



Carleton
UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES
Fall 2020

COMS 4602A CHILDREN, YOUTH & MEDIA



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Territorial Acknowledgement

Carleton University's campus is located on traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg people.

Course Description

Debates about new media technologies and forms have revolved around their impacts on young audiences since at least Ancient Greece, but these debates typically assume that childhood exists separately from media. As Derek Johnson observes in his recent book, *Transgenerational Media Industries*, a growing number of media companies build their business models on either side of a generation gap, simultaneously and strategically addressing both adults/parents and kids, albeit in distinct ways. Situated between cultural studies of childhood and critical media industries studies, this course explores the ongoing definition of childhood and adulthood at the nexus of domestic media-oriented practices.

Prerequisite(s)

Fourth year Honours standing in Communication and Media Studies or permission of the School of Journalism and Communication.

Instructor

Welcome to COMS 4602! I'm looking forward to spending the term with you reading, talking and thinking about the role media play in children's lives.

Although we won't be holding regular class sessions this semester, I am always happy to hear from you. There are several ways to get in touch with me: you can **e-mail me using the Mail block on cuLearn**; you can **@ me on MS Teams**; or you can **drop in for my weekly online office hours (Tuesdays, 10:30–11:30 a.m. Eastern)**, by yourself or in a group, to review course content and ask questions.

During the week (Monday to Friday), I aim to respond to your emails within 48 hours. Please note that any course-wide announcements I send to you by email will also be archived for your reference in the "Course Announcements" forum on cuLearn.

Course Format

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, COMS 4602 will be offered fully online in Fall 2020. It has been designed as a blended a/synchronous course. Some components can be completed on your own time, while others may require you to meet with the instructor and peers at a scheduled time:

- A new module of “lecture” material will be released on cuLearn every two weeks beginning Monday, Sept. 14. You will have two weeks to make your way through the module, complete the assigned readings, and take a short “knowledge check” quiz.
- Students pursuing a B or higher will also sign up for a tutorial group (a survey link will be circulated early in the term in order to ensure you are matched with a time that can work with your schedule), which will meet virtually every other week. These meetings will be used to workshop and discuss your autoethnographic exercises; questions about course content should be brought to my virtual office hours.

My overall goal has been to make this course as flexible as possible, while still pursuing learning outcomes appropriate to a fourth-year class in the B.CoMS program. The flip side of this is that some of the familiar structures and supports that you’re used to aren’t going to be available; consequently, you may have to take more responsibility for your own learning. You’ll see that I’ve tried to build some mechanisms into the course to help with that, but if you’re ever feeling overwhelmed, unsure about what you need to do, or simply want to talk about the material, please reach out to me or to your classmates. We’ll get through this together.

Course Materials

Textbooks

You are required to have access to the course text, *Transgenerational Media Industries: Adults, Children, and the Reproduction of Culture* (U of Michigan P, 2019) by Derek Johnson. An order has been placed with the Carleton University bookstore, but you are free to acquire it from your preferred bookseller. Additional required readings will be made available via the ARES online reserves system.

Microsoft Teams

We will also be using Microsoft Teams as our virtual classroom this term. Teams is one of the web collaboration platforms supported by Carleton and part of the broader Microsoft Office suite. You can access it on the web via the Office.com site (Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox are supported), or download the Teams app for your computer or mobile device.

Teams will allow us to schedule and host virtual meetings. I’ve also created channels that can be used for chatting with your peers. Please use the **General** channel for questions about course policies, schedules, assignments, etc. The **4602 Lounge** channel is for informal, social discussion; it’s a place to share news

stories or other relevant examples you come across, talk about what’s going on in your life, and support one another as we make our way through this unusual year. There are also a series of private channels that I will set up for each of the tutorial groups.

When connecting to a Teams meeting for discussion group, office hours or a one-on-one meeting, please wear headphones/earbuds in order to minimize background noise. Per our policy on online imaging and recording, you are not required to turn on your camera. If your internet connection is slow (and plugging into an Ethernet connection or moving closer to a router isn’t an option), you can also dial into office hours by phone.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment

This course adopts an assessment framework called *specifications grading*. It is designed to clearly and explicitly link grades to learning, give students more autonomy and responsibility for their learning, and focus our attention on the process of scholarship.

Your final course grade will be determined by the components you successfully complete, which demonstrate that you have met specific learning outcomes. ***By the end of this course, students who...***

<i>receive a grade of...</i>	<i>...will have demonstrated that they can...</i>	<i>...by...</i>
D	manage their learning through self-reflection	taking all six knowledge check quizzes, satisfactorily completing the Participation & Engagement Plan and Self-Assessments, and achieving 2 out of 3 Participation Goals.
C	actively engage with the course material, including assigned readings	satisfactorily completing the Course Journal.
B	critically interrogate childhood experiences	satisfactorily completing at least 4 autoethnographic exercises.
A	articulate course concepts to experience	satisfactorily completing an autoethnographic research paper.

Please note that the requirements for each grade **include all the requirements for the lower grades.**

In the specs grading framework, you choose what grade you want and then do the work that you need to get it. If, for instance, you're satisfied with a B this semester, you don't need to do the A requirements. Each assignment will be assessed on as either **complete** or **incomplete** (essentially, pass/fail) relative to its **specifications**, and no credit will be granted for unsatisfactory work.

Time Turner Tokens

In order to ensure that you have the flexibility you need to complete your work this semester, you will begin the term with 3 Time Turner Tokens. These are a resource you can spend at any time for the following benefits:

- **Make up a knowledge check quiz.** If you do not take or are unable to satisfactorily complete one of the knowledge check quizzes within the two-week window it is available, you can spend token to excuse them at a cost of n tokens, where n equals the number of quizzes you have excused this semester (i.e., 1 token for the first excused quiz, 2 tokens for the second, 3 for the third, etc.).
- **48-hour extension.** Under ordinary circumstances, assignments will not be accepted late without the purchase of an extension. Each 48-hour extension costs n tokens, where n equals the total number of extensions you have purchased for the same assignment (i.e., 1 token for the first 48 hours, 2 tokens for the second, 3 for the third, etc.).
- **Revise and resubmit an assignment.** Scholarly research and writing are iterative processes. If an assignment does not meet the criteria for successful completion defined in its specifications, you may spend tokens to have another opportunity to fulfill the requirements. Revising and resubmitting costs n tokens, where n equals the number of times you have had to R&R the same assignment (i.e., 1 token for first R&R, 2 for a second, 3 for a third, etc.). Revised assignments must be resubmitted within one week of receiving your feedback and must include a cover sheet in which you outline how you responded to the feedback.

When you need to spend your tokens, complete the brief form on cuLearn. **You may carry a negative balance of tokens up to -3, and additional tokens may be earned for work that, in my judgement, notably exceeds the assignment specifications in either effort or outcome.**

Pluses and Minuses

As described in the table above, your final letter grade in the course will be determined by which course components you have satisfactorily completed. However, if you have 2 or more tokens remaining at the end of the semester, I will adjust your grade up (e.g., from an A to an A+). On the other hand, if you have a negative token balance at the end of the semester, I will adjust your grade down (e.g., from an A to an A-). In order to maintain the link between the course grade and learning outcomes, grades will never move more than one step on the grading scale.

Assignments

The various assignments and components for the course are briefly described below. The full specifications, which lay out what you must do to complete it satisfactorily and receive credit towards your grade, are available on cuLearn and Teams. Remember that there's no partial credit, so ensure that you fully understand all the requirements in the specification document before submission.

Participation & Engagement

Students pursuing a D or higher will create a plan for their participation and engagement, including three Participation Goals. They will also successfully complete all six knowledge check quizzes. On-going, active engagement with course material is always important, but it is even more vital in online teaching and learning. Taking all six knowledge check quizzes is one way of ensuring you keep up with the course material this term, but real, valuable participation goes beyond simply "keeping up." Consequently, you will be asked to complete a brief reflection at the beginning of the semester and set 3 meaningful, measurable, and manageable goals to improve your participation and engagement with the class (due Wednesday, Sept. 16). They may include matters related to attendance, preparation, active listening, participation in discussions, or forms of engagement that take place outside of class. You will self-assess your progress towards these goals mid-semester (due Friday, Oct. 23) and again at the end of the class using forms provided (due Friday, Dec. 11).

Course Journal

Students pursuing a C or higher will keep a journal to document their engagement with the course material. Your journal will be a repository for your notes and reflections on the course material. The course journal is designed to model different strategies and habits that will facilitate your engagement with the material, including both class sessions and readings.

Journals will be collected three times during the semester for evaluation (Sept. 30, Nov. 11, and Dec. 11), and you can decide which entries to submit for assessment when, so long as by the end of semester you have received a satisfactory on at least:

- 3 module reflection worksheets;
- 2 reverse outlines
- 2 double-entry reading responses;
- 2 compare-and-contrasts;
- and a glossary of keywords.

You are encouraged to get into the habit of journaling frequently, not only so you have lots of choice when selecting the entries to submit for assessment but also so you can use the notes you produce as resources. With the exception of the Glossary, which must be submitted in the third and final batch, you can decide which entries to submit for assessment, though it is strongly recommended that you submit at least some entries for the first deadline in September in order to receive feedback.

Autoethnographic Exercises

Students pursuing a B or higher will complete a series of autoethnographic exercises to explore course concepts through their own experiences of childhood.

Autoethnography is a method of qualitative inquiry where, drawing on personal memory data, self-observational data and external artifacts, researchers themselves act as instruments for generating data in order to better understand a social or cultural process of interest. Each of the course modules will be accompanied by a prompt designed to get us ***thinking autoethnographically*** about childhood and children's media. You will carry out the exercise following the provided instructions and prepare some notes to share and discuss in class. Your fieldnotes should be uploaded to your group's Teams channel at least 24 hours before your scheduled tutorial meeting so that they can be reviewed by your peers in advance of our discussion.

Autoethnographic Research Paper (Take-Home Exam)

Students pursuing an A will expand one of their autoethnographic exercises into a research paper. You will select one of your completed exercises and write it up as a research report. By "writing up," I mean developing an analysis, discussion and formal presentation of your data, documenting what you did and what understandings you gained from it in light of the assigned readings, lecture, class discussion, and additional library research. The paper is due Dec. 23.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

The following schedule is provided for your information and is subject to reasonable changes with sufficient notice:

Date	Module Topic	Readings
Sept. 14	Constructing Childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• James & James, “Constructing Children”• Uprichard, “Being and Becomings”• Johnson, <i>TMI</i>, introduction• Recommended: Kraftl, “Memory and Autoethnographic Methodologies”
Sept. 28	The Industrial Logics of Domestic Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Johnson, <i>TMI</i>, chap. 1• Kline, “From Literacy to Comics”• Staksrud, “Citizen or Consumer?”
Oct. 12	Adult Expertise in Children’s Media Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Johnson, <i>TMI</i>, chap. 3• Asquith, “Box Tops”• London, “Producing Children’s Television”
Nov. 2	Cultivating Transgenerational Fans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Johnson, <i>TMI</i>, chap. 2• Götz et al., “Media Traces”• Ito, “Technologies of the Imagination”
Nov. 16	Managing the Transgenerational Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Johnson, <i>TMI</i>, chap. 4• Banet-Weiser, “Is Nick for Kids?”• Harrington and Bielby, “Life Course”
Nov. 30	Children as Media Producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Johnson, <i>TMI</i>, chap. 5• Williams, “ROI of Play”• Marshall, “Social Dance”

Policies

Declining Online Imaging and Recording

This course includes optional sessions that using the BigBlueButton video conferencing platform. This raises some important privacy considerations that all students should know. You are not required to turn your camera on and may decide to turn it on or off at any time. Students are **not permitted** to take photographs,

screenshots, or record other students unless they obtain **explicit permission** from the professor and all other students well in advance of the session.

Office hours and meetings held on BigBlueButton will not be recorded by the instructor. Our initial welcome/Q&A session will be recorded by the instructor to ensure access for those who cannot attend or those who wish to review it afterwards; if you do not wish to be recorded during this session, please let me know by email, and I will contact you to discuss alternate arrangements.

This statement was adapted from the research-creation project Cam Hunters (artist-scholars Julia Chan and Stéfy McKnight [STÉFY]).

Statement on Student Conduct Online

All students are expected to contribute towards an engaging, inclusive, and safe learning environment. During all class-related activities, whether synchronous or asynchronous, students are expected to engage in respectful and courteous communication. In accordance with the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy, discrimination and harassment](#) will not be tolerated. It is a violation of course policy to cut and paste, screen shot, share course content, or post the words of your classmates, TA, or Instructor outside of class without permission. All work submitted in this course must be uniquely your own. When submitting assignments and/or completing exams, you are expected to articulate responses in your own words rather than cutting and pasting from course materials without permission, which is a form of plagiarism.

Carleton Email Accounts

All email communication to students from the Communication and Media Studies Program will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn. As important course and University information are distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

Electronic Submissions

All assignments will be submitted electronically on cuLearn, typically as .pdf files. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have gone through all the steps to complete the submission by the deadline.

Late Policy

Deadlines are real and serious. Under ordinary circumstances, late assignments will not be accepted except with the purchase of an extension through the Time Turner Token system. That being said, if you experience a significant disruption to your ability to complete your academic work, whether due to the COVID-19

pandemic, another serious or chronic illness, or other major life event, please come see me as soon as possible to discuss potential remedies (see also “Requests for Academic Accommodation,” below).

Grading

The course will use the letter grade – percentage equivalents outlined in §5.4 of the [Academic Calendar](#). Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. **No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.**

Return of Term Work

Feedback and results can typically be anticipated within 2 weeks of submission.

Grade Appeals

If you receive a grade that you believe is inconsistent with posted assignment specifications, you may request that your grade be reviewed. Submit a completed Grade Review Request form (available on cuLearn) to the instructor by email within 7 days of receiving the assignment back. You should expect a decision within 15 days of receiving the grade; if necessary, I will schedule a meeting with you to discuss my decision. As a result of this informal appeal process the original grade may be raised, lowered, or left unchanged.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

The Carleton University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one’s own”. This can include the following:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;

- or handing in “substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without the prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.”

You should familiarize yourself with Carleton University’s policy on [Academic Integrity](#).

Retention of Student Work

Work submitted in this class may be retained for internal use and shared anonymously (that is, with all identifying information removed) as an example for future classes. If you do not consent to this use of your work, please speak with the instructor to opt out.

Additional Student Support

The Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS) is a centralized collection of learning support services designed to help students achieve their goals and improve their learning both inside and outside the classroom. CSAS offers academic assistance with course content, academic writing and skills development. Visit CSAS on the 4th floor of MacOdrum Library or online at www.carleton.ca/csas.

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

- ***Pregnancy obligation.*** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf
- ***Religious obligation.*** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf
- ***Academic accommodations for students with disabilities.*** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this

course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

- **Survivors of sexual violence.** As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf