New Books from Childhood Studies Faculty

*Children’s Rights: Today’s Global Challenge* (Rowman & Littlefield)
Dr. John Wall, Professor of Religion and Childhood Studies

From the Publisher:

This accessible and authoritative book provides the first systematic overview of the global children’s rights movement. It introduces both beginners and experts to child and youth rights in all their theoretical, historical, cultural, political, and practical complexity. In the process, the book examines key controversies about globalization, cultural relativism, social justice, power, economics, politics, freedom, ageism, and more. Combining vivid examples with cutting-edge scholarship, *Children’s Rights: Today’s Global Challenge* lifts up the rights of the youngest third of humanity as the major human rights challenge of the twenty-first century.

*Introducing Sociology Using the Stuff of Everyday Life* (Routledge)
Dr. Kate Cairns, Assistant Professor of Childhood Studies
w/ Josee Johnston and Shyon Baumann

From Publisher:

This comparatively concise, highly visual, and affordable book offers a refreshingly new way forward to reach students, using one of the most powerful tools in a sociologist’s teaching arsenal—the familiar stuff in students’ everyday lives throughout the world: the jeans they wear to class, the coffee they drink each morning, or the phones their professors tell them to put away during lectures.

While innovative, the book has been carefully crafted to make it as useful and flexible as possible for instructors aiming to build core sociological foundations in a single semester. A map on pages ii–iii identifies core sociological concepts covered so that a traditional syllabus as well as individual lectures can easily be maintained. Theory, method, and active learning exercises in every chapter constantly encourage the sociological imagination as well as the “doing” of sociology.
Meredith Bak presented papers at conferences for the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts and the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, and was invited to speak at a faculty research colloquium on Young People, Material Culture, and Media History at the University of Pittsburgh. She published two articles: “The Ludic Archive: The Work of Playing with Optical Toys,” appeared in the spring 2016 issue of The Moving Image; “Building Blocks of the Imagination: Children, Creativity, and the Limits of Disney Infinity,” appeared in the fall 2016 issue of The Velvet Light Trap. She also published book reviews in The Journal for the History of Childhood and Youth and The Lion and the Unicorn (forthcoming), and serves as book reviews editor for H-Childhood.

Sarada Balagopalan presented her research at various venues including at the conference on “Children’s Rights – Origins, Normativity, Transformations, Prospects” in Linkoping University in June 2016. She was invited to give the journal Children’s Geographies keynote lecture at the Association of American Geographers (AAG) conference in April 2017 in which she discussed “On Labor and Schooling in the Postcolony.” Sarada is organizing a panel on “Landscapes of Learning: Educational Imaginaries in Early Twentieth Century India” at Society for the History of Childhood and Youth Conference (SHCY), June 2017 and will be presenting a paper on “Travelling Technologies of Schooling and their Translations: the Case of ‘Compulsory Education’ in Bombay and Calcutta, 1919-1939” as part of this panel. Sarada’s publications include an essay, “Colonial Modernity and the Child Figure: Reconfiguring the multiplicity in ‘multiple childhoods’” in T. Saraswathi et al (eds.) Childhood in India: Traditions, Trends and Transformations (Routledge), and an entry titled “Postcolonial Childhoods” for Oxford Bibliographies Online which was co-published with Clovis Bergere. Sarada continues to serve as an Associate Editor to the SAGE Encyclopedia on Children and Childhood Studies, and is on the editorial board of the journal Childhood (SAGE), and the Advisory Board of the Journal, Contemporary Education Dialogue (SAGE).

Kate Cairns’s coauthored book, Food and Femininity, earned Honorable Mention for the 2016 Best Book Award from the Consumers and Consumption section of the American Sociological Association, and was favorably reviewed in a number of journals. She published an article in Children’s Geographies entitled “Connecting to Food: Cultivating Children in the School Garden” (2017). Kate also coauthored a new textbook that introduces sociological thinking through the lens of consumer culture, entitled Introducing Sociology Using the Stuff of Everyday Life (2017 Routledge, with Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann). In the spring of 2016, Kate received a Rutgers University Research Council Award to fund ethnographic research with a youth urban agriculture organization in Camden. She delivered conference presentations at the Association for the Study of Food and Society in Toronto, the American Sociological Association in Seattle, and the Eastern Sociological Society in Philadelphia. Kate was elected as a council member for the Consumers and Consumption section of the American Sociological Association, and began a three-year term on the Editorial Board for Gender & Society.

Kate Cairns, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Childhood Studies

Meredith A. Bak, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Childhood Studies

Sarada Balagopalan, Ph.D.
Director of Graduate Studies
Associate Professor of Childhood Studies

Kate Cairns, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Childhood Studies
Dan Cook joined a number of invited speakers at the “Consumers and Consumption@Yale” symposium in March where he discussed ongoing research about play, consumption and the “deep logic of ludic capitalism.” He also presented at the MAPACA conference in November, discussing his research on children’s market researchers as “moral brokers” of children’s culture. He will present “Simplicity, Money and Property: Moralities and Materialities in the Making of the Proto-Child Consumer, 1880-1910” at the SHCY conference in June. Cook participated in two published roundtable articles: “Knowledge of Childhood: Materiality, Text, and the History of Science – an Interdisciplinary Roundtable Discussion” (with Felix Reitmann, Mareike Schildmann, Caroline Arni, Davide Giurato, Nova Gohlsdorf and Wangui Muigai) appeared in the *British Journal for the History of Science* in February and “Considering Kids’ Media” (with Caroline Leader, Henry Jenkins and Natalie Coulter) came out in the Fall in *Velvet Light Trap* (#78).

Cook has been working on several projects with colleagues. With Erica Burman (University of Manchester), he is co-editing the SAGE *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood Studies* (5 vols.), expected to be published in 2019. He is also co-editing the forthcoming edited volume *Reimagining Childhood Studies* with Spyros Spyrou (University of Cyprus) and Rachel Rosen (University College London) which will be published by Bloomsbury in 2018. Cook’s editorial, “Childhood as a Moral Project,” appeared in February issue of *Childhood*, the journal for which he continues to serve as co-editor.

Lauren Silver has an invited book chapter in press (co-authored with Janice Stiglich), “Reproductive (In)Justice: State Violence, Young Parents in Child Welfare, and a Call for Family Integrity,” in *Youth Sexualities: Public Feelings and Contemporary Cultural Politics* (Praeger). She organized a panel on reproductive justice and presented at the March 2017 Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology (Santa Fe, NM). She presented three invited talks at the following events: the January 2017 Race and Social Work Symposium at the University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA); the November 2016 keynote address for Engaged Citizen Common Experience Speakers Series at the University of Illinois (Springfield, IL), and a May 2016 talk on her book *System Kids: Adolescent Mothers and the Politics of Regulation* (UNC Press, 2015) sponsored by Urban Studies and the School of Social Policy and Practice at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA).

My co-author, Jim Youniss, and I just submitted our final version of our book manuscript *Renewing Democracy* to Oxford University Press. The book examines civic education in the context of 21st century politics, and proposes initiatives to facilitate civic development and promote political life. Our message is that we can do better. I am also beginning a project, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and New Jersey Health Initiatives, to help ten communities across New Jersey create teams of civically engaged youth. Each team will plan and then implement during a summer of employment a project to improve community well-being. Teams are being selected in August of 2017 and will begin their projects in the summer of 2018. Each community will then select a new team that will develop another project to be conducted in the summer of 2019.
John Wall, Ph.D.
Professor of Religion and Childhood Studies


Susan Miller is wrapping up her fourth and final year as Undergraduate Program Coordinator. She is at work on an article focused on children’s art created in the aftermath of war, “Drawing Sustenance,” which she presented at the University of Salzburg Conference co-sponsored by the United Nations Office for Children and Armed Conflict. She is also working on her current book project, “Young Defenders: American Youth, Patriotism and Nationalism.” She is serving as Chair of the Organizing Committee for the 9th Biennial Conference of the Society for the History of Children & Youth, June 21-23, 2017 at Rutgers-Camden.


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