What does it mean to be a child? In this course we will attempt to answer this question by analyzing one aspect of childhood, immaturity. We will begin by questioning the existence of a stage of life called childhood. We will move on to examine immaturity as a necessary feature of the evolution of the human species and as a psychological phenomenon. We will then discuss anthropological arguments about the differing nature of childhood across cultures. To further this discussion, we will study two aspects of childhood in detail: language and emotions. When discussing case studies about how children speak and feel, we will analyze how such studies speak to the questions raised earlier in the quarter.

This class is structured as a seminar. Grades will be based on participation, weekly writing assignments, and two short essays. Because there is a large amount of assigned reading, no outside research is required. However, each student is required to demonstrate engagement with the material both in class and in their writing. To this end:

- Participation: You are expected to come to class prepared and to contribute to class discussions. **Those of you using computers must turn off wireless while in class.**
- Weekly writing assignments: Each week you are to write a one page single spaced Times New Roman 12 point font response to the readings. You are not to summarize the readings, but rather focus on an issue the readings bring up and analyze and reflect on that issue. You are expected to refer to more than one of the readings in this reflection. The assignment is due at the beginning of class each week. I will drop your lowest grade.
- Two short five-seven page essays. Double spaced, Times New Roman font size 12, one inch margins. **You will be graded on organization, structure, and the quality of your prose as much as on ideas.** I take the structure of writing, as well as the content, very seriously and warn you in advance that essays with interesting ideas but poor structure or prose will not receive high marks. Likewise, well-structured but uninteresting and incorrect essays will also not receive high marks. I will not read drafts of essays, but I will read outlines so long as they are given to me a week before the essay is due.
- **I do not accept any assignments via e-mail.** All assignments must be printed and handed to me.
Grading:
Participation: 10%
Weekly responses: 20%
Paper 1: 30%
Paper 2: 40%

Required Texts:

March 30th: Introduction

April 6: Does childhood exist?

April 13: Is immaturity central to phylogenetic and ontogenetic human development?

**Further Reading:**

**April 20: In what ways are all children equally immature?**

**Further reading:**

**April 27: Are children immature thinkers?**
**Further Reading:**

**First paper due: May 2 at 9:30 AM**

**May 4: Work, Play and other activities: Do (and should) children live immature lives?**

**Further reading:**

**May 11: Work, play, and other activities continued: Do (and should) children lead immature lives?**
Nieuwenhuys, Olga, 2994. *Children's Lifeworlds: Gender, welfare, and labour in the developing world*. Routledge: London. 121-152, 174-207 (Chapters 5, 7, and 8)

**Further Reading**


**May 18: How are children communicatively immature and how do they learn?**

**May 25: How are children emotionally immature and how do they learn?**

**Final Papers Due For Graduating Seniors Who Need This Class To Graduate May 27th**
5:00 PM

**June 1: How do we raise our children and what are the consequences of our childcare practices?**
Leach, Penelope 2004. Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age Five. London: Knopf (selections)

**Final Papers due June 8th 9:30 AM**