

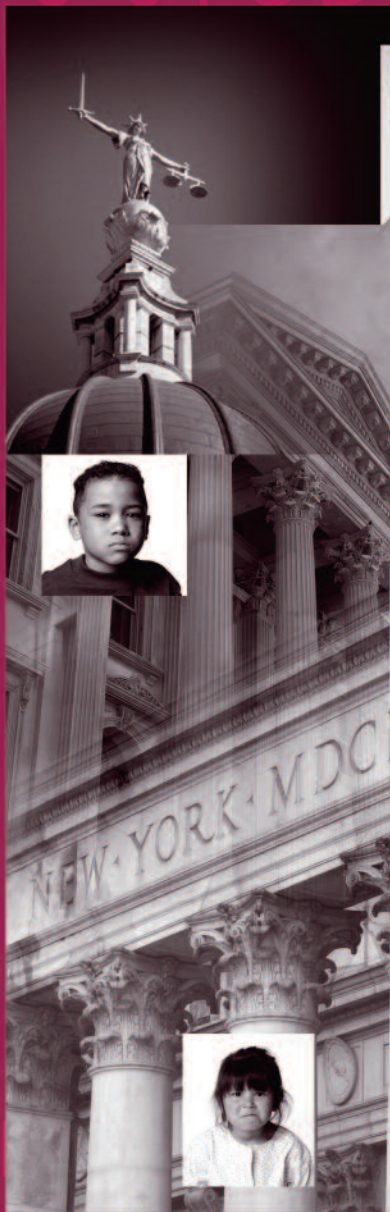
CHILDREN'S STUDIES

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CHILDREN'S STUDIES

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Children's Studies

An Interdisciplinary
Concentration for
Majors in the
Early Childhood
Education Teacher and
Childhood Education
Teacher Programs

Brooklyn College
The City University of New York

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Professor Gertrud Lenzer, director, Children's Studies Program and Center, with students from her course Perspectives in Childhood.

The Field of Children's Studies

Gertrud Lenzer is the founder and director of Children's Studies, as well as a professor of sociology and Children's Studies at both Brooklyn College and The City University of New York Graduate Center. In 1991, she led Brooklyn College's efforts to become the first academic institution to develop an interdisciplinary liberal arts Children's Studies program. Hailed as "pioneering" by the *New York Times*, the interdepartmental program of Children's Studies brings together knowledge about children and youth from infancy through the age of legal majority as seen from the differing perspectives of the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences, education, medicine, and the law. This groundbreaking interdisciplinary field was soon emulated by other colleges and universities both here and abroad.

Since 1992, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recognition of the human rights of children have been the constitutive framework for the new field of Children's Studies, which included the creation of a course on "The Human Rights of Children: A Transnational Development." Gertrud Lenzer has participated in numerous national and international initiatives and conferences on the rights of the child and has published extensively in the field.

Program Overview: Concentration in Children's Studies

The Children's Studies program provides students with a holistic and comprehensive understanding of the propensities and aptitudes of children, from birth to age eighteen, in their formal and informal contexts, both historical and contemporary. At the same time, Children's Studies advances the rights of children, who often cannot advocate for themselves.

The Children's Studies concentration is intended for early childhood education teacher (birth–grade 2) and childhood education teacher (grades 1–6) majors in the Brooklyn College School of Education. The concentration provides interdisciplinary instruction in research and knowledge about children and youth. The program promotes an awareness of child-related issues for students in their roles as teachers, parents, and citizens. The concentration includes such topics as the history of childhood; interdisciplinary perspectives on childhood; the human rights of children; applied research methodologies; educational policies affecting children; and advocacy and policy research in the areas of child welfare and juvenile justice.



Bernadette, 12, Ireland. Courtesy of The World Through the Eyes of Children: A project of Save the Children.

<http://www.treeoflife.se/pictures.html>

Program Requirements

The concentration in Children's Studies requires the completion of 30 credits of courses in the Children's Studies program with a grade of C or higher in each course. The requirements for the teacher education programs are described in the "Education" section in the *Brooklyn College Undergraduate Bulletin*.

Children's Studies 20 is required for all students.

Two courses from the following:

Children's Studies 30;

Children's Studies 40.1 or History 30.4;

Sociology 40.1 or Sociology 40.2

Three courses from the following:

Children's Studies 21;

Children's Studies 31;

Children's Studies 34;

Psychology 20 or Psychology 22 or Psychology 24.5;

Speech 31

Three courses from the following:

Africana Studies 54;

Children's Studies 25;

Children's Studies 33;

Children's Studies 35;

Health and Nutrition Sciences 31 or Health and Nutrition Sciences 36;

Puerto Rican and Latino Studies 40

One course from the following:

Children's Studies 32; Children's Studies 40; English 65;

Speech 14.4

Please note that some of these courses have prerequisites.

Course Offerings for the Children's Studies Concentration

Children's Studies 20: Perspectives on Childhood

3 hours, 3 credits

Childhood viewed from the perspectives of health science, history, literature, psychology, sociology, and the arts.

Autobiography as inquiry into the child's selfhood; the child's imagination; perceptions of adolescence; the child in relation to the family, school, and community; children's experiences of personal, social, and political problems; social, economic, and educational policies affecting children; children's rights and international policy. *(This course is not open to students who have completed Children's Studies 1.)*

Prerequisite: Core Studies 1, 3, or 4, and English 1; or Core Curriculum 1.1, 2.2, or 2.3, and English 1; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 21: Applied Research in Children's Studies

3 hours, 3 credits

Study of applied research with children in social science settings; ethical issues that arise when conducting research with children; different approaches to research, both qualitative and quantitative/experimental. Students will gain hands-on experience with one or more research methods inside and/or outside of the class, develop their own research questions, and explore appropriate methodologies for examining them. Critical reading and understanding of research literature and presentation of research findings.

(This course is not open to students who completed this topic as Children's Studies 25 in spring 2006 or fall 2006.)

Prerequisite: Children's Studies 20

Children's Studies 25: Special Topics: Issues in Children's Studies

3 hours, 3 credits

Emerging issues, policies, and research in rapidly developing areas relating to children and youth. Topics vary from term

to term. (Not open to students who have completed *Children's Studies 5*.)

Children's Studies 30: The Human Rights of Children: A Transnational Development

3 hours, 3 credits

National and international development of the human rights of children movement; central documents, databases, and legislation in the area of children and youth rights; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989 and its implementation; children ombudsmen in other countries; UNICEF activities; and more. Rights of children to full development, including such topics as street children; child abuse; child prostitution; discrimination on the basis of sex, race, or religion; child soldiers; and child labor.

Prerequisite: Core Studies 1, 3, or 4, and English 1; or Core Curriculum 1.1, 2.2, or 2.3, and English 1; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 31: Children in Crisis

3 hours; 3 credits

Children in extreme situations of social, cultural, political, and familial disruption. Examination of such global and domestic situations as war, natural disaster, famine, poverty, abuse and terrorism, which lead to starvation, disfigurement, slavery, forced prostitution, child soldiers, forced employment, separation, homelessness, and high incidence of infanticide. Children and September 11, 2001. Conditions faced by children, including foster care, displacement, detention and intra-family abuse. The effects of violence and crisis situations on children. Preventative measures and alleviation of children's sufferings.

Prerequisite: Core Studies 1, 3, or 4, and English 1; or Core Curriculum 1.1, 2.2, or 2.3, and English 1; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 32: The Professional Performing Child: Past and Present Issues

3 hours, 3 credits

Examination of the stage child in western history during the last 130 years, focusing on the performer in society rather than the dramatic character. Construction of popular views of the stage child through an examination of the regulations, laws, and mores applied. Issues in children's employment, such as health and safety, education, professional training and prospects, the role of organized labor, and long-term psycho-social adjustment. Current venues, working conditions, and regulations. Scholarly studies and individual histories of professional performing children. *(This course is not open to students who completed this topic as Children's Studies 25 in spring 2000 or spring 2001.)*

Prerequisite: Core Studies 1, 3, or 4; or Core Curriculum 1.1, 2.2, or 2.3; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 33: Children and the Law

3 hours, 3 credits

This course is designed to provide students with an exploration of the status, rights, and obligations of children according to the American legal system; to develop a general understanding of aspects of law ranging from family and social service law to juvenile and criminal law as they apply to children and adolescents; and to familiarize students with the growth and development of the American legal system, which in the course of the twentieth century established that children have both substantive and procedural constitutional rights.

Prerequisite: English I and Core Curriculum 2.2; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 34: Child Abuse and Neglect

3 hours, 3 credits

This course introduces students to contemporary understandings of what constitutes abuse and neglect; methodological difficulties in identifying abuse and neglect,



Dr. Victor Karunan, Chief, Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP), Division of Policy and Practice, UNICEF Headquarters, visited the Perspectives on Childhood class, October 2007. Dr. Karunan discussed the work of UNICEF and Adolescent Development and Participation.

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pub/departments/childrenstudies/1536.htm>

both in terms of identifying individual children at risk, and from the perspective of documenting incidence and prevalence; and the specific, and often controversial, legal and social issues that arise when abuse and neglect are suspected and/or reported.

Prerequisite: English I and Core Curriculum 2.2; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 35: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Children and Disability: Local, National, and International Development
3 hours, 3 credits

A critical overview of children and disability using local, national, and international perspectives. Historical to contemporary based discussions on culture and policy demonstrated through education, media, and medical practices specific to children and disability. Understanding of current policy, child-centered research, and practices specific to children and disability extending from the United States to China. *(This course is not open to students*



The Second Child Policy Forum of New York: The Campaign for the United States Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, November 2007.

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pub/departments/childrenstudies/1262.htm>

who completed this topic as Children's Studies 25 in fall 2006 or spring 2007.)

Prerequisite: Core Studies 3 or 4; or Core Curriculum 2.2 or 2.3; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 40: Children of New York *3 hours, 3 credits*

Examination of children's lives in New York. The institutions that affect them; living conditions and lifestyles; housing; education; religion; family structure; and public health. Relevant demographic variables, including age, gender, ethnicity, race, geography, and socio-economic status. Children's social organization in such activities as play, sports, music and dance, Internet use, illegal music downloading, and other forms of media. Examination of demographic trends focusing on child welfare, including legal and social policies affecting children. *(This course is not open to students who completed this topic as Children's Studies 25 in spring 2005 or fall 2005.)*

Prerequisite: Children's Studies 20 or 30 or 31; or permission of the program director.

Children's Studies 40.1: History of Children, Public Policy, and the Law in the United States

3 hours, 3 credits

Political and legal history of children's issues in the United States, focused on the attitudes and actions of figures in power. Origins of public education and welfare; debate over child labor. *Brown v. Board of Education, In re Gault, Tinker v. Des Moines*. Abortion, busing, welfare reform, and children's rights in the legal and political arenas. (*This course is the same as History 43.21.*)

Africana Studies 54: The Black Child and the Urban Education System

3 hours, 3 credits

Study and evaluation of school curricula from preschool through high school in terms of their historical background and contribution to the development of Black children. Finding and writing bibliographical materials relevant to the curricula.

English 65: Literature for Young People

3 hours, 3 credits

Literature appropriate for students in elementary and secondary schools. Fundamentals of literature and basic readings of interest to young people.

Prerequisite: English I or I.7.

Health and Nutrition Sciences 31: Child Development: Typical and Atypical

3 hours, 3 credits

Health perspectives on development of the child from birth through middle childhood with focus on young children. Emotional, physical, and social development. Deviations from normal patterns of development and study of specific disabilities. Environmental factors of particular importance in guiding growth. Course includes a child observation project.

Prerequisite or corequisite: Health and Nutrition Sciences 6.1 or Education 34 or Psychology I.1.

Health and Nutrition Sciences 36: Family Influences on Child Health

3 hours, 3 credits

Parenthood, prenatal care; development and health of the child from birth to adolescence; school environment; physical handicaps. Requires permission of the chairperson.

History 30.4: History of Childhood

3 hours; 3 credits

Children's place in society and thought from antiquity to the present. Child-rearing practices, childhood disease and mortality, the education of children, literary reflections of childhood experiences in relation to the history of society and the culture of the family and of women. (*Not open to students who have completed History 24.7.*)

History 43.21: History of Children, Public Policy, and the Law in the United States

3 hours; 3 credits

See course description for Children's Studies 40.1.

Psychology 20: Introductory Child Psychology

3 hours; 3 credits

Principal features of the psychological development of children. Lectures, discussions, class period observations. (*Not open to students who are enrolled in or who have completed Psychology 25 or Education 27.1.*)

Prerequisite: Psychology 1.1 or 2.

Psychology 22: Cognitive Development

3 hours; 3 credits

Theories and experimental evidence relating to development of cognitive processes in children. Language acquisition, perceptual development, symbolic thinking, memory, classification skills, interplay between social and cognitive processes. Independent project.

Prerequisite: Psychology 20 or 25.



Nya, a student in the Suzuki program at the Preparatory Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College, performed at the Brooklyn College Open House, April 2008. Pictured here with her mom, younger brother, and Professor Gertrud Lenzer.

Psychology 24.5: Psychological and Developmental Disorders of Childhood

3 hours; 3 credits

Introduction to the identification, origin, and treatment of psychological and developmental problems and disturbances of early childhood. Topics include developmental crises and neurological and emotional disorders. Focus on family interactions and understanding disability in cultural context.

Prerequisite: Psychology 1.1 and either Psychology 20 or 30 or Education 34; or permission of the chairperson.



Brooklyn College Open House, April 2008. Student volunteers discuss the Children's Studies program with prospective students.

Puerto Rican and Latino Studies 40: The Puerto Rican, Latino, and Caribbean Child in New York City

3 hours; 3 credits

Puerto Rican, Latino, and Caribbean children in contemporary society. Relation of school curricula to their historical background and cultural contributions. Development of identity; knowledge and appreciation of heritage. Examination, use, and evaluation of instructional materials. Concepts, information, and materials necessary for effective work with target population.

Sociology 40.1: The Family

3 hours; 3 credits

Examination of the structure and function of the family and its relationship with such other institutions of the society as religion, the economy, and the political system; family as a unit of interaction. Family types will be compared: the traditional family, the dual-career family, and the single-parent household; alternatives to the family will be discussed.

Prerequisite: Core Curriculum 2.3 with a grade of B- or higher, or Core Studies 3 with a grade of B- or higher, or Sociology 5, or permission of the chairperson.

Sociology 40.2: Sociology of Children

3 hours; 3 credits

Sociological analysis of children and childhood. Historical and cross-cultural differences in attitudes toward children. Socialization processes, the family, peer cultures, education, mass media, children as consumers. Such social problems as social inequality and poverty; divorce, adoption, and foster care; racial discrimination; differential schooling; children at risk.

Prerequisite: Core Curriculum 2.3 with a grade of B- or higher, or Core Studies 3 with a grade of B- or higher, or Sociology 5, or permission of the chairperson.

Speech 14.4: The Performance of Children's Literature

3 hours; 3 credits

Specific performance elements in reading to and with children. *(Not open to students who are enrolled in or have completed Speech 14.5.)*

Prerequisite: Completion of course assigned at speech screening interview.

Speech 31: Speech and Language Development

4 hours; 4 credits

Speech, language, and communication development in relation to motor, perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and social development. Implications for individual, cultural, and linguistic variation and literacy. *(Not open to students who have registered for this course in any two prior semesters.)*

Prerequisite: minimum GPA of 3.00 and Speech 13.

Advisement for the Selection of a Concentration in Children's Studies

Students who are interested in pursuing a concentration in Children's Studies should consult with an adviser in the School of Education and should also meet with a Children's Studies program adviser as early as possible to plan an appropriate sequence of courses. Students selecting this concentration must also complete an Undergraduate Major/Minor/Concentration form, which may be obtained in 2105 James Hall or 3602 James Hall.

The concentration in Children's Studies will be recorded on the student's transcript.

For more information, please contact:

School of Education

Office of Undergraduate Advisement

2105 James Hall, 718.951.5447

and

Professor Gertrud Lenzer

Director, Children's Studies, or

Elise Goldberg

Coordinator, Children's Studies

3602 James Hall, 718.951.3192

e-mail: eliseg@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Children's Studies Faculty Committee

All telephone numbers are in area code 718.

Gertrud Lenzer

Children's Studies and Sociology 951.3192

Margaret-Ellen Pipe

Children's Studies and Psychology 951.3192

Yael Orbach

Children's Studies 951.3192

Gail B. Gurland

Speech Communication Arts and Sciences 951.5186

Louise Hainline

Dean of Research and Graduate Studies 951.5252

Lindley P. Hanlon

Film 951.5664

Margaret L. King

History 951.5303

Carol Korn-Bursztyn

Education 951.5431

Régine Latortue

Africana Studies 951.5597

Betty Wolder Levin

Health and Nutrition Sciences 951.5026

Roni L. Natov

English 951.5195

María E. Pérez y González

Puerto Rican and Latino Studies 951.5561



Mural (4 x 5.5 feet) on view in the Children's Studies Center. Created by sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students at St Mary, Mother of Jesus/St. Frances Cabrini Academy. Culmination of a project on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Instructor: Ms. Josephine Maione, '03, CS Alumna.

Children's Studies

In the Service of Children and Youth

Brooklyn College

The City University of New York
2900 Bedford Avenue, 3602 James Hall
Brooklyn, New York 11210
718.951.3192

Please visit us at

<http://depthome.brooklyn.cuny.edu/childrensstudies>

