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SW 420.01: Child Abuse and Child Welfare

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Social Work 420 - Fall Semester 2001
Child Abuse and Child Welfare

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Introduction: The well being of children is an issue of critical concern both in the United States and throughout the world. Racism, violence, poverty and homelessness shape the early life experiences of millions of children and youth. Grassroots activists and child welfare advocates have worked tirelessly to place the concerns of children and youth on the public agenda in both international and national arenas. Despite these efforts, the daily reports of alarming rates of child abuse and neglect speak to the declining well being of children.

Course Description: This course provides a critical examination of child welfare policies and practices in a political economic context. It begins from a historic perspective, traces the thinking and practice of child welfare in the U.S., and examines the differential treatment of children of color in the U.S. child welfare system. Current laws and policies that shape child welfare practice are addressed. The mission and responsibilities of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services is a topic of study. Students participate in a variety of learning experiences to appreciate the complexity of child welfare service delivery. Particular attention is paid to the Indian Child Welfare Act, its history and implications for practice. We will explore the certainties that have informed and limited the scope of problem solving in child welfare. Students will develop and explore critical questions that challenge these certainties and promote an empowering vision of child well being to guide our children's future.

Course Objectives:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the current status and history of the U.S. child welfare system.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of institutional discrimination and its impacts, in particular, the differential treatment of minority children/children of color, throughout the history of the U.S. child welfare system.
3. Discuss the importance of gender difference in the identification and treatment of children in the child welfare system.
4. Discuss the relationship between social class and the identification and treatment of problems in child welfare system.
5. Discuss the relationship between factors such as ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation

and child welfare policy and practice.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of the forms and scope of child maltreatment.
7. Describe psychological, social, legal, cultural, economic, and political factors associated with child maltreatment.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of the organizational structure and practices of the child welfare system in Montana
10. Demonstrate linkages among history, policy, theory and practice in child welfare.
11. Connect local and global issues in child welfare by identifying lessons learned in diverse cultural and national contexts and applying them to the development of empowering models for the promotion of child well being.

Note: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Course Readings:

Dorne, C. K. (1997). *Child maltreatment: A primer in history, public policy, and research*. New York: Harrow and Heston.

Shapiro, M. (1999). *Solomon's sword*. New York: Random House

Faculty Pack of Readings and Handouts.

Final Examination (20%): There will be no quizzes or mid-term examination. However, there will be a final examination administered during finals' week. The exam will take approximately two hours to complete and will cover the concepts discussed in class and the course readings throughout the semester. The exam will be short and long answer essay.

Class Engagement (20%): This class will use a variety of pedagogical techniques to foster student learning. These will consist of a combination of lecture, films, guest speakers, field trips, and small and large group discussion. Students will work in pairs and groups to assist one another in the learning process. Students' engagement with the course material will be assessed via weekly commentaries and class attendance. Commentaries should be no longer than one to one and a half pages, typewritten, double-spaced and handed in on Mondays (I will try my best to get these back to you on Wednesdays with comments, questions, and feedback.).

What's Expected in a Commentary?: I use this assignment as a gauge of your learning and comprehension of course material. Commentaries also let me know you have done the readings and are prepared for class discussion. I want you to engage with the reading, not by providing me with a summary of its content, but rather by posing questions, constructing arguments and doing some critical reflection on what you have read. You can use some of the following questions to guide your work or come up with some of your own:

- (1) What is your critical assessment of what you have read?
- (2) What feelings, thoughts and practices of your own were challenged by the reading?
- (3) What lessons did you learn that relate to child welfare practice?

Course Assignments (60%): Students will explore the history, policies, theories and practices of the child welfare system through a variety of learning experiences. Regular attendance and active class participation are essential. The assignments are geared to develop critical knowledge about the history, policy, and practices of child welfare. All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced and use APA style format (Harvard and Chicago also okay). All assignments should be handed in no later than the date specified on the syllabus, unless you have made special arrangements with me beforehand. Assignments handed in late without prior permission will be dropped one grade.

The Child Welfare Portfolio: Course assignments for the semester will be based around building a portfolio of an aspect of the child welfare system that captures your interest (e.g., child labor, orphanages, adoption, boarding schools for Native American children, foster care, child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, children treated as adults in the criminal justice system, corporal punishment, etc.) I will elaborate on this assignment in class but in brief, here are the papers and projects your portfolio should include:

- (1) A 3-4 page paper exploring the history of policy, theory and practices related to this aspect of the child welfare system – Due Sept 26th
- (2) A time-line illustrating the social construction of this aspect of child welfare based on a model I will show you in class and several others I have found elsewhere – Due Oct 10th
- (3) A 3-4 page paper addressing ways in which factors such as race, gender, class or ethnicity relate to those policies and practices – Due Oct 17th
- (4) A 3-4 page paper examining the ramifications of the policies, theories and practices. What were the policies responding to? What responses did they trigger? What traces of the policies and practices remain in the child welfare system today? What theories guide practice? What values do they respond to? Due Oct 31st
- (5) An interview of a local person who works with the aspect of the child welfare system you are investigating – Due Nov 14th
- (6) A 3-4 page paper taking an international perspective and investigate how your aspect of child welfare is approached and addressed in another country – Due Nov 19th

- (7) Presentation of portfolio project to the class – a case study – Students will be divided into four groups and will present on Dec 3rd, Dec 5th, Dec 10th or Dec 12th.

Process and Structure: I will grade each of these assignments separately when they are due. The grade you receive will be your final grade for completing this section of the work. You will have the opportunity to address my questions and concerns on these sections before handing in the final project. Completing this leg of the assignment will be added into the grading for your portfolio presentation in Dec. The completed portfolio project is due Dec 12th. When completed, your portfolio will include the following sections:

- A. History of Policy, Theory and Practice
- B. Time-Line Connection History, Theory, Policy and Practice
- C. Race, Gender and Class Consideration
- D. Ramifications and Implications of Policy, Theory and Practice
- E. Local Perspectives
- F. International Perspectives

Determination of Course Grade:

Class Engagement	20%
Child Welfare Portfolio Assignment	60%
Final Examination	20%
Total:	100

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
65-69	D
< 65	F

* I will show you in class how I tabulate grades and grading criteria.

Course Outline and Assignments:

Week of:	Class Discussion and Lecture Topics	Assignments and Readings Prepared for the Week
Sept 5 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Course overview • Participation guidelines • Address child welfare portfolio assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin reading Solomon’s Sword – LaFlammes, Part 1

Sept 10 th and Sept 12 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be announced I'm out of town all week doing training for child protection services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 – Dorne FP 6 – Child maltreatment... FP 7 – Cultural diversity... Continue reading Solomon's Sword – LaFlammes, Part 1
Sept 17 th and Sept 19 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining the problem and clarifying concepts Overview of the helping system and the key players 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1 – Dorne FP 6 – Child maltreatment... FP 7 – Cultural diversity... Continue reading Solomon's Sword – LaFlammes, Part 1 First commentary due – Sept 17th
Sept 24 th and Sept 26 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Histories of child abuse and child welfare The “rediscovery” of child maltreatment Medicalizing child maltreatment – from badness to sickness Other theories of child maltreatment Connecting policy and theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish reading Solomon's Sword – LaFlammes, Part 1 Chapter 2 – Dorne Chapter 3 – Dorne FP 1 – Children in slavery... FP 2 - Beware of the Danger... FP 24 – Securing the welfare.. History of theory, policy and practice paper due Sept 26th Second commentary due Sept 24th
Oct 1 st and Oct 3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Histories of the criminal justice and child protection systems' responses to child welfare The multidisciplinary team approach to child maltreatment Team approach in Montana How to construct a time-line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin reading Solomon's Sword – The Melton's Part 1 Chapter 4 – Dorne Chapter 5 – Dorne FP 18 – Child Sexual Abuse... FP 19 – Multidisciplinary... FP 20 – Connecting the Dots... FP 21 – Child Sexual Abuse... Third commentary due Oct 1st

<p>Oct 8th and Oct 10th</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism, classism and child welfare • The Indian Child Welfare Act • Gender and child welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FP 4 – Indian Children... • FP 5 – Shortcomings in the... • FP 15 – The Politics... • FP 16 – Child Abuse and... • FP 17 – Reactions by Native... • FP 31 – Contest Caring... • Time-Line Connecting History, Theory, Policy, and Practice due Oct 10th • Fourth commentary due Oct 8th
<p>Oct 15th and Oct 17th</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors associated with child maltreatment • What’s the research say? • Effect of child maltreatment on victims • The Melton’s and the LaFlamme’s – case studies and implications and challenges for child welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 – Dorne • FP 10 – Signs of Physical... • FP 11 – Physical Signs of... • FP 12 – Behavioral... • Finish reading Solomon’s Sword – The Melton’s Part 1 • Race, gender and class paper due Oct 17th • Fifth commentary due Oct 15th
<p>Oct 22nd and Oct 24th</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child and Family Services and their response to child welfare • Film: Lady Bird, Lady Bird • CPS Field Trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FP 8 – Family and Individual.. • FP 9 – The Children’s Bill... • FP 13 – What Happens.... • FP 14 – Montana School... • FP 29 – She’ll Always be... • Sixth commentary due Oct 22nd
<p>Oct 29th and Oct 31st</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement responses to child welfare • Judicial system responses to child welfare • Guest Speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 – Dorne • Continue Reading Solomon’s Sword • Ramifications and Implications paper due Oct 31st • Seventh commentary due Oct 29th

Nov 5 th and Nov 7 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System responses to the problem and problems with the system • Treatment of Victims and Abusers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FP 25 – In Our Best Interest.. • FP 30 – Reforming Child... • FP 33 – The Adoption... • FP 35 – Family Preservation.. • FP 36 – Family Preservation.. • Eighth commentary due Nov 5th
Nov 12 th and Nov 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class on Nov 12th - Veteran's Day • Catch-up session on Solomon's Sword 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish reading Solomon's Sword • Chapter 8 - Dorne • Interview due Nov 14th • Ninth commentary due Nov 12th
Nov 19 th and Nov 21 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rethinking the child welfare system • People, power and participation • No Class – Nov 21st – Thanksgiving Holiday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FP 26 – New Zealand... • FP 27 – The Patch Approach • International Perspective due Nov 19th • Tenth commentary due Nov 19th
Nov 26 th and Nov 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rethinking the child welfare system (con't) • Community, family and culture as resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FP 28 – Child abuse... • FP 32 – Moving Toward... • Eleventh commentary due Nov 26th
Dec 3 rd and Dec 5 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1 Presentations • Group 2 Presentations
Dec 10 th and Dec 12 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio Presentations • Course Evaluation and Wrap-Up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 3 Presentations • Group 4 Presentations • Child Welfare Portfolio due Dec 12th
Dec 19 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Examination • Wednesday, Dec 19 – 1:10 – 3:10 	0000000000000000