade Distribution:

Your final grade is based on the following distribution:

Class Exercises/Participation	20%
Quizzes	10%
Mall Assignment	20%
Briefing Paper	20%
Final Exam	30%

You must submit quizzes, the Mall Assignment and the Final Exam in class. Other written assignments must be submitted via the class website on Sakai for credit. No papers, assignments or quizzes will be accepted by email or fax. *Professor reserves the right to change the grading distribution, to offer extra credit assignments, to add or change readings or otherwise change the structure of the course.*

Required Books

All books available online. Other course readings are available on the Sakai course website or from me directly.

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

Optional Books

Draut, Tamara. 2005. **Strapped: Why America's 20- and 30- Somethings Can't Get Ahead.** Doubleday Books.

Hindman, Hugh. 2002. **Child Labor: An American History.** M. E. Sharpe

Newman, Katherine. 1999. **No Shame in My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City.** Russel Sage Books.

Course Schedule

Part One: Overview and Framing

Week 1--September 8 (Tuesday): 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--September 14: 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."

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

Week 3—September 21: 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."

Part Two: The "Child Labor Problem"

Week 4—September 28: 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

In Class Exercise: **Children on Farms Today**

Week 5—October 5: Case Study-The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire

Film: *Triangle Fire American Experience OR Triangle: Remembering the Fire*

In Class Exercise: **Design a Memorial for Triangle Fire Victims**

Week 6--October 12: U.S. Policy Responses to Child Labor in the 21st Century

Quiz #1

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).

Part 3. The Challenges of Youth and Work Today

Week 7—October 19: 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

In Class Exercise: **Retails Jobs and Young Workers** (needs work prior to class)

Week 8--October 26: 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—November 3: 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 10--November 9: 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
Guest Speaker on the “Young Worker” movement

*Work on your **Briefing Paper to U.S. Secretary of Labor, Thomas E. Perez**. Details for the briefing paper are on the course website.

Week 11--November 16: 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”

Briefing Paper to Secretary Perez is due by this class meeting.

Week 12--November 23: How Young Workers Will Change Work

Quiz #2

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”

In Class Exercise: *Changing Workplaces*

Week 13--November 30: An Agenda for Change

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

Week 14—December 7: **Final Exam (In Class)**