

Childhood Studies Speaker Series

Speaker: Joseph V. Giunta

Tuesday, April 29 4:30-5:30pm

Location: Galloway Campus L-115

Pizza served

Title: Exploring the Many Kinds of Childhood(s) through the “Playground” of Children’s Film

Abstract: From *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) and *Peter Pan* (1953) to the *Avatar: the Last Airbender* and *Stranger Things* television series, children and childhood have been explored on-screen for over a century. Something that is less considered, however, is the ways in which these media representations of childhood simultaneously reflect, reinforce, or rebel against social and cultural understandings of what is “allowed” or “acceptable” for young people. This presentation will navigate the many different forms of childhood constructed in popular media and how the lens of Childhood Studies can be utilized to critically think about these depictions of youth and how they offer various models of behavior, paths to self-realization, and inspirations to embrace the diverse kinds of childhood(s) that exist in our world.

Short Bio: Joseph V. Giunta is a Visiting Instructor in the Education & Human Development (EDHD) program who studies representations of childhood in media through the interdisciplinary lens of Childhood Studies. With a background in Cinema Studies from his Master’s work at NYU and an embrace of the many fields that encompass Childhood Studies from his doctoral research at Rutgers – from sociology and psychology to anthropology and literature – he is passionate about exploring how constructions of children in film, television, and social media influence broader social understandings of childhood and youth.