

# BAD KIDS ~ ENGL102.601 ~ Jason Zuzga W 6-9pm ~ Syllabus ~ Spring 2015



still from Zero de Conduite (Dir. Jean Vigo, 1933)

fulfills requirements: Sector 6: 20th Century Literature of the English Standard Major

Office hours - office hours 4-5 T, 2-6 W and by appointment

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## Description:

This class will provide a rich immersion in questions of childhood and proper socialization, exploring the full spectrum of "bad kids," from those who refuse to do chores to those who are sexually precocious to those who deviate from gender norms to those who use automatic weapons to kill fellow schoolmates. That's quite a spectrum, admittedly. The basic premise of this class, however, is to consider cultural presentations childhood gone awry in recent films, novels, documentaries, and news coverage, to see what is so terrifying about childhood from

the outside and also to try to remember what it was like there inside.

Please keep the instructor apprised as to the extent of your workload to prioritize. You are not expected to complete ALL assigned viewing and reading, but to do as much as you can - I expect 6-9 hours of viewing and reading per week in addition to your other work.

#### Assignments:

1. Students are required to give brief presentations on course materials, and presentations will be assigned on an ongoing basis. Presentations should provide, in the case of a novel, story, or film, a close reading of a scene or important moment and questions for discussion. Presentations on historical and supplementary materials should break down the main ideas of the text. Some of the material, especially that on psychoanalysis, is quite difficult - student should consult with instructor if the material is unclear. As well, the most difficult material will be reviewed and broken down in class; the burden of explanation is not entirely on the student. We will cycle through the materials, and students will be assigned as to what they will present upon – as well, a respondent will be assigned, who should be also familiar with the material and ask follow up questions to the presenter, questions not to be prepared before class. Presentations can be rigid and formal or creative, as long as the key information is clear. Information about the author is not permitted - focus on the text itself, make it vivid and compelling and refreshed for conversation in class. 20%
2. We will maintain, in addition to the Canvas site, a course Facebook page for general discussion and posting of links. Weekly postings, at minimum, required. in response to course materials or other material of interest to the class. 20%
3. One 15- page research paper or creative research-based project (this may be a video, an audio piece, a performance, an installation, community service w report – the format and scope are up to you) - that begins with a close reading of a particularly intriguing and ambiguous moment in a piece of writing or film or other text and expands on it into current events, drawing on research. There are many more texts in the "FILES" folder for each week on canvas than appear on the syllabus below – all of them are fair game for use in your final project, so please take a look and see what intrigues you. The final project must include an annotated bibliography of five sources drawn from the FILES (any of the pieces, not only what is on the syllabus) or other class material on the syllabus with an explanation of how they fed into your project. 20%
4. Active and enthusiastic class participation and demonstration of familiarity with the materials. 20% (I will provide you with your class participation grade at the time of the midterm in case you need to adjust.) Everyone needs to talk and contribute to class discussion.
5. Short take-home midterm and short take-home final exam. 10%
6. You will be put in groups to execute some sort of mayhem or prank that does not violate University Policy. Keep in mind that this is a paradox - an assigned "prank" violates the very notion of a "prank" - so you will have to be creative to figure out what constitutes a prank on the very idea of a prank. No sex or violence permitted. We will as a class come up with some ground rules. 10%

Readings must be printed out and brought as hard copies to class. The professor will attempt

to provide as many print-outs of readings as possible. No e-books allowed and no electronic devices to be used during classtime except when explicitly allowed by instructor. We will put our cell phones in a basket for the duration of class except during break.

Plagiarism will be automatically met with an F for the semester.

Students are expected to get emotional and rambunctious during class, but to treat the instructor and fellow students with respect and without openly contradicting or attacking verbally in any way.

Films will be available online – the Instructor will send a link to where to find the film. Some films will need to be rented via Amazon or watched at the library on DVD. Again, the instructor will provide a link to where each film is available – some films will be available on the course canvas site, pending approval by the Reserves librarian.

Instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any time and to announce the changes clearly to be marked on student copy.

NOTE: Again - There is a great deal of work assigned per class - as this class meets once a week, I expect you to be working with the materials throughout the week between classes. I do not expect you to be able to get through all the material - it is there for you to have to use for work on your project. I will be clear about which texts and films are REQUIRED - others will be optional, though a students will be assigned, and thus required, to present and introduce the nonrequired material when such need arises.

Books to obtain:

Mary Poppins by P. L. Travers  
A High Wind in Jamaica by Richard Hughes  
Ferdynand by Witold Gombrowicz  
The Beast in the Nursery by Adam Phillips  
In Youth is Pleasure by Denton Welch  
Beloved by Toni Morrison  
Bastard Out of Carolina by Dorothy Alison

Week One Jan 21

Introductions

Read: <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/1974-zero-de-conduite-rude-freedom/>

Watch in class:

KIDS - MGMT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fe4EK4HSPkI>

Zero for Conduct (Dir. Jean Vigo, 1933)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUkW1LBuQcg>

Introductions

Read: <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/1974-zero-de-conduite-rude-freedom/>

Review Syllabus and discuss interests and memories of childhood

Watch (time permitting): Episodes (early) of Sesame Street

\* choose one to watch later

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBOWkk3b0eY>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Unv07MOp5c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Unv07MOp5c)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4aXmR51ewo>

watch episode of AdventureTime? There won't be time, but recommended.

What we wish to pay close attention to the following questions and discuss throughout the semester:

How do the the works we encounter articulate childhood, does the child have the capacity to speak for her or himself?

How does the work distinguish or separate or ignore or fixate on gender?

How does the work distinguish or separate or ignore or fixate on economic circumstances?

Is childhood being used to project adult anxieties onto? How so?

In works not made by children but "about" children (as they must, if we agree they must..look to SIXTEEN the film as a variant, as well as KIDS – who tells stories of childhood?), what kind of fantasies and melancholy and dreams and residue of youth are being brought to the surface, brought to consciousness?

What fears are projected onto the child?

What kinds of values are invested (and I use that term with its economic connotation) in the child?

How do the films, stories, and novels reflect the psychological theories we will read?

How do the requirements of narrative or the expectations of a story shape the content of tales of childhood?

Can any story of childhood have a satisfying "ending?"

To what degree do stories of childhood gone wrong allow for stories to take shape?

How does the work build or "construct" childhood as an object in social circulation (both work and child!)?

On whom or what does the work project blame, if blame is relevant?

What type of ethical standards is the child held to?

Each week, we will return to these same questions, and you can address them in your presentations. We are generating over the duration of the class a cluster of material to think with - we are not moving from one class to the next, forgetting what we did each previous week. I want you think about how all the works, all the thinking, fit together and relate, so you can have a fairly complete portrait of contemporary childhood by the end of the class.

## SUPERVISION

Week Two Jan 28

KEY WORK: ` Mary Poppins by P.L. Travers (IN FILES)

` Interview w/ P.L. Travers (IN FILES)

` "Sesame Street as Continuing Experiment" by Valeria Lovelace (IN FILES) – The other Other articles about Sesame Street in files are OPTIONAL.

` Excerpt from Dr. Spock (IN FILES)

` "Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena" Playing and Reality (excerpt) – D.W. Winnicott (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: ` "Playing: A Theoretical Statement" – D.W. Winnicott (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: ` "Mirror-Role of Mother and Family in Child Development" Playing and Reality

(excerpt) – D.W. Winnicott (IN FILES)  
` "Childhood as Spectacle" Patricia Crain (IN FILES)

## LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND SELFHOOD

Week Three Feb 4

KEY WORK: ` The Wild Child by Truffaut

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009511Z8G?](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009511Z8G?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

[ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B009511Z8G?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

` Review of The Wild Child [http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?](http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=ee05e7df1739e474bc4952dfbf66838b669ede)

[res=ee05e7df1739e474bc4952dfbf66838b669ede](http://www.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=ee05e7df1739e474bc4952dfbf66838b669ede)

` "Children Being Filmed by Truffaut" by Georgiana Collie (in FILES)

KEY WORK: ` History of Childhood (excerpt) - Colin Heywood (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: ` "The Beast in the Nursery" by Adam Phillips – title essay of book, not entire book!

` "The Mirror Stage" by Jacques Lacan (IN FILES) (OK not to read, lecture in class, time permitting) This is a difficult text.

If you have time, check out some of the videos of Ryan Trecartin - we'll revisit him later in the semester:

<http://www.andreareosengallery.com/artists/ryan-trecartin/videos>

We don't have a class session dedicated to media use - but such would make a fine research topic - from comic books to the effects of iPhones and social media.

## PLEASURES OF PLAY

Week Four Feb 11

KEY WORK: A High Wind in Jamaica by Richard Hughes

` A Delightfully Evil Tale Of Pirates And Children: <http://www.npr.org/2009/07/07/103930835/a-delightfully-evil-tale-of-pirates-and-children>

KEY WORK: "Infantile Sexuality" - Sigmund Freud:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14969/14969-h/14969-h.htm#p36>

summaries of Freud:

` <http://www.victorianweb.org/science/freud/develop.html>

` <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/psychoanalysis/freud.html>

KEY WORK: ` "Playing: Creative Activity and the Search for Self" – D.W. Winnicott (IN FILES)

` "On Tickling" Adam Philips (IN FILES)

## KEYSCHOOL

Week Five Feb 18

KEY WORK: Ferdyduke by Witold Gombrowicz

On FERDYDUKE

<http://bookcents.blogspot.com/2012/06/ferdydurke-by-witold-gombrowicz-whos.html>

Review of FERDYDUKE

<https://www.nytimes.com/books/00/12/10/reviews/001210.10hoffmat.html>

` "Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers" Roland Barthes (IN FILES)

## THE BAD SEED

Week Five Feb 18 (for homework we will select from following and watch

remaining in class)

KEY WORK: Heavenly Creatures (Dir. Peter Jackson, 1994)

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B006LG7GIQ?](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B006LG7GIQ?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

[ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B006LG7GIQ?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

`The Bad Seed (Dir. Mervyn LeRoi, 1956) You don't have to watch the entire movie, but do check out the trailer and clips and summary below.

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NWGyG4W5DI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1kOXfKJSM8>

[http://www.fandango.com/thebadseed\\_41983/plotsummary](http://www.fandango.com/thebadseed_41983/plotsummary)

`On The Exorcist:

<http://msmagazine.com/blog/2010/11/11/what-the-ever-popular-exorcist-says-about-female-sexuality/>

KEY WORK: "Just Rage" by Adam Phillips (IN FILES)

`"Dreaming, Fantasizing, and Living" D. W. Winnicott (IN FILES)

`"Contemporary Concepts of Adolescent Development" D.W. Winnicott (IN FILES)

MID TERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED

Drop Period ends Friday February 20

## JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Week Seven March 5

`Pixote (Dir. Hector Babenco, 1981)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCCK3k0OKtc>

KEY WORK: Thirteen (Dir Catherine Hardwicke)

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000I9VZHA?](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000I9VZHA?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

[ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000I9VZHA?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

(Links to an external site.)

`<http://www.urbanedjournal.org/archive/volume-2-issue-2-fall-2003/two-perspectives-thirteen-film-catherine-hardwicke-co-written-nik>

KEY WORK: Boyz in the Hood (Dir. John Singleton 1991)

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004GISY8W?](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004GISY8W?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

[ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004GISY8W?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

`"Two Takes on- BOYZ N THE HOOD" (IN FILES)

`"Assessment of Pathology" from Normality and Pathology in Childhood – Anna Freud (excerpts) (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: "Street Children in Film" by Irving Epstein (IN FILES)

`Juvenile Court (Dir. Frederick Wiseman) (DVD is available at Cinema Studies Office and on reserve at Library - it may also be streaming on our course Canvas site) We will watch part of this in class.

KEY WORK: <http://brightlightsfilm.com/buried-alive-frederick-wisemans-juvenile-court/>

## FINDING THE SELF

Week Seven March 18

There's a heavy work load this week - happy spring break...Feel free to watch

SPRINGBREAKERZ too....

KEY WORK: In Youth is Pleasure by Denton Welch

KEY WORK: Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh

KEY WORK: My Own Private Idaho (Dir. Gus Van Sant, 1991)

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B008PQ9EFS?  
ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B008PQ9EFS?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

KEY WORK: Let the Right One In (Dir. Tomas Alfredson, 2008)

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001V7YJMG?  
ie=UTF8&IMDBref=1&redirectToAsin=B001V7YJMG&ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_piv&tag=imdbtag  
\\_tt\\_wbr\\_piv-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001V7YJMG?ie=UTF8&IMDBref=1&redirectToAsin=B001V7YJMG&ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_piv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_piv-20)

KEY WORK: Childhood's End- "Let the Right One In" and Other Deaths of Innocence (In FILES)

KEY WORK: "A Stab at Hinting" Adam Phillips (in FILES)

KEY WORK: "On Risk and Solitude" Adam Phillips (in FILES)

KEY WORK: "Worrying and Its Discontents" Adam Phillips (in FILES)

Boredom Adam Phillips (In FILES)

Check out - <http://www.andrearosengallery.com/artists/ryan-trecartin>

## THE BULLY

Week Nine March 25

Midterm exam due

KEY WORK: Bully - documentary

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00BESLM5Y?  
ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00BESLM5Y?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

<http://www.thebullyproject.com/>

KEY WORK: The Brandon Teena Story (Dirs. Susan Muska, Gréta Olafsdóttir 1998)

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/movie/the-brandon-teena-story/id297434965>

(this is expensive - you might want to arrange group viewings via our facebook group)  
(optional) Bully (Dir. Larry Clarke 2001)

` "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay: The War on Effeminate Boys" Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (IN FILES)

` excerpt from GENDER TROUBLE by Judith Butler (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: excerpt from CIVILIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS by Sigmund ` Freud (IN FILES) This is a very brief excerpt, but think about how it relates to the psychology of the bully.

KEY WORK: Essay on Bully the documentary (in FILES)

## FACING VIOLENCE AND MAYHEM AND GUNS

Week Ten April 1

KEY WORK: We Need to Talk About Kevin (Dir. Lynne Ramsay, 2011)

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?  
redirectToAsin=B009AYVNEY&docId=1002996611&ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_piv&tag=imdbtag  
\\_tt\\_wbr\\_piv-20](http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?redirectToAsin=B009AYVNEY&docId=1002996611&ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_piv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_piv-20)

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/cannes-film-festival/8509779/Cannes-2011-We-  
Need-To-Talk-About-Kevin-review.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/cannes-film-festival/8509779/Cannes-2011-We-Need-To-Talk-About-Kevin-review.html)

KEY WORK: Elephant (Dir. Gus Van Sant, 2003) - We will screen in class.

Battle Royale (Dir. Kinji Fukasaku 2000)

[http://www.amazon.com/dp/B007MJSYF0?ref\\_=imdbref\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv&tag=imdbtag\\_tt\\_wbr\\_aiv-20](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B007MJSYF0?ref_=imdbref_tt_wbr_aiv&tag=imdbtag_tt_wbr_aiv-20)

"We Need to Talk About Kevin" screenplay (IN FILES) – read around in here and see how it corresponds with the movie as you will.

KEY WORK: "We Need to Talk About Kevin" by Dominic Power (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: "Elephant: Review" by Sophie Moore (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: "From Columbine to Red Lake: Tragic Provocations for Advocacy" by Cheryl Lester (IN FILES)

## SEXUALIZING THE CHILD

Week Eleven April 8

KEY WORK: The Story of the Eye by George Bataille (in FILES)

Sarah: A Novel by J. T. LeRoy (in FILES)

KEY WORK: Kids (Dir. Larry Clarke, 1995) –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcxJpslylO8>

KEY WORK: The Sense of an Ending: Youth Apocalypse Films by Richard Benjamin (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: Coming of Age on Samoa (excerpts) by Margaret Mead (IN FILES)

In class we will try to talk like anthropologists about KIDS as well as our regular discussion.

## DISABILITY / ILLNESS

Week Twelve April 15

KEY WORK: "People Like That Are The Only People Here" Lorrie Moore (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: Blind (Dir. Frederick Wiseman 1987) (This will be on reserve at the library and available at the Cinema Studies Office and may be available on Canvas for streaming)

Deaf (Dir. Frederick Wiseman 1986) (This will be on reserve at the library and available at the Cinema Studies Office and may be available on Canvas for streaming)

Dr. Spock excerpt (IN FILES)

KEY WORK: [https://www.ted.com/playlists/153/the\\_autism\\_spectrum](https://www.ted.com/playlists/153/the_autism_spectrum)

KEY WORK: "Bad Boys" (In FILES)

PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE - you must have met with the instructor and have had your project approved by next week.

## ABUSE

Week Thirteen April 22

KEY WORK: Bastard Out of Carolina by Dorothy Allison

All articles from FILES will be assigned for presentations.

## THE RETURNED / THE KID COMES BACK

Week Fourteen April 29

KEY WORK: Beloved by Toni Morrison

KEY WORK: A.I. (Dir. Steven Spielberg, 2005)

KEY WORK: "The Future is Kid Stuff" Lee Edelman (IN FILES)

FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED

Take home final exam and final project due last day of finals.

