

Geographies of Children and Young People 3

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Space, Place, and Environment

 SpringerReference

Geographies of Children and Young People

Volume 3

Editor-in-Chief

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Geographies of Children and Young People is a Major Reference Work comprising 12 volumes that pulls together the best international reflective and innovative scholarship focusing on younger people. Volumes 1 and 2 establish and critically engage with the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological groundings of this geographical sub-discipline. Volumes 3–11 provide in depth thematic analysis of key topical areas pertinent to children's and young people's lives: space, place and environment; identities and subjectivities; families and peer groups; movement and mobilities; politics and citizenship; global issues and change; play and well-being; learning and labouring; conflict and peace. Volume 12 connects both academic, policy, and practitioner based work around protection and provision.

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Editors

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Editor-in-Chief

Space, Place, and Environment

With 44 Figures and 6 Tables

 Springer Reference

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Series Preface

Geographies of Children and Young People now constitutes a major subdiscipline within Geography. This is a very exciting and influential time in its development. Hence, it is important to capture the dynamism, depth, and breadth of the subdiscipline within a Major Reference Work (MRW). Springer Major Reference Works are produced in such a way that updating and editing of the online version can be done every few years. This means that the publication does not fix the data, debates, and delivery but rather moves and evolves with the subdiscipline itself. The intention and expectation of this MRW is that this substantive collection will be *the* go-to resource for scholars, educators, and practitioners working with children and young people.

While founding scholarship was published in the 1970s and 1980s, the dramatic expansion of research and publication in the field really began in the late 1990s and has continued exponentially. The last decade has witnessed a substantive increase in graduate student research projects and a surge in university-level teaching related to children's and young people's geographies. It is therefore extremely timely that this 12-volume major reference work has been produced. Together as Editor-in-Chief, Volume Editors, and Authors, we have developed the largest single collection of geographic work focusing on children and young people in the world. Intellectually, the work reaches beyond geography to the wider social and behavioral sciences; many of the authors in the series are not geographers, and so, the collection is healthily and engagingly transdisciplinary. Anyone working with children and young people will find chapters that connect very effectively with their own interests. Specialists as well as graduate and tertiary education students will find relevant work distributed throughout the MRW or locate everything they might need within one thematic volume.

This Series was founded on certain key intellectual and political principles. Working with young people and children within the academy has not always been easy nor a straightforward pathway for academics. It has taken time for scholars to convince their colleagues of the following: that children and young people really matter; that they should not be marginalized by the academy; that they have competency and agency and play important roles in society; and that they should be taken seriously as people regardless of age or size. This 12-volume collection is material evidence of the academic importance of children and young people in our

world. The MRW is determinedly international in approach, in authorship, and in content. The huge diversity of nations and territories explored in the collection as well as the geographic locations of author contributors is a real testament to the commitment of the Editor-in-Chief and Volume Editors to be genuinely international. Children and young people are everywhere on the planet, hence it is imperative that this Series reflects that ubiquity. Drawing from scholars and scholarship from within and about the majority world has been a key achievement for each volume. Another aspect of inclusivity relates to authorship. Foundational, well-established, and early career scholars are all well represented throughout the volumes.

The 12 volumes work collectively as a series and also stand alone as single books. The volumes are lengthy and contain between 25 and 35 full chapters; each volume is an excellent resource of expertise, content, and analysis. Volume 1, *Establishing Geographies of Children and Young People*, is designed to pull together some of the foundational work in the sub discipline; demonstrate the emergence and establishment of particular philosophical, theoretical, and conceptual themes; and capture the diversity of geographic work on children and young people as it connects with other sub- and disciplinary approaches. This volume presents the key founding elements of the sub discipline. Volume 2, *Methodological Approaches*, explores the grand array of methodological approaches and tools that children's and young people's geographers, and other social and behavioral scientists, have worked with, adapted, and invented. Chapters explore research practices, techniques, data analysis, and/or interpretation. Working with younger people in research demands different ways of doing research and hence addressing the complexities of power relations. Methodologically, innovation and experimentation have been very important. *Space, Place, and Environment* (Vol. 3) takes these three central geographic concepts and debates and extends them. The volume is structured around five subsections: Indigenous Youth – Space and Place; Children, Nature, and Environmental Education; Urban Spaces; Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces; and Border Spaces. Several of these themes are explored in fuller depth in subsequent specialized volumes. Volumes 1 and 3 will be particularly useful starting points for readers less familiar with geography as a discipline. Volume 4, *Identities and Subjectivities*, is designed to focus on the stuff of life and living for younger people. The chapters examine who young people and children are and what their social identities and subjectivities mean in the context of their spatial experiences. The volume explores identity formation and the spatial meaning of identities and subjectivities in relation to a broad range of social relations. The chapters explore how young people's senses of selfhood and belonging emerge through complex processes of inclusion, exclusion, and marginalization and the important role played by representation, discourse, and creativity. In Vol. 5, *Families, Intergenerationality, and Peer Group Relations*, the focus is on the ways in which children and young people are relationally connected with others. Section I demonstrates that familial relationships and the spatiality of the home are extremely important in all children's and young people's lives, even though the patterns and structures of families and the spaces/places of home vary geographically and temporally. Section II innovatively examines the complexities and spatialities of

extrafamilial intergenerational relationships and the complex meanings of age relationality. Section III emphasizes children's and young people's relationships with one another. This includes work on geographies of emotion and affect, bodies and embodiment.

The mobility turn in geography has been highly influential in the social sciences. Children's and young people's geographers have been significant in the paradigmatic shift around mobilities and immobilities. In Vol. 6, *Movement, Mobilities, and Journeys*, contributors examine the role children and young people play in these "travels" in a range of diverse global contexts. The chapters collectively provide theoretical, empirical, and methodological insights and examples of actual movement combined with analysis of a range of complex contexts, spatialities, and temporalities that facilitate or hamper mobility. Volume 7 takes us into the realm of children and young people as political beings. *Politics, Citizenship and Rights* explores the political geographies of younger people in order to bring analytical attention to intricacies of the *policies* that specifically affect young people and children, alongside the *politics* at play in their everyday lives. Divided into four sections, the volume interrogates the spatialities of the rights of the child, children and young people's agency in politics, youthful practices and political resistance, and active youth citizenship. Volume 8, *Geographies of Global Issues: Change and Threat*, unites three broad research themes that are often examined separately: economic globalization and cultural change; international development; and children and young people's connections with climate change, natural hazards, and environmental issues. What pulls these themes together is the recognition that younger people are important actors and agents within these processes and that their engagement/disengagement is crucial for the planet's future. In Vol. 9, *Play and Recreation, Health and Wellbeing*, important, well-established, but often contentious foci of children's and young people's lives are examined conceptually, temporally, spatially, in practice, and through representation. Many of the debates about children's embodiment revolving around obesity, unfitness, wellness, and neglect are relatively new in the social sciences, and geographers have played important roles in their closer scrutiny. Volume 10, *Labouring and Learning*, provides an integrated and multidimensional approach to understanding what learning and laboring mean to children and young people. The two concepts are explored in depth and breadth in order to capture the variance of what work and education mean and how they are practiced in different places and at different times through childhood and youth. Key thematic areas for this volume include social reproduction, transitions, aspirations, and social and cultural capital. In *Conflict, Violence and Peace* (Vol. 11), the emphasis is on the ways in which children are impacted and affected by, and involved with, highly problematic and fragile conditions of war, violence, conflict, and peace. As more and more younger people experience a range of conflicts and social, economic, and political violence, it is essential to examine what happens to them and what roles they play in processes such as asylum, child soldiering, terrorism, counterterrorism, ending conflict, and building peace. Volume 12, *Risk, Protection, Provision and Policy*, serves to connect academic research and policy and planning that affects children and young people. Policy, planning, and provision

are often purportedly about reducing risk and offering protection but are also associated with the control and containment of younger people, particularly spatially. The chapters explore the ways in which policies at different scales affect children and young people in terms of their access to space and their life chances.

This Series is an extremely rich, varied, and vibrant collection of work centered on geographies of children and young people. Just as children and young people bring vibrancy, diversity, and complexity to our worlds, so this MRW is designed to showcase, deepen, and develop the geographic scholarship that captures, albeit partially, the fascinating social heterogeneity and diverse spatialities of children's and young people's lives.

National University of Singapore, Singapore
May 20, 2015

Tracey Skelton
MA Oxon, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Preface

The contributors to this volume herald from diverse international and (sub)disciplinary contexts. They were invited to contribute to this volume because their research addresses the three key themes of this volume: space, place, and environment. The volume is organized into five parts: Indigenous Youth: Space and Place; Children, Nature, and Environmental Education; Children, Young People, and Urban Spaces; Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces; and Border Spaces. These five themes emerged iteratively as authors' work developed. These themes are indicative of some major issues in children's geographies scholarship and act as points of articulation for the chapters; several chapters cut across two or more of these themes (and beyond).

Three central geographical concepts are at the heart of this volume: space, place, and environment. Geographers have proposed diverse ways to think about space. In this volume, the word is used to encapsulate the range of ways in which many geographers and spatial theorists have sought to explain the coming-together of the *spatial* with the *social*. Childhood is not merely a *social* construction (as per the New Social Studies of Childhood), but a *spatial* one.

Space is often contrasted with place because place denotes a name-able spot *in space*. Places gain *meaning* – through human action, through dwelling, through emotional attachments, through events, and through memories attached to them. Notably, children's geographers have reflected less on "place" in the sense afforded by human geographers than they have on children's active "place-making," especially in cities. Children's experiences of place have become central to critical accounts of intergenerational relations and tensions, especially over access to public spaces.

"The environment" has been an enduring topic of concern for human geographers. Broadly, the term refers to the spaces in which human action is situated and children's geographers have been at the forefront of studies of children's "local environments" – the neighborhoods, streets, parks, or patches of greenspace in which they spend their lives. More recently, human geographers have viewed nature and culture as thoroughly entangled. Here, nature and culture are never separated, even if one might imagine some places to have more of one than the other. Children's geographers have – alongside education scholars – expended considerable energy researching children's interactions with the environment.

Doreen Massey's (2005) book *For Space* brings together space and place in productive ways, including how nonhuman aspects of "the environment" or "nature" are not separate from spatiality but always-already entangled in the socialization of space and the spatialization of society. This volume presents a range of insights into the spatialities of children's and young people's experiences.

Massey (2005) recommends a state (or ethic) of "outwardlookingness," in order to bring the local and global together, which entails "aliveness to the world beyond one's own turf" and a "commitment to that radical contemporaneity which is the condition of, and condition for, spatiality" (p. 15). In light of Massey's work, one of the goals of this volume was to enact an ethic of "outwardlookingness": to be alive to the world beyond our usual "anglophone turf" (for those of us located on "anglo turf"), while appreciating this turf is still a place that many children's geographers look out from.

This sense of outwardlookingness works through the volume in a number of ways. Firstly, through the deliberately diverse geographical contexts covered in this volume – including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cyprus, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Peru, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Secondly, through the inclusion of chapters that challenge the (Euclidean) logic of capital, colonialism, and, more latterly, neoliberalism, notably through Indigenous perspectives on young people and land, education, and identity. Thirdly, through attention to practices and processes that cut across national borders (Border Spaces) and environmental practices and ideals that value diverse forms of global citizenship (Children, Nature, and Environmental Education). Finally, the volume also engages with notions of place and belonging – as "home" – that extend beyond the assumption that "the home" tallies with a nameable dwelling. Thus, the chapters in the section Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces unpick the assumed logics of "home" through children and young people's uses of social media, through the histories and geographies of bedroom spaces, and through young people's home-making in the street. Far from distinct concepts, the notions of space, place, and environment are therefore multiple, complex, and thoroughly entangled with one another.

All of the contributors advocate greater recognition of children and young people's spatial rights, in various ways, whether in the home, outdoors, at school, crossing borders, in public and digital spaces, or simply looking for a safe place to sleep. Children's and young people's perspectives on space, place, and the environment, and their desire for places to call their own, tie the volume together. The volume is a testament to the politics of the spaces and places of childhood, highlighting how many children and young people face obstacles to living well and to living where they desire. All children and young people deserve a place in the world where they can live well.

Acknowledgment

Our heartfelt acknowledgment goes to all our authors who contributed chapters to this volume. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the hard work of every author in bringing this particular volume of Springer's series to fruition. Highlighting the significance of space, place, and environment in children's and young people's lived geographies has been a collective effort initiated by Tracey Skelton's vision, and we hope you enjoy this volume and the series it is part of.

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About the Editors



Karen Nairn is currently based at Otago University College of Education, Dunedin, New Zealand. Her current research focuses on youth identities and post-school transitions. Her recent book *Children of Rogernomics. A Neoliberal Generation Leaves School* connects the stories of young people with the wider social and economic story of New Zealand during the last three decades. More broadly, her research focuses on processes of exclusion in education shaped by gender, sexuality, and race. Her research portfolio is interdisciplinary in nature with contributions to education, youth studies, geography, and qualitative research. Prior to her university career, she was a high school geography teacher.

Her future research plans revolve around investigating how diverse collectives of young people think about a future threatened by climate change, economic precarity, and political instability. Her new research intends to find out what young people consider the most urgent issues to address, how hope influences their collective actions for change, and how their identities are shaped in the process.



Peter Kraftl is Professor of Human Geography in the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, at the University of Birmingham, UK. He studied for his Ph.D. at the University of Wales, Swansea, before moving to the Centre for Children and Youth at The University of Northampton in 2004. In 2007 he moved to the Department of Geography at the University of Leicester, and in 2014 to the University of Birmingham.

Peter has three major research interests: children's geographies and childhood studies; geographies of education, and especially alternative education; and geographies of architecture. He has published 6 books and over 60 journal articles and book chapters, often examining the intersections between these three research interests. His research has been underscored by a commitment to nonrepresentational, new materialist approaches to understanding children's everyday lives, and to broadening our senses of "what matters" in the study of childhood. His most recent books are *Children's Emotions in Policy and Practices* (with Matej Blazek, Palgrave), *Informal Education, Childhood and Youth* (with Sarah Mills, Palgrave), and *Geographies of Alternative Education* (Policy Press).

Peter has been an Editor of *Area* and *Children's Geographies* journals, and was a founding member (and later Chair) of the Geographies of Children, Youth and Families Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). He is also an Editor of Routledge's *Spaces of Childhood and Youth* book series, and has guest-edited ten journal special issues. Between April 2016 and April 2019, he is an Honorary Professor at the School of Education, RMIT, Melbourne.

Editor-in-Chief



Tracey Skelton is Associate Professor of Human Geography in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. She was previously Professor of Critical Geographies at the University of Loughborough in the UK. The essential elements of her research career focus on people who are socially, politically, and intellectually excluded. Her early work focused on the Caribbean and issues of gender and racial inequality, feminist geographies, and methodological analysis. She has contributed to culture and development debates, particularly through her longitudinal research on the

island of Montserrat. Recently, A/P Skelton returned to this field of scholarship through research with volunteers and host organizations in Cambodia as part of a major comparative and collaborative project on development partnerships. She was the principal investigator of a major comparative urbanism research project on the livability, sustainability, and diversity of four Asian cities: Busan in South Korea, Hyderabad in India, Kunming in China, and Singapore.

A/P Skelton is a recognized international leader in the subdiscipline of children's and young people's geographies. In particular, her work has served to challenge the invisibility and marginalization of young people from geographic academic research at the same time as it has demonstrated the rich and varied ways in which young people live their lives both spatially and temporally alongside, but differently from, adults. Her research work has been funded by key research institutions such as the Economic and Social Research Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the UK; the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Academic Research Fund and the Global Asia Institute, both of the National University of Singapore; the Australian Research Council; and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

A/P Skelton was a founding editorial board member of the international journal *Children's Geographies* and has been the *Viewpoints* Editor since 2005 and became the Commissioning Editor for Asia in 2010. She is on the editorial boards of the following journals: *Geoforum*, the *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*,

Geography Compass, and *ACME: International Journal of Critical Geographies* (open access). She has coauthored 2 books, edited 3 collections, guest-edited 2 special journal issues, and published more than 70 journal articles and chapters. She is a passionate teacher and graduate supervisor. She is committed to the politics of research dissemination in accessible formats, in particular to enable the participants in her research projects to understand and recognize their coproduction of knowledge whether through specialized small-scale workshops, translation of reports into local languages, or production of audiovisual materials.

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Introduction to Children and Young People, Space, Place, and Environment

1

Karen Nairn and Peter Kraftl

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Abstract

Three central geographical concepts are at the heart of this volume on Space, Place, and Environment from the *Geographies of Children and Young People* series. The volume demonstrates the multiple imbrications of space, place, and environment with/in children and young people’s lives. All the contributors offer a suite of theoretical tools for thinking through how space, place, and environment are (con)figured in children and young people’s lives. They demonstrate how the social borders between childhood and adulthood and spatial borders between rural and urban, countries, neighborhoods, and institutions are

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relationally produced. The volume on Space, Place, and Environment is organized into five parts: “Indigenous Youth: Space and Place”; “Children, Nature, and Environmental Education”; “Children, Young People, and Urban Spaces”; “Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces”; and “Border Spaces.” These themes are indicative of some major issues in cutting-edge children’s geography scholarship, but they are, necessarily, partial. In various ways, all of the contributors advocate greater recognition of children and young people’s spatial rights, whether in the home, outdoors, at school, crossing borders, in public and digital spaces, or simply looking for a safe place to sleep. Children and young people’s perspectives on space, place, and environment, and their desire for places to call their own, tie the volume together. The volume is a testament to the politics of the spaces and places of childhood, highlighting how many children and young people face obstacles to living well and to living where they desire. All children and young people deserve a place in the world where they can live well.

Keywords

Bedroom culture • Border spaces • Childhood studies • Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) • Dynamic simultaneity • Education for sustainability’ (EfS) • Environment and nature • Forest schools • Independent mobilities • Intergenerational relations • Land and place • National Parks • Outwardlookingness • posthumanism • Social experience • Space and place • Border • Euclidean views • Homeless and home • Urban • Spatiality • Definition • Street children • Urban space • Wilderness • children’s geographies • new wave of childhood studies • geographies of education • scale • Indigenous childhoods • social media

1 Introducing Space, Place, and Environment

Three central geographical concepts are at the heart of this volume: space, place, and environment. This section of the introductory chapter outlines some working definitions of each concept, which prompted key “starting points” for the authors who contributed to this volume. In each case, it offers an (non-exhaustive) overview of some of the ways in which geographers have sought to grapple with and define each concept (for a more detailed introduction to “space” and “place,” see Horton and Kraftl 2013, Chap. 13). This section also provides some examples of work by geographers of childhood and youth that has engaged with those concepts. Throughout this section, it is acknowledged that, far from distinct concepts, the notions of space, place, and environment are multiple, complex, and thoroughly entangled with one another. Thus, the concepts outlined below provide a *starting point* in conversations about the multiple imbrications of space, place, and environment with/in children and young people’s lives. Each of the contributors to this volume develops one or more of these concepts in far more detail and, most importantly, in ways that extend well beyond the brief conceptual overviews provided below.

2 Space

In the most fundamental sense, the term “space” refers to the very surfaces and volumes of the earth. As Euclidean, or geometric space, it can be measured and mapped. “It” (as an entity) has x , y , and z coordinates, which can be translated onto paper maps or into degrees of longitude and latitude that inform Global Positioning Systems. Space is, in this understanding, entirely systematic and predictable, since it is ostensibly unchanging, stretched over the surface of our planet. This conceptualization of space leads to two further pieces of assumed logic. In the first, human action (alongside any other forms of action) takes place “in space.” In other words, space is a mere canvas or container for natural and social happenings. Space is – and was, particularly for early colonial explorers – a blank canvas onto which the aspirations, machinations, achievements, and mistakes of human history could be painted. In the second and as a result, such a view of space sees it as “dead,” compared with time and the processual liveliness of history (Massey 2005).

While, arguably, Euclidean views of space continue to inform lay understandings of the term and still guide Minority World attempts to systematize the world, very few contemporary human geographers think in these terms. Indeed, few “children’s geographers” would deploy this definition of space in their work. In part, this is because of the increasing predominance of “place,” as it emerged through social and cultural geographies from the 1970s onward (as detailed in the next section). In part, this is because the idea of space as a blank slate – as *terra nullius* – is politically far from neutral or blank. Understood as such, space has been implicated in some of the most infamous acts of literal and symbolic violence in human history – from the removal of lands from Indigenous groups (discussed in Part 1 of this volume, “Indigenous Youth: Space and Place”) to the domination of men over public spaces to the detriment of marginalized groups, including children (implicit in many chapters in this volume and discussed elsewhere in this major reference work). And, in part, this is because – in conjunction with understandings of place – geographers have proposed a diverse and often bewildering array of other ways to think about space.

One of the most important ways in which human geographers have more recently retheorized space is through the term “spatiality.” In this introductory chapter, the word is used not only in its more precise sense but to encapsulate a range of ways in which many geographers and spatial theorists have sought to explain the coming together of the *spatial* with the *social*. Informed initially by Marxian thought, space is no longer (quite) as dead as it may appear in Euclidean logic. Rather, space produces society as society produces space – dualistically or even dialectically. Thus, in its original definition,

[w]e [...] use the term “spatiality” to capture the ways in which the social and spatial are inextricably realized in one another; to conjure up the circumstances in which society and space are simultaneously realized by thinking, feeling, doing individuals and [...] the many different conditions in which such realizations are experienced by thinking, feeling, doing subjects. (Keith and Pile 1993, p. 6)

However, as Massey (2005) puts it:

[an] approach to the understanding of the social, the individual, the political, itself *implies and requires* both a strong dimension of spatiality and the conceptualisation of that spatiality in a particular way. At one level this is to rehearse again the fact that any notion of sociability [...] is to imply a dimension of spatiality. This is obvious, but since it usually remains implicit [...] its implications are rarely drawn out. (Massey 2005, p. 189, emphasis in original)

For these reasons, many human geographers have sought to draw out the implications of *spatiality* in their research. Perhaps the most distinct contribution to these debates by children's geographers has been to recognize that childhood is not merely a *social* construction (as per the New Social Studies of Childhood) but a *spatial* one. Thus, as Holloway and Valentine (2000) demonstrate, there are pervasive spatial discourses in societies that work to contain, channel, or prevent children's agency (Matthews et al. 2000; Kraftl 2006; Nairn and Higgins 2011). For instance, in many geographical contexts, it is assumed that schools are appropriate places "for" children, that children are "safest" at home, and that children are "out of place" in public spaces (Cresswell 1996; Pain 2006). Several of the chapters in this volume develop nuanced insights into the spatialities of childhood and youth experience. For instance, Femi Adekunle's chapter (► Chap. 13, "Slipping as a Sociospatial Negotiation: Teenagers and Risky Landscapes") examines how in London young men deploy a spatial strategy of "slipping" to negotiate local spaces in terms of danger and threat and thus produce spatialities inflected by age and ethnicity. In a very different context, Barbara Pini, Deborah Morris, and Robyn Mayes (in ► Chap. 22, "Rural Youth: Mobilities, Marginalities, and Negotiations") observe how the experiences of rural Australian young people vary depending on their social positioning and independent mobility (or lack), which affects their capacity to move to different parts of the country should they wish to.

More recently still, geographers have formulated an even richer array of theoretical ciphers for witnessing the complexities of spatial experience. Some of these are discussed in the following sections – not least how Massey (2005) brings together space and place in productive ways and how nonhuman aspects of "the environment" or "nature" are not separate from spatiality but always already entangled in the socialization of space and the spatialization of society. Thus, for instance, age-based "transitions" are imbricated with multiple other (societal, economic, political, environmental) transitions that, *together*, produce diverse spaces and place – territories, cities, ruralities, wildernesses, and publics (Brown et al. 2012). However, it is also worth mentioning here that contemporary human geographers have sought to attune to far more diverse facets of what we might glibly term "social experience" in the production of space. For instance, following feminist scholars, they have emphasized the role of human bodies and emotions in making spaces – through habits, rules, routines, gestures, dress, and other forms of interaction and performance. Such embodied geographies and emotional geographies are signaled when women, men, and children feel compelled to act and dress differently in public spaces (Longhurst 2000). Children's geographers have recently expanded on these debates, analyzing

how, for instance, children's bodies – and their (non)activity in public spaces – have become a key locus for contentious debates about obesity in Minority World countries (Hörschelmann and Colls 2009; see also chapters in this volume by Mould (► Chap. 15, "Parkour, Activism, and Young People"), Blanch (► Chap. 21, "New Spaces, Blurred Boundaries, and Embodied Performances on Facebook"), and Witten and Carroll (► Chap. 16, "Children's Neighborhoods: Places of Play or Spaces of Fear?"). Elsewhere, scholars have sought to enliven notions of space and spatiality through "nonrepresentational" approaches, designed to witness the ineffable, for-the-moment, liveliness of spatial action (Thrift 2000). In some areas of children's geographies, such approaches have brought together theorizations of materiality, embodiment, emotion, and affect, in attempts to foreground the different registers of childhood experience as "more-than" representational and beyond cognitive thought (Horton and Kraftl 2006). Similarly, nonrepresentational theories inform some of the chapters in this volume – especially those by Duffy (► Chaps. 18, "Affect and Emotion in Children's Place-Making"), Mould (► 15, "Parkour, Activism, and Young People"), Butcher (► Chap. 14, "Reimagining Home: Visualizing the Multiple Meanings of Place"), and Malone (► Chap. 9, "Posthumanist Approaches to Theorizing Children's Human-Nature Relations").

3 Place and Space?

In more traditional geographical scholarship, space is contrasted with place through its definitional capacity: it denotes a nameable spot *in space*. Most fundamentally, a "place" might be pinpointed through the same "dead" logic as Euclidean space – through GPS coordinates or grid references. However, in most understandings, a place is marked through place naming or toponyms: "Birmingham," "Dunedin," "Monument Valley," etcetera. Moreover, places gain their place-like qualities through human experience (and here, already, there are obvious overlaps with the logic of spatiality). Thus, places gain *meaning* – through human action, through dwelling, through emotional attachments, through events, and through memories attached to them (for an authoritative overview, see Cresswell 2004). For the humanist geographers of the 1970s, "place" became a key point of theoretical orientation. Contrasted with the "objective," "dead," positivist conceptions of space, humanist thought allowed – perhaps for the first time – for more *personal*, emotional, poetic geographies to be written. Although critiqued (principally for their male-dominated elitism), humanist geographies still remain influential in cultural-geographic studies of landscapes, texts, arts, and built forms (Horton and Kraftl 2013).

Notably, children's geographers have reflected less on "place" in the sense afforded by humanist geographers than they have on children's active "placemaking," especially in cities (e.g., Matthews et al. 2000). In some ways, this reflects again the elitism of some humanist geographers. In others, it reflects one of the key concerns of scholarship in the subdiscipline: that is, rather than exploring how places come to be named, remembered, or afforded meaning through

generations of (adult) action, attention turned to the ways in which children express agency and exhibit creativity or subversion in “places” whose meanings may (to adults) appear to be solidified. Thus, children’s experiences of place have become central to critical accounts of intergenerational relations and tensions, especially over access to public spaces (Skelton 2000; Vanderbeck 2007). The chapters on “Border Spaces” in this volume build on some of that earlier work to demonstrate how cutting-edge scholarship in the subdiscipline has, simultaneously, acknowledged children’s experiences of the contested spaces of the border and how children themselves *contest and renegotiate* the practices of bordering through (usually adult-led) social norms, lawmaking, or military action.

Increasingly, however, it has become difficult to clearly disentangle notions of space and place. Thus, many scholars have brought these terms into constructive conversation with one another. Building extensively upon earlier notions of spatiality (especially feminist approaches) and upon humanist theorizations of place, Doreen Massey’s (2005) book *For Space* is an excellent reference point in this regard. Massey (2005) acknowledges how space is often the abstract counterpart of concrete, localized place, but she works to further dislodge these assumptions. Her argument that both place and space are “concrete, grounded, real, lived, etc.” counters the abstraction accorded space but can render place and space somehow the same. Massey’s explanatory tools bring the concepts of space and place together but allow for nuances. She recommends a state (or ethic) of “outwardlookingness,” in order to bring the local and global together, which entails “aliveness to the world beyond one’s own turf” and a “commitment to that radical contemporaneity which is the condition of, and condition for, spatiality” (p. 15).

In light of Massey’s work, one of the goals of this volume was to enact an ethic of “outwardlookingness”: to be alive to the world beyond our usual “anglophone turf” (for those of us located on “anglo turf”), while appreciating this turf is still a place that many children’s geographers look out from. This sense of outwardlookingness works through the volume in a number of ways. First is through the deliberately diverse geographical contexts covered in this volume – including Brazil, New Zealand, Indonesia, Cyprus, the USA, Slovenia, India, Peru, and other countries besides. Second is through the inclusion of chapters that challenge the (Euclidean) logic of capital, colonialism, and, more latterly, neoliberalism, notably through Indigenous perspectives on young people and land, education, and identity (chapters by Kidman (► Chap. 2, “Māori Young People, Nationhood, and Land”); de Leeuw and Greenwood (► Chap. 3, “Geographies of Indigenous Children and Youth: A Critical Review Grounded in Spaces of the Colonial Nation State”); and Sciascia (► Chap. 4, “Negotiating Place, Negotiating Identity: Rangatahi Māori in Facebook”, in Part 1). Third is through attention to practices and processes that “upscale” children’s geographies (Ansell 2009; Hopkins and Alexander 2010) – most notably those experiences that cut across national borders (Part 5 – “Border Spaces”) and environmental practices and ideals that value diverse forms of global citizenship (Part 2 – “Children, Nature, and Environmental Education”). Finally, the volume also engages with notions of place and belonging – as “home” – that extend beyond the assumption that “the home” tallies with a nameable dwelling. Thus, the

chapters in Part 4 (“Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces”) unpick the assumed logics of “home” through children and young people’s uses of social media, through the histories and geographies of bedroom spaces, and through young people’s home-making in the street.

4 Environment and “Nature”?

“The environment” has been an enduring topic of concern for human geographers. Most broadly, the term may refer to the spaces in which human action is situated, and, indeed, children’s geographers have been at the forefront of studies of children’s “local environments” – the neighborhoods, streets, parks, or patches of greenspace in which they spend their lives (e.g., Aitken 2001). However, of course, “the environment” also takes on a more specific meaning, referring to the natural resources, places, and landscapes that, in many contemporary societies, are deemed in need of protection. Hinchliffe (2007) argues that geographers (and to an extent some societies) have understood “nature” in three ways. First, and most basically, it is “out there” – as an entity separate from human culture, sitting behind defined boundaries: in National Parks; at the edges of cities; and in “wilderness,” far from human settlement. While it has been tremendously valuable in the mobilization of environmental action, this view of nature is also problematic, not least because nature is viewed as a (finite) resource, to be exploited, and the rather more fuzzy boundaries between “nature” and “culture” are effaced. Second, and in response, many geographers view nature as a “social construction.” Thus, “wilderness” places may exist, but only as they are imagined, bounded, managed, and represented by humans. National Parks are prime examples – their landscapes may be highly managed, and even if they are not, the very fact that they are guarded by lines on a map (and sometimes fences and entrance fees) means that human action is far from absent. Finally, and more recently, Hinchliffe (2007) notes that human geographers have viewed nature and culture as thoroughly entangled. Here, nature and culture are never separated, even if one might imagine some places to have more of one than the other. Rather, cities are places in which nature – overtly or covertly – is introduced, or colonizes, or even thrives as a result of interaction with humans: think of the preponderance of nonhuman urban specialists, like foxes, pigeons, and seagulls in the UK or raccoons in Canada; or think of the ecological diversity of urban parks around the world. Moreover, it is a fallacy to think of humans as distinct from or “above” nature, when our very, fleshy bodies are subject to biological aging and are crossed by a range of “nonhuman” agents: disease vectors, foodstuffs, minerals, and chemicals.

Children’s geographers have – alongside education scholars – expended considerable energy researching children’s interactions with the environment. Although not necessarily framing the environment in the threefold schema above, the vast majority of work by children’s geographers has resonated with the first two approaches (nature as “out there” and nature as social construction). Indeed, alongside studies of children’s local environments, scholars have tended to focus on children’s

awareness of and learning about sustainability issues – often captured by the term “Education for Sustainability” (EfS). Thus, groundbreaking work linked children’s learning about environmental issues to the relative availability (or lack) of safe, accessible outdoor spaces in which children could play and interact (Malone and Tranter 2003; also see Freeman and Tranter 2011). In these kinds of studies, nature was viewed both as a resource (which children may learn to protect) and as a social construction (as children are taught about particular, Minority World notions of sustainability). Several of the chapters in this volume (notably in Part 2 – “Children, Nature, and Environmental Education”) pick up on these debates, examining how, for instance, children acquire different environmentally relevant skills in gardens (Wake and Birdsall, ► [Chap. 5, “Can School Gardens Deepen Children’s Connection to Nature?”](#)) or forests (Austin, Knowles, Richards, McCree, Sayers, and Ridgers, ► [Chap. 6, “Play and Learning Outdoors: Engaging with the Natural World Using Forest School in the UK”](#)).

However, of late, some critics have noted that childhood scholars have tended to reduce children’s interactions with “the environment” to the sphere of education and, especially, EfS (Horton et al. 2015). In other words, children’s lives may be entangled with nature (and the environment) in manifold ways that go beyond a concern with learning about sustainability. Thus, for example, as Horton et al. (2015) show, children experience, feel, and talk about sustainable urban architectures in a whole suite of ways that extend beyond learning. Sustainable architectures include integrated drainage systems (with porous pavements, swales, and retention ponds), high-level eco houses, and a range of features designed to make houses more efficient, such as photovoltaic panels, green roofs, combined heating and power plants, and increased thermal mass. Horton et al. (2015) demonstrate how children’s experiences were diverse – from rumors about the everyday problems of sustainable technologies to the embodied geographies of playing with/in sustainable urban drainage systems. While most of the chapters in this volume remain concerned with sustainability (and to an extent EfS), they nevertheless admit other concerns – like wider senses of connectedness to nature, play, and resilience.

Most recently, childhood study scholars across a range of disciplines (especially geographers) have begun to engage with the third approach to nature listed above: with nature/culture as “entangled.” They have done so through a broader recognition of the ways in which childhood is not merely a social (or socio-spatial) construction: rather, childhoods are “more-than-social” (Kraftl 2013a). As Prout (2005) argued in his groundbreaking book, “childhood studies [must] move beyond the opposition of nature and culture [...to] a hybrid form [...wherein] children’s capacities are extended and supplemented by all kinds of material artefacts and technologies, which are also hybrids of nature and culture” (Prout 2005, pp. 3–4). In other words, children’s *social* worlds are accompanied, experienced, and formulated through a range of nonhuman (or more-than-human) things and flows – from pharmaceuticals to toys and from pets to bacteria, which

mean[s] that life processes and social processes now appear regularly to mix with and to influence one another without regard to a biological/social boundary. As we see it, many

present and emergent bio-political formations of childhood consist of novel and unpredictable connections among materials and processes, forces and events that are not best understood through bio-social dualism. (Lee and Motzkau 2011, p. 8)

Drawing on actor-network theory, nonrepresentational geographies, and posthuman, post-feminist theories (e.g., Braidotti 2011), these diverse approaches to the more-than-social geographies of childhood experience have, tentatively, been termed a “new wave” of childhood studies (Ryan 2012). Early scholarship in this vein has *begun* to show how children are intertwined with animals – domestic or wild – with whom they coexist (Taylor 2013); how children’s practices of carrying stones can propel children’s geographers beyond the temptation of reducing children’s everyday practices to symbolic, representable identities (Rautio 2013); and how children are part of flows of water that move through the microscale of the human body to the macroscale of the continental watershed (Pacini-Ketchabaw and Clark 2014). In terms of the environment, new scholarship has concentrated on how, in contexts like alternative education in the UK, entanglements of human/nonhuman natures involve but also exceed the demands of EfS, for instance, in the acquisition of habits that may enable an “at-risk” child to return to school (Krafft 2013b, c; also see Higgins and Nairn 2014a). Several of the chapters in this volume – through attentiveness to affects, materialities, and nonhuman natures – develop some of these nascent conceptual themes, albeit not necessarily referencing the “new wave” directly. Most explicitly, Malone (► Chap. 9, “Posthumanist Approaches to Theorizing Children’s Human-Nature Relations”) uses posthuman theories to reflect critically on her earlier work on children’s encounters with “nature,” contrasting experiences from very different “environments” in Kazakhstan and Australia. This so-called new wave is not necessarily representative of a singular future for children’s geographies – a subdiscipline now characterized by considerable theoretical diversity – but might offer a suite of alternative tools for thinking through how space, place, and environment are (con)figured in children’s lives.

5 The Parts in this Volume

The contributors to this volume herald from diverse international and (sub)disciplinary contexts. They were invited to contribute to this volume because their previous or ongoing research has made substantive, innovative contributions to the three key themes of this volume: space, place, and environment. The editors also suggested a range of more detailed themes, some of which formed the basis for the five Parts below. However, these five themes emerged iteratively as authors’ work developed. It is important to note that these themes are merely points of articulation for the chapters and that several chapters cut across two or more of these themes (and beyond). Moreover, these themes are not meant to exhaustively represent the full breadth of contemporary geographical work on children, young people, space,

place, and environment. They are indicative of some major issues in cutting-edge children's geography scholarship, but they are, necessarily, partial. This section provides some contextualization for each theme, followed by a sketch of the chapters in each part.

5.1 Part 1: Indigenous Youth: Space and Place

Land and place frame young Indigenous people's stories of their everyday lives in the opening chapter by Joanna Kidman. It seemed appropriate to place the chapters on Indigenous young people and children first in the volume as a form of *karanga*, or call, which invites the other authors to this *hui*, or meeting place, where the *kaupapa*, or purpose, is children and young people's geographies (Irwin 1992). In consciously drawing on cultural metaphors of the place from which she writes, Nairn (a Pākehā New Zealander) offers a *mihi*, or greeting, to all the authors, especially the authors of the first part: Joanna Kidman (on young Indigenous Māori), Sarah de Leeuw and Margo Greenwood (on young "First Peoples" in Canada), and Acushla Sciascia (on young Indigenous Māori and Facebook). Joanna Kidman (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa) and Acushla Sciascia (Te Āti Awa, Ngāruahine Rangi, Ngāti Ruanui) live in Aotearoa New Zealand and Sarah de Leeuw and Margo Greenwood in Canada. In the first part, Kidman, de Leeuw, and Greenwood grapple with the political complexities of the significance of land and place in post-settler societies, which is about "home" but complicated by dispossession and violence (Kidman). Acushla Sciascia acknowledges the importance of young Māori people's connections to place and people and charts how they are moving into new spaces, such as social media, where articulations of identity and belonging are shifting and changing.

Kidman's chapter (► [Chap. 2, "Māori Young People, Nationhood, and Land"](#)) outlines the historical constructions of land and childhood in Aotearoa New Zealand, which have excluded young Māori from contemporary notions of citizenship. Indigenous Māori and the early settlers had different conceptions of land and ways of relating to the land. Indigenous Māori considered themselves *kaitiaki*, or guardians of the land, while early settlers focused on land as property to own. Kidman's chapter demonstrates how young people are social actors in their own right, who are reworking these historical constructions, mobilizing diverse cultural and geographical imaginaries, which challenge dominant state discourses (Kidman). One example is the ritualized process of greeting, where speakers identify where they are from through the identification of significant geographic features such as mountains, rivers, the location of home (both *marae* and family home), and extended genealogical relationships to ancestors and relatives. Even the more informal greeting of "where are you from," when many Māori first meet, encapsulates the significance of place for Māori. Kidman demonstrates how these imaginaries of tribal homelands enable young Māori to experience a sense of belonging, even if they do not physically live there.

Sarah de Leeuw and Margo Greenwood's chapter (► [Chap. 3, "Geographies of Indigenous Children and Youth: A Critical Review Grounded in Spaces of the Colonial Nation State"](#)) explores the removal and separation of Indigenous children into residential schools away from their homes, families, communities, and cultures in Canada. The evocative phrase "Losing children is like losing the land" from Larry Stillday, an elder who went through residential schooling, stands out in the chapter. Colonial control over First People's land and resources, as well as their children and young people, were de-indigenizing projects as de Leeuw and Greenwood demonstrate. In the forcible removal of children from their families and the control of children and young people in residential schools, colonial governments in Canada, and other countries such as Australia, exerted control over Indigenous populations, often containing nomadic populations in one place, especially families who tried to locate close to their children's residential schools. These schools prepared children and young people to work on farms, which worked as another strategy of containment. De Leeuw and Greenwood go on to show how these de-indigenizing projects of the past continue to have profound marginalizing legacies in the present for First Nations young people in Canada.

Acushla Sciascia (► [Chap. 4, "Negotiating Place, Negotiating Identity: Rangatahi Māori in Facebook"](#)) chapter extends the theme of the importance of connections to land, place, and people for young Māori, or rangatahi, into the online spaces of social media such as Facebook. She considers how rangatahi are creating spaces for themselves on Facebook where they connect and communicate on their own terms. Rangatahi Māori negotiate and articulate their offline and online identities in ways, which are indigenizing Facebook, as Sciascia demonstrates. The indigenizing of Facebook by rangatahi offers an important counter-narrative to the de-indigenizing project outlined by de Leeuw and Greenwood. Sciascia focuses on Facebook pages which celebrate iwi, or tribal, identities and enable rangatahi living at a distance from their home marae to still experience a sense of belonging to their tūrangawaewae, which literally means a place to stand. Facebook pages for different iwi enable rangatahi to find out about their ancestry and identity, in spite of physical barriers and distance. While Sciascia acknowledges the potential dangers of social networking sites, her celebration of Māori-oriented Facebook pages as spaces in which rangatahi can perform their identities and self-determination is a strong note to end the first part on.

5.2 Part 2: Children, Nature, and Environmental Education

Massey (2005, p. 137) argues that "'nature', and the 'natural landscape', are classic foundations for the appreciation of place." The second part of this volume focuses on children, nature, and environmental education, in order to explore how they are articulated in diverse spaces and places. "This is where ecological conceptions of place," which are "marginalised. . . in the preoccupation with the 'social construction of space', [can provide]. . . some crucial insights. . . into the conceptualisation of place" (Dirlik 2001, cited in Massey 2005, p. 137). As outlined above, the working

definition of “environment” in this part is an attempt at an ecological conceptualization where our world is imagined as “one big garden. . .[and as] our commons – what we and all other living species share (and should maintain and safeguard)” (Gibson-Graham et al. 2013, p. xv).

The chapters in this part grapple directly with the conceptual questions around “nature” and “environment” outlined above. Specifically, they discuss different “ecological conceptions of place” and different conceptions of the mutuality of co-species, as these are experienced by children and young people in radically different geographical and social contexts. In the first chapter, Sue Wake and Sally Birdsall (► Chap. 5, “Can School Gardens Deepen Children’s Connection to Nature?”) examine children’s gardens in New Zealand, asking whether children’s engagement in designing, digging, and growing gardens deepens children’s connection with nature. Like several other chapters, their piece is set against the (controversial) assessment that children are distanced from nature, especially in Minority World countries (Louv 2008). Wake and Birdsall show that the picture is more complex: to assume that children are distanced from nature is to assume the most simplistic conception of “nature” as separate from “culture” is universally true. Rather, they demonstrate that school gardens – cultivated spaces, involving combinations of human and nonhuman – require significant thought, design, and planning if they are to have benefits and that the measuring of those benefits is no easy task.

Clare Austin, Zoe Knowles, Kaye Richards, Mel McCree, Jo Sayers, and Nicola Ridgers (► Chap. 6, “Play and Learning Outdoors: Engaging with the Natural World Using Forest School in the UK”) also write from the context of debates about children’s engagements with nature. They focus upon environments that are often taken to be rather more “natural” than gardens – forests and woodlands – although, of course, even these spaces may be intensively managed by humans. They examine an increasingly popular phenomenon in the UK and other countries: the Forest School. Forest Schools are not merely alternative places in which EfS takes place (Kraftl 2013b); rather, they offer children a variety of activities that they might not engage in as part of the school curriculum – from fire lighting to den building to the use of sharp tools. Indeed, their chapter reflects on the opportunities that Forest Schools might offer for children’s *play*, as well as their learning, finishing with some recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners seeking to use forests and similar environments for, and beyond, the confines of EfS (compare Horton et al. 2015).

Martina Jaskolski’s (► Chap. 7, “Youth Discourses of Sustainability in Denpasar, Bali”) chapter offers a critical analysis of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Her chapter is striking because it assesses the role of participatory approaches – a mainstay of children’s geographers’ research with children – in EfS. The key contribution of her chapter is to examine the outcomes of DESD in an under-researched environment: Bali, Indonesia. In her research with diverse groups of children, Jaskolski comes to some conclusions that are striking not just for children’s geographers, but all those interested in (education for) sustainability. Most notably, she argues that although there may be cognate concerns (e.g., about environmental integrity) across geographical contexts, programs like DESD must be far better attuned to the local exigencies of

place. In particular, they should allow for the interpretation of EfS and other “universal” education programs through the everyday languages and practices of young people. This is not merely a matter of “voice” but of ensuring sufficient flexibility – room for “openings,” as Jaskolski puts it – through which unpredictable, alternative, or dissonant kinds of knowledges and embodied practices might emerge (see also Kraftl 2015).

Elaine Stratford, Nel Smit, and Jenny Newton (► Chap. 8, “Engaging Young People in Climate Change and Sustainability Trails: Local Geographies for Global Insights”) deploy Massey’s (2005) notion of “outwardlookingness” to examine how environmental interpretive trails might foster an ethic of global care among young people. It is particularly noteworthy that this particular example of EfS – directed at children – is situated on a University campus. Stratford, Smit, and Newton’s chapter therefore witnesses the multi-scalar possibilities involved in representing (and, hence, socially constructing) the “environment.” It also observes the situatedness of sustainability issues with/in other pressing social agendas – in the case of Australia, wherein universities are being encouraged to engage more deeply with their local publics. Their chapter also offers detailed analysis of how interpretive trails offer children opportunities to engage *emotionally* with place in ways that empower children to care on a scale beyond the local.

Finally, Karen Malone’s chapter (► Chap. 9, “Posthumanist Approaches to Theorizing Children’s Human-Nature Relations”) reflects on years of research with children in diverse environments. She looks back on her previous work on environmental education and argues that posthumanist (and, therefore, “new wave”) approaches to children’s lives could offer an alternative frame for analyzing her earlier findings. Her chapter offers a critical stance on recent “back-to-nature” discourses, demonstrating instead – through examples as diverse as radiation in Kazakhstan and “cruel nature” in Australian botanic gardens – that children and natures are intertwined in complex ways. Often, it is only through paying greater attention to these comingling natures/cultures – which may be amusing, troubling, dangerous, or provocative – that the most pressing social, ecological, and *political* questions contextualizing children’s lives can be broached. Malone’s chapter also articulates a range of starting points for how a new wave of childhood studies might proceed methodologically.

5.3 Part 3: Children, Young People, and Urban Spaces

The majority of children’s geography research takes place in urban contexts. Crucially, many of those studies have examined not only how children and young people carve out spaces within the overwhelmingly adultist spaces of the city, but how children contribute to and drive urban processes. For instance, Karsten (2005) demonstrates how children are often the social “glue” which holds together diverse, multicultural city neighborhoods because they are often present and interact with one another in outdoor, public spaces.

However, as Skelton and Gough (2013) have observed, children's perspectives – and the work of children's geographers – are often missing from wider debates in urban geography or urban studies. This reflects a long-standing tendency within the social sciences to marginalize children and young people within urban study scholarship. As Skelton and Gough (2013) note, this is deeply problematic for several reasons. Firstly, children and young people are one of the largest population groups in any city, especially in the Majority Global South. Secondly, children and young people have repeatedly been shown to be the social group who spend the most time *using* urban spaces and tend to have far more nuanced knowledge of local urban environments than do adults (Davis et al. 2006; Horton et al. 2014; Matthews and Limb 1999). Thirdly, children and young people may be more readily shaped by their immediate social environments than adults, since their spatial range is more limited than that of adults (O'Brien et al. 2000). For these reasons, if social scientists are *truly* to understand pressing urban issues – from the availability of food and energy to social inclusion and diversity – then attention to how children and young people live and grow up in contrasting urban places must be a pressing concern for children's geographers and urban study scholars.

The chapters in this part bear testament to the richness and variety of contemporary research on children and young people in urban places. They are also situated in a range of geographical and social contexts, offering – together – important points of resonance and divergence as far as any global trends in urban childhoods might be identified. Sophie Hadfield-Hill's chapter (► [Chap. 10, "Children and Young People in Changing Urban Environments in the Majority World"](#)) is based in her ongoing research in the Majority Global South (and especially India). In contexts like India, there are multiple processes of urban change. Significantly, as Hadfield-Hill notes, these are not all located in existing cities. Rather, as urban policies in the Majority Global South adopt and adapt neoliberal planning models from the Minority Global North, there has been a surge of interest in the construction of new cities. However, she argues, there is a real need to understand how (and whether) children are being positioned in debates about the planning and governance of new cities – and whether new, "smart" cities will be a panacea for the pressing ecological and social problems that so often disproportionately affect children.

Resonant with Massey's (2005) notion of "outwardlookingness," Irene Arends and Michaela Hordijk (► [Chap. 11, "Physical and Virtual Public Spaces for Youth: The Importance of Claiming Spaces in Lima, Peru"](#)) examine how young people in Lima, Peru, negotiate urban public spaces through the meshing of physical and virtual spaces. Rather than see a divide between material urban spaces and the Internet, they emphasize how the ability to operate in both spheres simultaneously is no longer the preserve of wealthier youth. They demonstrate that these intertwined spheres operate in complex ways as young people construct their senses of identity in the multiple "public spaces" that social media and urban spaces afford. Yet, they caution against a rather celebratory (or dystopian) stance that may see these identities as totally "new"; rather, they are still framed by the established norms, rules, and social expectations that recursively produce the identities of individuals and local places (as spatialities).

Anna Ortiz, Maria Prats Ferret, and Mireia Baylina (► [Chap. 12, “Teenagers’ Sense of Neighborhood in Barcelona”](#)) examine young people’s senses of neighborhood in Barcelona, Spain. Echoing Hopkins and Pain’s (2007) call for a relational geography of age, their work identifies the multiple intersectionalities of youth with class and gender in the city. Their work is symptomatic of much work in children’s geographies – it pays close attention to the rich, intimate connections that young people forge with/in urban places, in their everyday lives. It offers an important point of comparison with Arends and Hordijk’s work, since their chapter, too, focuses on young people’s use and appropriation of urban public spaces. However, Ortiz et al. also demonstrate how young people’s experiences of growing up articulate with contemporaneous processes of urban change. Thus, they show how living in a traditional, peripheral neighborhood that has undergone rapid and controversial development affects young people’s senses of belonging.

Femi Adekunle’s chapter (► [Chap. 13, “Slipping as a Sociospatial Negotiation: Teenagers and Risky Landscapes”](#)) is focussed on London, UK, and also focuses on identity. He looks at what young black men term “slipping” – the process through which they negotiate, perform, and adapt their identities as they navigate through unfamiliar and potentially risky urban spaces. On the one hand, Adekunle’s chapter offers insights into how young men’s identities are experienced relationally in peer-to-peer encounters, which proceed via for-the-moment, bodily interactions. On the other hand, his chapter exemplifies how (urban) space is not merely a container or blank canvas for these kinds of interaction. Rather, following the conventional definition of spatiality, urban spaces are key actors in the choreographies of young men’s urban encounters. Most notably, the notion of “territory” – as a complex, changing, contested socio-spatial construct – figures highly in young men’s accounts of “slipping” in and through urban spaces.

Remaining in London, Melissa Butcher’s chapter (► [Chap. 14, “Reimagining Home: Visualizing the Multiple Meanings of Place”](#)) exemplifies how young people express their sense of belonging and “home” in large cities. Butcher’s chapter brings together two key themes in several other chapters in this part – social diversity and rapid urban change. Her research is based in the Borough of Hackney, which is well known for its diverse ethnic and religious populations. However, at the time of her research (in the early 2010s), Hackney was gaining (critical) attention because of rapid processes of urban transformation, especially gentrification. Butcher paints a complex picture of young people’s sometimes ambivalent, sometimes poignant, sometimes creative responses to these urban changes. Through participatory video research methods, she offers what she terms a more “polysemous account of urban transformation” that both challenges the logics of contemporary urban policy and offers a (sometimes) more hopeful account than do many studies of urban displacement. Butcher’s chapter also offers reflections on “home” that connect with the chapters in Part 4.

If Butcher accounts for some of the affective registers in which young people engage urban life, Oli Mould’s chapter (► [Chap. 15, “Parkour, Activism, and Young People”](#)) emphasizes the embodied geographies of city life. He examines a practice that has become increasingly popular among young people: parkour. His chapter is

set within a rich vein of scholarship in geography and elsewhere that witnesses the diverse, creative ways in which young people appropriate urban public spaces in ways that are dissonant with their original intention – from hanging out to skateboarding. Although emphasizing the embodied geographies of parkour, Mould argues that there is still significant broader scope for using parkour as a “means of social scientific inquiry” into urban spaces. Although developing work on nonrepresentational children’s geographies, his chapter has a political message. He explains how parkour may foster a state of mind that is “childlike” and create the seeds for the cultivation of an emancipatory mindset. In particular, Mould’s chapter demonstrates how parkour may prompt broader and deeper reflection on the possibilities for urban political activism, especially in contrast to (or in subversion of) the moniker of London as the “global creative city.”

Karen Witten and Penelope Carroll (► [Chap. 16](#), “[Children’s Neighborhoods: Places of Play or Spaces of Fear?](#)”) focus on children’s urban mobilities. The study of children’s (independent) mobilities has represented one of the major contributions of children’s geography scholarship since 2000. Indeed, it might be argued that the concept of “mobilities” has been a key to children’s geographers’ theorizations of and empirical investigations into children’s interactions with urban spaces (Barker et al. 2009). The term has also led to considerable debates – not least around the value of “independent” mobilities as distinct from those experienced relationally with other actors, human, and nonhuman (Mikkelsen and Christensen 2009). Witten and Carroll’s chapter cuts through these debates both to offer an overview of research on children’s mobilities and to report on the result of a major study, based in Auckland, New Zealand. They focus upon the complex relationships between children’s mobilities and their play and well-being. Like Butcher, they argue that urban environments offer contradictory opportunities and challenges for children’s mobilities, being simultaneously both “places of play and spaces of fear” (or neither). At the same time, despite calls to “upscale” children’s geographies (Ansell 2009), they reiterate the ongoing importance of studies of children’s everyday lives at the neighborhood level.

5.4 Part 4: Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces

Children and young people’s experiences of homelessness and home are the focus of part 4. All the contributors to part 4 blur the boundaries between homelessness and home, private and public, home, school, and social media. Marit Ursin focuses on young men living on the streets and their search for safe places and times to sleep in public urban spaces in Brazil. She notes geographic differences in terminology between “street children” who inhabit the Global South and “homeless youth” who inhabit mainly Anglo-American countries of the Global North, which reveals the underlying politics of the respective discursive constructions of childhood. Implicitly, “street children” and “homeless youth” are out of place in public urban spaces and ideally should be at home and/or school, which are relatively private spaces of containment, keeping children and young people “off the streets” (Nairn

and Higgins 2011). Keeping children and young people – initially young women and, more recently, young men – safe at home and “off the streets” has led to the development of bedroom culture in many western countries as Sian Lincoln’s chapter demonstrates. Indeed, Lincoln argues that the bedroom is often one of the first spaces in the home that young people can call their own. Jamie Adcock’s historical account shows how the bedroom has evolved from the nursery for upper and middle-class children, where they were sequestered from the adult world in colonial America and Victorian England, to the later gender segregation of girls and boys into bedrooms. Adcock and Lincoln demonstrate how attention to bedrooms balances geographers’ primary attention to children and young people’s relationships to public spaces. Keely Blanch explores the tensions of public, private, and social worlds colliding on a Facebook page setup for education purposes.

Marit Ursin’s chapter (► [Chap. 17, “Geographies of Sleep Among Brazilian Street Youth”](#)) is about the complex sleep geographies of young Brazilian men who choose different times and places to sleep, which depend on their position in “street” hierarchies and their pursuit of relative safety. The geography of sleep is seldom researched (although see Kraftl and Horton 2008), and it is not surprising that the geographies that do exist, including Ursin’s, are often made possible because sleep occurs in public spaces (Nettleton et al. 2012). Ursin pays attention to intersections between the temporal and the spatial to show how some young men in her study were only able to safely sleep when the sun rises. She identified four different sleep patterns among boys and young men on the streets of a Brazilian city, which she linked to four collective identities. A range of individual and structural factors – such as physical maturity, societal attitudes, drug use, involvement in crime – influenced the young men’s choices of where and when to sleep. One of Ursin’s conceptual contributions is her demonstration of how sleep is socially constructed and spatially defined, rather than a taken-for-granted biological imperative. She shows how sleep alters over the life course as young men grow up on the streets and negotiate the hierarchies of different collective identities. Ursin acknowledges how public space is primarily a male domain in Brazil and therefore the partiality of her research. Young marginalized Brazilian women might also be searching for spaces to sleep, and if they are strategically invisible, then this geography of sleep might be difficult to catch a glimpse of (England 1994).

The pursuit of safe places to sleep in public contrasts with Jamie Adcock’s chapter on the relatively private spaces of children and young people’s bedrooms in the Global North (► [Chap. 19, “The Bedroom: A Missing Space Within Geographies of Children and Young People”](#)). Adcock traces the history of children and young people’s bedrooms, drawing on a range of disciplines to show how bedrooms are one of the missing spaces in children’s geographies because they are considered to be private spaces not appropriate for researchers to enter. Adcock’s history of the evolution of bedroom culture from the nurseries of the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century to contemporary bedrooms provides fascinating insights into the social and cultural ideas which have shaped children’s and young people’s lived experiences of this domestic space. He reminds us of the domestication of childhood and the importance of paying attention to this important space, particularly

considering the recent reduction in children's and young people's spatial freedom due to parents' concerns about safety in public spaces.

Sian Lincoln's chapter (► [Chap. 20, "Bedroom Culture: A Review of Research"](#)) traces the evolution of bedroom culture from the 1970s when young women created bedroom cultures as alternatives to "street-based subcultures" dominated by young men, to the home-based technologies of the 1990s, which connected young women and young men to the wider world from their relatively private bedroom spaces. Like Adcock, Lincoln reinforces the importance of the domestic sphere as one of the first spaces where young people engage with popular culture and explore their emerging sense of identity. In her emphasis on the intersection between the domestic and broader cultural spheres, Lincoln provides a compelling account of how teenagers create, and participate in, diverse "bedroom cultures." In connecting bedroom cultures with broader youth cultures, Lincoln's ethnographic studies of bedroom cultures, in the northwest of the UK, open the bedroom door to understanding how young people use their bedrooms. Lincoln ends by pondering whether bedrooms offer a refuge from the pressures of social networking sites, which offers the perfect segue into the final chapter of this part.

Keely Blanch's chapter (► [Chap. 21, "New Spaces, Blurred Boundaries, and Embodied Performances on Facebook"](#)) explores how a group of young women in New Zealand negotiated the tensions of merged educational and social spaces when their teacher set up a Facebook page for educational purposes. The young women in Blanch's study negotiated the fluidity of these interrelational spaces which were materially based in classrooms, homes, sports teams, and workplaces and digitally mediated through Facebook. Blanch convincingly argues that Facebook is therefore a continuation of materially located spaces and the interrelations between these spaces, rather than a separate space. Like other authors in part 4, Blanch demonstrates how conceptual binaries, such as offline/online and private/public, are limited (also see Valentine and Holloway 2002). However, the continuation of spaces and interrelations between school, home, social, and other spaces created tensions for these young women because it blurred the boundaries between their school and social identities, which they sometimes preferred to keep separate.

The fluidity of space, place, and identity – so well exemplified in part 4 on home, homelessness, and the digital mediation of spaces in between home and school – also informs the fifth and final part on borders.

5.5 Part 5: Border Spaces

The final part on border spaces deliberately plays with different conceptions and scales of "the border." The first chapter (Pini, Morris and Mayes) in this part plays with the border between rural and urban, which often marginalizes "the rural," yet the rural and the urban are mutually constitutive (Higgins and Nairn 2014b; Nairn et al. 2003; Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2003). The subsequent chapters explore other kinds of borders – the border between two sides of a small provincial town in NZ (Wood), borders between countries (Spyrou and Christou; Wood, Aitken, and

Swanson; Jiménez Alvarez), and borders between childhood and adulthood – and in the process, these authors disrupt taken-for-granted categories of spatial organization and human development (Nairn and Higgins 2009).

Barbara Pini, Deborah Morris, and Robyn Mayes (► Chap. 22, “Rural Youth: Mobilities, Marginalities, and Negotiations”) deploy three conceptual themes – mobilities, marginalities, and negotiations – apposite to their chapter and the subsequent chapters in this part. They demonstrate how rural spaces, like all spaces and places, are shaped by flows and movements, which create “dynamic simultaneity” (Massey 2005, p. 107). The movement of rural youth to cities has tended to preoccupy researchers, diverting their attention away from regional and return migration. These authors put the rural/urban borderland firmly on the research agenda, and they point out that the focus does not necessarily have to be concerned solely with young people who live outside cities. Instead, they advocate for scholarship, which goes beyond simply a focus on young people who live in the countryside. They keep both the rural and urban in play, which is exemplified in one of their many examples: the significance of the rural for urban-based mountain bikers’ lifestyle and identity formation. They outline the challenge for future research as the double-barreled task of challenging *and* recalibrating adult-centric as well as urban-centric knowledge, reiterating that this task remains as urgent as ever.

Bronwyn Wood’s chapter (► Chap. 23, “Border Spaces: Geographies of Youth Exclusion, Inclusion, and Liminality”) specifically focuses on the liminal, or border spaces, between the conceptual categories of inclusion and exclusion. Drawing on her research with “marginalized” young people living on the “wrong side of the tracks” in a semirural town in New Zealand, she demonstrates the potential of liminality for understanding the “border spaces,” which young people occupy. Wood provides a useful typology for understanding the major themes of the research on young people’s inclusion and exclusion. But the typology has its limits, as Wood acknowledges, and she goes on to demonstrate how the concept of liminality allows for a more sophisticated understanding of ambiguity, material space, and the political possibilities of in-betweenness and hybrid identities. As border youth, the young people in her case study found affiliation and a sense of belonging through their Māori identity and school community, but at the same time expressed a sense of alienation from those who lived on the “other” side of town. Despite this sense of alienation, these young people described with pride, and a sense of agency, their decision to attend the school perceived to be on the “wrong side of the tracks.”

Lydia Wood, Stuart Aitken, and Kate Swanson’s chapter (► Chap. 24, “Young People’s Rights to Recreate Spaces and Reimagine Borders”) also engages in the double task of playing with conceptual borders – between adult and child and between nations, territories, and institutions – demonstrating how the geographies of children’s lives are fundamentally about the geographies of borders. Like earlier contributors, they conceptualize these borders as relationally produced spaces. Drawing on three case studies – with erased Slovenian youth, Ecuadorian migrants, and Indigenous youth on the US/Mexico border – they make a compelling argument for political recognition of children’s rights. The Slovenian youth, despite his nationality being erased from his passport, was unequivocal: “Neither you nor

your government will stop me coming home as far as I'm concerned." Young people and children are subject to the violence of borders, as well as agentic in resisting and subverting borders. Political recognition of the spatial rights of children and young people positions them as citizen-selves who can challenge seemingly clear bordered spaces, as Wood, Aitken, and Swanson argue. Ideally, such recognition of children's spatial rights might ameliorate border violence and allow borders to be reimagined in productive and liberating ways for children and young people (Wood, Aitken and Swanson).

Spyros Spyrou and Miranda Christou's chapter (► [Chap. 25, "Children and Youth at the Border: Agency, Identity, and Belonging"](#)) begins with reports of waves of unaccompanied minors arriving at the US/Mexico border from Central America, who were arriving in such numbers they could not be contained in the holding facilities and defied categorization. The authorities did not know whether to treat these children as illegal immigrants, potential trafficking victims, refugees, or asylum seekers. Spyrou and Christou deploy this example as the springboard to their chapter on the relationship between young people and borders, which they argue has not received adequate attention. Their chapter deploys three key concepts – bordering, rebordering, and transbordering – to consider children and young people's agency, resistance, identity, and belonging in a range of border zones around the world. They focus on children's and young people's active engagement with borders, investigating the role of borders in children's everyday lives as well as the constitutive role of children in border spaces. They expose the fallacy of a borderless world with free transnational movement, which usually depends on the "right" kind of passport, beyond the reach of the erased Slovenian youth of the previous chapter. Border surveillance has become increasingly sophisticated to capture "illegal" crossings. Spyrou and Christou's selected examples of children and young people's border crossings demonstrate how international borders are now more porous and simultaneously more impenetrable, affecting children and young people in profound ways, which echoes Wood, Aitken, and Swanson's chapter.

The final chapter in this part is by Mercedes G. Jiménez Alvarez (► [Chap. 26, "Children's Rights and Mobility at the Border"](#)). She examines the autonomous migration of children and young people in two border cities, Tangier in northern Morocco and Tapachula on the southern border of Mexico. Jiménez Alvarez uses these two border cities as paradigmatic spaces to analyze how unaccompanied child migrants are articulating new transnational mobility processes. As in the other chapters, the border is multifaceted and fluid, incorporating physical elements, as well as operating as a process within and between countries, with legal, procedural, technological, and ideological aspects. Jiménez Alvarez highlights how migratory regimes and legal regimes for the protection of children construct unaccompanied child migrants simultaneously as young people requiring protection and migrants to be controlled. The chapter identifies adults and organizations that have mobilized to control children and young people as well as those who have mobilized to defend children and young people's rights. Where Wood, Aitken, and Swanson argue for children and young people's spatial rights, Jiménez Alvarez argues for children and

young people's rights to mobility as well as their rights to protection identified in international human rights legislation.

6 Concluding Remarks

Children and young people's spatial rights and their rights to mobility are themes that unite all the parts of this volume, even if they are not the explicit focus of the earlier parts. In one way or another, all contributors to this volume advocate greater recognition of children and young people's spatial rights, whether that is in the home, outdoors, at school, crossing borders, in public and digital spaces, or simply looking for a safe place to sleep. Children and young people's rights to space and to mobility are hindered and/or facilitated by adults. There are adults who wish to control and contain, limiting children and young people's mobility and spatial rights. Control and containment are often (re)presented as in the best interests of children and young people, whether it is containment in domestic spaces to protect children from urban dangers or containment in border holding facilities. There are also adults determined to facilitate children and young people's encounters with a wider range of environments, including the nonhuman, expanding schools beyond the confines of buildings into forests and school gardens, extending education for sustainability into a range of urban spaces, and creating nature trails on a university campus.

Children and young people's perspectives on space, place, and the environment, and their desire for spaces and places to call their own and/or to enjoy with their peers, also tie the volume together. Claims to space are many and varied. Young Māori rangatahi claim the social media space of Facebook to find out about and perform their tribal identities and in effect indigenize this digital space. Young people in different cities appropriate spaces in creative and diverse ways for themselves, despite urban developments that seem to exclude engaging in parkour, "hanging out" in parks, and deploying gestures, dress, and other forms of interaction to announce their presence and their identities. Bedrooms also provide spaces for young people to "hang out" with their peers and/or serve as a refuge to escape to. Others seek out nature and the rural within or beyond the urban to nurture their sense of self. Young people may express pride in the spaces they claim, even if these spaces (such as neighborhoods and schools) are marginalized. But young people do not always welcome encounters with similarly aged peers; thus, the process of negotiating potentially risky urban (and rural) spaces with others can be understood via Adekunle's spatial strategy of "slipping," which describes being in space but slipping through it in ways that do not draw too much attention.

The volume amply demonstrates the multiple imbrications of space, place, and environment with/in children and young people's lives. Childhood and youth are, in part, both *social* and *spatial* constructions. All the contributors offer a suite of theoretical tools for thinking through how space, place, and environment are (con)figured in children's lives. They demonstrate how the social borders between childhood and adulthood, and spatial borders between rural and urban, countries,

neighborhoods, territories, and institutions are relationally produced. Conceptual borders between the usual binaries (private/public, rural/urban, home/school) are blurred, as geographers would expect. Children and young people's perspectives on their experiences of blurred boundaries also matter; some young people might wish these boundaries were not so blurred, as in the example of those who preferred their social worlds on Facebook to be kept separate from school.

Finally, the volume is a testament to the political spaces and places of childhood, where so many children and young people face obstacles to living well and to living where they desire. The volume begins and ends with sections that traverse the violence children and young people encountered during earlier periods of colonization and continue to encounter in a globalizing (and neocolonial) world where borders are enforced in increasingly draconian ways. The volume's attention to pressing political problems, which often affect children and young people disproportionately, especially in the Majority Global South, is an important sobering note to end on. Yes, children and young people resist, and rework, the power relations they encounter, but as Jiménez Alvarez argues in the final chapter, adult advocates have a role to play in promoting and respecting children and young people's rights. The volume outlines the myriad ways adults might act as advocates for children and young people's spatial rights and rights to mobility. Taking inspiration from the chapters in Part 1, it is clear that all children and young people deserve a place in the world they can legitimately claim and call their *tūrangawaewae* (a place to stand). Inspired by diverse understandings of space, place, and environment, this volume presents a (partial) guide to how children and young people might be best supported in claiming their *tūrangawaewae*.

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Part I

Indigenous Youth: Space and Place

Joanna Kidman

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Abstract

Land and place figure heavily in official narratives about nationhood. They act as a framing device for stories that speak to a territorialized sense of belonging and citizenship in the modern nation state. In post-settler societies where indigenous groups maintain unresolved claims over the land, however, the nation’s geographical imagination and memory of itself is underscored by deep-seated anxiety and unease. In these contexts, land is associated with “home” but also with dispossession and violence. Within these unsettled landscapes, the tribal geographies of indigenous young people and their everyday place-making activities are often positioned negatively by the state as a form of cultural disruption and resistance to official memory regimes.

Drawing on previous research, this chapter explores how indigenous young people are positioned within official national identity discourses and argues that in post-settler societies, historical constructions of land and childhood converge in ways that directly exclude them from many contemporary notions of citizenship. One of the responses that indigenous young people have to these exclusions

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from formal state narratives is to mobilize a range of cultural and geographical imaginaries located within their own readings of history and culture which provide a basis for territorialized memories and identities that sit outside dominant state discourses. This chapter concludes with the argument that indigenous Māori young people in New Zealand “speak back” to their exclusion from official state narratives by constructing their own cultural memories of place and belonging. These territorialized memories offer alternative spaces for the development of a sense of cultural belonging in the present.

Keywords

Indigenous children • Nationhood • Land • Place • Māori

1 Introduction

Post-settler nation-building often involves a complex series of negotiations about the conflicts and unresolved tensions of the past. At the heart of many of these conflicts are competing claims over land and land tenure. In societies where indigenous groups have experienced land loss, land confiscation, and land alienation in their dealings with the state and its agents, contemporary discourses about national unity tend to be fractured, partial, and incomplete. Yet tropes of the land are central to official memory regimes; they signify notions of home, place attachment, belonging, and citizenship for many different groups of people (Chang 2010). Where unreconciled and contested memories about land and place persist in the present, however, and where historical injustices against indigenous groups remain in contention, the geographical imagination of the nation moves uneasily between land narratives that are remembered by some groups but rejected or forgotten by others. Within the body politic, this weaving between social memory and collective amnesia about land, people, and place can in itself serve as a kind of connective tissue between groups with competing frames of reference, but more often, unresolved conflict over land and all that it symbolizes disrupt official narratives about the past. Elazar Barkin (2001) argues that when historical identities and national identities encroach on one another and compete for the same spaces and resources, different groups must negotiate with each other and mediate between different versions of history in order to find a way of coexisting. Certainly, in societies where indigenous and post-settler populations lay claim to the same physical territories, deep rifts are exposed in the story of the nation as an imagined community bound by “a deep and horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 2006, p. 7).

Panelli et al. (2008) contend that complex readings of ethnicity are embedded in the social and spatial significance of land and argue that in this respect, power relations are heavily implicated in struggles over place. This is particularly the case in post-settler societies where nation-building narratives are overlaid by highly ethnicized representations of land and landscape (Kong and Yeoh 2003). These intersecting ideas have their origins in colonial interactions where land was a ubiquitous presence in the unfolding national saga. Indeed, in many former

colonies, land narratives sit at the heart of stories about early indigenous-settler encounters. It is portrayed variously as having been fought over and lost by some groups while claimed by others. At the same time, it provided a source of sustenance and the means of survival, as well as marketable resources for imperial economies. It is also represented as the site of ancestral tribal homelands and a place of settlement or refuge for groups who had left their “motherlands” (Valenčius 2004).

In many ways, these colonial era stories are still being rehearsed today, and it is within these contexts that many indigenous young people develop their own sense of memory and place. This chapter examines how post-settler representations of indigenous and Anglo childhoods reflect widespread and long-standing anxieties about land and national memory regimes. In particular, it explores how tropes of land and childhood converge in ways that racialize, essentialize, and exclude the everyday geographies of indigenous children and young people in the present. One of the responses that indigenous young people have to these exclusions from formal state narratives is to mobilize a range of cultural and geographical imaginaries located within their own readings of history and culture that provide a basis for territorialized memories and identities that sit outside dominant state discourses.

This chapter is divided into four parts. In the first part, notions of post-settler place belonging and place exclusion are explored. This is followed by a discussion about place exclusion and indigenous children who, placed at the center of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonial enterprise, were included in the nation-building narrative as “honorary white” citizens-in-the-making at precisely the same time that many indigenous communities were experiencing widespread alienation from their ancestral or tribal land base. The third part of this chapter examines the construction of post-settler childhoods and the associated erasures of indigenous place identities from nationalist narratives at a time when post-settler relationships with nature, the “wilderness,” and the “frontier” were changing. The chapter concludes with the argument that indigenous Māori young people in contemporary post-settler states “speak back” to their exclusion from official state narratives by creating their own cultural memories of place and belonging and that these territorialized memories offer alternative spaces for the development of a sense of cultural belonging in the present.

2 Land, Belonging, and Exclusion

Trudeau (2006) argues that when people form affinities with distinct territories from which they draw meaning, identity, and a sense of continuity across time and space, belonging becomes “inherently spatial” (Trudeau 2006, p. 423). He contends that the notion of territorialized belonging is central to understanding the control of social space, since belonging and exclusion are integral to the “production of social spaces such as landscapes and place” (Trudeau 2006, p. 423). It is in this way that material “places” acquire symbolic significance and can be woven into national memories. As Edensor (1997) following Boyarin argues, the mapping of “history

onto territory” (Edensor 1997, p. 175) is central to the construction of official remembrance and identity that sits within the nationalist project.

In many post-settler nations, the relationship between landscape, memory, and nationalism, however, is complicated by the marginalization, erasure, or official “forgetting” of indigenous claims to land. Panelli et al. (2008) argue that in New Zealand, for example, the representation and mythologizing of rural land and its associated place identities is often highly racialized. In this regard, “history is mapped onto territory” in ways that forget the indigenous groups that came before. They contend that the construction of a romanticized “white” landscape is not simply a matter of emphasizing the occupation of land by “white” ethnicities; it is also a means of silencing other ethnicities. Correspondingly, Cerwonka (2004) contends that in Australia, “[t]he aesthetic production of the landscape was a useful method for mystifying the colonial appropriation of land underway in Australia. Turning the Australian continent into an English countryside and farmland helped erase the physical evidence of Aboriginal presence and influence on the land” (Cerwonka 2004, p. 66). In America too, Anglo-American identity and citizenship at the turn of the twentieth century was expressed, in part, through pastoral imagery of men who had conquered the wilderness and transformed it into pastureland and gardens. Domosh (2002) argues that this imaginary of an American arcadia was incorporated into state representations of national identity that provided an ideological justification for the expansion into the West that ultimately led to Native American land alienation and subsequent resettlement by Anglo-American pioneering families.

These colonial representations of the land as being an unoccupied and “ownerless” space prior to European settlement are closely associated with the doctrine of *terra nullius*. The concept of *terra nullius* as it was applied in Australia, for example, effectively expunged indigenous history and place-making practices from the official colonial record by providing a rationale for the colonial government to claim ownership of the continent (Buchan and Heath 2006; Kelly 2011/2012). Similarly, the colonial notion of *terra nullius* underscores contemporary readings of the Canadian “wilderness” that portrays the land as a pristine environment untouched by humans. Dent (2013) argues that this framing of the land negates the indigenous landscapes and place-making activities that existed prior to European contact and which, in many cases, were maintained long afterwards. In this respect, the “spatialisation of public memory” (Johnson 1995, p. 63) in post-settler societies, and the deployment of heritage landscapes and rural iconographies, plays a pivotal role in constructions of the nation as a site of racialized inclusions and exclusions that disguise or marginalize the claims of indigenous groups.

At the same time, as the romantic pastoral discourses that underpinned nineteenth-century imperial expansion were providing a way of imagining land as a series of material and symbolic spaces that could be secured for colonial administrations, cultural understandings of childhood were undergoing a similar and related transformation in the rapidly industrializing nations of Western Europe. Taylor (2011) argues that in these increasingly urbanized environments, the “romantic sublime,” the notion of a pure, unpeopled bucolic landscape, was

conflated with changing attitudes and beliefs about childhood. She notes that the eighteenth-century French writer and philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was highly influential in bringing together these ideas about nature and childhood in his book, *Emile*, a story about the development of a child raised in an idealized state of nature away from the “corrupting” influence of society. Taylor (2011) contends,

The most radically pure and separate form of externalized nature, consecrated wilderness becomes the moral compass against which human actions can be judged. From the wilderness example it is easy to see how the moral authority of essentialized nature can and has been deployed to naturalize particular social and cultural understandings of childhood. (Taylor 2011, p. 427)

This view of childhood as a form of moral authority that is equated with “goodness,” innocence, and vulnerability has been described as “the last refuge of unexamined essentialism” (Crain 1999, p. 553). Here, childhood is conceptualized as intrinsically “good,” but at the same time, it is also conceived in terms of ontological incompleteness, a blank slate upon which experience shall eventually be written (Katz 2008). In this respect, childhood comes to be seen as a space of possibility and futurity that is overwritten with ideals of moral virtue, but in colonial contexts, it can also be represented allegorically as a form of terra nullius, something that can be shaped, defined, and ultimately possessed by others. These tropes are embedded in the cultural politics of childhood and are played out in contemporary post-settler citizenship narratives in particular ways. For example, James (2011) argues that these cultural politics are critical to understanding how citizenship and nationhood are experienced by children and young people in any society. She contends that although they vary from nation to nation and there are also significant *within*-nation modalities of childhood, the representation of childhood as a form of morality, a tabula rasa, and as citizenship *in potentia* continues to exert a powerful hold on the imagination.

In a sense, however, children’s inclusion in national histories and colonial narratives is always partial because of the persistence of representations of children and young people as potential citizens rather than full members of society. In this regard, colonial children, like colonial representations of the “wilderness” and the “untamed” rural landscape, exist largely outside the nation’s authority except as a conceptual space that can eventually be shaped, defined, and reconfigured by the mores, values, and priorities of adults. On the other hand, the presence of indigenous children and young people confounds these narratives and exposes their ethnicized nature. This can be seen most clearly in the colonial response to the “native question” which, in many countries, was to place indigenous children and young people at the center of the “civilizing” mission and, in doing so, bring them more completely under state authority in order for the reshaping and reconstructing process to take place. In British colonies during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this was carried out through an assimilationist agenda whereby citizenship for indigenous groups was envisaged as a process of absorbing native peoples into colonial society. Integral to this ideological practice was the expectation that they would relinquish their languages and cultures of origin and fully embrace

Western values and lifestyles. Belich (2001) argues that in the New Zealand context, this involved the desire to reinvent indigenous Māori as “honorary whites” or “brown Britons” (Belich 2001, p. 189).

Insofar as indigenous children were concerned, they were considered to be “honorary white” citizens-in-the-making, and as such many colonial administrations instituted a series of measures intended to accelerate the “civilizing” mission. In Australia, for example, government authorities took legal guardianship of all Aboriginal children and ordered the brutal and systematic forced removal of those children from their families and communities (van Krieken 1999). Elsewhere, in North America and Canada, indigenous children were placed in racially segregated residential or day schools away from their communities of origin where they were expected to adopt Western cultural mores and ways of life (de Leeuw 2009; Ellinghaus 2006). In other countries, such as parts of Africa, village-based native schooling systems were established. These kinds of “village-based” colonial interventions, where indigenous children remained in their tribal communities during their early years of schooling, reflected a more hegemonic form of state control whereby authority was exercised through strategic alliances with carefully selected native networks rather than by direct and overtly violent means (Mamdani 1999). The native school system in New Zealand, from its inception, was directly linked to the government agenda to “civilize” Māori children and prepare them to take up citizenship roles in New Zealand society as quickly as possible (Barrington 2008). In this respect, village-based native schooling provided a vehicle for the colonial government to enact assimilationist policies within tribal contexts. These ideologies ultimately had a far-reaching and devastating impact on many Māori communities, particularly as the number of Māori language speakers decreased and these numbers have never recovered. Thus, it is clear that while Anglo colonial children were represented symbolically within the nation-building narrative as a form of terra nullius, or as tabulae rasae awaiting some form of “cultural inscription,” indigenous children were seen as requiring a much more elaborate preparation for colonial citizenship – one that involved the erasure, and in some cases the complete eradication, of native cultures, languages, and ways of life.

These attempts at the regulation and control of indigenous lives, and in particular the lives of indigenous children and young people, sit right at the heart of an “ontological unease” that besets post-settler nations (Bell 2009, p. 145). Here, there is recognition that the apparently benign romanticism of nineteenth-century representations of colonial land and indigenous people carried with it a deep racist and evolutionary premise that resulted, in many instances, in atrocities and injustices perpetrated against native populations (Bell 2006). Accordingly, in cases where the conquest of native populations is a foundational event in a nation’s history or where unresolved historical injustices are carried across generations, official “forgetting” about conflict bolsters the “illusion of the nation’s historical innocence” (Huhndorf 2001, p. 11; but see also Scheckel 1998). However, where these injustices remain in contention, Bell (2006) argues that the history of Anglo settlement becomes “an increasingly problematic ground to assert a sense of cultural identity” (Bell 2006, p. 256). In this respect, place identities in post-settler

contexts are complicated by the unfinished stories of the cultural encounters of the past, but the centrality of land in national narratives continues to frame these unsettled relationships in the present. With regard to children and young people in post-settler societies, these discourses are overlaid by intersecting discourses about land and childhood that affect the way that citizenship is conceived and put into practice. The enactment of these perspectives in contemporary state narratives involves negotiating between nostalgic depictions of land and childhood as they figure in national imaginaries and the highly racialized sentiments that underpin those notions. This can be seen in state educational policy relating to young people and post-settler readings of the “outdoors” as is discussed below.

3 Young People and the Racializing of the “Wilderness”

One of the central ideas that cuts across nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonial thought is the trenchant belief that native populations would inevitably die out as a direct result of contact with European “civilization.” Brantlinger (2003) refers to this as “extinction discourse,” a distinctive aspect of the closely connected creeds of imperialism and racism. He argues,

A remarkable feature of extinction discourse is its uniformity across other ideological fault lines: whatever their disagreements, humanitarians, missionaries, scientists, government officials, explorers, colonists, soldiers, journalists, novelists, and poets were in basic agreement about the inevitable disappearance of some or all primitive races. This massive and rarely questioned consensus made extinction discourse extremely potent, working inexorably toward the very outcome it often opposed. (Brantlinger 2003, pp. 1–2)

Extinction discourse (sometimes referred to as “fatal impact”) became part of the colonial mindset in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as indigenous populations around the world sharply declined in the aftermath of contact with Europeans. There were many reasons for this; Brantlinger (2003) cites war, violence, genocide, and the introduction of diseases into populations that had not yet had time to build immunity. In colonial societies around the world, however, the rarely questioned notion that indigenous peoples were inevitably doomed as a result of their encounters with “civilization” gave rise to a nostalgic or “sentimental racism” (Brantlinger 2003, p. 1) whereby native races were at once mourned, eulogized, and ultimately ennobled and valorized as the innocent victims of a tainted and degenerate Western civilization.

At the same time as these extinction discourses were playing out, settler anxieties about the loss of indigenous wilderness spaces were also intensifying. Massive clearances of land for agricultural use in places like New Zealand and Australia led to the widespread destruction of native habitats as forested areas made way for pasture or, as Dominy (2002) describes, “the telltale patchwork quilt of European settlement” (Dominy 2002, p. 15). Native flora and fauna served as much a psychological and aesthetic need for settlers as it did a commercial one, however,

and as the long-term environmental effects of these practices became apparent, it seemed to them that indigenous landscapes and indigenous peoples were destined to die out altogether (Star and Lochhead 2003). These regrets combined with a guilty, “sentimental racism” inflected colonial discourses about childhood, ethnicity, and the indigenous wilderness that were positioned together and reified in state narratives of the colonial era.

In many respects, these backcountry tropes continue to be deployed in contemporary state education narratives that extol the wilderness as a place that offers sanctuary and respite from city life for children and young people. For example, the “wild” is often portrayed as a place of healing and therapy for urban young people who have been identified as “difficult” or “troubled.” Certainly, wilderness therapy programs for “high-risk” adolescents have long been connected with other kinds of outdoor education programs such as adventure therapy, Outward Bound courses, forest schools, wilderness education, as well as military-style boot camps designed for young people deemed to be “at risk” (Rutko and Gillespie 2013). It should be noted here that although the positive impact of these kinds of programs is often assumed by educators, social workers, and wilderness therapists, their overall efficacy is under-researched and, as such, open to debate (Ungar et al. 2005).

Yet children and young people are constantly given messages about the need to directly experience and engage with the land, especially when it comes to rural or wilderness environments. Indeed, since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, outdoor youth movements involving activities such as scouting, hiking, and camping have been closely associated with representations of the wilderness and the construction of social meanings about nature. Early twentieth-century rural landscapes were conceived in this way by adults who saw these spaces as ideal sites for place-making activities that were designed to educate children and young people as well as regulate and monitor their leisure and recreation experiences (Cupers 2008). Implicit in these ideas was the conviction that children would mature into healthy adults if they developed a strong and sympathetic relationship with the natural world (Armitage 2007).

These perspectives were linked to early twentieth-century public discourses about nature and its importance to children’s spiritual, moral, and physical development, but they were eventually incorporated into state education policies and became part of official narratives about nature and childhood that underpinned the nationalist rhetoric of that era. This came about because many early twentieth-century nature study advocates were closely aligned with the emerging progressive education reform movement that actively supported outdoor learning programs. In England and Wales, for example, school nature study organizations had sprung up at the turn of the twentieth century and their claims about the value of putting urban children in touch with nature dovetailed with broader pedagogical concerns about fostering young people’s engagement with science education through increasing their knowledge and awareness of the natural world. In 1905, the Board of Education included a new regulation that British primary school children should be given “observation lessons and nature study” (Jenkins and Swinnerton 1996). These ideas

were widely adopted in the British colonies and were eventually included in school curricula across the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Similar initiatives were introduced in North America in the early years of the twentieth century as the increasingly influential nature study movement successfully argued for the introduction of science into public schools (Kohlstedt 2010). These ideas were also behind the school garden movement that operated in many parts of the United States from the 1890s until the mid-twentieth century (Kohlstedt 2008). Many of these nature study programs reflected the way that proponents of progressive education viewed child development. In particular, they associated the domain of childhood very closely with the natural world, believing that adult intervention was needed in both areas either to protect and regulate or to exalt and enhance them (Kohlstedt 2008). However, these ideas were also shaped by the racial and ethnic discourses of the time. This can be seen in the way in which the progressive educational movement was bolstered by programs developed specifically for children and young people that aimed to connect them with nature and the wilderness. For example, at the turn of the twentieth century, “nature”-oriented youth movements in America had become an important part of many Anglo-American childhoods that were closely associated with the nostalgic ideal of a quietly vanishing world, the colonial frontier.

The League of Woodcraft Indians (later known as the Woodcraft League of America), for instance, was an outdoors club for white American children established by Ernest Thompson Seton in 1902. Seton believed that industrialized urban society had weakened the moral and physical well-being of American children and their families. In response to this, the League of Woodcraft Indians was a youth program that offered boys the opportunity to spend time in the outdoors hunting, camping, and learning frontier skills. Seton looked carefully for exemplars of moral virtue and physical “purity” to serve as a model for the young people who joined the League, and he ultimately turned to American Indians as epitomizing his desired standard of ideal goodness for urban youth (Armitage 2007). To this end, Seton wrote, “the ideal Indian, whether he ever existed or not, stands for the highest type of primitive life, and he was a master of woodcraft, which is our principal study” (Seton 1907, p. 3). Here, constructions of native peoples as noble “primitives” acted as a vehicle for lessons given to white American children about physical and moral virtue, and this was not uncommon in youth programs at the turn of the twentieth century. At the same time, as these activities were taking place, however, real Native Americans were experiencing the devastating impact of the 1851 Indian Appropriations Act that had sanctioned the creation of Indian reservations forcing many tribal communities to surrender large areas of land to the state (Goldstein 2008). It was in this way that a fatal impact model of cultural encounters came to be embedded in an educative process whereby “Indians” could be conceived as poetical ennobled peoples only after the so-called Indian problem had been eliminated and replaced by the notion of native populations as a landless and dying race – victims of the onslaught of civilization and the colonial hunger for land.

Similarly, the early twentieth-century scouting movement in North America also relied heavily on nostalgic notions about the wilderness which was posited as an ideal environment for white American children. The place-making activities of organizations like the Boy Scouts of America during this era took place at a time when the American frontier had closed and notions of the wilderness were being transformed as the modern American city was making incursions into the material landscape and gaining dominance in the national imagination. Cupers (2008) comments that at the same time as learning wilderness skills, boy scouts were also introduced to an invented tradition of “Indianness” that drew on heavily Westernized versions of stories about native American customs and lore. These highly romanticized and ahistorical “traditions” were a feature of many of the social activities that took place in scout camps that involved songs, games, and dressing up as “Indians.” In this respect, indigeneity was reinvented in these contexts as a proxy for Anglo-American masculinity but entirely disconnected with actual native struggles over land that were happening at exactly the same time. As Cupers (2008) notes, the establishment of the National Parks system in the United States forced many native communities off their ancestral lands, but it was also in these same places that scout troops regularly came to set up camp and dress up as “Indians.”

In this respect, the presence of actual indigenous people with real histories of struggle and protest serve as a disruption to these idealized, fetishized, and highly racialized narratives about land acquisition, national histories, and childhood. They fade in and out of official memory according to whose politics and renderings of the past are being summoned. Philip Deloria (1998) has commented on the reliance of Anglo-Americans on native peoples to define their own national identities arguing that “[s]avage Indians served Americans as oppositional figures against whom one might imagine a civilized national Self” (Deloria 1998, p. 3). This idea can be applied more broadly to other post-settler nations where indigenous peoples are frequently positioned ambiguously in national narratives. On one hand they are necessary for the validation of Anglo national identities, but on the other hand, they are largely invisible in pioneering and early settler tales about the acquisition of the land.

In post-settler environments, the nation-building project invokes difficult and frequently unanswered questions about the control of space including questions about who belongs and who is excluded. Cutting across these narratives is a discourse about childhood and place and the racialized nature of the geographical imagination in post-settler memory regimes. At the same time, however, the narrative of the colonized landscape, like the narratives of colonial and indigenous childhoods, is never absolute. There are multiple possibilities involved for children and young people in their reading of these ideas. Moreover, adult constructions of childhood, land, and indigeneity, while constituting very powerful influences in children’s lives, are also partial and cannot ever fully represent the spectrum of young people’s perspectives on these matters. Smith et al. (2002), for example, argue that despite adult constructions of land, place, and childhood dominating public narratives, young people are very adept at reading the world on their own terms and are able to negotiate and construct place identities in their own way. In a

similar vein, Nairn et al. (2003) assert that it is important to speak directly with young people themselves in order to discover their views and experiences of their everyday environments. They argue that young people invariably provide a highly complex and nuanced picture of their engagement with place and public space that can easily be overlooked if others speak on their behalf. A fuller understanding of the way that indigenous youth interact with physical spaces has yet to be developed, and this is an area where further research is needed. However, some of the elements that could potentially be incorporated into future studies, at least in the post-settler context of New Zealand, are explored in the section below.

4 Indigenous Māori Youth Geographies in New Zealand

Frantz Fanon once wrote that “[f]or a colonized people, the most essential value, because it is the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity” (Fanon 2001/1963, p. 34). The primacy of land in colonial encounters has ongoing repercussions in contemporary post-settler nations where historical injustices against indigenous peoples are in the process of being formally addressed. In these societies, conflicting memories about the past often rise up in unexpected and uncomfortable ways making it difficult to establish and embed national narratives about harmonious cultural relations in the present. In this respect, cultural identities also have spatial and historical dimensions that shape the way that memory, place attachment, and belonging are articulated within both public and indigenous discourses. Craib (2000) argues, however, that when spatial constructions of identity are historicized and acknowledged, we can begin to conceptualize the cultural and spatial understandings that preceded and coexisted with the colonial enterprise and explore the ways that these perceptions influence contemporary identity formation. This is an important step in thinking about how indigenous young people construct cultural place identities within post-settler spaces.

In the New Zealand context, the centrality of the landscape is deeply ingrained in narratives of national identity. Perry (1994) argues that New Zealanders mobilize and read these images differently from societies whose wealth and well-being do not rest upon agricultural or agrarian economies. These narratives of place have come to be focused on an iconic wilderness, a vast topography of volcanic plateaus, mountains, forests, lakes, and glaciers upon which national imaginaries rest (Le Heron 2004). But the modern New Zealand nation was also built on the colonial acquisition of land held by Māori tribal communities, and tensions continue to simmer as a result. Indeed, the landscape itself has become a metaphor for many of these tensions and silences (Le Heron 2004). This can be seen in the way that the past is represented in the repositories of national memory, such as Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand’s national museum, where Māori and Crown conflicts over land are portrayed as a historical concern that has been resolved rather than as a contemporary problem that is still in bitter contention (Labrum 2012; Macdonald 1999). In practice, Māori experienced extensive land loss throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the subsequent impact on Māori tribal identity, which

is inextricably tied to ancestral and cultural links to particular territories, has been profound. As Smith (2007) notes, “[r]ecovering identities from forced removal has been a long-term intergenerational battle for many” (Smith 2007, p. 70). These intergenerational battles continue to be played out in the present, and this has a considerable impact on the way that many Māori young people engage, and often disengage, with state-sanctioned histories about land and nation.

Consequently, cultural relations between Māori peoples and the Crown are far from reconciled and continue to be the subject of ongoing negotiation and heated debate. Many of these debates now take place within formal state mechanisms that have been specifically created to address Māori grievances against the Crown. These mechanisms have been in place since 1975 when, as a response to growing Māori anger and protest about the colonial “land grab,” the New Zealand government established a Tribunal, known as the Waitangi Tribunal. The purpose of the Waitangi Tribunal is to investigate breaches of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi – an agreement made between Māori tribes and the Crown which is considered by some to be the founding document of the modern New Zealand nation. It was established at a time when Māori anger about the massive loss of tribal lands threatened to spill into wider civil unrest and the government feared that the protests would take a more violent turn that could not easily be curbed (Celemajer and Kidman 2012). The creation of the Waitangi Tribunal was therefore an attempt to contain that possibility and establish avenues whereby Māori could seek some form of resolution and redress for claims over land and other forms of historical injustice in ways that were less likely to lead to civil disorder (Poata-Smith 2004).

Given these circumstances, New Zealand Māori have become very familiar with historical discourses relating to land and dispossession, yet even those who have experienced tribal deterritorialization either firsthand or as an intergenerational memory continue to draw meaning from places. Nowadays, the majority of Māori young people are located in urban areas at a distance from their tribal homelands, and because of this, many of them do not have day-to-day contact with their tribal communities (Kukutai 2013). Even so, many young people continue to feel a strong sense of affinity with their tribal origins which provides them with a sense of belonging, continuity, and place (Andrews et al. 2012; Hokowhitu 2013). These affinities are particularly important because most Māori young people have direct experience of interpersonal and institutional racism and cultural stigmatization in their daily lives, and this is partly the reason why tribal homelands have such significance as a place that they can call home (Webber 2012). In many ways, these are cultural geographies that sit beneath Māori young people’s everyday sense of place and location which offer them a means of resisting, or at least managing, racism, and stigmatization insofar as they provide a tribalized politics of place. In this regard, young people’s ascription of meaning to tribal homelands can be seen as being much more complex than a nostalgic desire to reinvent cultural traditions that have been lost – these expressions of tribal identity have become a key component of contemporary indigenous identity discourse for Māori children and young people who seek a form of cultural expression that provides them with a territorialized sense of belonging (Kidman 2012).

In addition, Panelli (2008) argues that the construction of homescapes is an important source of resistance for minority groups. She adds that different groups deploy notions of place and home that “provide safety, support, and expression of identity and sustenance of lifestyle” (Panelli 2008, p. 803). In line with this, Coombes et al. (2012) contend that the “spaces for Indigenous belonging and reconciliation are fleeting and tenuous rather than consensual and certain” (Coombes et al. 2012, p. 695). They suggest that because of this ambiguity, the hope expressed by some postcolonial commentators that the recognition of indigenous agency might lead to a greater spirit of reconciliation and belonging always needs to be balanced against the ongoing realities that exist within what they describe as the “persistent geographies of marginalization, disadvantage and desperation” (Coombes et al. 2012, p. 694). The kinds of tribal place identities that are available to Māori young people are discussed below.

4.1 Māori Tribal Place Identities

The importance of the land in maintaining *sui generis* tribal identities that are reflected in a wide range of Māori cultural and tribal practices cannot be underestimated. For example, the customary forms of greeting that are used at formal gatherings of Māori communities also reflect people’s unique tribal affiliations with particular territories. On these occasions, highly ritualized introductory oratories are delivered that involve a recitation of one’s genealogy (known as *whakapapa*) and an account of one’s tribal area including geographical references to tribal locations such as mountains, rivers, and lakes. Salmon (2005) writes,

One of the most interesting features of Māori oratory is its setting in a mythological landscape, one which would be quite unfamiliar to other New Zealanders. A totally different concept of the country and its history comes into play, and unless the listener roughly knows the landmarks of this landscape, he is liable to get lost. Places are called by their Māori names in direct preference to European equivalents [. . .], and places that are hardly noted on European maps become extremely important. Focal points of Māori settlement, such as Ruatahuna, Ngaruawahia, Ruatoria and so on, are insignificant communities in size and wealth, yet rich in history and *mana*, and they dominate the “Māori” map. Large cities on the other hand, are relatively unimportant, since they are European creations, and recent ones at that. (Salmon 2005, p. 165)

For some Māori young people, these practices offer a way of understanding the natural world that is different from what they learn at school and which legitimizes their connection with particular “spaces.” Māori tribal place identities are also formulated through many other kinds of multigenerational connections with physical territories. Kawharu (2000), for example, contends that a particular form of land guardianship, known as *kaitiakitanga*, is closely associated with Māori tribal identities and it has “a centrality in Māori kin-based communities because it weaves together ancestral, environmental and social threads of identity, purpose and practice” (Kawharu 2000, p. 349ff). In this respect, land and tribal identity are fused into

every aspect of cultural practice relating to the care and custodianship of the environment. At the same time, she argues, the ethic of *kaitiakitanga*, as a form of intergenerational land custodianship and “resource management,” is also becoming more widely used in Māori political claims relating to Crown breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi. Accordingly, contemporary cultural and tribal claims about the care and management of land no longer simply relate to a series of cultural practices. Rather, they have entered political and legal discourse as an assertion of what it means to be Māori in the twenty-first century, although Kawharu (2000) notes that the principles of land protection and conservation tend to be more heavily emphasized in these contexts than other aspects of the ethic which involve spiritual, philosophical, and ethical matters.

The concept of *kaitiakitanga* has also been introduced in many schools although it often appears in a heavily anglicized form. For example, it is frequently cited in environmental education and sustainability programs that focus on people’s civic responsibilities and obligations toward the environment (Tarrant 2010). In this regard, Māori cultural meanings have recently begun to be referenced in a range of education policies and practices, and *kaitiakitanga* is one such concept that has been adapted for use in New Zealand classrooms. The reasons that educators give for wanting to incorporate these elements of Māori cultural meaning into the curriculum often relate to their beliefs about biculturalism and civic and professional responsibilities to reflect bicultural perspectives in their teaching practice (see, e.g., Cosgriff et al. 2012).

In the New Zealand context, biculturalism has become a focal aspect of nationalist discourse, and it carries strong redemptive overtones. Since the 1980s, this discourse has centered on the idea that the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi between Māori peoples and the Crown gave legitimacy to the Pākehā [*New Zealanders with settler origins*] presence in New Zealand. Accordingly, the Treaty of Waitangi is represented as the foundation document of New Zealand and is widely perceived as the basis of a unique relationship between two parties, namely, Māori and Pākehā, who are portrayed as the founding peoples of the nation (Bell 2009). Nationalist rhetoric since the 1980s has focused on the notion that a “partnership of equals” exists between Māori and non-Māori. This partnership is seen by many as defining New Zealand as a modern nation that is at peace with its “Treaty partners” – namely, indigenous Māori people. The strong nationalist overtone in the language of Treaty partnership has since entered into educational policy and practice where it is often referred to as an actuality rather than as a highly aspirational goal for future cultural relationships.

While biculturalism has become the default narrative of state policy makers and educators, it has also been challenged by many Māori scholars and political activists. For example, O’Sullivan (2014) describes the instatement of biculturalism as “a state-initiated strategy of containment which understates the extent of indigenous aspirations” for self-determination (O’Sullivan 2014, p. 30). In a similar vein, Bell (2009) argues that although the nationalist rhetoric of biculturalism was brought in as an attempt to solve the problem of representing the past, the issue

still remains because in practice, bicultural discourse tends to reify Pākehā identity as the dominant one (Bell 2009).

Here it can be seen that despite Māori young people being positioned within curriculum policy and practice as “bicultural Treaty partners” and as legitimate “citizens-in-the-making,” these perspectives emerge from a state imaginary that acknowledges the violent past but insists that cultural reconciliation has taken place. In the official story of the nation, we are all now “equal” partners who are depicted as sharing common goals and concerns and committed to a common future. However, in the face of ongoing Māori struggles for recognition and autonomy, this notion does not touch the reality of many Māori children’s lives, nor does it address the very real disparities in Māori health, education, economic, housing, and employment outcomes. For this reason, tribal place identities that sometimes, at least, manage to sit outside of state power relations continue to hold a great deal of appeal for Māori young people who, to borrow a term from Paul Goodman (1960), are “growing up absurd,” in the trenches of state-organized systems.

But if tribal narratives hold meaning for young people and provide them with a sense of belonging, there are also dilemmas associated with these kinds of identity-making practices. Sissons (2004), for example, argues that some forms of identity construction can limit and constrain options for indigenous peoples. In the New Zealand context, he argues that post-settler nationhood has permanently changed the cultural landscape for both Māori and non-Māori alike, and for that reason, manifestations of contemporary cultural identity continue to be heavily influenced and shaped by power relations. He notes that, “[w]hereas settler nationhood required Māori to become Pākehā, post-settler nationhood requires Māori to become Māori” (Sissons 2004, p. 29). Likewise, Castree (2004) contends that indigenous and nonindigenous groups alike may fetishize “place” in order to support their identity claims by valorizing “local knowledge,” “subaltern” identities, and “place-making projects” (Castree 2004, p. 140). He notes that while these identity claims may well be intended as a form of empowerment, the “various geographical imaginations that local actors and institutions have deployed to command their home ‘turf’ have often been chauvinistic, essentialist and exclusive, as opposed to ecumenical, open and inclusive” (Castree 2004, p. 141).

Māori youth geographies are indeed situated within the politics of the subaltern. But in nations where history has disobliged indigenous groups and rendered indigenous young people silent or invisible within the wider nation-building project, and when tribal histories and memories of loss and dispossession are denied or glossed over in official state depictions of the past, young people’s construction of tribal place identities can also become an expression of resistance to these official narratives, and as such they can be seen as acts of conscientization and politicization (see, e.g., Kidman 2012, 2014). These tribal place identities can therefore provide young people with a means of “speaking back” to historical and contemporary injustices at a time when official state discourses have closed down other kinds of spaces for debate to take place. It could well be that young people’s

articulations are sometimes partial, incomplete, and messy, but they are also a way of responding to power relations that have disrupted Māori “spaces” over time, and in this respect, it is within these contexts that new kinds of decolonizing youth geographies may well have the potential to emerge.

5 Conclusion

Across the British empire, romantic and pastoral imagery of colonial childhoods, combined with idealized colonial conceptualizations of wilderness, landscape, and scenery, positioned cultural relationships between indigenous groups and the state in highly oppositional terms. These oppositional relationships were, in any case, the basis of power struggles that took place over land and territory over time. But the conflation of ideas about childhood and land mirrored the racialized nature of colonial understandings about land and indigenous peoples that came to be embedded in modern nation-building stories. In many post-settler societies, these perspectives denied or marginalized indigenous peoples and their place-making activities, histories, memories, and cultural practices as well as their claims to land.

In the New Zealand context, continuing silences about the cultural encounters of the past disrupt national stories that speak of race relations as being resolved and harmonious. The “ontological unease” (Bell 2009) that is produced by these unsettled histories has also provoked a response from many Māori young people who are beginning to find new ways of responding to ongoing tensions over the control of social space. As has been discussed in this chapter, some do this by adopting cultural identities that give them a sense of belonging, acceptance, and place attachment, and this is a form of tribal identity and place-making that carries meaning even for those who reside at a distance from their tribal base. When they adopt these tribal place identities, people can “speak back” in ways that may potentially open up spaces for the creation of redemptive geographies that decolonize and emancipate although much more work is yet to be done if we are to understand the complexities, challenges, and nuances involved.

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Geographies of Indigenous Children and Youth: A Critical Review Grounded in Spaces of the Colonial Nation State

3

Sarah de Leeuw and Margo Greenwood

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Abstract

This chapter considers the specific role of young Indigenous peoples within historic colonial and neocolonial efforts of building and maintaining nation-states. Although these efforts have unfolded around the world, theoretical discussions in the chapter are grounded in specific examples from Canada, with some reference to New Zealand (Aotearoa), Australia, and the United States. The chapter begins by exploring the very idea of Indigeneity, followed in the second and third sections by an investigation of Indigenous children in the discipline of geography. The chapter then provides an overview of nations and nation-states, followed by a discussion about the place of children and youth in the construction and continuance of these nation-states. The fifth section of the chapter offers examples of new – often decolonizing – roles of young Indigenous people within contemporary geographies. The chapter concludes with thoughts

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about where and how to extend future discussions in human geography so as to more fully and significantly account for the unique places and roles of Indigenous children and youth in the neocolonial work and spaces of nation-states and beyond.

Keywords

Indigenous children and youth • Nation building • Colonialism

1 Introduction

Canada celebrated its 134th birthday as a modern nation-state in July 2001. Earlier that same year, First Nations photographer Jeff Thomas (member of Six Nations Reserve in Southern Ontario) curated a national exhibit of images entitled *Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools*. The National Healing Foundation (NHF) supported the exhibition in efforts to promote public awareness, understanding, and education about the history and legacy of one of Canada's most brutal colonial projects. Residential schooling was fundamentally centered on children and was tied to the building of a nation and the expansion of territory and physical geography (de Leeuw 2009; Milloy 1999). Comprised mostly of small black and white or sepia-toned photos, most of them hauntingly faded and often creased or damaged, the exhibition focused on images of very young Indigenous children or youth in school settings across the country. Image after image in *Where are the Children?* captured rows of Indigenous children and youth standing stiffly on the steps of government- and church-run schools, flanked by black-robed priests and nuns. Many of the photos caught children bent over sewing machines, working on farming equipment, or sitting in orderly lines of small wooden desks. Some images depicted “before-and-after” transformation of children, a colonial dream of remaking Indigenous children into “civilized” citizens for a modernizing new nation. Many of the Indigenous children simply stare at the camera, unsmilingly, their hair cropped short and their arms hanging limply at their sides.

The exhibit was part of NHF's ongoing effort toward building reconciliation both among generations of Indigenous peoples and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada – starting with developing a national dialogue about Indigenous children and youth being central, and often violently positioned, subjects in the building and maintaining of Canada as colonial nation-state. The children in Thomas's collection of photographs, it might be argued, embodied a nation-expanding and colonial agenda of “de-Indigenizing” Canada's geographies (Razack 2002). The presence of sovereign or independent Indigenous children and youth would have signaled the immaturity of the country, an incompleteness or fragility of Canada's national borders (Milloy 1999). Images of subdued, “civilized,” and settler-educated Indigenous children reinforced Canada's sense of self as a nation-state, its production of both physical and sociocultural borders that defined and reinforced who and what Canada was about as a country. Borders, after all, are precisely what define nation-states. Borders, both in imagination and on the ground,

demarcate one country's geography as distinct and bounded from another. Borders also define who has the right to be where and how those people are to be treated (Sparke 2009; Anderson 1983). Young Indigenous people in Canada, then, were at the epicenter of sociocultural and geographic concerns focused on territorial expansion of Canada becoming and sustaining itself as a colonial space. In some ways, as observed by an Indigenous elder and expanded upon in this chapter, for Indigenous peoples "losing children [was] like losing the land" (Wilkinson 2006, p. 7).

This chapter considers the place of Indigenous children and youth in the building and maintaining of nation-states, historically and in the present day. To contextualize this, a brief exploration about what constitutes Indigeneity as geographers and children's geographers have written about it is offered in the chapter's opening sections. The roles of children in nation building are then considered, looking at specific ways the roles of children have been considered geographically – which is taken to mean that place, space, and spatiality are central organizing forces in the sociocultural and material lives of different subjects. The next section of the chapter focuses primarily on Indigenous children and youth in Canada, both historically and within neocolonial geographies of the nation. The roles of Indigenous children and youth in New Zealand (Aotearoa) and Australia's colonial projects are also contemplated, emphasizing how geographies of Indigenous children and youth were and are central to colonial projects around the world. In the penultimate section, the roles of young Indigenous peoples in contemporary nation-states are considered even more carefully and extended across different scales, including their roles in revolutionary cross-border activities like the *Idle No More* movement. The chapter ends with a reflection on the chapter as a whole and with considerations and suggestions about how future generations of scholars interested in critical, antiracist, and decolonizing geographies might more fully theorize young Indigenous people in relation to spaces of nations, countries, neocolonialism, and beyond. Like Jeff Thomas' *Where are the Children?* exhibit, this chapter asks about the role and presence of Indigenous children in colonial projects. Its goals are to understand how children and youth – and especially Indigenous children and youth – have been deployed to form and maintain national and colonial borders, both grounded and discursive. Like the aim of Canada's National Healing Foundation (NHF), the chapter also seeks to build reconciliation across existing colonial borders – through education and increased understanding about the geographies of Indigenous children and youth – in the hopes that one day, a greater diversity of values, personhoods, and identities can coexist across myriad geographies, from childhood onward.

2 Indigeneity and Geographies of Indigenous Children and Youth

Indigeneity is far from a straightforward marker or even descriptor of identity. Many Indigenous scholars around the world insist that, prior to colonial interventions, there was only an understanding of "being human" with no attendant sense of "being Indigenous" (Smith 1999). This has led some (Sissons 2005) to argue that

“First Peoples” might be a better descriptor than “Indigenous,” a particularly salient observation given that Indigeneity is, for some Indigenous theorists, an imposed categorization of Otherness in reference to the imagined normalcy of newcomers and settlers who were mostly, but by no means only, European (Smith 1999; see too Tuck and Wayne 2012). Still, due to confusion and controversy about the concept of “First Peoples,” most geographers, including those focused on children and youth, continue to use the terms Indigenous or Aboriginal, often with attendant explanations about the chosen nomenclature (Cameron et al. 2009). Undoubtedly, however, the very concept of “Indigenous,” and the various geographies it conjures, remains contested and evolving. Some Indigenous scholars suggest the very construct of “Indigenous” is one of many ongoing forms of colonial violence against peoples who held title over lands prior to times of contact (Lawrence 2003, 2004).

While the nomenclature around Indigeneity is complicated, the categorizations of what (and who) qualifies as a “real” Indigenous subject are also rife with tensions. These tensions are centered in claims about authenticity, blood, genealogy, community, and access to certain (often curtailed) rights and roles (Li 2007). This means that Indigenous children and youth are central to contemporary conversations about identity. Indigeneity is assigned or claimed at birth, often placing children and young Indigenous peoples at the vanguard of claims about who is an Indigenous person and who can claim ensuing rights and responsibilities. Compared with non-Indigenous peoples, Indigenous people in Canada, New Zealand (Aotearoa), and Australia are among the youngest demographic in each country (Statistics Canada 2013). Indigenous peoples also have higher birthrates and become parents earlier in life (Statistics Canada 2013). Indigenous children and young people thus figure prominently in all aspects of Indigenous identity, which in turn is tied tightly to the geographies of colonial nation-states.

Given the deep feelings of hope many Indigenous communities around the world place in their children and youth, believing them to be part of a renewed future in which Indigenous peoples are fairly emplaced within contemporary geographies, some Indigenous youths express feelings of being pressured, a fear of failure, or a sense they might not be “good enough” to claim the identity of Indigenous (Friedel 2010). In geographies around the world, from Canada’s Arctic to Australia’s western shores, young Indigenous peoples and children also struggle to make clear, for themselves and others, what it means to be an Indigenous subject (Ulturgasheva 2014; Guilfoyle and Botsis 2013). While they—like many other young people—are increasingly articulating themselves as sovereign, independent, and resilient subjects (Jeffrey 2011), young Indigenous peoples also live with unique challenges. These can be the outcome of targeted and specifically racialized anti-Indigenous discrimination based on pejorative ideas about Indigeneity with links to a violent colonial past that consistently “othered” Indigenous subjects (Chandler et al. 2003; Chandler 2002; de Leeuw et al. 2012). Indigenous peoples around the world are also living increasingly mobile, urbanizing, and border-crossing lives, resulting in hybrid and multinational families, communities, and identities that do not fit easily or smoothly into reified ideas about exactly what

constitutes being Indigenous (see, for instance, Katz 2004; Kobayashi and de Leeuw 2010; de Leeuw et al. 2011).

To further complicate the very idea of Indigeneity, “being Indigenous” has met with some skepticism, from critical geographers who worry about essentialism, reductionism, and overly codified racialization of people based on socially constructed ideas about identity (for discussions on this, see Cameron et al. 2014; Tolia-Kelly and Crang 2010; Tolia-Kelly 2009). Still, there remains an established need to recognize *some* unique and material aspect of being Indigenous, which begins in the earliest years. This is especially the case because, despite incredible strengths and resiliencies, to be Indigenous today means, around the world and including for young Indigenous peoples, to live with some of the highest rates of poverty, morbidity and mortality, isolation, low education, political persecution, poor health, and cultural marginalization (Dockery 2011; Richmond and Ross 2009; Adelson 2005; Amnesty International 2004). These marginalizations are well established as the outcome of often geographically influenced anti-Indigenous racism and neocolonial violence (de Leeuw et al. 2012). This feels especially tragic given overwhelming evidence that if Indigenous children and young people have a clear and healthy sense of their Indigenous identity, however that be defined, they experience fewer health risks, including suicidal ideations, an “epidemic” among many Indigenous children and youth around the world (Chandler and Lalonde 1998; Chandler et al. 2003). Still, how to understand and define Indigeneity remains a topic of ongoing inquiry, one that geographers grapple with. Indigenous geographies, the relationships between the discipline of geography and questions of Indigeneity, similarly remain an ongoing, often shifting and many times somewhat contentious, area of inquiry.

To be Indigenous, to claim Indigeneity within a nation, is a contested and complicated matter. There are, however, a few simple ways of considering and understanding Indigeneity, which are the ways we understand and use it throughout this chapter. Postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak once wrote (although later problematized) that there may be benefit in a “strategic essentialism” that provides to outsiders some sort of unified cohesion to an identity that might otherwise be consistently reconstructed as fragmented and flawed *especially* by colonial forces (Danius et al. 1993). For many Indigenous peoples, including young people, strategic positioning and defining of identity are often an articulation that an inalienable difference exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, namely, that people with Indigenous identity “have no other homeland” (Smith 1999) than their place of birth either to return to or from which to form a sense of self or community. Linked to a deep and “from-time-immemorial” connectivity to their homeland as the very place they and all previous generations were born, many Indigenous peoples, including young people, articulate a place-based principle of sociocultural organizing and structuring (Cajete 1999; Basso 1996; Cardinal 1969; Deloria Jr. 1969). This place-based orientation to identity and culture extends into urban environments, where many young Indigenous peoples live today, and to geographies beyond Canada, including in Australia and New Zealand (Aotearoa) where young Indigenous peoples, their teachers and mentors, their families, and

their communities are all increasingly asserting a connection and right to land and cultural sovereignty (Borell 2005; Kidman 2012). The materiality of and relationship with land, environment, and the more-than-human, as opposed to more abstracted and less grounded principles of progress or rational logic, form the very essence of Indigeneity from the perspective of many Indigenous people and especially those in Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand (Aotearoa) (Alfred 1999; Alfred and Cornthassel 2005; Smith 1999). Indeed, for many Indigenous peoples including Indigenous youth, to “be” Indigenous is simply something that *is*, beyond explanation, especially to non-Indigenous peoples or to forces of a colonial nation-state (Alfred 1999; Caringi et al. 2013). This is something we too believe.

3 Indigenous Peoples and Geography: Where Are the Indigenous Children?

Many contemporary geographers take as established and well understood that geography has a long problematic colonial past that was fundamental both to the framing of Indigenous peoples and communities as inferior to especially European colonial powers (Razack 2002) and to the deterritorialization, or “mapping out and off,” of Indigenous peoples (Harris 2002, 2004; Brealey 1995). Consequently, many geographers, and particularly critical, feminist, Indigenous, antiracist, and decolonizing geographers, have established that current questions about and inquiries into Indigenous geographies must always be framed and understood in relation to questions about colonial power (Coombes et al. 2014). Specific work includes unsettling normalized non-Indigenous hegemonies and associated ongoing projects that perpetually result in Indigenous peoples’ spatial, legal, sociocultural, and economic marginalization, including as a function of nationalism and the maintenance of nation-states (Shaw et al. 2006; Castree 2004; Wainwright 2008; Egan and Place 2013). Unfortunately, very little attention is paid to the role of Indigenous children and youth, or geographies of childhood, in these examinations.

In the opening decades of the twenty-first century, geographers and other social scientists are proposing new research frameworks for considering Indigenous geographies, which might well include geographies of children and youth, often proposing research methods and methodologies that account for self-determining and autonomous Indigenous community partners (Castleden et al. 2012; Louis 2007). Some of these methods include participatory mapping, auto-ethnography, digital storytelling, photo-voice, or even interactive theater based on Theater of the Oppressed philosophies and pedagogies (Bird et al. 2009; Conrad 2008). There is nevertheless *much more* attention needed to respectfully and fully include and account for Indigenous children and youth in research and other conversations, which is explored at the end of the chapter. Indeed, while innovative research methodologies that account for ethics and power imbalances are occurring in the subdiscipline of children’s geographies (Abebe and Bessell 2014), rarely have children’s geographies contemplated the unique and multiple power imbalances

that exist when we (mostly White and non-Indigenous scholars (Delaney 2002)) work expressly with Indigenous children and youth. The geographies of Indigenous children and youth, then, are a relatively recent field of inquiry for all geographers (Aitken et al. 2007).

More broadly, but with potentially interesting implications for geographies of Indigenous children and youth, geographers are documenting the ways that colonial power intersects with neoliberal power, which manifests in ongoing alienation of Indigenous peoples from lands and resources in nation-states (Altamirano-Jimenez 2014). Geographers are also addressing the ways that innumerable legal and discursive structures collude to (re)produce Indigenous subjects, including children and youth, as undeserving dependent wards of benevolent nation-states (Gilmartin and Berg 2007). Finally, some geographers are considering questions about embodying Indigeneity in the discipline and the tense but potentially very productive relations between Indigeneity, feminism, emotionality, affect, and nonrepresentational theory and storytelling (Hunt 2014; Christensen 2013). In other words, while not yet fully conceptualized as such, young Indigenous peoples, like other children and youth, may offer valuable and transformative empirical and conceptual lenses through which to understand a “range of issues. . . [from]. . . education, work, micropolitics, and identity. . . [to]. . . structure, agency, and participation – that form part of the intellectual currency of human geography” (Jeffery 2010, p. 497).

It is well established, nevertheless, that all children and young people, far from being “little adults,” are unique autonomous subjects with distinctive orientations to space, place, and power who, consequently, require distinct methodologies and theorizations, ethical attunements, and considerations (James 1990; Philo 2003). Children and youth are, for instance, active participants in the creation and recreation of spaces at multiple scales (Ansell 2009), including in nations at war or peace and countries transforming within and through ever-globalizing and increasingly urbanizing circuits of power (Wood 2013). Children experience the spaces, places, and geopolitics of nations and countries in unique emotional and embodied registers that differ from adults but which are also varied according to class, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, (dis)ability, and gender (Blazek and Windram-Geddes 2013). These also vary at different points in their lifecycles (Hil and Bessant 1999; Halloway and Valentine 2000; Barrett 2013). Certainly racialization and citizenship and issues of immigration and emigration are critical in children’s geographies, prompting experiences of and orientations to space and place that result in feelings of inclusion or exclusion (Howard and Gill 2001). These can have powerful implications for the ways that children and youth go about constructing and maintaining the communities and nations in which they live (Barrett 2013). Children and youth, then, have never been neutral or passive subjects. They are active agents who impact spaces of countries and nations distinctively and dynamically.

Despite geography’s significant colonial past – and to some extent because of its ongoing conflicted relationship with trying to define itself as a post- or anti-colonial discipline – there is much work by geographers trying to make and open new spaces in and through which to think about Indigenous geographies. There is also, thanks

to the expansion of children's geography as a subdiscipline, an understanding that geography needs to make and open new spaces for young people. Only quite recently have the geographies of Indigenous children and young people begun to be explored and critically theorized, especially in the context of the present day (see, for instance, Kidman, this volume, ► [Chap. 2, "Māori Young People, Nationhood, and Land"](#)). There consequently remains much work to be done about the geographies of young Indigenous peoples as they interact with nation-states.

4 Indigenous Children and Youth in Colonial Geographies of Nation-States

A still dominant but increasingly outdated notion of the nation-state, according to *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, is one where the nation-state is a product of nationalism which reifies a "geo-historical foundation for national community" (Sparke 2009, pp. 486–487). This idea turns in part on historic understandings of the nation-state as a somehow formalized, consolidated, and almost "primordial" (Sparke 2009, pp. 486–487) spatialized parceling of physical geography that is mapped along material boundaries. This definition is, of course, limited. More theoretical work, which is less attuned to ground-truthing the nation-state, makes clear that nations might better be conceptualized as "imagined" spaces, often in flux, and often dependent in great part on (sometimes violent) discursive exclusions of "others" based on racist, masculinist, or other phobic logics premised on keeping some subjects "out" and other subjects "in" (Sparke 2009, p. 487). While children and young people are often targets of nation-states establishing hard and fast national boundaries, this too remains an under-theorized area of geographic inquiry (Hörschelmann 2008; Hopkins and Alexander 2010). Understanding how colonial and imperial hegemonies encode certain normalizations of national identities, politics, cultures, and socio-legal categories through children and young people expands our understandings about state power. Furthermore, understanding that the nation-state is more than an ontological ground-truth opens spaces in which to more fully theorize children and young people as importantly enfolded within eminently socially constructed geographies reliant on various discourses of power.

Many geographers have argued how the formation of nation-states from spaces that, prior to becoming ones, were NOT nation-states relied heavily on violent impositions of colonial imaginaries about the spaces being terra nullius, or empty, uninhabited, and unclaimed lands open for settlement and enclosure *precisely as* nations or countries (Brealey 1995; Clayton 2000). Geographies now known as the nations of Canada and the United States were famously imagined (and then reimaged through myriad cultural and popular rhetoric from maps and legislation to books and movies) as wide-open unpopulated spaces passively waiting and available for the modernity of colonial European's "westerly" advancement and enclosure (Harris 2004). Critical and contemporary apertures of postcolonialism and decolonization offer additional insights. The transformations from what were undeniably complex and sophisticated independent self-governing Indigenous

territories into what are now known as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (Aotearoa) were systematic de-Indigenizing projects involving the wholesale (and sometimes genocidal) eradication of the regions' First Peoples (Churchill 2004; Razack 2002).

Certainly strong evidence exists that settler colonialism was squarely focused on *The Indian Question*. Indeed, that focus differentiated settler colonialism from first-wave colonialism in that the former involved colonization and settlement of lands, while the latter was more focused on contact and trade, often in coastal lands (Fisher 1977), especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the Americas and Australia and New Zealand (Aotearoa). Theorized very broadly, *The Indian Question* involved what Euro-colonial settler subjects should “do” with peoples who, as one Indigenous scholar puts it, were “inconveniently” alive, strong, resisting, and sophisticated, uninterested either in dying off, disappearing, or quietly assimilating (King 2013). In other words, the grounded, material, and ontological production of nations rested firmly on the issue of “dealing” with the regions' First Peoples. The production of colonial nation spaces meant securing power over Indigenous peoples and communities, which meant that securing power over Indigenous peoples and communities implicitly – or perhaps explicitly as will be explored – involved Indigenous children and youth.

On June 11, 2008, the Prime Minister of Canada offered to all Indigenous peoples in Canada, on behalf of the Canadian Government, what quickly became coined in the country's mass media as a “historic and groundbreaking apology.” Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology closely followed Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's February 2008 apology to Indigenous peoples in Australia.

Both apologies, offered by the leaders of nation-states to Indigenous peoples who do not live in “post”-colonial circumstances (Waterstone and de Leeuw 2010), concerned the countries' centuries of violent treatment of Indigenous children and youth in educational systems. Even Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper acquiesced that the nation was purposeful in efforts to remove and isolate Indigenous children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions, and cultures and to assimilate them into the dominant culture of an expanding Canadian nation-state. These removals were based on the assumption that Indigenous cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, “to kill the Indian in the child” (de Leeuw 2009). The apologies of both prime ministers underscore the role of Indigenous children and young people in the establishment of nation-states' intent on absorbing preexisting First Peoples. Indigenous children and youth, from the perspectives of many, were foundational in formations of colonial nation-states (Fournier and Crey 1997). Forcibly and frequently violently acculturating Indigenous children served multiple, and often eminently geographic, historic purposes which have shifted powerfully over time. Around the world, and certainly in Canada, the formation of colonial nation-states required control by settler subjects over land and resources. Widely migrating, sovereign, and self-determining Indigenous peoples disrupted Euro-colonial models of private property ownership. Forcibly removing children from families and communities, while simultaneously enacting a series of laws and policies that

made it illegal for families or communities to resist children's removal, forced many Indigenous peoples to increasingly stay located year long in a single place near to where their children were being schooled. Coupled with the formation of Indian reservations or reserves, in which Indigenous peoples were enclosed, Indigenous children and youth became ways by which newly establishing colonial nations could circumvent Indigenous claim to and use of vast traditional geographies. During their schooling, children were educated in agrarian labor practices, which served colonial settler needs for cheap farming labor and trained children to cultivate private land after finishing. This forced many Indigenous peoples into nonmigratory farming lives that allowed nation-states to more easily control them in ways that made sense to colonial governments establishing nation-states built in great part on models of private property ownership. Indigenous children and youth became another means of controlling space and territory in nation-states.

Indigenous children and youth were also envisioned by ecumenical organizations and the newly forming national colonial governments, who in Canada (as in Australia, the United States, and New Zealand (Aotearoa)) worked together on the project of "Indian Education," as entry points by which to begin conversion. Conversion was designed to transform heathen savages into modern civilized subjects subservient within the nation-state. As Prime Minister Harper's apology also acknowledged, spiritual transformation of Indigenous children and youth was another way "to kill the Indian." Acculturation and de-Indigenization of Indigenous peoples and communities could be scaled up from the bodies, minds, and emotions of children and young people through to Indigenous parents and adult communities. Indigenous children and youth were understood as vectors through which to spread nationalism and enfold First Peoples into the colonial nation-state.

Perhaps most controversially, then, Indigenous children and youth are understood today – particularly by more radical anti-colonial Indigenous theorists – as the embodied sites by which emerging nation-states like Canada and the United States enacted genocidal efforts against Indigenous peoples (Churchill 2004). In Canada, more than 150,000 Indigenous children were removed from their families and communities and placed in Indian residential schools across the country for more than a century. In some of these schools, scientific experiments involving mass starvation or monitored malnutrition were conducted (Mosby 2013). Despite documented reports by physicians about the deplorable states of children's health in the schools, including substandard sanitation and hygiene leading to deadly outbreaks of disease, the federal government and ecumenical organizations continued to operate the schools on untenable budgets with little to no health oversight (Kelm 1998).

Many children died in the schools. More pervasive than acute illness and even death of children was the "cultural" genocide of killing languages and practices of Indigenous children, thereby eradicating generations of traditional knowledge and experiences and leading to what many have asserted is the ongoing and intergenerational violence of residential schools (Milloy 1999). Generations of Indigenous peoples, either as children themselves or as children of parents or grandparents who went through the residential school system, are left with little to no knowledge of individual or community Indigenous identity. A de-Indigenized

state of Indigenous peoples, begun in childhood, can be theorized as an effective means by which colonial nationhood manages to maintain power and thwart strong self-determining autonomous Indigenous subjects. Violent erasure of Indigenous knowledges from children and youth has led to challenges in parenting new generations of Indigenous children, resulting in a “cycle of cultural genocide” that, to many contemporary Indigenous theorists, continues colonial efforts to de-Indigenize countries (Elias et al. 2012).

So deeply linked to the geographies of Indigenous children and youth are the grounded formations of colonial nation-states, which relied on territorialization and control over resources and spaces that some Indigenous peoples view colonization of land as one and the same as the colonization of children. Larry Stiliday, an elder who grew up in the 1940s and 1950s and went through residential schooling, is quoted by an American historian of colonialism as saying:

We had loss of land. We had the loss of [our] religion to the missionaries. The absence of children was quite noticeable. Our children were being ripped away, to government boarding schools, to non-Indian foster homes off the reservation. *Losing children is like losing the land*. You talk about losing the land, and you talk about acreage, but that is not the whole part. (my emphasis, Stiliday quoted in Wilkinson 2006 pg. 7).

The loss of Indigenous children and youth to residential schooling cannot, however, be relegated to the past. Neocolonial geographies of nation-states continue to disrupt Indigenous communities through ongoing intervention into families, through the extension of what Stiliday references as “non-Indian foster homes” and more commonly known as child welfare (de Leeuw 2014). In 2008, Indigenous children made up 51 % of children in care in Canada’s westernmost province of British Columbia; the province’s 2008/2009 Auditor General Report noted that “[s]tudies indicate that in British Columbia, an Indigenous child is about six times more likely to be taken into care than a non-Indigenous child. Of all B.C. children who are in care, 51 % are Indigenous – yet Indigenous people represent only about 8 % of B.C.’s population” (Auditor General 2008/2009). The 2010 BC Ministry for Children and Families service plan reported 53 % of 8,677 children in the ministry’s care were Indigenous and the 2008 Canadian Incident Studies Report on child protection notes a rate of 49.69/1,000 Indigenous families reported for investigation compared to only 11.85/1,000 reports on non-Indigenous families. The numbers of children being displaced through child welfare in Canada are more than the number displaced by the residential schooling system, a system overt in its attempt to kill the Indian inside the child.

Geographers and others, including theorists of children’s geographies, know well that power is never fixed or complete (Scott 1990; Pile and Keith 1997). There are always slips and gaps; resistance and struggle against power occur wherever power announces itself. Children and young people, especially if understood as active political subjects (Hopkins and Alexander 2010; Habashi 2008), are fluent in creative and imaginative ways to thwart and push back against articulations of power. This is the case for Indigenous children and young people, both historically and in contemporary times. Even in residential schools where, as discussed, children and youth faced violence and, in some cases genocidal circumstances, children

and young people asserted themselves by speaking their languages, forging connections among each other, making art representing traditional knowledges, and ultimately and over time using lessons of colonial education to tackle the very nation-state that was attempting to assimilate them through legal battles that are in the twenty-first century coming to successful fruition (de Leeuw 2007).

5 Being Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century: The New Places of Children and Youth

For many strategic reasons, which are also often geopolitical, sociocultural, and economic, Indigenous peoples are intent – especially in these early years of the twenty-first century – on ensuring they are clearly understood as unique subjects in comparison to the many and varied non-Indigenous peoples with whom Indigenous peoples coexist in colonially defined and controlled, and ever-globalizing, nation-states. Within the grounded and imaginative boundaries that give colonial nation-states like Canada their contours, young Indigenous people are increasingly active decolonizing forces. Young Indigenous women are engaging global circuits of power to draw attention to the unique and racialized violences they face, and two-spirited (or queer or transgendered) Indigenous youth are announcing themselves as different subjects within – but outside and beyond – Euro-heteronormative colonial national state spaces (Morgensen 2011). Creative youth forces like the band “A Tribe Called Red” produce radically inspired, decolonizing, hip-hop music proudly announcing Indigenous ways of knowing and being as no longer something that can be ignored by non-Indigenous Canadians – or indeed other settler-colonial subjects around the world. Theirs, like many others, is a politically hybrid fusion of sounds focused on social justice that refuses essentialisms or certainties while still celebrating spaces and places of Indigeneity. Indigenous youth cultural jamming interventions have very recently underscored the ways that popular culture – including settler youth subculture’s wearing of “feather headdresses” and beaded headbands in places like folk festivals – continues to enact misunderstandings about Indigenous peoples, thereby perpetuating colonial violence (Hayden-Taylor 2014). Cultural jamming is not always tied to non-Indigenous settler activity but is also an independent practice used by Indigenous youth to make statements about cultural pride and assertions of sovereignty. Often these cultural jammers use humor and imagination to make their point, suggesting ever-opening and new ways to speak back against colonial hegemony.

Other young Indigenous people, through broad-based political movements with global and social media attention and through increasingly radical and identity-based music, art, literatures, cultural jams, and urban and rural installations, are also progressively articulating themselves as sovereign anti-colonial subjects (Belanger et al. 2003; Big-Canoe and Richmond 2014; Buffam 2011). For instance, the revolutionary and eminently nation-based vision statement of the Idle No More movement, which began in Canada and spread around the world (www.idlenomore.ca), clearly links Indigenous identity with territory and water- and land-

based concerns: “Idle No More calls on all people...to honour Indigenous sovereignty...to protect the land and water...to help build sovereignty and resurgence of nationhood...[and] to reframe the nation to nation relationship... by including grassroots perspectives, issues, and concern” (www.idlenomore.ca). In many cases, the “grassroots” have been populated by young Indigenous peoples speaking passionately about their rights to traditional, and hence contemporary, geographies.

In January 2013, and as part of the Idle No More movement, a group of six Indigenous youth and a guide set out on a 1,600 km walk from the James Bay Cree community of Whapmagoostui, Quebec, to Canada’s capital city, Ottawa. The youth called their walk “The Journey of Nishiyuu,” which means “The Journey of the People” in Cree. As the young people walked, nearly 400 other Cree and Algonquin peoples, including children, joined them in efforts to “show the federal government that First Nations are united and determined to preserve their language, culture, traditions, and treaty rights.” On March 21, 2015, and also in dialogue with the Idle No More movement, a small group of young Indigenous Diné women and their supporters embarked on a 350 mile walk designed to be an act of cultural revitalization. The walk began in Prewitt, New Mexico, with the express intent of “gathering all Diné people together, both to fight against environmental degradation and, through music, art and poetry, to bring joy and laughter to each of the communities they visit” (http://www.idlenomore.ca/nih_gaal_bee_iin_walk_for_existence). By articulating a united sense of Indigeneity, and by leveraging that unified identity in negotiations with nation-states, Indigenous peoples are able to claim both a decolonized sense of identity and (most often small but nevertheless significant) rights to land, resources, and other remuneration for displacement (Li 2007; Dawes 1998; Kobayashi and de Leeuw 2010). These complex positionalities and subjectivities are being grappled with and articulated by Indigenous young people in myriad spaces, from territories traversed on epic national walks through to social media spaces like Facebook and Twitter. Indigenous leaders and young people have pioneered trending Twitter feeds about the need in Canada for a national inquiry into the more than 1,000 missing and murdered aboriginal women, many of them young woman (see #MMAW), while Facebook pages like Native Pride exist so “Native Americans from around the world [can] UNITE...[and] share with one another, communicate, [and] learn from each other...” Young Indigenous people are redefining and reworking borders at many scales, conscious of a colonial past, aware of a neocolonial present, and looking forward to an open and increasingly decolonized future.

6 Conclusions and Thinking Forward: Geographers and States of Knowledge About Indigenous Children and Youth

This chapter explored the fundamental concept of Indigeneity, charting the centrality of Indigenous children and youth to the very identities and cultures that define Indigenous peoples and community now and for the future. The chapter then

explored the place (or lack thereof) of young Indigenous people, both in geography writ large and in the subdiscipline of children's geography. To demonstrate the absence – yet incredible potential – of Indigenous children and youth in conversations about historic and contemporary geographies, the chapter then illustrated the remarkable centrality of Indigenous children and youth to a powerful geographic construct: the nation-state. The fourth section of the chapter began by focusing on the historic deployment of Indigenous children and youth within violent colonial nation-building projects and then moved into discussions about Indigenous children's ongoing vulnerability in neocolonial geographies and their resilience and revolutionary roles within their countries. Given the extraordinarily central role that Indigenous children and youth have played in the establishment and maintenance of nation-states, not to mention the openness with which to theorize colonialism and nation-states, there is certainly a plethora of possibilities for future research about colonial power, countries, and the geographies of Indigenous children and youth. This is the case however nation-state is defined, from material or ground-truthed locations through to imaginative discursive spaces. Indigenous young people continue to be active forces within nations, increasingly challenging colonial power and articulating Indigenous identity and culture as inalienably tied to territory rights and responsibility. Consequently, there is a virtually untapped opportunity to understand radical social change through investigations of Indigenous children and youth. Indeed, as this chapter has outlined, while the field of children's geographies is rapidly expanding and while there is an increasing effort by (especially critical) geographers to grapple more fully with Indigeneity and the settler-colonial history of geography, there remains little work that expressly combines the two. This chapter attempts to do this.

Although young Indigenous peoples are loudly and widely declaring themselves as active place-focused decolonizing forces, very little geographic research actively considers the place and roles of Indigenous children and youth either as specific subjects within children's geographies or as unique subjects within colonialism and the (re)production of nations – among other geographies. All the more need, then, for geographers to make new places for understanding how Indigenous children and youth either experience and resist colonialism, including the establishment and maintenance of settler-colonial nation-states, or how Indigenous children and youth have actively engaged with, shifted, thwarted, or even transformed the trajectory of national geographies. As this chapter has outlined, there is a myriad of unexplored ways that geographers might actively engage the potentiality of young Indigenous peoples as a means of understanding broad questions that geographers are engaged in answering. Critical geographers, or geographers vested in unsettling colonial hegemony, are especially well positioned to work with questions pertaining to Indigenous young people and how they navigate workings of social, cultural, and spatial power. Certainly understanding the fluidity and mobility of people across multiple spaces, from rural to urban and from region to nation to the global, would be enlivened through attention to where and how Indigenous children and youth fit. Geographers interested in health and medicine would find fertile ground by asking questions

about the places and realities of young Indigenous peoples. Groundbreaking work on feminist and queer Indigenous geographies is garnering increased attention by geographers (see, for instance, Morgensen 2011), but there are many questions that could be asked of, and with, two-spirited Indigenous young people on topics spanning the roles and constructions of gender through to the health needs and realities of two-spirited Indigenous youth.

If there is a growing and increasingly well-established understanding about children and youth as distinctive agents of change across a broad spectrum of times and spaces, surely too there must be an attendant realization about the specific positionality and subjectivity of Indigenous children and youth in geographies of colonialism and nation-states. Specific examples from Canada suggest there are many constantly evolving reciprocal, iterative, and imbricated relationships between nation-states and present-day Indigenous children and youth; these relationships always invite new questions and research, especially by geographers and those who understand the importance of spatiality as a determinant of human engagements. What the Canadian examples also demonstrate, however, is that there are endless possibilities for future and further investigation. Understanding the geographies of Indigenous children, nation-states, and colonialism remains a wide-open field: Australia, New Zealand (Aotearoa), the United States, and countries in Central and South America – not to mention, China, Taiwan, Japan, and so many other nations – are all countries in which specific investigations of Indigenous children and youth might occur. Since there is an evolving and growing series of investigations into the unique nature of research ethics and methodologies pertaining to young people and, separately, into how to more fully understand Indigenous peoples and geographies in decolonizing ways, it stands to reason that contemplating the two in tandem would also lead to new and invigorating areas of research. There is thus wide-open potential for geographers to engage Indigenous young people through community-based participatory action research or other research frameworks that work to redress existing power imbalances between geographic researcher and research participants (Pain 2004; Wood 2013). Research methods that place emphasis on affect, on emotionality, or that embrace inventive practices such as walking, collecting, mind-mapping, storytelling, or digital narrative collection could surely be codesigned and navigated with Indigenous partners, thus finding expression and utility among young Indigenous peoples. Indeed, if more human geographers, including children's geographers, simply asked questions with Indigenous peoples, in partnership with Indigenous communities, or that actively involved and empowered young Indigenous peoples, the discipline would surely and positively broaden, in turn finding even more creative ways to work with and understand the people and places in which we all live.

Indigenous children's geographies, like Indigenous peoples and communities, are never stagnant or fixed. They are always growing, shape-shifting, and transforming – all key concepts in many Indigenous communities (Hunt 2014). It might be productive then for geographers to think of the many “in-betweens,” the many possibilities for growth and transformation, which exist among children's geographies and the geographies of Indigenous peoples living in

colonial states and beyond. Theorizing children's geographies and Indigenous geographies in dialogue with each other might just open new possibilities for reconciliation between and among settler and Indigenous peoples.

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Negotiating Place, Negotiating Identity: Rangatahi Māori in Facebook

4

Acushla Deanne Sciascia

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Abstract

Māori identify themselves through their connections to place and people – these connections are based on genealogy, culture, values, and experiences. Spaces for identity articulation and expression are changing and shifting. SNS are increasingly becoming spaces where rangatahi feel confident to express their identity and feel proud to do so. This chapter discusses identity as being underpinned by connections to place and the tensions of offline and online spaces (such as Facebook) for identity articulation and expression.

Keywords

Social networking sites • Māori identity • Rangatahi Māori • Connection to land

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1 Introduction

Tūrangawaewae, in its strictest application, refers to those places to which one has allegiance and a ‘right to stand’. In a wider sense, it embraces a person’s identity as a Māori – culturally, linguistically and emotionally. (Kāretu 1990, p. 112)

Natural environments – lands, mountains, and waterways – are considered to be deeply entrenched in Māori identity (Tomlins-Jahnke 2002). The inextricable connection to the land and water is founded on spiritual dimensions where respect and guardianship are practiced in relation to elements of the landscape (Rangihau 1977; Walker 2004). In a Māori worldview, connections back to land areas, mountains, rivers, lakes, seas, and burial grounds are represented through whakapapa or genealogy both to people and to place. These tracings are essentially acknowledging the land and water that sustained a group of people, becoming markings of identity to locating an individual and his or her ancestral connections to a place or places.

Like a feather plume worn in the hair or an appropriately inscribed moko, one’s connections to their lands and waterways are a marking of identity. These ancestral connections to land and water and their contemporary expression depict the immense importance of connection that Māori practice and that contributes to Māori identity. However, major impacts of colonization on Māori and iwi/hapū (tribal/sub-tribal) identity in a geographical sense have been significant (Robson and Reid 2001). Pepper-potting and urbanization of Māori moving away from tribal lands (into largely populated cities), coupled with land loss and confiscation by the Crown, have equally impacted on a sense of Māori identity (McIntosh 2005).

Rangatahi Māori (Māori youth) nowadays are occupying new spaces where identity expression is taking place (O’Carroll 2013a). Virtual spaces of social communities, interaction, and engagement provide new opportunities for negotiating identity that empowers rangatahi (O’Carroll 2013c). Facebook is a key space where rangatahi are socializing and engaging, thereby expressing their identity in a range of ways and to a range of audiences. Cloke et al. (2013, p. xi) describe socially produced spaces as “spatiality” to “emphasize how space is socially constructed and experienced rather than being an innate backdrop to social life” and that there are a range of ways in which these spaces are constructed. Social networking sites (SNS), for example, utilizing the Internet to produce a “space and place” where Māori communities have the ability to connect, engage, and communicate in meaningful ways. This shift of socially constructed spaces from the physical to the virtual is being driven by the affordances of the Internet and SNS that enable human interaction and sociality to occur at unprecedented levels.

This chapter seeks to discuss the importance of place and connection to place from a Māori perspective and the tensions of offline and online spaces (such as Facebook) for rangatahi Māori. Discussions around the negotiation and articulation of offline and online identities and the ways in which rangatahi are indigenizing Facebook as a marae space (gathering place for communities) will also be explored. Furthermore, this chapter seeks to develop and extend on the literature of *Critical Geographies of Childhood and Youth* in ways that highlight the importance of space and place for rangatahi Māori in a society that is increasingly becoming digitized.

1.1 The Importance of Place in Identity

There is a strong sense of place and belonging within Māori that relate to identity and whakapapa (genealogical connections) (Edwards 2009; Roberts 2013; Selwyn and Rito 2007). Whakapapa is a key aspect of Māoridom and being Māori through connecting yourself to your ancestors (Nikora 2007). Genealogical connections and ties refer not only to kinsfolk and iwi (tribes) but also to land as well. Whakapapa literally means “to be grounded”; grounding in this context refers to the genealogical grounding and belonging of an individual to his or her ancestors, tribesmen (hapū (sub-tribe) and iwi), land, lakes, rivers, and seas (Roberts 2013). A connection between a person and land/water refers to the mutual relationship that their ancestors had with the land that nourished and nurtured them.

Māori philosophies identify geographies with people; “Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au” – I am my river and my river is me (a whakataukī (proverb) from the Whanganui tribes referring to the connection between descendants of those tribes and the Whanganui River which nourishes them); thus, the importance of being connected to place and, therefore, one’s whakapapa is a key aspect of Māori identity and sense of belonging (Mead 2003) and is evident in the way that Māori connect themselves to the environment. Genealogical connections of people are just as important as genealogical connections to land and water, and the two are interwoven, therefore connecting yourself to your ancestors and acknowledging them, their teachings, and therefore who you are (your identity).

Many scholars have theorized Māori cultural identity (Māori identity) and what it means to be Māori in Aotearoa and beyond (Borell 2005; Durie 1995a, b; Hiroa 1982; McIntosh 2005; Moeke-Pickering 1996; Rangihau 1977; Te Hiwi 2008). Prior to European contact, identity was demarcated through tribal groupings and affiliations to iwi, hapū, and geographical configurations (including regional dialectal differences). Māori as a word or concept can trace its initial origins meaning “normal” or “regular” (Williams 2006) and, before European contact, did not act to categorize or identify Māori as Māori. Māori identity itself began to develop after European contact (Durie 1998).

This positioning of Māori as normal and the new arrivals as the other has now been reversed, resulting in considerable discussion and debate about the nature of Māori and Māori identity (Durie 1997b; Moewaka Barnes 2000; Walker 2004). What is clear from the literature is that Māori identity is fluid and can mean different things for different people.

1.2 Notions of Māori Identity

Māori scholars discuss interlinked strands, which can broadly be described as ancestry and cultural practices (Moeke-Pickering 1996). In practical terms these two aspects of Māori identity are interwoven and overlapping. Ancestry argues that Māori identity is based on kinship to iwi, who trace their genealogy to a common ancestor (Durie 1997a; Hiroa 1982; Walker 1992). Moeke-Pickering (1996, p. 1)

describes how Māori ancestry, structures, and practices have played a key role in the continuity of Māori identity.

Therefore, identity is about whakapapa as well as an articulation of the individual and is often guided by the teachings within whānau (family) and extended whānau during upbringing (Kāretu 1990). The second dimension, cultural practices (or ethnicity as articulated by Kukutai (2004)), encompasses knowledge of customs, practices, language, kawa and tikanga (protocols and practices), as well as involvement and participation with iwi, hapū, and/or marae structures, as related to Māori identity (Kāretu 1993; Rangihau 1977).

Identity can be based on how the individual chooses to articulate him or herself regardless of negative stereotypes or labeling from society. While this choice of identity is impacted by a range of dynamics such as whakapapa, membership, cultural involvement, and so on, it is nonetheless an individual choice (Kukutai 2004). In contrast, negative slurs and racism toward Māori identity can have implications on people's self-identity (interpersonal behaviors and characteristics of the individual) and how they perceive their own cultural identity. Māori statistics around unemployment, imprisonment, violence, crime, and poor education have, for some, become markers of Māori identity. While these statistics and racial stereotypes might be realities for some Māori, for others, they represent a negative idea of Māori identity.

These stereotypes can have major implications for Māori and in particular rangatahi Māori, causing resentment toward being Māori or expressing Māori identity. In this way, identity is not always something that is chosen by the individual. Instead, negative traits of identities (often created through stereotypes) are used as labels, making it difficult for the individual to manage and control how his or her identity is perceived. In addition to the multiple influences that affect Māori identity, mass media and especially new technologies associated with the Internet have an impact on how identity is being expressed and articulated (Niezen 2005).

1.3 Online Identity

Throughout our history, new media and communication technologies have provided Māori with alternative tools and methods to practice and preserve culture, without necessarily having to be face-to-face. At our own pace and for our own purposes, we have adopted, adapted, and entrenched the use of these tools into our lives in various ways. The emergence of social networking sites (SNS) has seen a similar rapid uptake by Māori, in particular, for the utilization of the construction and representation of both offline and online identities (O'Carroll 2013a, c).

Within the broad scope of possibilities enabled by the development of the Internet, the emergence of SNS has been a key phenomenon in the twenty-first century. Boyd and Ellison (2007, p. 211) define the attributes of SNS as:

Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a

connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

These sites include (but are not limited to) Facebook, which is the largest SNS to date with 1.06 billion active users (Smith 2013), Twitter, YouTube, Skype, Google+, MySpace, and Bebo.

Māori are now transitioning to the virtual space, and research shows that 86 % of Māori are using the Internet (Smith et al. 2011). With increased access to broadband connections in remote areas, Internet in the home is becoming almost a commonplace, and mobile (smart) phones continue to extend Internet use (Smith et al. 2011). Wi-Fi hotspots across parts of major cities, cafes, eating spots, learning institutions, and libraries all provide Māori with greater access to the Internet. The Internet has become a useful medium to participate in and promote Māori culture and identity (O'Carroll 2013c).

Muhamad-Brandner's (2010) PhD thesis looked at Māori identity in cyberspace and covered some discussion around SNS. Throughout her data collection, participants commented on the importance of SNS for them in their daily lives as well as for communities and groups they belonged to. Māori have been sampled in studies that look at the usage of SNS (Kukutai 2012; Smith et al. 2011), but in this burgeoning social field, there is very little research around Māori and SNS.

The Te Hoe Nuku Roa was a longitudinal study set up in 1992 to "enable cultural, social, economic and personal factors to be correlated" (Durie 1995a, p. 461). The study consisted of approximately 700 households and 1200 participants. Its framework featured four major axes in which Māori identity was measured, including "Te Ao Māori." This axis features the following distinct cultural markers of Māori identity, ethnic affiliation, language and tikanga, land, fisheries and forests, marae and hapū activities, and iwi links.

The framework was constructed as a tool to conceptualize current social, cultural, and economic positions of Māori, recognizing that Māori are diverse and dynamic with multiple affiliations. The framework attempts to address ideas of Māori identity from both older and more contemporary points of view, attempting to avoid prescribing parameters as to what Māori identity might be. However, there have been some concerns about the THNR framework being used as a measurement tool of Māori identity (Stevenson 2004). Relevant cultural markers from Te Hoe Nuku Roa Māori identity framework will be used to discuss how participants of this study used SNS for Māori identity formation and construction including whakapapa, te reo Māori (Māori language), and ancestral connections.

Digital identity studies mainly focus on how identity constructed online is done through social interaction within networks (DiMicco and Millen 2007; Leonard et al. 2008; Mehra et al. 1998). Studies have emerged that highlight self-representation within SNS as a form of narcissism or self-absorption (see Buffardi and Campbell 2008; Rosen 2007). A study conducted by Mehdizadeh (2010) indicates that self-absorption exists in SNS, particularly Facebook, through the promotion of oneself in photos and status updates. However, another study found

that most Facebook users tend to contribute more to these functions on *other* contacts' pages, rather than their own (Hampton and Goulet 2012).

Larsen (2007) conducted a study on how young people maintain friendships and thereby continuously work to construct and co-construct their identity online with online networking acting as an extension of offline lives. Several studies indicate that what young people are doing online (socializing, organizing, sharing information, and so on) is very close to what they do offline thereby blurring and obscuring the line between online and offline behavior (Boyd 2006; Hine 2000).

Other research around self-representation in SNS suggests that there is a level of identity negotiation which occurs in varying online environments, situations, and audiences (Cullen 2009; Kendall 1998; Stutzman 2006), but there are a small number of studies that look at how cultural identity is constructed online (Diamandaki 2003; Kennedy 2010; Larsen 2007; Lumby 2010). Broadly, these studies look at the impacts of online identity construction and how identity (individual and cultural) is impacted through online environment and protocols.

Goodwin discusses how SNS, Facebook in particular, provide Māori with spaces to explore notions of identity, “these various Facebook usages produce differentiated means for Māori Facebook users themselves to explore, contest, and re-define Māori cultural identity across a set of technologically-facilitated social spaces” (Goodwin 2011, p. 119). Within these social spaces that he describes as “technologically facilitated temporal as well as spatial,” Māori identity and culture are negotiated within these spaces (Goodwin 2011, p. 119).

More broadly, literature in the area of geographical work on children and specifically within ICT/new media has been considerable. A number of studies have looked into children and young people, spatiality (Holloway and Valentine 2000), and cyberspace. Robertson refers to this generation as “netizens” or the new public citizens of cyberspace where decision-making occurs, and values are practiced creating highly socialized spaces (Robertson 2009, p. 287). Other literatures have focused on earlier phenomena within the virtual social space such as relationships (Carter 2005), children's identities in online and offline worlds (Valentine and Holloway 2002), social networking sites as spaces for education and learning (Livingstone and Bober 2004; Madge et al. 2009), children's safety in online social spaces (Valentine and Holloway 2001), and teenagers use of new media for self-expression (Livingstone 2008). This literature has provided a solid basis of which geographical studies of children, young people, and new media have grown and developed. This chapter aims to build upon and develop this literature with a particular focus on Māori identity in the virtual space.

Therefore, connection to place is of key importance to Māori identity, and SNS provide new spaces for identity performance and articulation as well as a place for demonstrating cultural practice, particularly with regard to key identifiers of Māori identity. SNS enable rangatahi Māori to negotiate their identity and express it in ways that are comfortable for them and to audiences or communities that have been socially constructed by them.

2 Methodology

This study uses a framework that encompasses Kaupapa Māori principles that provide a platform for Māori research to be conducted using distinct Māori cultural practices and a Māori worldview (Cram 1992; Smith 1999). Secondly, the framework is complimented by acknowledging the tribal upbringing of the researcher, namely, three Taranaki iwi (Te Āti Awa, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngaruahine Rangi), which uniquely contributes to the way the researcher interprets and makes meaning based on two fundamental teachings: rangimārie (peace) and hūmārie (humility). Finally, te reo Māori me ōna tikanga (Māori language and protocols) is the third part of the framework where Māori language use is elevated and used to holistically understand Māori concepts.

The research draws from a rich empirical data set of 12 focus groups that were conducted and made up of mutual friends (55 rangatahi), aged 18–25 from both rural and urban areas of the North Island of Aotearoa, New Zealand. They included 19 male and 36 female participants within both single and mixed gender groups. Additionally, two tribal case studies were conducted with Ngāti Rānana (an urban tribe established for Māori living in London, UK) and Ngaruahine Rangi (a South Taranaki tribe), and at least eight spokespersons (including rangatahi) of each tribe were involved in the case studies. An interview schedule was designed and utilized to capture co-constructed dialogue from participants regarding their experiences, attitudes, and understanding of SNS. Both the rangatahi focus group data and case study data (that included rangatahi participants) will be used in this chapter and focus primarily on Facebook as this was the main site used and accessed by participants of the research. Thematic analysis has been employed in this study, which highlighted the two major themes of construction and representations of offline and online identities (Attride-Stirling 2001; Boyatzis 1998; Braun and Clarke 2012). Ideas represented in this chapter have been drawn from two publications that broadly looked into the role of SNS in Māori identity construction and rangatahi Māori using SNS in different ways (O’Carroll 2013a, b, c). The chapter highlights some of the major findings from these literary works, foregrounded in discussions around place and space.

3 Discussion

3.1 Connection to Place

Connection to land in a physical sense is something that is felt and experienced (i.e., being able to connect through touch and smell) enabling that person to combine together the physical and spiritual connections of a place. This is a very important way in which Māori have a sense of place and understand their belonging to a place is through feeling a connection. That connection is not always necessarily a

physical one; it can be purely a spiritual one; nonetheless, it is a connection that is felt by the person:

There's nothing like coming home you know, physically being on the land, physically being and meeting people and that adds to the whole experience, you can only get so much virtually. Well nothing's too hard, you know if the pull's there and the want is there. (Ngaruahine Rangī case study participant)

Being on the land physically, connecting with the earth, feeling the dirt under your feet, smelling the familiar scents of home are experiences that cannot be experienced in the same way, in a virtual space. The sense of place is central to the idea of having ancestral connections, as expressed by a rangatahi participant of a case study from Ngaruahine Rangī iwi.

Ancestral connections to place were expressed and celebrated through SNS spaces. The Facebook page “I’m Proud to be a Māori” provides a confident space for rangatahi Māori to express their identity in ways that they would like (“I’m Proud to be a Māori” 2012). Māori are regularly visiting the page and expressing tribal affiliations on the page through proclamations of iwitanga (tribal identity) in celebration of one’s Māori identity. Similarly, kapa haka (Māori performing arts) Facebook pages provided rangatahi Māori with another forum in which to celebrate iwitanga through SNS, such as HakaNation and Guess That Kapa (“Guuuuess that Kapaaaaaa Bleh 8” (2012).

3.2 Connection to Culture and Identity Through the Marae Space

The marae is an important aspect of Māori identity (Durie 1995a) and is discussed as being a central space for tribal and sub-tribal groupings to gather and practice rituals and ceremonies as according to customs, “The marae is the focal point of Māori culture and communal activities [...] it was a courtyard, the plaza and meeting-place” (Walker 1992, p. 15).

The marae and its inhabitants are families and extended family that derive from a main or prominent ancestor; these groupings are known as hapū. The majority of marae are rurally based on the ancestral homelands of its ancestors and remain a place for its descendants to use and access. However, the cost and time to return back to one’s marae to participate in marae and hapū activities is limiting many Māori families, particularly those who live at a distance from their marae.

Marae have provided a place of belonging for Māori to feel connected to and a place to reinforce ancestral and cultural links to one’s Māoritanga (Māori culture) and identity. Marae, hapū, and iwi Facebook pages have been created by some of these institutions as ways to connect more to their constituents and to have access to more of the rangatahi who frequent SNS spaces. Rangatahi Māori discussed how

important these spaces were for them and how significant it was to have access to their marae when living at a distance:

It's really cool to see all the iwi's and hapu's [sic] all getting their own pages up and running. I just jump on their page and just like oh that's the back home lot! You know add myself to that group 'cos that's what it's all about you know. You can't forget where you are from originally so it's bridging a small whānau gap with all your wider whānau and then some. (Tui, male, focus group participant)

Having access to marae, hapū, and iwi is empowering rangatahi Māori with the tools to be updated, kept informed, and involved in activities and events.

The following participant lives in Central Auckland, yet her involvement in what is happening within their marae, hapū, and iwi is steady, as she is made aware of happenings through the marae's Facebook page. This level of communication is innovative for marae in having the ability to communicate messages to a wide-scale audience of marae members:

With these smaller marae and hapū a lot of these Māori communities are realizing that rangatahi are on Facebook and so to bring the rangatahi home back into the marae they are using Facebook as a tool to tell the world there is a wānanga [workshop or lesson] this weekend – come along and jump in and get involved. Marae, hapū and iwi are really tapping in and thinking strategically about Facebook and how they can use it and bring rangatahi in. (Sonia, female, focus group participant)

Further, marae and tribal institutions have realized that being accessible through new technologies such as SNS that provide access to an important demographic (i.e., 18–30 years) of the marae, hapū, or iwi constituency and that it is important to be part of the SNS community to increase the network of the organization and have greater connectivity among its collective:

Facebook [has] become the marae of the young people, that's their marae. It's the marae where they can meet one another and kōrero [talk] to each other. Once they get to pahake [adults] status like us, there'll be a yearning to go home, but while they have the ability to catch one another on Facebook and kōrero to each other, that's where they're going. (Iwi elder, Ngaruahine Rangi case study participant)

Not only are users seeking information about what is happening on the marae, activities, hui, gatherings, and hapū/iwi developments, but they also seek these groups as a way to feel a sense of belonging and connection to home, to the marae, to the elders, and to families who continue to run the marae and, therefore, a connection to their Māori identity.

Places for expressing Māori identity are no longer relegated to homes or traditional spaces of gathering such as the marae. SNS are providing this opportunity to Māori from anywhere in the world where Māori identity can be promoted, encouraged, and celebrated in collective spaces such as Facebook.

3.3 Tensions

A number of tensions were identified by rangatahi Māori regarding offline and online identities and how information was being accessed and shared and concerns for protection, privacy, and ownership. These tensions were largely concerned with what was considered culturally appropriate to be sharing and accessing in online spaces.

Knowing one's genealogical links and connections to both people and environment is part of knowing how you connect and fit into the tapestry of genealogy. Ancestry provides the single most important factor of identifying as Māori and participants in this study discussed whakapapa information as being accessible through family pages or family orientated pages, including marae, hapū, and iwi pages on Facebook:

Yeah we use this page for people that are looking for their links. People looking for whakapapa and who they whakapapa to, who they whakapapa off. (Katarena, female, focus group participant)

Physical dislocations from one's tūrangawaewae, marae, or kaumātua who are experts in whakapapa made it difficult for people to access these sources of knowledge to learn their whakapapa. SNS filled the void and allowed people to learn about their ancestry remotely, removing physical barriers, distance, and access from the process of identity construction and instead becoming an enabling tool for rangatahi Māori to access information and resources pertaining to their identity. This level of access to such information and knowledge allowed rangatahi to feel more connected to their identity and felt more confident to express their culture and identity (O'Carroll 2013c).

Conversely, some participants indicated that whakapapa shared in publicly accessible virtual spaces had its risks. The information might easily be used by unintended recipients, which caused participants to be cautious about what information was being shared, how it was being shared, and with whom. Others felt that these barriers to sharing knowledge such as whakapapa were slowly diminishing, and Māori were being more open minded to these spaces for sharing:

There was a thing whereby you don't put your whakapapa online, or it was more like you don't actually write it down. Um, I think that [attitude] is changing a lot more now and that people are much more accepting [to] put down your whakapapa online and those sort of fears are [...] changing I think for the better (personally). (Ngāti Rānana case study participant)

There is certainly a level of consideration given to when, how, and with whom whakapapa is shared. Whakapapa is increasingly becoming more commonly shared in SNS as more and more Māori seek this type of information from online spaces.

This increase in sharing whakapapa in online spaces may have an impact on the importance of the marae as being a central place where knowledge such as whakapapa is maintained and nurtured. A rangatahi from the Ngaruahine Rangi

iwi case study spoke about her observations of many families that moved away from their tribal boundaries and struggled to return home again. For the following marae, the concern was that the numbers of people physically “coming home” to participate in their cultural institutions and activities would diminish if knowledge and information such as whakapapa were shared in ways other than face-to-face:

Where I fall short with that is, it’s nice to connect the dots but then when it comes to, “Oh can you tell me who I am, can you tell me this, can you tell me that?” that’s when I say well “Ok, here’s the address, here’s the time, here’s the hui, hoki mai ki te kāinga” [return home]. (Ngaruahine Rangi case study participant)

New generations brought up away from their tūrangawaewae would seek whakapapa information through other means (Internet, SNS, emails, ancestry databases). Engaging with whakapapa and knowledge of this type is considered a sacred process. This means that the information being handed down was not for everybody – there were specific people entrusted with whakapapa knowledge as the responsibility to bear was great, particularly when dealing with lines of genealogy that might reveal concealed information that might not be public knowledge. This remains to be the feeling for some Ngaruahine descendants, and finding out this information at a face-to-face level shows a genuine willingness to want to learn about themselves.

For the Ngaruahine Rangi iwi case study, there were a range of mixed views from both rangatahi and kaumātua (elders) on the issue of accessing and sharing whakapapa and genealogy in SNS. Barriers were noted as being broken down to allow for greater access of such information and were being accessed by some iwi members, while others were preferring to go to the source, to iwi representatives to obtain whakapapa information. Regardless, SNS is changing the ways in which Māori are able to access what was once a knowledge base only accessible through oral traditions, stories, and narratives.

Further to these tensions are those of how identities are expressed in SNS with image and appearance and are central to an individual’s identity. Such identities differ from the offline to the online space where rangatahi Māori and a female in particular invest time and effort into crafting such representations of their identities.

3.4 Identity Negotiation

SNS provide a number of different ways that users can share information about themselves. Facebook, for example, allowed users to update their status (which is a task that users are currently doing or a thought that they wish to share with their network), share or tag (identification labels in images) photographs and videos of themselves (or of friends), and like or show interest in other peoples shared information, updates, media, or links and share external links. These functionalities provided rangatahi with a number of ways to express themselves, their personalities, and their identity/identities through online profile pages.

Representations of the self were expressed in how participants talked about presenting *themselves*, the effort they put in, and how they crafted and shaped their online presentations. Generally, participants worked toward presenting themselves in a way that they wanted others to perceive them, which reinforced feminist views of objectification through an observer's perspective, and constantly seeing themselves from others' points of view. When the following participant was asked what reasons would there be for her to remove any tags of herself from photos, she responded:

Tragic [photos] Tragic looking, like make up everywhere, blaaaah. Tragic! Untag that [photo]. Like, you never know who you're going to meet or where [laughter] so what if someone comes across your page? It's like [clicks fingers] dam cos' I don't want to see no tragic photos up there. (Antonia, female, focus group participant)

Furthermore, young women in the study expressed that they invested a considerable amount of thought (and time) into how they might present themselves online. The creation of text, selection of photos, and links to share and with which networks (that might include whānau, friends, colleagues, university friends, community workers, and so on) to include in their profile all contributed to the person they wish to be presented as.

Another theme was the judgment and evaluation of peers' self-representations that were measured against how that person is perceived offline, with participants using the terms "real life" and "normal." Participants highlighted the contradictions between "real-life" and online representations as causing confusion and giving contradictory ideas about an individual:

She only has photos when she's beautiful, when she's got make up on, when she's wearing her hair extensions, when her hair is straightened, but in real life she's not like that, she's hori, she wears track pants, and her hair is always curly [. . .] so every single photo, I mean every photo she has about 500 photos, is a perfect edited photo of her [. . .] and there's no just normal photos of what she's like normally. (Hine, female, focus group participant)

Participants (both male and female) appeared to alter their perceptions about individuals whose online and offline representations were not seen as congruent. Some participants also commented that their perception of a person changed when they saw or read something from Facebook, and judgments of that person would be made based on the online material:

Yeah, I reckon Facebook can sometimes be quite yuck cos' you know how girls like put themselves out there, especially like girls and they're like hardly wearing anything and they'll post it on their wall and make everyone see like their bodies and exposing their bodies, I reckon it's gross. Yeah [. . .] It gives you sort of an idea of what people [are] like. (Kiriti, female, focus group participant)

Exploring the way that rangatahi presented themselves online required examination of the role of the non-textual such as photographs and video. Photos in

particular were shared and tagged and contributed to how a person was represented in SNS:

Yeah I hate it when people tag you on photos though aye [...] especially when you're not looking your best – Sonia, female, focus group participant

Oh you've got to [...] it's all about, yeah, personal image – Tui, male, focus group participant

Females, in particular, expressly discussed tagged photos that they considered unflattering and unhelpful to their image, reinforcing views on how femininity is or should be presented. There was a process of “untagging” of photos that are seen as undesirable. Untagging of images is a common practice among especially female participants and, for some, had been routinely implemented into their Sunday morning schedule (as many photos were posted from a weekend night out).

Judgments in the form of sexual references were often made in relation to others trying to seek attention with photos or elaborate and excessive textual excerpts particularly in the case of women seen as wearing revealing clothing. Participants would cast judgment based on what they think they know about a person, and if the online representation did not match up, often judgments of falseness were made. These forms of expression were fundamentally based on how rangatahi chose to represent themselves, which ties into identity.

These nuances of online identities and representations were carefully crafted and presented to varying audiences. Markers of Māori identity (as considered important by participants) were expressed and promoted in online profile pages allowing rangatahi Māori to take pride in cultural aspects of their identity. Furthermore, representations of individuals underwent considerable crafting of image with the use of images and text.

There are disparities in the ways that rangatahi present themselves in offline and online spaces which do not appear to be congruent to their offline representations and sometimes perceived by audiences as overly manufactured. Facebook networks are usually acquaintances that have initially been made in person; therefore, the notion that offline and online representations not aligning poses a threat on those physical relationships (offline) around perhaps the authenticity of those relationships; thus, online and offline spaces become blurred.

In the context of place and space, rangatahi Māori were actively making decisions and choices as to their online identities and how they chose to represent themselves that were not always congruent with their offline representation. While the negotiation of self-representation discussed in this section differs to Māori cultural identity and markers of identity, whakapapa, and cultural involvement, these online representations nonetheless make up part of an individuals' identity. Consequently, online spaces *empower* rangatahi Māori with the tools to manage and control their online image. This affordance of technology conflicts with an earlier argument made about the issues around offline identity and negative stereotypes and categorizing of Māori being difficult to control and manage.

Thus, rangatahi Māori are constantly negotiating their identity in different spaces and for different audiences.

3.5 Indigenizing the Space

Māori identity is an evolving and dynamic fluid process of self-realization and discovery of the individual grounded in multiple cultural forms from diverse local and international locations. The usual constraints on the expression of Māori identity are changing and fading. SNS are becoming a pro-Māori space in which Māori are indigenizing as their own space through strong articulations and expressions of their identity as Māori and as iwi, hapū, and marae. Māori cultural practices are becoming everyday activities in SNS, enabling Māori who are living away from the ancestral places and spaces to continue having a connection to culture, identity, and language. SNS will continue to play an integral role in how Māori negotiate culture that empowers them with the ability and access to participate and engage, including Māori diaspora who are “actively seeking and using virtual media to make and maintain strong connections with their haukāinga (home), despite being physically dislocated from them” (O’Carroll 2013d, p. 448).

It is abundantly clear that SNS aid and assist Māori users to access more information about their whakapapa, language, marae, hapū, and iwi and enabling rangatahi Māori to perform and articulate identity in new spaces. These spaces are offering unprecedented opportunities for “cultural negotiations” (Goodwin 2011, p. 112) and cultural expression. Māori are using Facebook pages as springboards to catalyze political movements (Waitoa 2013), revitalize the Māori language (Keegan and Cunliffe 2014), create communities of Māori diaspora (O’Carroll 2013b), and reconnect Māori to their tribal and ancestral roots via Facebook. The affordances of SNS are enabling Māori to indigenize this virtual space. This of course comes at a cost, and recent research has investigated the potential impacts of virtualizing Māori culture and practice on the physical marae space and on the important value and practice of being face-to-face (O’Carroll 2013a, b, c).

For rangatahi Māori, it is important to understand the spatiality of SNS, utilize the affordances that space offers, and maximize opportunities that offer cultural articulation, expression, and performance. While at the same time, recognizing and understanding the importance and connection to place and space with regard to land, water, marae, mountains, rivers, ancestral grounds – all those places and people whom we derive and that make up our unique identity as Māori.

4 Conclusion

Connection to place and people is what makes up Māori identity and enables individuals to feel a sense of belonging that is meaningful and important to them. These connections are experienced and felt and are what grounds rangatahi Māori

so they know who they are, where they come from, and who they descend from. Spaces for identity articulation and expression are changing and shifting – the marae is no longer the only space where Māori identity is celebrated and expressed. SNS are increasingly becoming safe spaces where rangatahi feel confident to express their identity and feel proud to do so. Furthermore, SNS provide rangatahi with technological tools and platforms to articulate and produce their image and self-representation, contributing to their identity.

Rangatahi identities and representations are articulated through how they perceive themselves, how they would like to see themselves, and how they want others to see them. Identity is in a constant state of development, shift, and change as factors influence the space in which identity is being presented. Different contexts and audiences in SNS draw out different notions of identity that are presented. Moreover, identity becomes scrutinized by audiences where judgments are made in how identity is produced, reproduced, and represented and in how it is perceived.

SNS are innovative, exciting, yet potentially hazardous spaces in which Māori are navigating and exploring, taking with them their culture, language, identity, and values. Māori have had to find new and innovative ways in which cultural vitality can be achieved and cultural identity understood. SNS are providing another means of communication, another platform, and another forum in which Māori identity is being expressed, articulated, and formed. The usual constraints on the expression of Māori identity are changing and fading. SNS are becoming a pro-Māori space in which Māori are indigenizing as their own space through strong articulations and expressions of their identity as Māori and as iwi, hapū, and marae.

Having a strong identity can enable Māori to succeed in their lives and careers, leading to the development of cultural citizens and leaders. The following whakataukī (proverb) illustrates these points:

Tangata ako ana i te whare, te tūranga ki te marae, tau ana

A child who is taught at home and instilled with values, culture and identity will not only stand proudly for their marae, but also within society and throughout their life.

This study contributes to the burgeoning field of literature around geographical studies of children/youth and new media in providing a Māori perspective on the connection to place that is of key importance to Māori identity and SNS providing new spaces for identity performance and articulation that are done in meaningful, valuable ways. SNS enable rangatahi Māori to negotiate their identity and express it in ways that are comfortable for them and to audiences or communities that have been socially constructed by them. SNS provide a socially constructed virtual platform for identity to be expressed and performed as well; it empowers rangatahi with the tools to manage and control their online image. SNS have changed the landscape of which identity can be expressed and performed and are acknowledged as a positive step toward self-determination for these rangatahi.

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Part II

Children, Nature, and Environmental Education

Can School Gardens Deepen Children's Connection to Nature?

5

Susan J. Wake and Sally Birdsall

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Abstract

This chapter is a review of school gardens and their potential for deepening children's connection to nature. School gardens are currently experiencing a resurgence in popularity in many Western countries following their decline after WWII. Rationales for contemporary school gardens are focused on issues that today's children face, such as inflexible education systems, obesity, diminishing experiences with nature, and a lack of physical activity. Although lauded by their champions (e.g., researchers, educational and landscape professionals, celebrities), the school garden remains a tenuous construct both as an entity and an

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educational tool. This is due to lack of consistent empirical evidence about their role in learning, plus their reliance on teacher knowledge and commitment, fundraising potential, and volunteer assistance.

Yet school gardens can provide spaces for many experiences in nature ranging from play, exercise, and socialization to learning in maths, science, and environmental education. The focus of this chapter is examining their potential for environmental learning and fostering positive environmental experiences and attitudes.

It is proposed that many current school gardens may be limited both in their scope and levels of children's participation, especially in areas such as planning and design. It is recommended that partnerships between schools and their wider communities (e.g., landscape architects) could result in more diverse school garden models that go beyond "vege" gardens in contributing both to environmental learning and promoting biodiversity. Empowering children through inclusion within such partnerships can lead to transformative learning. This type of learning could contribute to building resilient children who see themselves as future guardians of the Earth.

Keywords

School gardens • School-ground greening • Children • Environmental education • Participation • Codesign

1 Introduction

There has been a resurgence in the popularity of school gardens, especially over the last decade, representing different purposes including gardens for food, flowers, native habitats, recycling, rainwater management, art, sustainable power generation, and permaculture. For example, Fig. 1 shows a sensory garden with varied leaf textures, scents, etc. These gardens represent opportunities for children to deepen their connection to nature. While "school-ground greening" is a generally used term (Dyment 2005), other names are also used, for example, "learnsapes" in Australia (e.g., Skamp and Bergman 2001) and "learning gardens" in the USA (e.g., Gaylie 2009; Williams and Brown 2012), although these have also been developed into programs that promote gardens as learning environments.

The creation and management of school gardens can be usefully informed by research within many disciplines. This includes children's geographies, which represent children and young people's lives, including their mobility, education, participation, and spatial interactions with the wider world (Robson et al. 2013). These authors note that children's geographies are now an enduring subdiscipline, informed by the sociology of childhood or the new social studies of childhood. This subdiscipline emerged in the 1990s and positioned children as active citizens and childhood as a state of *being* rather than *becoming* (Holloway and Valentine 2000), which is the position of empowerment advocated within this chapter. Therefore, children's geographies offer a multidisciplinary lens through which to combine different perspectives of childhood, for example, the reasons and ramifications of



Fig. 1 A school garden in Hamilton, New Zealand that encourages sensory engagement, e.g. scent and texture (Author's photo)

children's diminishing contact with nature, as well as their participation in school gardens. Such a lens can provide a valuable counterpoint to the often uncritical literature extolling the benefits of school gardens.

The premise of this chapter is that in order for school gardens to be enduring, they need to be child-centered environments that provide valuable resources to the school and wider community. It will be argued that while school gardens provide opportunities for learning about and connecting to nature, their full potential may not be realized because of the ways they are typically created and used.

This chapter begins with a discussion about children being a part of society and able to engage in pro-environmental decision-making. It is argued that they are not citizens-in-waiting for their turn to effect change that can lead to more sustainable societies; they can make a difference now. The importance of children having experiences in nature in order to be able to make pro-environmental decisions is explored, along with problems defining the term "nature." It is also argued that gardens can offer opportunities to make connections with nature that could counter a growing trend toward biophobia in children.

Next, the origins of school gardens are discussed along with reasons for their rise and fall in popularity from the nineteenth century to the present day. Rationales for contemporary school gardens are explored, along with their potential sustainability within school curriculums.

The chapter continues by investigating the role of adults in school gardens, particularly that of teachers, who are identified as having the most influence on the success of such gardens. It concludes with an argument for the benefits of partnerships between schools and their communities, in terms of both increasing children's sense of agency as environmental guardians and the increased biodiversity resulting through the creation of urban green corridors.

2 Children and Nature, Participation, and Learning

On 14 August 2015, the Earth went into “environmental overdraft” for the year (Aridi 2015). In exceeding the Earth's annual capacity to provide resources and environmental services earlier than ever before (a week earlier than in 2014), an increasingly shrill warning is being sounded that people must change their behavior. It is essential that this change includes children due to their role as future decision-makers. However, in seeking to empower children as future guardians of the environment, they need to be recognized as legitimate community members with a role to play right now (Morgan 2009), something which Percy-Smith and Burns (2013) suggest is still frequently overlooked. This oversight is despite more than 20 years of increasing acknowledgment within children's geographies research of children's capability for actively shaping their environments (Robson et al. 2013), as well as the widespread acceptance of childhood as a social construction (Holloway and Valentine 2000). In fact, as Malone and Hartung (2010) point out, children today have a powerful combination of unprecedented access to global knowledge and technological skills that can surpass those of most adults. They therefore have the potential to make themselves heard and to take action on issues they choose. This signals the importance of adults being both role models and key facilitators in children's environmental journeys.

Formal education has long been recognized as an important vehicle for environmental learning, beginning with early United Nations (UN) conferences and agreements, for example, *Agenda 21*, the working document from the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (UNESCO 1992). This signaled a shift from environmental education (EE) toward education for sustainability (EfS) or education for sustainable development (ESD) and established the aphorism “think global, act local” that has underpinned the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) (Morgan 2009). The DESD is significant for having promoted a learning framework that has encouraged unique “local” solutions with relevance to place and people (Morgan 2009). School gardens, through the opportunities they provide for local environmental learning, are potential sites of place-based learning. This is defined by Smith (2007) to be environmental learning that is grounded in the local and the social, ideally having relevance and interaction with communities in which they are situated.

2.1 Children and Nature

At the heart of both EE and ESD are children having experiences in nature. Such experiences are regarded as a foundation for the acquisition of environmental knowledge and a contributing factor to the development of positive environmental values and attitudes that foster development of pro-environmental behavior (Bögeholz 2006). With this knowledge that experiences in nature are of seminal importance, it is imperative, yet difficult, to define what “nature” is and what it includes. For example, Bögeholz (2006) refers to “nature experiences,” Fägerstam (2012) discusses “experiences in the natural world,” and Freeman and Tranter (2011) speak about “natural space.”

This variety of terms illustrates that nature is a contested construct and one used in a variety of ways (Payne 2014). “Nature” is usually viewed as something external to and separate from people and as something physical or material. However, it can also be experienced differently, for example, in a real/practical way, through study (usually scientifically), or by being “saved” through a political/social process (Payne 2014). Furthermore, the term “nature” implies a duality, with nature being natural things, such as a river or a forest as opposed to nonnatural, artificial things, for example, a building. This duality means that our urban and domestic built environments are not viewed as part of nature, reinforcing people’s separation from it and reflecting Taylor’s (2013) assertion that nature is a “monolithic, self-evident idea” (p. 4).

When studying 11–12-year-old children’s conceptions of nature, Payne (2014) found that children viewed nature as an ideal, something external to them, and “pure” and “raw” (p. 74) where, in all but one instance, humans had no part. He argues that these conceptions contradict their direct, everyday experiences with forms of nature, for example, their school grounds. Coupled with the assertion made by Bögeholz (2006) that children need to experience nature to feel a connection and thus be motivated to care for their environment, it becomes evident that their understanding and experiences of nature need to be expanded.

Taylor (2013) proposes a broader construction of nature. She argues that people and their actions are entangled in a reciprocal manner with the actions of nonhuman living things. Therefore, nature can be viewed as a complex nexus of “human and non-human, living and inert, geographic and engineered, discursive and material relations” (Taylor 2013, p. 70). This wider conception of nature can then be seen to include modified environments, such as school gardens.

Even though it is widely accepted that having nature experiences is probably essential for children’s well-being (Faber Taylor and Kuo 2006), research is confirming anecdotal claims that successive generations of children are having diminishing nature experiences, as expressed by phrases such as Kahn’s (2002) “environmental generational amnesia.” For example, Freeman and Tranter (2011) state that 62 % of English children surveyed ($n = 502$) said that they played inside at home more than any other place and that 41 % preferred playing inside.

Furthermore, it is concerning that some researchers are reporting tendencies in children toward what Orr (1994) described as “biophobia” (e.g., Kong 2000). Confirming this, Fägerstam’s (2012) study revealed that Australian high school teachers found that their students were uncomfortable learning in a natural setting, with one teacher describing students as “distant” from nature. By comparison, Birdsall (2014) found that 5- to 6-year-old New Zealand children’s experiences in their school garden not only resulted in understandings about the interdependence of flora, fauna, and people that were sophisticated for their age, but they also expressed positive attitudes toward the fauna found there.

In considering adults’ role as environmental role models, school gardens may also provide opportunities for parents and children to spend more time together in nature. While school grounds have traditionally been part of communities, over the last 20 years, this has changed (Witten et al. 2013). Witten et al. point out that children no longer always attend their local schools due to a variety of reasons such as zoning changes, parents’ workplace locations, and school closures. As a result, they found that children’s independent mobility has diminished significantly compared to the childhoods their parents remember. The authors of this chapter suggest this could contribute to less time spent interacting with nature since it is clear that children are traveling further to school and have less free time and permission to go off on their own. School gardens could therefore encourage parental sharing in children’s nature experiences both at school and through bringing ideas home. In addition, school gardens could play a role in rebuilding the community focus of schools resulting in parents meeting other parents and building trust that may lead to increased independent mobility for children. This would help to build a vibrant school community and strengthen connections between parents and their children’s learning as well as children’s connections with nature.

2.2 The Rights and Benefits of Children’s Participation

In the 25-year journey toward endorsing the tenets of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) (UNHCHR 1989), children’s rights have been increasingly emphasized, and this includes children participating in decision-making. Reid and Nikel (2008) define participation as active involvement in a process of decision-making; the fundamental requirement is for power sharing to occur, leading to opportunities for transformational learning, a term defined by Sterling (2010, p. 524) as an “intrinsic and life-changing inner process.” It is now known that such participation builds “soft skills” such as increased self-confidence and leadership abilities, plus other benefits, for example, a strengthened sense of community (Sorrell and Sorrell 2005; Wake and Eames 2013). When embedded within specific disciplines such as design, it can also lead to a multiplicity of more specialized outcomes (Derr and Rigolon *in press*).

One of the most well-known models used to consider children's participation is Hart's (1997) "ladder of participation." Hart has always emphasized that this model was a way of representing the differing degrees to which adults enable children's agency in decision-making and involvement. He further stressed that it was not implied that the eight levels should be sequentially reached or that the top rung (child-initiated, shared decision-making with adults) was aspirational in every situation. Despite this, the ladder model has frequently been misapplied as a hierarchical measure of children's participation (Malone and Hartung 2010). According to Reid and Nikel (2008), perhaps the most useful role of the ladder has been the identification of three levels of "nonparticipation" (i.e., manipulation, tokenism, decoration). In a different approach, Driskell (2002) distributed Hart's eight categories of participation across a graph that represents increasing decision-making and change-effect powers (vertical axis) and increasing community interaction and collaboration (horizontal axis). The result is a more encompassing, less linear model, although, as Malone and Hartung (2010) point out, one of the problems is the reliance on such models as tools rather than seeing them as theoretical frameworks.

Children's participation and power sharing with adults are an intrinsic view of education. Here children are learning to think critically and reflexively about issues, for example, envisaging a sustainable future and then working toward its realization, adapting in the process to unknowns and uncertainties, which helps to build resilient learners (Sterling 2010). As Sterling points out, in this way, the direction of learning is set by children. Therefore, children have opportunities to participate in authentic ways, defined as learning through real issues of personal relevance and taking a role as active citizens (e.g., Chawla and Cushing 2007; Malone and Hartung 2010).

However, in many school garden situations, children are not given this agency and instead follow adult agendas. In this regard, Malone and Hartung (2010) propose that one barrier is adult resistance to the required change in power relationships between children and adults. Relating to this, the authors of this chapter also suggest that adult-imposed inflexibility regarding time frames for project completion is a further barrier that can preclude children's involvement. In order to develop into Sterling's (2010, p. 515) "resilient learner," it is important for children to engage politically (Chawla and Cushing 2007). Therefore, the perception that children taking on political or decision-making roles is "robbing them of their childhood" (Malone and Hartung 2010, p. 27) needs to be challenged.

Wake (2008) argues that gardens for children should prioritize their needs rather than being dominated by adults' agendas (e.g., through design or management). She claims that such agendas determine both the expression and use of the garden and, as a corollary, influence the experiences children have in nature. Participatory partnerships between adults and children, which start at the design phase, are suggested as a way of balancing the geography of children's gardens between all stakeholders.

The next section will examine the background to school gardens and their sustainability as a model by considering earlier eras when school gardens blossomed and comparing them with contemporary school gardens.

3 School Gardens: A Systemic Review and Critique

School gardens offer spaces for children's activities that can be grouped into six broad categories: play and exercise, experiential (interacting with the garden, which provides learning opportunities, e.g., in science and maths), development of environmental guardianship, learning about food origins and nutrition, socialization, and vocational training through development of gardening skills. The focus of this chapter is on gardens for learning and development of positive attitudes toward nature and outdoor environments.

While it is argued that school gardens have potential for reconnecting children with nature, as well as providing opportunities for environmental learning that can lead to pro-environmental behavior, they are vulnerable on a number of levels. These include the possibility of hijacking children's learning potential through adult domination (no matter how well intentioned), teachers' limited garden knowledge, lack of time and commitment from teachers, reliance on parental support, and the fact that gardens are not, so far, a permanent feature of curriculum learning. These factors are interrelated and are discussed in this section.

3.1 Different Times, Similar Agendas: A Brief History of School Gardens

School gardens, as part of a school's curriculum, have enjoyed popularity before, albeit in a very different format. In Europe, during the 1800s, sand gardens were a more common interpretation (Shair 1999) than the vegetables, flowers, and fruits that have become the standards within contemporary school gardens. Perhaps the original "child's garden" was Friedrich Froebel's 1837 Prussian *kindergarten* model for preschoolers; this was a metaphorical garden with Froebel referring to "cultivating the garden of childhood" (as cited in May 2006, p. 248). Froebel's system of "gifts" and "occupations," focusing prescriptively on appropriate behavior, eventually fell out of favor, so while the name survives, his philosophy died out (Shapiro 1983).

In the early twentieth century, gardening and the benefits of outdoor exposure for children were again embraced, this time by progressive reformers. For example, the McMillan sisters from industrial Bradford in Great Britain were concerned with social issues such as the plight of the working class, especially children who were seen as in need of "saving." They devised a radical outdoor school program called the "Camp School" that focused on the health-giving properties of the outdoor environment (McMillan 1917). One of the sisters wrote:

This Camp is the biggest of all. . . . It is the open space that matters. Our rickety children, our . . . deformed children, get back to the earth with its magnetic currents, and the free blowing wind . . . To let them live at last and have the sight of people planting and digging, . . . to get these things we sacrificed everything else. (pp. 51–52)

In America, in a similar era, Liberty Hyde Bailey's "Nature-Study Movement" also influenced children's lives through an imperative of encouraging connections with nature. In this instance, his agenda was to infuse their minds rather than their bodies with the spirit of nature, in order to lead to contentment with rural life and keep up production to fuel urban and industrial growth (Danbom 1979). The movement was also overlaid with Bailey's religious idealism that to be close to nature was to be close to God. Bailey (1909) writes:

Nature-study is a revolt from the teaching of formal science in the elementary grades. (p. 5)
It tends country-ward. God made the country. (p. 52)

Meanwhile, in the cities, nature-study advocates and progressive reformers subverted Bailey's Nature-Study Movement into the "American School Garden Movement." This attracted Bureau of Education funding from 1914 to 1920 and led to some significant-sized gardens being established, although landscape architects were largely uninvolved in their design (Trelstad 1997). In the tussle between the educational aims of the Nature-Study Movement and the social control focus of the progressive reformers, the victors were generally the progressive reformers so, according to Trelstad (1997), school gardens became regarded as, ". . . a convenient means to achieve multiple social aims: city beautification, the reduction of juvenile delinquency, improved public health and nutrition, Americanization of immigrants, and the creation of good workers and citizens" (p. 164).

When America entered WWI, the program changed to the US School Garden Army, which received federal funding and saw over 1.5 million students and 60,000 acres involved in school gardens for economy and patriotism (Shair 1999). Demobilization following the end of WWI heralded the inevitable end of the American School Garden Movement; the sudden demise was blamed on the withdrawal of funding alongside a number of other factors. For example, Trelstad (1997) cites increasing suburbanization and gardens becoming a home-based family activity, the rise of associations such as scouts for recreational social development, the rarity of teachers skilled in gardening, and a lack of professional support to integrate gardens meaningfully into curriculum documents.

Historic school garden movements also flourished during this era in other countries. In New Zealand, for example, gardening sought to prepare students for traditional gender roles (i.e., cut flowers for girls and food provision for boys) and instilled economy through "growing your own" (Beaumont 2002), as well as promoting native plants for conservation (Cockayne 1923). Nature-study classes often became heavily imbued with moral lessons about character, citizenship, and work ethic (Beaumont 2002) that were expressed via regimented gardens and behavior, as illustrated in Fig. 2. While this fitted with the sociocultural conditioning of the day, it is valuable to keep these agendas in mind when considering the



Fig. 2 School gardening in early 20th century Waianiwa, New Zealand. Photographer: P. Hazledine, Ref. 1/1-022125-G. With permission of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

rationales behind the current school garden popularity, which is discussed in the following section. Interest in school gardens waned in post-WWII New Zealand as, coupled with the “baby boom” putting pressure on school rolls, the convenience of asphalt, grass sports areas, and standardized play equipment began their stealthy march toward the homogeneity of school grounds in 1960s–1970s New Zealand society.

3.2 Rationales for Contemporary School Gardens

Contemporary school gardens, with which children interact on a number of levels, have been proposed as a panacea for many adults’ concerns about modern-day children, including isolation from cycles of nature, developing environmental responsibility, healthy eating, and exercise outdoors. There appear to be five dominant and overlapping discourses that represent key rationales for the current inclusion of gardens in school grounds. Some of these are eerily similar to rationales justifying the incorporation of school gardens in past years.

A major rationale is dissatisfaction with sterile, uninspiring, grass, and concrete-dominated school environments. Ironically, concrete and asphalt were the materials

that replaced the earlier-era school gardens, which were promoted as clean and modern at the time (Beaumont 2002). In a contemporary about-face, current programs such as the UK's *Learning Through Landscapes* partner schools with landscape professionals for greening school grounds, improving their aesthetic, play, biodiversity, and learning value (www.ltl.org.uk). In the USA, an early garden example that has been widely publicized is the Berkeley, California, schoolyard transformed in 1995 from a vacant lot into an organic garden by Alice Waters, founder of the Edible Schoolyard program (www.edibleschoolyard.org).

Criticism of education systems, especially those focused on testing and standards that leave little opportunity for children to learn about nature, is another important rationale. In the USA, the "No Child Left Indoors Coalition" was formed in a reaction against the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (nicknamed the No Child Left Behind Act), which introduced content standards at each grade level for core subjects such as reading, maths, and science (Williams and Brown 2012). The coalition promotes garden-based learning (www.cbf.org/ncli/landing) and is a strong advocate for the ideas of American journalist Richard Louv (2005), whose term "nature deficit disorder" has become a catchphrase to describe the downward spiral of contemporary children's nature interactions. This current dissatisfaction with children's learning and school experiences mirrors the motives that fueled the establishment of the twentieth-century school garden movement.

A further rationale that is also found in historical antecedents is the increasing concern over children's diminishing contact with nature. This is due to reasons such as over-structuring or "adultization" of children's free time (Francis and Lorenzo 2002), increased technology use (e.g., Kahn 2011), and lives that are increasingly lived indoors within urban surroundings, cut off from interactions with nature. It is believed that this is leading to fear and ambivalence toward nature (e.g., Kong 2000; Louv 2005).

A parallel rationale to children's lack of nature contact that is also gaining momentum is the importance of including environmental education in school curricula. This is regarded as an area of urgency for children's engagement due to their future roles as guardians of the Earth. Although compulsory environmental education is by no means the norm, its interdisciplinary nature means it is able to be integrated within other subjects (e.g., science, health, and technology), and school gardens are ideally positioned to support this in an experiential way (Williams and Brown 2012). The popular choice of "vege" gardens is defended by Moore and Wong (1997) as providing children with a full plant and nature life cycle through the year, an "ecosystem in miniature" that begins a new crop of plants and children annually. According to Blair (2009), it also expands children's understanding of locally grown food and provides them with nature-culture connections due to plant origins and their cultural uses.

However, the authors of this chapter question whether "vege" gardens (i.e., focused on growing vegetables, herbs, and fruit for eating) are necessarily the best or only model of nature children should experience at school. This is due to them being positioned at the human end of nature (in a continuum from wild to

cultivated nature) with a plant palette often focused on horticultural hybrids that have high demands for water and fertilizers. Furthermore, although “vege” garden lessons can encourage diversity (e.g., insects) and recycling materials (e.g., rain-water collection and compost making), they may not be the most valuable way to teach about biodiversity and natural systems.

The final rationale, which is also analogous with historical ones, is the child obesity explosion, which, fueled by the mass media, has led to a scramble to inculcate children with better eating habits through learning about food – from soil and toil to making and munching. A number of programs have appeared, popularly headed by celebrity chefs such as Alice Waters. For example, in Australia, Stephanie Alexander was responsible in 2004 for starting the Kitchen Garden Foundation (www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au) and its affiliate, the Garden to Table program in New Zealand in 2008 (www.gardentotable.org.nz). A more recent celebrity adding his name and voice to the debate is Jamie Oliver, who began the Kitchen Garden Project in the UK in 2011 (www.jamieskitchengarden.org).

In a provocative article for *The Atlantic*, journalist Caitlin Flanagan (2010) attacked the school garden concept in California and especially the political agenda of Waters, who, Flanagan claims, is using the current “food hysteria” (para. 2) to further her personal cause at the expense of unwitting schoolchildren. Flanagan’s chief argument is that the focus on gardening as a curriculum-based educational activity oversimplifies learning across core disciplines such as English and mathematics. She argues that this focus is cheating children of their right to learn what is required to pass state exams while simultaneously promoting Waters’ high-profile career. It is interesting to note that this view runs counter to the earlier-mentioned contemporary rationale where gardens are seen as a way of ameliorating the current educational emphasis on testing and meeting standards.

Within Flanagan’s article, allusions to the similarity in agendas behind school gardens currently and historically can be read. For example, “contemporary progressivism” (Flanagan 2010, para. 3), “moral values” (para. 3), and “social movement” (para. 3) are phrases used in her article that reflect the language used by progressive reformers in early-twentieth-century school gardens. In fact, according to Trelstad (1997), with the exception of the environmental rationale, the current rationales discussed above share commonalities with those utilized in the past, making them somewhat cautionary tales.

3.3 Contemporary School Gardens: A New Paradigm or a Flash in the Pan?

In the present era, school gardens are flourishing. As in the past, this resurgence is focused on adults’ perceptions of “children’s best interests.” The contemporary purpose of school gardens is to diversify and enrich school grounds as an engaging and real-life learning experience in nature for students, yet researchers are also reporting a number of related effects. For example, engagement in a garden space can foster a strong sense of belonging in children regardless of ethnicity, which in

turn can engender social inclusivity by helping to overcome cultural barriers of language and connection (e.g., Cutter-Mackenzie 2009; Dymont and Bell 2008). Gardens can also encourage physical activity (e.g., Dymont and Bell 2007) and deliver other benefits related to children's health and eating, e.g., learning about how food is grown and the understanding the concept of "food miles" (Passy 2014). Development of soft skills such as communication, leadership, and patience is also widely reported in studies as qualities promoted by garden-based learning (Williams and Dixon 2013). This illustrates the potential of school gardens for engaging with participatory processes previously discussed. Finally, as Passy (2014) notes, school gardens offer a relatively cheap and accessible outdoor learning resource, compared to the expense and complexity of off-site field trips.

It is valuable to speculate on the sustainability of school gardens, i.e., whether this current popularity will continue with gardens becoming an intrinsic part of the curriculum or, as in the past, that they will disappear from school grounds without leaving a trace. In this section, two areas of influence on the renaissance of school gardens are identified and discussed.

The first is the presence of garden "champions." A veteran advocate is Robin Moore, researcher and practitioner who designs and consults on natural play and learning environments for children, focusing on their participation in design (see Moore and Wong 1997; and www.naturalearning.org). Richard Louv (2005) is another champion previously discussed, whose book *Last Child in the Woods* resonated with people's fears about children's loss of nature experiences, especially due to increased technology exposure. Endorsement of school gardens by these champions, together with celebrity chefs such as Alice Waters, Stephanie Alexander, and others, has meant that they are enjoying greater awareness and recognition.

The publication of books and the development of programs espoused by such champions have provided further evidence of the growing popularity of school gardens. Some of these programs were identified in the previous section on rationales, and a number of books have recently been published, especially in the USA. Founded in research and/or practice, they provide affirmation and advice on outdoor learning opportunities at kindergartens and schools (e.g., Bucklin-Sporer and Pringle 2010; Danks 2010). A further two books promote "learning gardens" for sustainability education through a pedagogical shift away from current transmissive and product-focused US education policy to a focus on process and participation using soil science as a pedagogical metaphor (Gaylie 2009; Williams and Brown 2012). In so doing, these authors hope to bridge the divide between simple gardening and transformative environmental learning.

A second influence is funding. As in the past, governmental support via funding influences school gardens. Previously success was measured in terms of food production, whereas currently, it is accountability in terms of student achievement. Ozer (2007) points out that there were US government funding incentives in 2004 to start up educational gardens focusing on nutrition. However, support comes at a cost and there is now pressure in the USA to validate anecdotal claims of the myriad educational benefits of school gardens, in order to help secure their survival

(Williams and Dixon 2013). Three US reviews of school garden-based literature have been completed recently, with the aim of establishing clear evidence that links school gardens to improved learning in students across a range of areas including academic, social, health, and environmental empathy (Blair 2009; Ozer 2007; Williams and Dixon 2013). The reviews are based on published research about student outcomes from involvement in garden-based projects. All are unanimous that while school gardens have great potential to promote intellectual, physical, and social development of school children, there is an urgent need for studies to be longer term, more consistent in scope, inclusive of qualitative and quantitative data, and with increased rigor of design and dissemination of research methods. Unless this is addressed in future studies, it may be difficult to find continued support and funding (especially governmental) for school-ground greening projects.

3.4 The Role of Adults in Garden-Based Learning

Knowledgeable adults can play an important role in ensuring effective garden-based learning. Adults who can assist with children's learning in this setting include teachers, grounds managers, parents, and professionals such as landscape architects.

Of all of these, it is teachers who have the most influence over success or failure of school gardens or other environmental education projects, especially since they may invest dedication and passion beyond job boundaries (Passy 2014; Wake and Eames 2013). Blair (2009) concurs that responsibility for school gardens falls mostly on teachers and emphasizes the importance of training for teachers in creating and using school gardens for learning. According to Trelstad (1997), this was also an issue in the twentieth-century school garden movement.

Passy's (2014) research found that young teachers especially felt pressure to meet requirements such as readying students for examinations, which led to a very structured and classroom-focused teaching approach, rather than being prepared to experiment with garden-based learning. While largely blaming current UK education policy, Passy suggests that teachers, especially young ones, may feel threatened by their lack of gardening knowledge. Frustration by students resulting from lack of teacher knowledge has been suggested previously as contributing to children's diminished interest in learning about nature (Kong 2000).

Research also highlights the importance of teachers feeling supported in order for school gardens to thrive long term (Passy 2014; Wake and Eames 2013), and the authors of both these studies found that school managers (e.g., principals and school boards) exert considerable influence on the success of environmental learning, including garden projects, due to the decision-making power they wield. As Wooltorton (2004, p. 606) points out, "Leadership can be a serious tension in the transformation of a school community towards sustainability," while Passy (2014, p. 33) summarizes:

... factors that enabled a school garden to be developed included strong support from senior management, a key member of staff to take responsibility for the garden, giving gardening activities a high profile within the school and ensuring that the garden-related tasks are manageable for staff.

From this, Passy concludes that the degree to which gardens are integrated into school life is fundamental to their success, and this is determined by the “school culture,” a somewhat subjective and difficult-to-measure value.

Professionals such as landscape architects also have a potentially valuable role to play in the redesign of school grounds, yet anecdotal evidence points to a general lack of their input, which, according to Trelstad (1997), is a continuation of the trend in the previous school garden movement. It is, however, important to acknowledge that landscape architecture was a fledgling discipline at that time.

Landscape architects' involvement in a codesign relationship with students could certainly add to the authenticity of the project for learners through their participation in real and locally relevant design projects, worked through with design professionals. Parnell (2010) defines codesign in this situation as “... users tak[ing] an active, hands-on role in the design of the school building/grounds, working directly and collaboratively with the design team to develop designs through models, for example.”

As identified in the previous section on children's participation, environmental learning should be authentic and relevant, encourage pro-environmental behavior, and include children engaging politically in an advocacy role rather than them being passive participants (Chawla and Cushing 2007), e.g., gardening under direction. Wake and Eames' (2013) findings illustrate this point since they determined that there were significant learning gains when students worked alongside building industry practitioners in grappling with design issues within regulatory frameworks. In this instance, and with strong project support by school management, students learned about building consents, risk assessment reports, waste management, performance of materials, and design techniques as well as developing soft skills such as collaboration and problem-solving. There is a growing body of research and examples illustrating the benefits of children's democratic involvement with architects (e.g., www.designingwithchildren.dao.theusefularts.org). This is in part due to the UK's government-led Building Schools for the Future program (BSF) of 2005–2010, which helped to mainstream school-based codesign projects between practitioners and stakeholders (Burke 2007).

The authors of this chapter speculate that the very things which make school-ground greening projects seem more achievable than building projects (i.e., lower cost and less regulatory requirements to create a garden) are what also lead laypeople (e.g., teachers and school management) to think that landscape and plant specialists are not required to assist with school-ground development. Confirming this, Downs (2006) comments that during the recent BSF period in the UK, funding shortfalls led to a lack of landscape architect involvement in school renewal projects, with volunteer assistance of teachers and parents used

instead. Downs predicts this will lead to long-term problems with design and management.

4 What School Gardens Can Offer: The Benefits of Partnerships

The tendency of not involving specialist landscape practitioners in school-ground greening could contribute to lost opportunities to look holistically at school-ground development in terms of the environmental learning and ecosystem services these landscapes could provide and perform. Related to this, the frequently ad hoc nature of school garden establishment means that there is considerable pressure on teachers, grounds staff (e.g., caretakers), and parents to support such projects. This privileges schools with parents who have the time, knowledge, and confidence to volunteer and/or with connections to fundraising means, which, for the latter at least, generally equates to schools with higher socioeconomic households in their catchment (e.g., Dymont 2005; Flanagan 2010).

Consequently, if gardens are planned by others, with children's main input limited to maintaining the garden and the curriculum-linked learning restricted to mathematical working out of plant rows or writing recipes in English classes, as Flanagan (2010) suggests, then the potential of a school garden is not being realized. If the current school garden movement is to be enduring, the authors of this chapter propose that the methodology around the development and use of school gardens needs to encompass a range of partnerships and embrace democratic participation of children, leading to transformative learning. In their research using Uzzell's framework for school-community partnerships, Flowers and Chodkiewicz (2009) concur. They point out there are four levels at which partnership can occur. These range from learning being isolated within the school to community members coming into the school to schools going out into the community and, ultimately, to schools working with communities as social agents for environmental change. These authors argue that the last is the most effective for transformative learning. This suggests that those driving school-ground greening projects should focus on building strong relationships between the school and its community as well as actively engaging children in the process.

School-ground greening projects with this focus could realize a vision of codesign partnerships between schools and landscape practitioners. Within this, students would work alongside specialists to research, design, construct, and use their outdoor school environments in a way that integrates curriculum-based learning, builds empowerment, engages with local communities, and adds to ecosystem services, potentially leading to the resilient learners envisaged by Sterling (2010). The environmental advantages of this are untold and not well researched in this context, for example, greater shading and cooling from planting trees and shrubs; food and shelter for birds; creation of bird, insect, lizard, and mammal habitats; and

restoration of stream courses and wetlands – all contributing to a more interconnected corridor of green throughout cities.

It has already been established that children want to have a say in landscape decision-making yet often do not feel listened to (Roe 2007). In a school-ground greening project, Dymont (2008) found that, while children were conspicuous in the implementation of gardens, they were underrepresented in their design. Roe's study (2007) indicated that children understand their environment and value landscape features differently than adults because of their perceptions of safety and risk in the environment, for example, their need to challenge themselves physically and psychologically as part of learning. Depending on age, it is clear that children are interested in spaces to play and spaces to relax, which are natural and have place identity; where they feel secure but possibly separate from adults (Francis and Lorenzo 2006). Obviously children have unique knowledge of the places they inhabit, such as schools, although what Francis and Lorenzo (2006) have described as "planning around children" tends to ignore this, potentially leading to paranoid adults advocating for fenced and designated play areas where children can be seen and "safe." These researchers claim that this is partly responsible for the much-talked-about "decline of childhood" (see Louv 2005) and its ally, "politicization of parenting," which Furedi (2014) explains as the turning of child-rearing into a political football that judges parents harshly for allowing children any freedoms (e.g., to be independently mobile or play unsupervised in nature).

However, it has been emphasized that children alone cannot execute complex design processes. The final decisions may need to rest with practitioners who have specialist knowledge (Iltus and Hart 1995; Mannion 2007). In this regard, the choice of design practitioners to work with children is crucial to the success of the project (Wake and Eames 2013) as is open communication with children about the limitations to their participation (Hill 2006).

There is some research that supports children as codesigners with adults in school-ground greening projects. For example, in mapping the geography of place-making with children through encouragement of design literacies in an Australian school garden project, Green (2014) found that children became proficient in design skills and knowledge when they were included in the designing and planning of the environments where they lived. This transformed the teaching and learning in the school due to the ownership children felt and the creativity and imagination required during the design process.

Disappointingly, Green (2014) acknowledges that there are, to date, few examples reported of children as designers within school garden discourses, and she argues for the learning benefits of a codesign partnership by stating that: "... design opportunities and processes expand learning environments that encourage children's creative, diverse and embodied ways of knowing" (p. 192). This case study illustrates a shift in approach whereby children's learning was enhanced through empowerment. It also represents a departure from measuring being a mathematical or scientific endeavor to a design one where drawing, mapping,

modeling, planting, and building for aesthetic and practical solutions were foregrounded. It is suggested by the authors of this chapter that this approach would be further enhanced through the inclusion of landscape practitioners to work with students in providing authentic and relevant environmental experiences both within schools and reaching out into the wider community.

Other studies have investigated school-ground greening projects with a strong “codesign with practitioners” focus. One US example is a project with students to establish an ecological habitat for informal play in an area adjacent to their school (Derr and Rigolon [in press](#)). Also involved was a group of retired adults who valued this site because they had played there in their youth. The project utilized participatory processes including codesign with city planners and collaboration with the skeptical retirees, who were eventually won over by the project’s process. In evaluating the project success, Derr and Rigolon attribute significant credit to having an independent organization (“Growing Up Boulder,” in this case) to facilitate community and school engagement.

The value of having intergenerational collaborations within specialist projects like this is also highlighted in research from Greece that investigated school children engaging with native plant conservation (Paraskeva-Hadjichambi et al. [2012](#)). Results indicated that rural children identified that native plants required fertilizer and water, the same as crop plants. Similarly to research discussed earlier by Payne ([2014](#)), these children saw nature as something removed from humans, so taken together these findings signal the importance of school-ground greening projects including areas of domesticated and natural habitats, so children can learn the difference between wild and cultivated ecosystems. It also speaks of having a community and participatory learning focus so that expert outside help can be sought plus group responsibility toward conservation inculcated.

In an example that seems to exemplify this, a school ground greening project in Hamilton, New Zealand that was recently visited by the authors of this chapter features students aged 9–12 years old working with conservationists, designers, and their environmental studies teacher to research techniques for designing and constructing an ecological island in their school grounds. This is an area that excludes predators through isolation (e.g., through being surrounded by water or via installation of a predator-proof fence) so that threatened wildlife can be established. The project originated from a student’s idea, and the island and moat have been constructed with community and student assistance. A bird hide and science center made of repurposed shipping containers are being refurbished, and planting of native tree species to create a canopy is occurring (see [Fig. 3](#)). This will both provide a habitat for birds and other fauna and act as a connecting corridor between green spaces within the city.

In a further example, Smith ([2011](#)) portrays a US high school for students who have failed to learn in other schools. The school transformed itself and students through a process of both school- and community-based ecological and other sustainability-driven projects. Using projects that focus on five domains of sustainability, architecture, energy, water, forests, and agriculture, students are empowered



Fig. 3 The ecological island for encouraging and studying native biodiversity – a student-led project. View from the bird hide showing development of a moat and native tree canopy (Author's photo)

to bring about positive environmental, social, and economic change within their communities. This is done through the establishment of gardens, restoration of habitats, and building of affordable, sustainable housing for students' families. Embedded in this is recognition that children's lives at school cannot be much improved unless their home and family lives are secure.

Smith (2011), however, raises the concern that the success of this project, which is largely driven by the school principal, is leading to expectations that may not always be met. This returns to the issue discussed in an earlier section of these projects' reliance on the vision and passion of key people and the vulnerability of projects, should those significant people leave. It further speaks of the need to involve wider networks of specialists and overarching resources rather than depending on individuals, in other words embedding such projects into the school's culture, as identified by Passy (2014). Finally, it emphasizes the importance of the shared role played by students, school-based adults, and other professionals, plus parents, in the development of school-ground greening and other environmental projects. It is proposed by the authors of this chapter that this project described by Smith (2011) exemplifies level four of Uzzel's school and community partnership, where schools become active agents in collaborating with community to instigate change (Flowers and Chodkiewicz 2009).



Fig. 4 The ecological island project is part of school ground greening at a school that has developed its grounds beyond ‘vege’ gardens (seen in the foreground) to ambitious conservation projects (in the background), to which students feel ownership through their learning, decision-making and participation (Author’s photo)

In summary, these studies provide valuable insights into the potential for children to be active participants in learning that goes beyond “vege” gardening (see Fig. 4). Through processes such as codesign and purposes such as ecosystem conservation, such projects aim to encourage children to feel connected to nature and to make pro-environmental decisions in their lives.

5 Conclusion

Particularly in the last 10 years, school gardens in myriad forms but often gardens of edible and flowering plants have been enjoying a significant renaissance in many countries, as evidenced by multiple published examples and studies. A key reason for this is that they are regarded as a panacea for a number of social, physical, and educational ills facing children. However, school gardens are usually tenuously positioned within the wider school environment, often relying on passion and expertise of teachers, parents, and unpaid others for their sustainability. The pressure is now on to justify their educational place in schools and therefore secure

reliable funding sources since, while they may be relatively cheap and easy to initially implement (Passy 2014), their long-term resource requirements are significant (e.g., maintenance labor and materials, teacher knowledge and skills) and their benefits for learning not definitively established.

In a world where many children have diminishing opportunities to experience nature, school gardens are potentially rich sites for environmental learning as well as offering other benefits such as engendering social inclusivity and promoting healthy lifestyles. While many of the rationales for today's school gardens are ominously similar to those for earlier-era school gardens, which were not sustainable, there is an important point of difference, which Akerblom (2004) summarizes well by concluding, "The aim of the school garden has thus shifted from being an end to a means" (p. 246). This comment identifies a change in desired outcomes from economic products to learning experiences. This may help ensure the survival of school gardens, especially if opportunities are created that recognize children's firsthand knowledge of their school environments and their capability as designers and decision-makers. This could lead, for example, to them codesigning with professionals and engaging in community collaborations to create authentic learning opportunities such as the development of varied habitats including native areas and those that contribute to green service networks within cities (e.g., corridors for bird and insect pollinating movements or rain garden systems for filtering stormwater runoff). It is, however, recommended that more research is needed, first to gather baseline data on the status of school-ground greening projects within geographic zones (e.g., areas of a city) and then to establish methods by which greater involvement of professionals such as landscape architects could occur.

In conclusion, it has been argued in this chapter that participatory learning approaches, codesign practices, and projects that extend both learning and provision of ecosystem services within school environments could take school gardens beyond the environmental limitation of "vege" gardens and widen the learning focus toward participation with professionals and community stakeholders in a holistic land management approach that promotes enduring guardianship of these spaces. While it is acknowledged that "vege" gardens have valuable learning potential, an alternative approach as proposed by the authors of this chapter could result in greater durability than an isolated garden within a school that is reliant on the continued efforts of a few. Further, this has a better chance long term of deepening children's connection to nature through transformative learning, which contributes to developing resilient learners who are poised to become flexible, future guardians of the Earth. The chapter has taken a broad approach to school gardens by using the multidisciplinary lens of children's geographies, which prioritizes children's perspectives. Orr (1994) proposes that "All education is environmental education . . . by what is included or excluded we teach the young that they are *part of* or *apart from* the natural world" (p. 12, emphasis added). In a similar way, school gardens, by the approach they take, can be *part of* or *apart from* children's enduring environmental experiences.

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Play and Learning Outdoors: Engaging with the Natural World Using Forest School in the UK

6

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Abstract

Natural play occurs when children explore and enjoy the natural environment through their freely chosen play (Natural England 2014). This chapter will discuss natural play as an approach to outdoor learning and examine its role in children's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development using examples from research. The chapter will acknowledge the current decline in natural play opportunities for children in the UK, compared with that of previous generations, and describe how promoting natural play through Forest Schools has been shown as a promising strategy to resolve this issue. Forest Schools offer "all ages regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence through hands-on learning in a woodland environment" (Murray and O'Brien 2005). The ethos, implementation, and outcomes of Forest Schools in the UK are outlined with supporting evidence. Finally, future directions will be described for natural play within Forest Schools as an approach for facilitating children's engagement with the natural environment. Reflections on recent programs and recommendations for future delivery strategies and implications for research will be also discussed.

Keywords

Natural play • Forest School • Children • Natural environments • Outdoor learning

1 Background

Contributions to this chapter are made by a multidisciplinary team of authors from educational, health, psychology, sport and exercise sciences, and outdoor learning disciplines. This team reflects an organically grown collaboration, developed from successful practice and academic partnerships across institutions and organizations initially in the UK and more recently Australia. Collectively, they have undertaken research and evaluation across a broad spectrum of areas which underpin the perspectives in this chapter and include, for example, physical activity interventions for children and young people, health psychology, and outdoor learning. Combined, they have accumulated experience of developing, delivering, and evaluating Forest School programs and believe that these experiences facilitate access to nature and have great benefits, which we subscribe to. The authors' range of experience demonstrates an appreciation and understanding of not only the wide range of health and well-being benefits for children connecting to nature but also the associated research, policy, and practice debates in this broad topic area.

This chapter offers a range of viewpoints to provide an initial, but not exhaustive, setting of the scene for understanding the emergence of natural play initiatives, with a specific focus on Forest Schools. This will be achieved via an introduction to outdoor learning with acknowledgement of the wide-ranging benefits of learning in

the natural environment. Outdoor practices with varying applications will then be described followed by a discussion of the paradox natural play currently faces. The paradox outlines the discrepancy between the associated positive benefits of the natural environment on children and the restrictions and barriers they face regarding natural play opportunities. Forest Schools will then be introduced as one means to promote and foster natural play, from its early Danish influences to its adaptation in the UK. Contemporary case studies provided by the authors will then be presented before consideration of future directions and potential limitations to the delivery and evaluation of Forest Schools.

There is no wi-fi in the forest, but we promise you'll find a better connection.
(Author unknown)

2 Learning Outdoors in Natural Environments

An integrated view of learning and development challenges the assumption that learning happens indoors (Waite 2010). In the UK, the “Learning Outside the Classroom” Manifesto (DfES 2006) stated that every young person, regardless of their age, ability, or circumstances, should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development. Outdoor learning is a broad concept, which encompasses a breadth of educational and developmental activities that occur in a range of different outdoor settings. These can include school grounds, community projects, outdoor visits, environmental education, and outdoor play (O’Brien et al. 2011). Accordingly, offering learning outside the classroom is a cornerstone to the breadth of outdoor education provision across the United Kingdom (UK), and its practices have developed over many years (see Ogilvie 2012, for a UK-focused historical review). It is not uncommon, therefore, for school pupils to take part in residential outdoor education visits, undertake fieldwork and outdoor visits as part of formal curriculum, engage in environmental education and nature studies, take part in outdoor adventure activities, undertake expeditions, and use outdoor spaces in school grounds and communities as a learning environment (Rickinson et al. 2004). While there has been renewed interest in recent years in learning outdoors (Elliott 2014), the positive outcomes that children and young people experience from a range of outdoor learning educational and community initiatives have been observed and reported over a number of decades (e.g., Drasdo 1972; Hunt 1989; Neill and Richards 1998; Armour and Sandford 2013).

A fundamental aspect of learning outdoors is that it takes place in the natural environment as opposed to the built environment (O’Brien et al. 2011). Natural environments are, in principle, considered “environments [*that are*] not designed or cultivated by humans” (Fjørtoft 2004, p. 24), yet it is important to recognize that

many outdoor learning landscapes that might be deemed “natural” have been cultivated and developed by humans (e.g., hills for farming). However, the overarching notion is that of an environment that contains living species in their (semi-) natural habitats. Less cultivated sites, such as ancient seminatural woodland, can bring about greater experiences of biodiversity and natural affordances for natural play (e.g., dirt and sand for molding, trees for shelter and climbing) including topography, water bodies, vegetation, and animals (Kyttä 2004). A further differentiation between approaches in Forest Schools and some other forms of outdoor learning is that the environment is something to actively engage with rather than a mere backdrop for the action (Nerland 2007).

The benefits of taking learning outside has reported improvements in children’s interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, cognitive skill development, behavioral improvement, increased academic attainment, improved psychological well-being, and better physical health (e.g., Rickinson et al. 2004; Faber et al. 2006). Outdoor learning enriches and enhances education and development, not only contributing to developing positive attitudes toward the self, others, and the environment but also fostering positive attitudes to learning *inside* the classroom (Malone 2008). It is these benefits that continue to drive the development and promotion of sustainable outdoor learning provision across the UK and provide a background context to aspects related to the emergence of natural play and Forest School initiatives being implemented in partnership with schools and local communities.

Approaches to outdoor practices which underpin the range of associated benefits can vary in terms of their focus and desired outcomes. An educational, developmental, and/or psychotherapeutic emphasis inevitably determines the psychological approaches utilized and intended outcomes. However, it is clear that an experience of nature, with attention to physical, social, and personal dimensions, provides a framework for understanding the change process for participants and informs research and evaluation strategies. Malone (2008) identified five domains of child development and associated benefits of learning outside the classroom, namely, cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and personal. There is evidence of benefits across all these domains during outdoor learning for children and young people, and the collation of evidence to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses is ongoing. As highlighted by Waite et al. (2013), an inherent problem with undertaking studies in this area is “how to capture the micro-processes of unstructured free outdoor play without destroying the object of the study” (p. 260). There remains a gap in the literature concerning the associated physical benefits of natural play, and the ways in which such practices actively reduce sedentary behavior (e.g., sitting in class, television viewing, etc.) both in the short and long term. Furthermore, understanding psychological models of behavior change in outdoor play has received limited attention in the context of physical activity. Collective evaluation of such evidence would contribute to the understanding of natural play processes, practices, and benefits and generate evidence to inform the strategic research agenda for future practices and developments.

3 Play and the Natural Play Paradox

According to the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (Article 31), all children have a right to play (1989). While a substantial body of literature has attempted to study and define play, there is no consensus. Sutton-Smith (2009) argued that there is little agreement and much ambiguity in the definition of play. For example, play has been described as an activity done for its own sake, characterized by the means rather than the ends (the process is more important than any end point or goal), flexibility (objects are put in new combinations or roles are acted out in new ways), and positive affect (children often smile, laugh, and say they enjoy it) (Pellegrini and Smith 1998). Harker (2005) also critically explored the definitions of play, examining how play is related to spaces and places. He argued that playing is a process which occurs between being and becoming. Further, Sutton-Smith (2009) noted that psychologically, play can be defined as “a virtual simulation characterized by staged contingencies of variation, with opportunities for control engendered by either mastery or further chaos” (p. 231). Despite the contrasting viewpoints on how play should be defined, in general, play can be viewed as an inherently enjoyable activity and an important process through which children learn about themselves, others, and the world around them.

Adding to the debate about the general definition of “play” is natural play, which is context specific and has been defined as children exploring and enjoying the natural environment through their freely chosen play (Natural England 2014). The natural environment affords challenging, exciting, and complex play opportunities with the diversity of the environment closely related to the creativity and inventiveness of children’s play (Fjørtoft and Sageie 2000). Importantly, natural play often involves physically active play, which can range from low- to high-intensity activities such as den building and tree climbing (O’Brien et al. 2011). According to Gleave and Cole-Hamilton (2012), play behaviors in the natural environment during childhood are important because they facilitate cognitive, social, emotional, and motor skills, foster connections with nature, develop a sense of ownership and integration into their environment, and positively influence attention skills and an ability to cope with stress. With respect to opportunity to access such environments, the role of school grounds has also been recognized for their opportunities for natural play and providing an “informal curriculum” outside of the formal classroom environment. This is supported by Malone and Tranter (2003) who reported that children viewed the school grounds as an opportunity to take a break from their formal classroom learning.

Developmental benefits associated with natural play are reported within the literature (Lester and Maudsley 2007), yet decreases in the amount of time that children spend outdoors have been observed (Rickinson et al. 2004), particularly among certain groups (e.g., girls). There are concerns that children have a lack of access to nature (O’Brien 2009), are at a growing risk of nature deficit disorder (NDD; Louv 2006), and are unable to access (what remains of) the natural

environment as freely as previous generations due to a risk adverse society (Woolley et al. 2009). For example, children as young as 6–7 years of age have reported that stranger danger and heavy traffic restricted outdoor play opportunities near to home and that they were wholly reliant on families taking them to play in natural environments such as parks and open spaces (Ridgers et al. 2012). Schalit (2006), however, expresses concern about the idea of nature as a cure, or a “pill,” and encourages the distinction between nature’s value in its own right and what it can do for us. Dickinson (2013) moreover critiques Louv’s NDD theory, arguing that NDD is a misdiagnosis, which fails to address the root of “problems” described by NDD, such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder or obesity, leading to the inappropriate “treatment” of these problems. She therefore calls for adults to rethink human-nature disconnectedness and return to the psyche to delve deeper to the roots of the problem through communication. Kraftl (2013) also argues that “nature” is just one of many contributing factors to the benefits that children experience as a result of learning outdoors. The natural environment is more than just a natural space but a social one where human interactions also influence how children benefit from the natural environment (Kraftl 2015). This adds further support to the complexity of the relationship between nature and childhood (Taylor 2013).

There is a sense of irony that children are at risk of NDD, given that their parents often report very different experiences. There is subsequently a paradox here; whenever parents are asked about their own childhood experiences in comparison to that of their child/children, they report access to a range of green spaces and refer to “making the most” of what the community and local area offered. For example:

“I would say at C’s (daughter’s) age that I was playing on my own; I think outside, I’m sure I was. . . I wouldn’t even dream of letting them out on their own now.” – Parent 3 (Ridgers and Sayers 2010, p. 16). However, parents are often the gatekeepers restricting their own children from having these experiences for a range of reasons, which are primarily safety related. This is called the natural play paradox. Such findings must, however, be approached with caution due to their reliance on adults’ memories of their own childhood. Jones (2008) challenges this very idea, stating that adults’ memories of childhood might not be accurate representations and instead argues that research into childhood cannot simply seek to capture children’s experiences. These childhood recollections may be deliberately or inadvertently converted into adult “codes.”

Notably, while parents are concerned that the current generation of children has fewer opportunities to play compared to previous generations, parental concerns about safety are cited as one of the main barriers to outdoor play (Flett et al. 2010). According to Gill (2011), other barriers to outdoor play are linked to wider changes in society including increasing car ownership and use, loss of green spaces, longer parent/carer working hours, changing cultural attitudes about parenting and children, and growth of indoor, screen-based leisure activities. As a result, the connections between young people and nature are suggested to be weaker now than in the past, and the likelihood of children visiting any green space at all was reported to have halved within the space of a generation (DEFRA 2011; Natural England 2010). It has been argued that adults need to allow children enough freedom and

responsibility to learn from their own efforts and mistakes, in regard to utilizing the outdoors, while being aware as to what might go wrong (Gill 2011). Natural play provides such opportunities. Consequently, encouraging intergenerational/family-based nature play may, therefore, be appropriate as a setting and a stimulus for play in general.

A range of interventions have been designed to address family “connectedness” to the outdoors. For example, Flett et al. (2010) investigated the experiences and beliefs of families regarding physical activity in the natural environment to explore the feasibility of an intervention to increase awareness, connection, and physical activity in the natural environment. All participants reported enjoyment of outdoor activities, with several noting that they regularly participated in activities such as bird watching, animal tracking, and riding outdoor machines, for example. Participants expressed an interest in taking a more active role; however, a number of barriers were highlighted and were largely centered around safety concerns (e.g., knowledge of the terrain and lack of mobile phone coverage for emergencies), although factors such as physical discomfort associated with being outdoors (e.g., getting dirty and not having access to conveniences) were also noted. The development of a nature-based training program was suggested as an ideal opportunity to engage participants in physical activity in the outdoors so they might gain confidence in this setting.

It is important to note that there is a wide range of nature-based opportunities offered to contemporary children in varied formats, across the UK and other countries, such as Australia and the USA. However, the remainder of this chapter will focus on one approach, Forest School, which has become increasingly popular and available in recent years. Further, while acknowledging that similar strategies have been implemented in different contexts, they all have a consistent focus, namely, learning through play and engagement within the natural environment.

4 Introducing Forest School

Forest School is a hands-on approach to promote play in natural environments and encourage children (and indirectly) and parents to become more comfortable with natural play. Forest School can be defined as an eco-social pedagogical practice taking place in local woodlands, for a sustained period of time, ranging from 6 weeks to years, and as a distinct form of outdoor play and learning pedagogy in the UK, run by qualified practitioners. Programs are provided for all ages, though particularly directed at children via educational and care settings (Murray and O’Brien 2005). The UK Forest School movement emerged from practitioners’ needs and interests, partially in response to the mainstream context of education and care (Cree and McCree 2013). Forest School can be located as a response to a number of social movements, including those promoting outdoor play, outdoor learning, “free-range childhoods,” environmental concerns, educational pressures, and the growing demand for natural play opportunities (Cree and McCree 2013).

Table 1 Forest School definition and principles (FS IOL SIG 2012)

Recognized Forest School definition
“Forest School is an inspirational process, that offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem, through hands on learning experiences in a local woodland or natural environment with trees. Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within, and complements, the wider context of outdoor and woodland education”
Recognized principles
1. It is a long-term process with frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural wooded environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adapting, observing, and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School
2. It takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world
3. It aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent, and creative learners
4. It offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves
5. It is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice
6. It uses a range of learner-centered processes to create a community for development and learning

A national practitioner consultation in 2011 confirmed the definition and agreed upon new principles and criteria (Forest School Institute for Outdoor Learning Significant Interest Group (FS IOL SIG 2012)). The UK Forest School Association (FSA) was formed in 2012.

Table 1 provides an overview of these definitions and principles. Play is detailed in the full criteria of Principle 6: “play and choice are an integral part of the FS learning process where play is recognised as vital to learning and development at FS” (FS IOL SIG 2012).

It is perhaps a common misconception that UK Forest School initiatives originated solely from Scandinavian influences. The term “Forest School” originated in the UK, made up by the Bridgwater College’s early years practitioners who witnessed Forest School practices in Denmark in 1993 and adapted it for UK settings (Williams-Siegfredson 2012). This section explores how the term is perceived differently, despite a recognized definition and principles, and gives some indication as to why this has happened. Firstly, an individual’s relationship to the rest of the natural world, and conception of the child and nature relationship, is socioculturally constructed. This has a significant impact and is manifested in several ways, such as prevailing adult attitudes and cultural restrictions (Kyttä 2004). Forest School has been aided in part by cross-cultural borrowing of Scandinavian outdoor pedagogic practice (Cree and McCree 2012; Knight 2009). Consequently, this has created a cultural transference issue in relocating to the UK’s industrial culture, thereby changing the practice as it is mediated through different values and understandings. Forest pedagogy in Scandinavia is connected with their culture of *friluftsliv* (“free-air life”). There is a rich tradition of outdoor play and outdoor learning in the UK, yet this differs to some cultural understandings

of the concept in Scandinavia and elsewhere. There are also other examples of forest pedagogy and outdoor play across Europe, with Switzerland, Hungary, and Slovenia as notable examples (Lindemann-Mattheis and Knecht 2011). Scandinavia is less industrialized and less populated, there is widespread rights to roam, grandparents may still work on the land, and families are more prepared for all weathers and engage much more with outdoor experience. The UK, however, has had over 300 years of industrialized culture in four or more generations since the Industrial Revolution, a historical backdrop to the growing disconnection to natural environments and a clear contributing factor to much of the UK population being ill-prepared for, or ambivalent about, being outdoors. These cultural differences and subjective reinterpretations impact upon the professional integration of Forest School within UK mainstream practice. Whereby practices similar to Forest School may be culturally mainstream in some European countries, and seen as every day, this was not the case when Forest School began in the UK. This, of course, explains a demand for “borrowing” in the first place, yet Forest School is often framed as the “other” (Levinas 1988) within the dominant discourse rather than fully integrated. This is slowly changing; for example, education leaders and inspectors are now more familiar with the pedagogy and may have witnessed positive examples of whole-school approaches, where outdoor play and learning is integrated seamlessly into a school’s culture and pedagogy. However, “othering” occurs when Forest School is seen as an alternative rather than an everyday experience. Practitioners may look to outdoor learning to provide a “special experience” (Dillon et al. 2005; Davis et al. 2006). However, being “special” rather than integrated into everyday practice may limit its integration with wider learning as well as threaten its cost-effectiveness. If the pedagogical practices of Forest School and the setting entered into an encounter where alterity was respected, rather than absorbing the “other” into the “same” (Levinas 1988), then what might be possible? The Forest School Association’s strapline and main aim is “quality Forest School for all,” which could include entitlement for all children to experience a high-quality program within their everyday schooling. The difference in pedagogy and the view of our own and the child’s relationship with the rest of nature could therefore be reflected on and explored. Caring for woodland and clearing and planting new wildflowers, for example, could become a useful part of a child’s education. Where Forest School is seen as separate and distinct from the rest of a child’s play, learning, and life, we may encounter challenges in cultural absorption. Critical intersubjectivity demands an ethical stance with room for otherness, such as children’s otherness, without feeling the need to understand them through adult lenses and to see them as versions of adults (Dahlberg and Moss 2005). An eco-social perspective might include adults, children, and environments entering into a collaborative process of exploration and experimentation.

A recent study in the UK highlighted some of children’s favored outdoor experiences, which included drinks and snacks around the fire (Fig. 1); hiding, climbing, and exploring the woods; talking, playing, and sharing time with friends; making fires and dens (Figs. 2 and 3), digging holes, using tools, art, films, stories, and imaginative play (Fig. 4); and discovering and learning about nature

Fig. 1 Cooking snacks on an open fire at a Forest School session (Photograph courtesy of The Mersey Forest, UK)



(McCree 2014). Forest School pedagogy advocates participants directing and initiating play, within a considered process with a significant adult, such as a parent or Forest School practitioner (Knight 2009). Evidence suggests that young children learn best in a supportive environment that encourages extended child-initiated play (e.g., Rose and Rogers 2012). Forest School is a learner-centered process, not a program of planned adult-led activity. Any initial adult-led structure is intended to fade over time, as learners gain confidence and engage in more exploratory play, moving from indirect to direct experience of nature (Davis et al. 2006). This movement and flow from adult- to child-initiated experiences requires a skill of reciprocity in responding to the child's emergent needs, and Forest School practitioners need sufficient pedagogical understanding to enable a child-centered environment. It takes nurture (e.g., regular hot drinks, observation) and time for gentle, repeated introductions to a new space, new materials, and new ways of being, where there is permission to play and get muddy, in order for children to get the most from the experience (McCree 2014). The Forest School principles note the necessity for supported risk, high adult-child ratios, and site visits through all seasons. The aims of Forest School, therefore, have closer parallels with facilitating child-centered play than with traditional lesson planning (Cree and McCree 2013). However, play, notwithstanding play-based learning, is problematic in theory and practice

Fig. 2 Tree climbing and building a den at a Forest School session (Photograph courtesy of The Mersey Forest, UK)



Fig. 3 Den building (Photograph courtesy of The Mersey Forest, UK)

Fig. 4 Playing and creating with natural materials
(Photograph courtesy of The Mersey Forest, UK)



(Hughes 2012), which cannot be fully explored here, beyond stating that a view of play as intrinsic rather than instrumental is part of the Forest School pedagogy. The primary aims of Forest School have been described as personal, social, and emotional development, focused on increasing self-esteem and positive learning dispositions, with secondary aims of physical activity and contact with nature (O'Brien and Murray 2007). Yet, each child's journey will be different and ideally one which the reflective adult practitioner will adapt to (see www.forestschoollassociation.org for further information about Forest Schools).

5 Forest School Research: An Overview

The early Forest School literature focused on defining and evaluating the aims, ethos, and outcomes of Forest School initiatives. Such research has typically consisted of pilot and small-scale evaluation and research studies, which have been conducted within a range of settings, across a range of ages, drawing on different methodologies. This section will provide an overview of this research and the outcomes reported.

A range of Forest School outcomes have been investigated, including positive learning dispositions, strengthened self-esteem, and enriched children's practices in the early years (O'Brien 2009). The Forest School definition, presented earlier, highlighted the opportunities for children to develop their confidence and

self-esteem through their experiences in this context. A number of studies have attempted to determine whether such changes occurred during a Forest School project. For example, adults using the Forest School approach in schools and early year settings have reported that quiet children aged 5–11 years had an increased ability to express themselves and had improved confidence (O'Brien 2009). These findings are also apparent in anecdotal research where primary school staff observed higher levels of self-esteem, motivation, and social interaction during Forest School sessions. These changes were particularly evident for boys and those with special needs (Slade et al. 2013). O'Brien and Murray (2007) conducted an evaluation of children attending Forest School sessions using observations conducted by the Forest School leaders over an 8-month period. The observations indicated that children's self-esteem and confidence increased. Notably, positive changes in children's language and communication skills, improvements in physical motor skills, and a greater knowledge and understanding of the environment were observed during the Forest School program (O'Brien and Murray 2007). Burtwright and colleagues (2007) also reported that teachers viewed Forest School as a "child-led approach [*that*] builds confidence, encourages creativity and promotes independence which are essential skills for learning and for life" (p. 11). Collectively, such results highlight the positive outcomes of outdoor learning experiences for children, as perceived by adult practitioners in Forest Schools.

Research has also been conducted with primary school-aged children to explore their thoughts, perceptions, and experiences of Forest School. Overall, children typically report positive experiences and that Forest School is enjoyable and fun to do (Burtwright et al. 2007; Ridgers Knowles and Sayers 2012). Activities such as den building, tree climbing, and mini-beast searching are popular, providing opportunities for physical activity, teamwork, as well as learning about and engaging with nature (Ridgers et al. 2012). Children have also reported feeling safe and happy in the outdoors, an important finding given parental perceptions of the safety of playing in natural environments (Woolley et al. 2009). Further, Ridgers and colleagues (2012) reported that activities undertaken in Forest School sessions led to children developing knowledge of, and an interest in, nature and the world around them, including an increasing sensitivity toward nature.

The restorative effects of Forest School for children and young people have also been investigated. Changes to positive participation were demonstrated during Forest School sessions by higher levels of verbal communication with peers reported by teachers (Swarbrick et al. 2004), while increases in social interactions, self-esteem, and concentration have been noted in children with special educational needs and shy children (Slade et al. 2013). One study reported that Forest School provided an optimal learning environment, whereby children's well-being and involvement levels were very high during Forest School sessions subsequently supporting children's learning as well as their wider developmental needs (Kenny 2010). The results of this study were particularly pertinent for those children who had low school academic achievement levels. Roe and Aspinall (2011) found that teenagers classified as having "good" and "bad" behavior by the schools benefitted from Forest School sessions, with those in the "bad" behavior group including those

with ADHD, those at risk of exclusion, or those exhibiting withdrawn behavior, experiencing optimal benefits in particular. Forest School could, therefore, facilitate the management of challenging behaviors and/or positively influence health and well-being.

These benefits are further illustrated by the following case studies, which indicate how research in this area is progressing.

6 Natural Play in the Forest Play Study

This project (Ridgers and Sayers 2010) investigated the use of Forest School to encourage families to participate in outdoor leisure activities using areas of the Mersey Forest for natural play and leisure time activity. These activities involved a Forest School day aimed at families which encouraged natural play, family den building, gardening for families, and self-led visits. Results from questionnaires and interviews with 15 parents pre- and post-intervention reported that, as children, parents experienced few constraints on their natural play and were able to roam away from home. Safety and heavy traffic were current concerns of parents, which they believed had increased since they were children themselves. Time, finances, and weather were also reported as barriers to families' natural play. At the conclusion of the project, greater engagement in natural play was reported by families, with changes reported by both parents and their children. A greater willingness to engage in natural play was reported by parents, who appreciated the supporting information which helped them with their leisure time choices. Parents also enjoyed interacting with children through natural play, while the children shared their knowledge and understanding about the natural environment learnt in Forest School. Notably, the findings also suggested that the Forest School sessions reassured parents of their children's competencies and abilities to assess risks themselves, enabling children's greater independence, which may help to address parents' concerns about safety in the natural environment. Overall, parents reported that both the family engagement project and Forest Schools had a positive impact on their leisure choices. Greater engagement in other natural outdoor play opportunities was reported with visits to local green spaces increasing. Despite these positive findings, however, it is clear that more research into this area is needed to establish the effects of Forest Schools on parents as well as their children. The findings and recommendations offer a useful framework for future projects that encourage and facilitate families' engagement in natural play opportunities.

7 Physical Activity Benefits of the Forest School Study

The Mersey Forest and the Physical Activity Exchange at Liverpool John Moores University are collaborating on a Forest School study investigating whether Forest School sessions increase physical activity in children (Austin et al. 2015). This current research utilizes a range of methods including qualitative techniques to

gather rich in-depth data from the child's perspective and physical activity monitors to objectively measure physical activity. Fifty-nine children aged 7–9 years from four local primary schools in Merseyside, North West England, participated in the study, which is one of the largest sample sizes in a study of this kind to date. All children took part in 12 weekly Forest School sessions. Preliminary accelerometry data measuring physical activity during a typical school week revealed a significant increase in children's daily physical activity levels, in terms of light intensity physical activity on Forest School days, compared to regular school days, with trends revealing similarities between Forest School days and school days which contained a PE lesson (Physical Education). Additionally, qualitative data suggests that Forest School sessions encouraged outdoor play and use of green spaces in children's free time, which extended to that of their family members. Gender differences regarding Forest School activity preferences were noted, with boys preferring active games, climbing trees, and construction activities, while girls showed more interest in the social elements of Forest School, such as interacting with friends by the fire and associated activities (e.g., drinking hot chocolate and roasting marshmallows). These findings raise interesting questions in respect of targeting the active engagement and social interaction of both boys and girls throughout sessions. Overall, this study reported that Forest School had positive effects on the general well-being of children and their families. It demonstrated Forest School as a successful intervention for increasing children's physical activity levels while also promoting mental well-being.

This contemporary research from the team of authors indicates a range of positive influences that Forest School can have on childhood experiences of outdoor play. However, some research has indicated that parents are not always aware of what Forest School entails and what happens during the sessions (Slade et al. 2013; Ridgers and Sayers 2010), thus supporting the need to involve families in such approaches, as was the case in the research reported here. This is an important consideration given the reciprocal effects that children and their families can have on each other's behavior, attitudes, and values (e.g., Flett et al. 2010; Fig. 5).

7.1 Future Directions and Potential Limitations

It is evident that while a wide range of potential benefits have been reported both during and following children and young people's engagement in Forest School, relatively few studies have examined these outcomes to date. As highlighted, benefits range from improvements in self-esteem and confidence, social skills, positive influences on behavior, concentration, physical motor skills, and language and communication skills. Further, children's increased knowledge, interest, and understanding of the environment and improved connectedness to nature were also observed and reported. Such benefits have not only the potential to contribute to children's overall development and facilitate learning within the school curriculum but also to extend benefits to the family by providing opportunities for

Fig. 5 Parent and child engaged in co-operative play (Photograph courtesy of The Mersey Forest, UK)



intergenerational physical activity and community cohesion through shared use of local green spaces.

Research reporting the benefits of participating in Forest School sessions could be criticized, however, for failing to offer consistent intervention delivery, thus influencing the fidelity of findings, especially if the findings do not take account of the influence of additional factors on populations. Differing styles of Forest School delivery, depending on contexts or practitioners involved, make it difficult for researchers to generalize their findings. Research is unable to account for differing social contexts between the settings of a child's classroom or home environment when away from Forest School sessions, which may influence a child's health, mental well-being, behavior, and academic performance. Group dynamics in Forest School sessions will also differ from the classroom environment, depending on factors such as staff present and group sizes. The types of activities within Forest School sessions will also differ from traditional school work in the classroom environment, possibly affecting behaviors observed in Forest School settings. Sessions will also vary depending on Forest School Leaders' individual characteristics, which may have an impact on the child's Forest School experiences and personal benefits gained as a result. Indeed, while Forest School sessions share the same core principles, sessions will vary in terms of frameworks and delivery.

Given these issues, it could be argued that exposure to nature may not be the only influence but rather a blend of factors involved in the curriculum or delivery which

influence outcomes. Additionally, the Forest School research described here is predominantly UK based, and thus the contexts, applications, and research foci of outdoor play will inevitably differ across international settings and/or cultural perspectives. As an example, Hammond and Jackson-Barrett (2013) discuss an outdoor learning project with Aboriginal pupils in Western Australia. The study demonstrated how the traditional cultural knowledge regarding the children's relationship with nature and sense of belonging within the natural world can be used to address lower educational outcomes within an Aboriginal community context. It also emphasizes the differences, in terms of research focus depending on settings and culture.

In terms of developing the evidence base more fully, it has been frequently noted among the research literature that the small numbers of children in observation studies present difficulties in the generalizability of findings. Pilot studies with small numbers are, however, one step in developing the evidence of program efficacy. Additionally, the lack of exploration of the transferability of learning and behavior change to other settings (e.g., classroom environment) and of the impact beyond the immediacy of Forest School experiences (O'Brien 2009) echo wider recommendations for developing an evidence base for learning outside the classroom. For example, Malone (2008, p. 24) previously highlighted issues with multi-method and action research projects because they tend to be "less rigorous and less likely to have replicability for ongoing comparative possibilities." Malone (2008) also reported a need to develop more strategic and conceptual frameworks for collating and organizing research evidence. Given these issues and the wide range of possible outcomes associated with Forest School, a more strategic research framework, which builds a sustainable and robust approach to examining the delivery processes and impacts of Forest School across a range of key education, health, and developmental perspectives, is essential. Inevitably this may require larger sample sizes, standardized intervention designs that address fidelity and examine effectiveness in practice, and a common evaluation framework. Longitudinal studies that track the effects of these sessions over time on a range of outcomes are also warranted. Such research needs to place itself firmly within, and respond to wider, national and international educational, environmental, and health and well-being directives. In doing so, it will be able to respond effectively to the demands placed on such initiatives to demonstrate economic, health, and societal benefits.

It is important to note, however, that despite the benefits of Forest Schools that have been discussed above, it can be a challenging program to develop and implement. For example, the requirements needed to qualify as a Forest School Leader are rigorous, and the current demand for fully trained Forest School practitioners outstrips the number of people who are qualified to deliver sessions. While an estimated 10,000 people have undertaken Forest School training to date in the UK, not all will qualify or continue to practice on a regular basis. The nature and interpretation of Forest School varies widely in terms of training, delivery, practitioners, and settings, in part due to its grassroots origins (Cree and McCree 2013). Training provision is currently unregulated and is monitored by a voluntary

network of Forest School training providers. The demand for training and for that of suitable woodland settings requires funding and is, with a lack of empirical research evidence, difficult to justify and therefore lacks policy support (Knight 2009).

The lack of suitable settings can limit the uptake of Forest School, particularly in urban or peri-urban settings. Land constraints are also a limiting factor in rural schools. Urban schools often have smaller school grounds due to higher land prices and less usable green space options available to them by Forest School. Environmental programs such as Community Forests and Community Forestry Initiatives, which have supported the increase of woodland cover within school grounds over the past 20 years, have helped to readdress the balance in some areas in the UK, but many schools are devoid of natural habitats. The utilization of external woodland sites, parkland, and public and private woodland is increasing across the UK but requires understanding, coordination, and willingness to share by landowners and education providers. The costs of accessing suitable external sites may also be a prohibitive factor, potentially contributing to perceived barriers in accessing nature (O'Brien et al. 2011). Furthermore, the widening of Forest School provision to that of natural play opportunities for families means that access to such sites may become challenging in the future. An increased demand on green spaces that are currently available could possibly contribute to increased damage of the natural environment. These challenges are also evident when considering the gradual reduction of ranger services within local authorities, reduced support for programs of family natural play events, and reduced management or enhancement of sites.

From a pedagogical perspective, while the application and delivery of Forest School practices continues to grow, establishing a collective idea of Forest School practice remains debatable within the Forest School community and wider communities of practice within children's services. For example, due to the variance in how it is perceived, Forest School in practice may remain predominantly adult led or adult initiated (Cree and McCree 2013). There is also a need to clarify the purpose of Forest School as to whether it is an optional addition to enriching the curriculum or used to meet specific curriculum requirements (Waite 2011). This highlights tensions experienced by teachers in meeting curriculum requirements while using a Forest School approach that values free play and autonomous learning. Furthermore, some practitioners look to certain types of outdoor learning to provide a "special" experience (Davis et al. 2006, p. 10). However, being "special" rather than integrated into everyday practice and children's experiences may limit its integration with wider learning as well as threaten its cost-effectiveness for different settings.

8 Conclusion

There are a vast array of reported benefits for children (and more recently families) linked with natural play. Forest School provides opportunities for children to learn outside the classroom within a natural environment and complements the wider context of outdoor and woodland education (Murray and O'Brien 2005).

Consequently, such environments can also encourage active *engagement* with the natural environment rather than being used as a mere “backdrop” to learning. There is a growing evidence base that supports the use of Forest School within a range of contexts, though practical barriers such as limited funding for training and provision may hinder the continued rollout and impact of Forest Schools in the future. There is clearly a need for empirical, robust research and economic evidence to provide a basis for the value of Forest School, particularly longitudinal research to establish effects over time. Future work should ideally involve an interdisciplinary and coordinated approach involving geographers, educationalists, researchers, and policy makers to facilitate the development of Forest Schools across the UK and internationally. Empowering educators within school settings to deliver Forest School sessions, while encouraging a culture of participant- and delivery-focused evaluation, is encouraged. Ideally, this would be integrated into the children’s overall academic experience and be considered a core environment for learning rather than as a separate entity or “other.” As highlighted by the Childcare Resource and Research Unit (2008, p. 1), “the outdoor environment can be more than a place to burn off steam, with more educators and architects and designers embracing the ideas that outdoor play space provides chances for the highest level of development and learning. When used best, it can be a place for investigation, exploration and social interaction.”

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Youth Discourses of Sustainability in Denpasar, Bali

7

Martina Jaskolski

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Abstract

Throughout the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), drawing to a close this year, considerable academic attention has been placed on how sustainability can be integrated into educational contexts worldwide. The rhetoric of DESD promotes the engagement of students as active participants in sustainability through participatory teaching methodologies. How this assumption sits with educational processes in localities around the world remains under-researched, particularly from a perspective of developing countries. This chapter shows that in Denpasar, Bali, DESD encounters local hegemonic discourses that effect power in complex ways, as well as educational structures that may not foster the participatory notions DESD requires. The chapter also recounts the story of a participatory research experiment that demonstrates that, where Balinese high school students are given the space to actively engage with topics of

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sustainability, they do not only create their own languages of sustainability but also challenge hegemonic discourses.

Keywords

Denpasar • Bali • Balinese culture • Student discourses • Sustainability and education • Sustainability discourses, scalar politics and power • Teaching and learning sustainability • Urbanization and agricultural land loss • Youth and education

1 Introduction: Sustainability in Bali - A Matter of Cosmic Harmony?

Where is Bali Headed? Fears of Sustainability on an Island of Cosmic Harmony. In the cartoon above (Fig. 1), taken from the Balinese youth magazine *Bog Bog*, a traditional Balinese chariot, steered by a Hindu character resembling the Mahabarata hero Arjuna, is being hijacked by a cowboy. Visibly taken aback, Arjuna can only look on, as the whip-swinging foreigner sporting sunglasses and blue jeans cheers on Arjuna's chariot horse. The horse is donning a daring style mix of stereotype "Western clothes," complete with socks and tie. In a tongue-in-cheek way, the cartoon portrays a Balinese dilemma: how can the small Hindu enclave, located in the most populous Muslim country in the world with an economy depending 80 % on tourism (The Jakarta Post 2012), *sustain* its environmental, economic, and cultural integrity? Who chauffeurs Bali into which kind of future?

In 2004, hardly a day passed without the Balinese media reporting on this very issue – the term "Ajeg Bali" was coined and appeared in Balinese newspapers and



Fig. 1 Who chauffeurs Bali where? (Rik 2003)

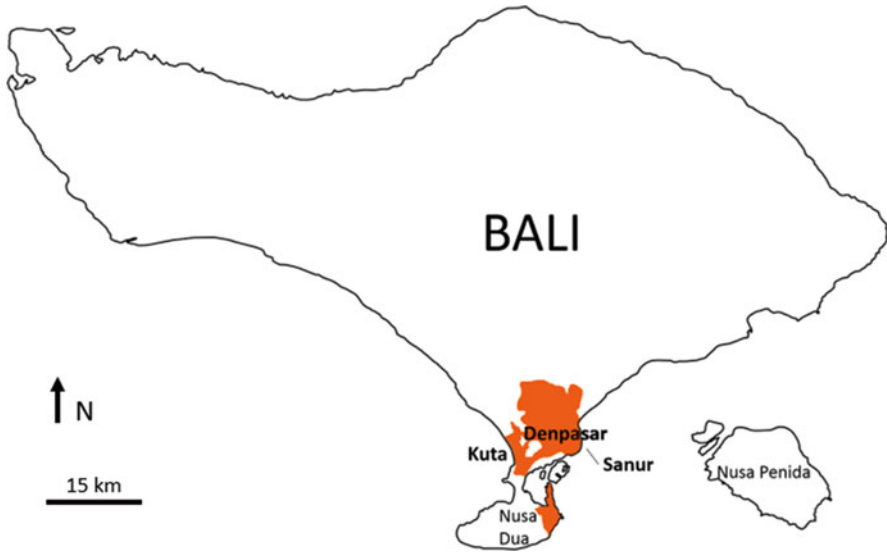


Fig. 2 Map of Bali – Denpasar and the urbanized south are marked in red

TV channels (Naradha 2004). *Ajeng* is a Balinese word that translates to “really,” “to stay,” or “sustained/sustainable” – “Really Bali!,” “Keeping Bali truly Bali!” respondents from governmental and nongovernmental backgrounds transcribed – and it reflects two impulses. One is to protect Bali from influences of modernization that deeply compromise its natural environments and cultural character. The other is to shield Balinese culture from foreign influence feared to be brought in by large numbers of immigrants, seen as a threat particularly since the Bali bombings in 2002 (Robinson and Meaton 2005).

Ajeng Bali emerged in response to very tangible problems: an alarming rate of urbanization and agricultural land loss, increasing numbers of immigrants from Java and further afield, and rates of air and water pollution that reflect both increasingly unsustainable lifestyles and a lack of effective environmental policies and waste management practices. With a population of just over 4 million in 2014 (as compared to 3.3 million in 2003) inhabiting an area of 5,561 km² (BPS 2014), Bali is the third most populated Indonesian province, after Central and East Java. In 2014, Denpasar occupied an area of 127.78 km² (BPS 2014) (up from 123.98 in 2003 (DIKNAS 2003)) and had a population of 863,000 (BPS 2014) (up from about half a million in 2003 (BAPEDALDA 2003)). Accounting for Denpasar and the adjacent areas of Kuta and Sanur, Bali’s urbanized south is home to more than a third of the island’s total population (Fig. 2).

Denpasar and Kuta alone generated 45 % of Bali’s 1.7 million m³ of rubbish in 2003 (BAPEDALDA 2003), while waste collection and management systems remain underdeveloped in 2014 and recycling facilities for plastic and cans do not exist. Other serious environmental problems include forest degradation and beach

erosion (BAPEDALDA 2003), with 82 % of Bali's 130,686 ha of forest classified as being in a critical condition in 2003 as a result of wood burning, illegal logging, and clearing (BAPEDALDA 2003 6). Areas of land under wet rice cultivation have been declining by almost 1,000 ha per year for years (Ashrama and Ingham 2002), threatening the traditional *subak* system of communal rice cultivation based on intricate water distribution methods (Lansing 1987, 2006). Over a third of Bali's population does not have access to clean water (The Jakarta Post 2012). All these numbers confirm Balinese fears that the islanders are struggling to create a future that is *ajeg*. However, there remain serious questions over the best ways to address Bali's future.

As a way to implement *Ajeg Bali*, the discourse often mentions Tri Hita Karana (THK), the Hindu concept of "three causes of happiness" based on Hindu holy books. THK outlines three relations of harmony: between humans and their God; between humans and other humans; and between humans and their environments (Ashrama and Ingham 2002), mirroring the striving for cosmic harmony so ever-present in Balinese daily lives and practices (Lansing 2006). Both *Ajeg Bali* and THK have long found their way into the educational sector. In November 2004, at the high school SMA6 in Bali's capital city of Denpasar, students from all over Bali, dressed in traditional Balinese attire, competed in an *Ajeg Bali* contest – performing works representing Balinese culture, including dance, text recital, and song (Fig. 3). Members of the education sector presented the event as a way to promote sustainability among young Balinese, while sponsorship came from the local media.

By 2013, the *Ajeg Bali* craze had faded, but daily newspaper articles about pollution, waste management, loss of agricultural land, and climate change were a reminder that sustainability remained high on the public agenda, with *Ajeg Bali* still receiving the odd mention. When reprompted about *Ajeg Bali* and THK in 2013, many teachers, school principals, and NGO workers interviewed in 2004 and 2005 confirmed the concepts' continued importance, but placed more emphasis on the slogan "Bali Clean and Green." The Balinese Governor's newly labeled provincial sustainability strategy is promoted in similar ways as previously *Ajeg Bali* – but, interestingly enough, when questioned about the concept, most Balinese were not able to describe what it really entailed. "Perhaps the clean-up and tree planting events sponsored by the Balinese government, universities and the Bali Post newspaper?," some of them guessed.

As sustainability remains a local concern expressed through different streams of rhetoric, this chapter explores how Balinese sustainability discourses sit within the context of global discourses of sustainability and education. Framing the scholarly debate on how sustainability should be integrated into education (and vice versa) and what role young people should assume in DESD, the chapter assesses how the international call for participatory spaces in education intersects with local institutional arrangements and practices of high school education. Examples of formal and informal teaching provide a local account of how global and local discourses of sustainability take effect in the educational sector, and how students learn about and respond to sustainability discourses, knowledge, and practices. The chapter then recounts the story of a participatory research conducted with Denpasar high school students aimed at creating spaces for Balinese youth to actively engage in



Fig. 3 Ajeg Bali competition at high school SMA 6 in Denpasar

sustainability discourses. The outcomes of participatory workshop programs and a participatory filmmaking project provide reflections of the languages and discourses Balinese high school students employ when given the opportunity to voice and explore their own sustainability discourses.

2 Local Sustainabilities Meet Global Discourses

It is noteworthy that Ajeg Bali, Tri Hita Karana, and Bali Clean and Green are local discourses that address questions of global significance, not least among them how we use our planet's resources, maintain our ecological integrity, conserve our natural

environments, and enable social and economic development for all countries. Sustainable development received much scholarly and political attention since first discussed in international fora in the early 1980s. After the World Commission on Environment and Development had coined the term “sustainable development” in 1987, the ratification of Agenda 21 in 1992 created further impetus to implement sustainable development policies at multiple scales of governance from local to global. Several follow-up conferences have reinforced this goal over the past two decades. The years 2004–2014 mark the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), an international push “to integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning” (UNESCO 2006, electronic source). The decade started after the UN General Assembly had proclaimed that “education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development” (DESD 2014, electronic source). Over the decade a range of activities and donor-funded projects were used to advance education for sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Regional Centers of Expertise have been coordinating education for sustainable development using both formal and informal channels, and efforts have been made to promote sustainability as integral to teaching and learning worldwide (DESD 2014). *How* this takes place and how international languages and concepts of sustainability intersect with local ones remains under-reported.

Researchers, and particularly geographers, have been interested in the spatial and multiscalar dimensions of sustainability and its discourses (Adger et al. 2001; Gough 2002; Kelly 2000; Mansfield and Haas 2006; Marston et al. 2005; Yencken 2000), contributing to debates about how best to understand this contested concept and its equally contested forms of implementation. Three lines of argument are discussed here to help place Balinese sustainability discourses in the context of global rhetoric:

Argument one: sustainability is a laudable, necessary, and unifying “global partnership ... based on common understanding of shared needs and interests” (UN 1997, p. 1). International sustainability strategies encourage people worldwide to think global and act local – making use of increased global connectedness in addressing local issues. The notion of sustainability as a “global partnership” resonates with the vision of the DESD, which advocates a global notion of sustainability education as a guideline for worldwide implementation.

Argument two: sustainable development smothers local wisdom. Several authors have described sustainable development as a “Western” agenda of conservative environmentalism, disguised in a “cloak of globalism” (Doyle 1998; Nygren 1999; White 1992). The argument here is that sustainable development is used to impose “Western” ideas of environmentalism on the “developing world” in ways that override local lifestyles and resource management systems, abusing political leverage – aid, trade, and treaties – as well as economic and financial dominance to achieve this goal. To return to the Bog Bog cartoon, Arjuna’s cart is being hijacked and a cowboy put in his place.

Argument three: Don’t sell our story as yours! – Our forms of development have always been local. According to this argument, “Western” ideas of sustainability

are stolen – they mimic and mock deep, longstanding, and sophisticated forms of knowledge that have engendered balanced and harmonious lifestyles among many indigenous cultures for centuries (Armitage 2003; Nygren 1999) – and are then sold on as derived from the West. For example, Balinese “traditional” land management, anchored in Hindu Balinese belief and practices, is described to have been “sustainable” well before development agencies pressured the Balinese to implement Green Revolution measures (Lansing 1987, 2006; Mitchell 1994a, b), which were later retracted for their detrimental environmental effects and replaced with notions of “sustainable agriculture” (and here one perceives connections with argument two).

These arguments encapsulate obviously far more complex and nuanced debates but serve to emphasize two important points. First, sustainability is not a clear-cut model with quantifiable indicators or guidelines but a debate that consists of various competitive and potentially conflicting discourses. Second, all three arguments engage notions of scale – for example, of the “local” and the “global,” as well as categories such as “indigenous” and “Western.” These discursive categories reflect the different interests that drive sustainability as a political project – as a global partnership or as a local sanctum, for example. The notion that many localities can serve “the global,” or that local knowledge is somehow more “sustainable” than global knowledge, attaches to spatial categories and geographical scales associations of power. How such power is effected in global and local sustainability requires a closer examination of discourse and power.

3 Sustainability Discourses, Scalar Politics and Power

Sustainability discourses make use of language in presenting “a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities” (Hajer 1995, p. 44). Discourses create boundaries of what can be thought and is deemed possible and appropriate in a society; they pitch normative frameworks and behavioral patterns of how sustainability should be lived (McGregor 2004). The production of discourses is neither neutral nor apolitical. Discourses can become “heavily policed cognitive systems” (Ghandi 1998, p. 77), and “language is the vessel that steers hegemonic ideas into ascendancy and perpetuates a particular vision of the world” (Rigg et al. 1999, p. 581).

In the three arguments outlined above, power takes effect in different ways. The global partnership model exemplified by story one does at least attempt to create a discourse of power *with* and *to* (following power typologies by Allen 2003 and Arendt 1958) change the planet through global effort. In argument two, power through discourse takes effect as domination – power *over*: global and hegemonic discourses are paired with economic and political rhetoric and strategies, and dominate local or “indigenous” livelihoods. The third story is a lamentation that multiscale models of power (where size matters) portray global ideas of

sustainability as more valid than and thus exercising power *over* local ones, even if such ideas simply regurgitate the latter. In Bali, such global discourses and languages of sustainable development were conspicuously absent from local media debates, public discourse, educational materials, syllabi, and formal educational contexts. In conversations, local responses most reflected argument three, referring to THK as a Balinese concept predating international notions of sustainable development. But rather than feeling threatened by global notions of sustainability, respondents suggested exporting THK to the world. An environmental officer at the provincial government level said that “Tri Hita Karana is already there in Bali, so why not build on this again and make it a global concept, as it is in fact globally relevant?” Similarly, a THK brochure reads,

[W]e are...confident that by implementing THK we will... be capable of safeguarding [the] local physical environment... [and] can take active part in resolving four global issues: environment, democratization, fundamental human rights, and intellectual rights (Ashrama and Ingham 2002, pp. 4–5).

Despite this rhetoric of local power *to*, an appreciation of dominance and “power *over*” is evident in the ways in which sustainability discourses were advocated *locally* by those in whom authority is vested. Specifically, sustainability discourses in Bali are respected because they are promoted in influential newspapers by “experts” from amongst those seen as “educated Balinese...the mouthpiece of an incipient Balinese ‘civil society’” (Picard 2005, p. 113). Among those elite are religious scholars talking about Ajeg Bali, or local politicians, scientists, and government representatives commenting on climate change and promoting “Bali Clean and Green.” Power as authority depends on recognition and subjection to figures of authority (Allen 2003), which in Bali includes members of the high caste priesthood, who produce often quite conservative ideological frameworks (Schoenfelder 2004).

Despite reproducing a rhetoric of cultural harmony, discourses such as Ajeg Bali and THK are culturally conservative and profoundly exclusionary. They portray sustainability as based on *Hindu* religious harmony only, to the implicit exclusion of growing numbers of non-Hindu immigrants to Bali. The narratives enforce dimensions of “inside” and “outside,” which have played a vital role in Bali’s history, as the island struggled to assert itself against outside cultural, economic, and geopolitical interests (Reuter 1999). A corollary of these cultural dynamics is that the harmonious values which appear in argument three – Balinese are united in their appreciation of long-standing, local, and sound practices of sustainable development and land management – hide the real politic that resides in interfaith and inter-racial engagements. The processes driving Balinese narratives of sustainability are a reminder that descriptions of sustainable and balanced local lifestyles facing “modern” invasion neglect the fact that local “tradition” is often an invented, contested, and shifting entity (Baviskar 2000; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Nygren 1999; Sundar 2000; Vickers 1989). But is the creation of local discourses reserved for Balinese authorities only? The following sections take a look at the involvement of

youth in sustainability discourse formation in the field of education, first considering theoretical debates and then moving on to the case of Bali.

4 Youth, Education, and Sustainability

At first sight, young people in Bali are conspicuously absent from the creation of public sustainability discourses, despite performing their suggested practices in educational settings – as seen in the example of the Ajeg Bali competition. However, given that sustainability is a concept intrinsically concerned with the future, involving youth in the formation of its languages, discourses, and practices today is portrayed as paramount in sustainability debates (Horton et al. 2013). Agenda 21, for example, identifies young people, who comprise almost 30 % of the world’s population, as key agents in sustainable development (UNCED 1992, 25.1). The DESD has enforced this focus on youth by promoting the integration of sustainable development into education systems worldwide. Depending on how such efforts are implemented, youth participation may remain merely a token, or become what Skelton (2007) calls *authentic* participation, creating real spaces for young people to contribute as active citizens to sustainability (Chawla 2002), both inside the classroom and reaching out to communities (Percy-Smith and Burns 2013). As Horton et al. (2013) emphasize, children and youth are often constructed as in need of adult protection, as represented and spoken for, or as victims of adult behavior. Thus, making young people active citizens and participants for sustainability may challenge firstly dominant discourses and cultural constructions of childhood (Duhn 2012; Skelton 2007), secondly perceived rights of youth to participate in democratic processes, and thirdly state politics that may use educational procedures to form students into state subjects (Parker 2002).

As global educational strategies “hit” classrooms in localities around the globe, they immediately become entangled with the institutional arrangements, operations, and policies of educational sectors that are closely tied to state politics (Jaskolski 2007). According to UNESCO, education for sustainability should be interdisciplinary and holistic, embedded in the whole curriculum, value driven, multimethod, and exercising a focus on participatory decision-making as well as critical thinking and problem solving (UNESCO 2006, electronic source). Problematically, this language reflects sweeping assumptions about institutional arrangements for education, as well as the scope and purposes of national and local curricula, and the axiology underpinning teaching philosophies and practices around the globe.

At the beginning of the DESD, authors have argued whether sustainability education could simply be added to existing subjects and curricula or be applied across *all* subjects and teaching (Summers et al. 2003), or if what was needed was “education *as* sustainability” – a process in which students would not only learn about but also *shape* and *construct* sustainability (Foster 2001). As research on the creative engagement of children in climate change debates has shown, “children are

highly capable of looking critically at local problems and coming up with creative solutions that their older peers may not have considered” (Stratford and Low 2013, p. 13). More recently, in questioning the impact of sustainability education on sustainable communities, Percy-Smith and Burns (2013, p. 335) have argued for schools to act as “intergenerational sustainable community learning and development centers” that provide students with opportunities to act as sustainability leaders and educators beyond the classroom. While these school models may be desirable, the implementation of such teaching and learning structures may conflict with existing educational structures, curricula, and pedagogical approaches in localities around the world, as well as differing levels of awareness, capacity, interest, and understanding of how to implement participatory methods and student-centered learning among teachers.

Moving beyond educational structures, what sustainability *knowledge is* being transferred and created at schools? One premise of the DESD is that a translation of global issues and rhetoric into local languages and cultures is both possible and feasible. However, as in the three arguments presented above, what is often considered “global” knowledge about sustainable development is not a series of facts that can be passed on from teacher to student. Environmental concerns such as climate change remain contested in international debates as they meet local interpretations of sustainability that follow their own political interests and power dynamics. So *what* sustainability should be taught in class? Recent studies have questioned the discourses and ethical frameworks underpinning the pedagogy of sustainability education (Laessoe 2010; Kronlind and Öhman 2013; Sumner 2008) and queried whether anthropocentric, neoliberal assumptions about free markets, economic growth, and globalization conveyed in education in “Western” contexts might fundamentally conflict with the idea of environmental conservation (Kopnina 2012; Jickling and Wals 2008). Laessoe (2010) argues that the DESD in Northern Europe has been shaped by the dominant discourse of “ecological modernization,” while other discourses are being strategically marginalized. Critical engagement with the languages and discourses emerging from the field of sustainability education in developing countries is much less present in academic debate. How can it be avoided that the DESD becomes a reflection of sustainability story number two? In the case of Bali, sustainability discourses appear localized in media representations – but how are such discourses shaping high school education? In considering education, which is laden with its own discourses, regulations, and practices, it becomes important to assess how local discourses sit with institutional frameworks of education on the one hand and with the global mission of sustainability education on the other (Jaskolski 2007).

In that light, this chapter explores Balinese notions of sustainability, focusing particularly on the ways in which such notions are used in high school education. How sustainability is taught and learned and how young people relate to sustainability discourses within and outside the classroom are questions that drove 12 months of participatory action research carried out with junior and senior high school students in 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2013 in Bali’s capital Denpasar. The qualitative research methodology included classroom observations; in-depth

interviews with government officials, school principals, teachers, students, and NGO workers; and an interactive workshop program carried out with high school students. What follows is a local account of sustainability education as experienced in formal and informal education in Denpasar, as well as the documentation of a participatory experiment that tells a new story of local sustainability.

5 Teaching and Learning Sustainability in Bali: Formal and Informal Approaches

In 2004, environmental education in Denpasar was not part of the newly introduced high school curriculum for public high schools, known as the *Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (KBK)*, or curriculum based on competence, which was still in place in May 2013. (Such competence is based on knowledge, capacity, independence, creativity, health, character, piety, and citizenship (DEPDIKNAS 2004). Education seeks to convey the practical skills, competence, and attitudes that students require to successfully cope with the demands of changing life and work circumstances in an increasingly “technicised” and “globalised” Indonesia.) Some subjects offered as electives were vaguely related to sustainability education, while in core subjects such as geography and biology students would learn about ecosystem processes that are also relevant to sustainability but which may not be couched in such terms. The model syllabus for the subject of geography, for example, contains units on the topics of environment, ecosystem, and development. As an indicator of standard competence in geography, this syllabus refers to students’ ability to “describe the quality of environment and development” (DEPDIKNAS 2003, p. 63). Students are expected to “analyze the limits of ecology in development” and “provide an example for interactive networks of environmental elements (socio-bio-physical).” Under the umbrella of natural resource use, students learn about “eco-efficiency” and to “evaluate the ways of using natural resources according to environmental aspects and in a sustainable way” (DEPDIKNAS 2003, p. 63).

It is noteworthy then that Indonesian translations of the concepts of “sustainability” or “sustainable development” – *pembangunan berkelanjutan* and *pelestarian lingkungan* – did not feature prominently in the national model curricula or syllabi. While the word “sustainable” emerges on single occasions in different contexts (e.g., in relation to “resource use”), none of the syllabi included a module that positioned “sustainability” as a concept or global debate. The same was true for most textbooks teachers were presented. Only a single geography schoolbook scanned in a bookshop featured a page explaining the concept of sustainable development as defined in global sustainability discourses. All in all, the “global partnership” of sustainability remains largely undertheorized in the national curriculum, which was surprising, given that the language of sustainable development had made its way into Indonesian policy and rhetoric at the time (BAPEDALDA 2003; BAPEDALDA and PSLUW 2004).

In 2004, the local Balinese curriculum, devoted to regional subjects such as Balinese language and art, featured an elective called environmental education.

It includes learning goals such as identifying different types of trash, recycling, composting, biodiversity, and renewable energy. In practice, this course was often offered as an extracurricular activity focusing mainly on outdoor and camping skills rather than on explicit discussions about the concept of sustainability – although the aforementioned capacities often engender strong respect for the integrated realities of life, which is an idea central to sustainability. The local curriculum that came into effect in 2010 required first year students of some high schools to take an environmental education module that contains sessions on environmental processes, pollution, food additives, the Balinese traditional rice cultivation system, and planting knowledge. Interestingly, the subject outline for “environmental education” in the 2004 local curriculum was explicitly based on the concept of THK. Its “standard competence” statement describes environmental education as a “program for school development in the domain of environment by applying the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana” (DIKNAS 2004, no page numbers). The “basic competence” subcomponents for this elective are erected on the three pillars of THK, the relationship between humans and God; amongst humans; and between humans and the environment (DIKNAS 2004).

Teachers often immediately referred to THK when asked about sustainability. They saw THK as a Balinese basis for sustainable living and cosmic harmony, a part of all teaching. Although the KBK curriculum requires at least 15 min of practical activity per class, classroom teaching in the many lessons attended at various schools in 2004 was mainly top-down, a tendency Parker (2002) also observed in Bali. Teachers often present knowledge and students repeat the most important points of the lesson. The author’s field notes, taken during a biology class in Denpasar in October 2004, read,

“Is anything still unclear? Did someone get this answer wrong?” the teacher asks. No reaction on the part of the students. The middle-aged physics teacher decides to go over the material again, addressing the whole class: What is needed is an “A.?” “TOOOM” a choir of students replies; what we need here is “Su?” “GAAAAR”, “So the taste is sw?” “EET!”. This game of finishing sentences is so addictive that from time to time I find myself tempted to join in with the students. Sometimes the teacher also gives the students a choice, such as: “An atom or a molecule?” This evokes a loud univocal answer of either “ATOOM” or “MOLECUUUULE”. Rare questions that require longer, more complex answers wreak havoc: students answer simultaneously, but not univocally, which creates a confused murmur of which not a single word is audible. The teacher still decides the students have answered correctly and comments on the murmur with “yes, right”.

However, a geography lesson witnessed at SMA6 in 2013 showed that more interactive ways of teaching seem to be appearing. The lesson involved a group sustainability assessment during which students were asked to think through the environmental, social, and economic issues related to mobile phone use – an exercise that reflects the three pillars many sustainability models integrate and that resonates with the participatory teaching approaches advocated through both DESD and the KBK.

As far as “all of school” approaches to sustainability go, at most schools this was not understood as weaving sustainability content into all teaching and learning or as engaging youth in the critical assessment of sustainability as a concept. Most Denpasar high school principals and teachers interpret sustainability as cleanliness, as keeping the school grounds green and tidy and having a school garden. Students participated in school-wide cleaning exercises and cleanliness competitions, and the first thing presented during my school visits were traditional herb gardens with Balinese medicinal plants. Throwing garbage in a bin rather than on the ground was one of the major school-wide educational messages. While disciplinary practices such as sweeping and tidying up classrooms and school spaces loomed large in environmental and sustainability education at these schools both within and outside formal lessons (Fig. 4), there was not much space for students to critically explore sustainability or to develop a future vision of a sustainable Bali.

During revisits of the same schools in 2013, some had been furbished with recycling bins for source separation and compost facilities for garden waste. Three Denpasar schools, among them two high schools, had become members of the national program *Adi Wiyata Mandiri*, which promotes schools as environmental leaders and requires both the integration of environmental topics across the curriculum and formalized reporting on environmental activities. While a full assessment could not be conducted in 2013, there seemed to be at least an impetus for taking more of an “all of school” approach to environmental education, promoting some of the environmental activities informal educational approaches have been organizing for over a decade.

While many NGOs in Bali engage in environmental education, two NGOs focus specifically on environmental education at schools: PPLH Bali (“Pusat Pendidikan Lingkungan Hidup,” or “Environmental Education Centre”) and GUS (“Gelombang Udara Segar,” or “A Wave of Fresh Air”). PPLH runs two separate projects involving high school students. The first one, the “Green Team” program, engages students from different Denpasar high schools in environmental workshops delivered at the NGO’s education center as well as sporadic environmental events, such as beach cleanups or mangrove planting. The second program, the “Urban Green School” program, delivers basic environmental knowledge and skills at primary schools around Denpasar on a weekly basis. Students learn how to compost, make recycled paper, cultivate plants, or measure water quality. In 2013, PPLH Bali was still running school programs as well as facilitating a council of school teachers that worked on integrating environmental content into schoolteaching.

The approach to environmental education taken by the NGO GUS, sponsored by the surfing industry in Kuta, was a fundamentally different one. This NGO tours Balinese schools with a 1.5-h teaching module on waste management that was delivered to over 10,000 students around Bali between 2002 and late 2004 and continues on a sporadic basis depending on sponsorship availability. The presenters start the sessions by assembling several classes (sometimes the entire school) in front of a TV set, kicking off each session with a 20-min film shot at locations all over Bali and acted out by the presenters themselves:



Fig. 4 Students sweeping the school yard and gathering for a clean-up drill

Opening pictures of clean water taken straight from a spring in the central Balinese highlands induce feel-good sentiments about a clean Bali. However, this picturesque scenario is quickly disturbed by sequences of shots of urban environments destroyed by pollution: rivers covered in garbage, dead animals floating on rivers next to people washing their dishes, and birds trying to free themselves from plastic bags; all accompanied by the drumming beat of heavy metal music. The film is edited with extremely fast cuts, like a music video clip. The main storyline involves two young couples (the males are actually played by the two surfers the NGO employs as school presenters), driving around in a trendy convertible, trying to locate a quiet spot for what Indonesians refer to as pacaran (dating). Each time the couples are starting to get cosy, they are distracted by some environmental disaster (a man throwing rubbish down the cliffs onto their heads, the excruciating stench of

a nearby rubbish tip, etc.). Finally, after having fled the third location in horror, the girls accept an offer to hop into the car of two new wooers. The surfer guys are left behind woman-less and conclude that a destroyed environment does not help with finding a girlfriend. The film closes with Indonesian celebrities, such as MTV presenters, singers and actors, as well as surfers from several countries (interviewed at Kuta beach), asking the viewer to 'keep Bali clean'.

The presenters follow up on the shock and awe the film usually generates with relaxed and simple questions such as: “What is garbage? Do any of you know what garbage is?” “What different types of garbage are there?” “Can you name any examples?” “What are we not supposed to do with garbage?” Students receive small prizes for answering questions correctly and are given handouts outlining sustainable behaviors, for example, practicing the three Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle). One central message involves three rules for what “we should not do” with waste: “Don’t burn it!”, “Don’t throw it “a . . . -” “ROUND!” (GUS also employed the “repeat after me” game), “Don’t bury it!”

Such informal approaches to sustainability education in Bali deliver “international” knowledge of environmentally sound behaviors that can be found in environmental education programs around the world. Local discourses such as Ajeg Bali or THK did not play a role in these NGO programs. In this sense, informal environmental education in Bali fills some of the educational gaps in the formal curriculum. However, while engaging much more in the way of hands-on approaches to education than do formal teaching methods, at least in the case of PPLH, neither of the programs encourages students to think *critically* about the concepts taught and debated, or to create youth languages of sustainability. Is this shift possible?

6 Student Discourses of Sustainability: A Participatory Research Project

The participatory workshop program forming part of this research was conducted with a total of around 60 junior and senior students from Denpasar, aged between 13 and 17, partly in collaboration with PPLH. All students attended public high schools, but represented middle-class, almost exclusively Hindu urban family backgrounds of varying Balinese castes. While some programs took place in the classroom, others were conducted as part of PPLH’s Green Team program and one was carried out with a high school’s extracurricular group of nature lovers. The program was conducted partly in English and partly in Indonesian and engaged students through role plays, poster making, mental mapping, photo voice, debates, the assessment of pop culture and media such as comics, student-led field research, and participatory video making. These methods were used to elicit what kinds of discourses of sustainability students would employ when asked about environment, culture, and life in Bali both now and in the future. While the first part of the coming section will report on the workshop program, the latter section introduces the

participatory video making program and its creative output, the documentary “*Segi lima – sisi lain kotaku*” (“Pentagon, another side of my city”).

6.1 Student Workshops: What Does Sustainability Mean to You?

The workshop participants related to the future in profoundly localized ways. In their visions for Bali in the year 2020, most students described the island as a beautiful, desirable place to live, with a picturesque landscape, cultural richness, and friendly people. Some spoke in favor of preserving Bali the way they saw it in 2004 as a base level for long-term sustainability. Others perceived problems with Bali’s present state, for example, in terms of intensifying levels of pollution or the loss of Bali’s natural and cultural assets, and thus expressed a desire for the long-term improvement of Bali’s environments. The teenagers described connections between processes of environmental destruction and human and economic activity in Bali, but did not link the transformations and challenges Bali faces to those at national or global levels. In their responses the students portrayed themselves as first and foremost “orang Bali” (Balinese) rather than global citizens, and local rather than global concerns dominated their responses.

The threat of losing Balinese nature and culture, which so prominently features in local discourses such as *Ajeg Bali*, was also voiced in student workshops, especially in the context of urbanization, destruction of agricultural land, and the transformation of space. “I hope the trees and rice fields [will be] more than building, restaurant, hotel,” one girl wrote in her vision for Bali in the year 2020. Several students expressed through photo elicitation the view that the rice fields they loved spending time in – the boys particularly for playing with kites – were giving way to urban sprawl. One student from the junior high school SMP8 contributed to the workshop a comic that captures the rapid transformation of urban Balinese landscapes in a “tongue-in-cheek” way (Fig. 5). It depicts two children wearing Balinese attire and playing hide and seek in the rice fields, in view of Bali’s holy mountain Gunung Agung. Before the seeker has finished counting from 1 to 53, the rice fields have been bulldozed and turned into an urban landscape with skyscrapers, cars, and hotels. Rather than leaning against a tree, the seeker is now facing an electricity pole, while his friend is no longer crouching behind a bush, but barely hidden behind the cart of a street vendor selling “*Es Cendol*” – a popular cold drink sold on Indonesian streets.

Students noticed not only the changes in natural but also in cultural and spiritual environments. The teenagers showed pride in Bali’s culture and its integrity, and cultural sustainability formed an integral part of their imaginaries of the future. One student stated, “I wish that by the year 2020 Bali will be still beautiful and the customary law will be sustained properly. The young people speak the regional language, so it will be better known.” Her friend explained, “I want the culture in Bali don’t be lose. But now teenagers not care with Bali’s culture. Though the culture in Bali is important and interesting.” Another student added, “I hope that traditional arts in Bali will be protected.” The students showed a sincere care for the practice of



Fig. 5 Hide and seek in a rapidly changing landscape (produced by student in the workshop program)

Balinese customs, ceremonies, and language, and worried about their possible disappearance – a concern that emerges strongly in the *Ajeg Bali* discourse of “keeping Bali truly Bali.” The teenagers were familiar with the catch phrase and used it in their own visions for sustaining Bali’s culture: “I wish that in the year 2020 Bali will be really *ajeg* and will be sustaining its arts from the ancestors. I wish that Balinese will keep on using Balinese language or the language from the various regions.” Students independently engaged the term “*Ajeg Bali*” and held a positive, almost conservative attitude in regard to Balinese culture.

The teenagers identified spiritual harmony and balance as main components of cultural and environmental sustainability in Bali, mirroring the rhetoric of THK. Most showed a sincere interest in and concern for religion and stated that spirituality

formed a central part of their everyday lives. Both Hindu and Muslim students pray several times a day, at home and at school. In the mental mapping and photo voice exercises they exhibited deep awareness of the spiritual and sacred places around them, such as temples and sacred trees. One student poster portrayed the idea of balance between God, the student's life, and Bali, bearing close similarity to visual representations of THK. The students mentioned Balinese customary law and traditional concepts such as THK as regulators for the daily practices that sustain spiritual balance and ultimately sustainability. Customary law "forges important connections between environment and culture," some students established during a small group discussion about Balinese culture, while another group maintained that "cultural and spiritual institutions and practices (such as the *subak* irrigation societies or cremation ceremonies) are regulated through the concept of THK." When asked when THK was practiced, the students unanimously shouted "every day!" One girl elaborated that through prayer and offerings harmony in the relationship between people and God was re-established on a daily basis. Thus, the concepts of both *Ajeg Bali* and THK featured strongly in students' debate and conceptions about culture, environment, and future cosmic harmony.

"Modernization" and "change" were viewed by workshop participants as processes that cause disharmony and "imbalance." The tendency to transform Balinese landscapes to cater for tourists' needs was one issue the teenagers perceived as "unbalancing" Balinese life. Many students were quite critical of the "negative influence of foreign culture in the lives of Balinese society," especially where seen as inappropriate in light of Balinese cultural traditions. The fear that the influence from "outside," as represented by immigrants, tourists, and foreign culture, might destroy the integrity and harmony "inside" is a concern reflecting and reinforcing the *Ajeg Bali* discourse. *Ajeg Bali* and THK construct a "Balineseness" based on Hindu Balinese religion and make universalist claims about its alleged cross-religious and -cultural relevance. Their advocates indirectly promote an adversary attitude toward "non-Balinese" outside influence, with animosity often directed at immigrants who are accused of exploiting the local economy while showing insufficient care for Balinese environments. In their workshop contributions, some students reproduced this fear of "outsiders":

I hope the government will forbid people coming to Bali because they want to work for example as petty vendors...and other small businesses, because in Bali it is...already crowded enough. Normally those who are not native Balinese do not care about the environment in Bali and only look for their own profit.

One teenager stated, "Immigrants are often on the streets. Beggars can cause conflict. Are they poor or not? The newspaper says they are not poor. They can work daily, but they are lazy." Some students saw increased immigration to Bali as a threat to the sustainability of those values they had emphasized as worth sustaining in their visions of Balinese futures. Such exclusionary aspects of the *Ajeg Bali* discourse only emerged in the shorter-term discussions of the workshop programs.

The participatory video making project, presented in the following section, approached sustainability and foreignness in a very different way.

6.2 The Odd Side of the Pentagon: Speaking Sustainability Differently

In a separate student program, the Green Team, a group of eight students representing different public high schools in Denpasar, was given 3 months to produce a short film about any topic they saw as a pressing issue of environment and future in Bali. After a 2-day introductory workshop facilitated by a Balinese film director on the basics of cinematography, the group was free to develop their own ideas for their film project, including subject and filming location. The team decided that the film should portray the lives of a community of immigrants inhabiting an urban slum on the banks of a Denpasar river. For the film title, the team chose the metaphor of a pentagon, “Segi Lima” in Indonesian, as the “odd side” in this geometrical figure (the “tip” of the pentagon) differs from the other sides – this title implies “otherness,” but also the process of looking at things from a different angle.

The group’s output, *Segi Lima*, portrays the stark differences between livelihoods in Bali – the reality of a socioeconomically marginalized community dwelling only hundreds of meters away from the fancy icons of middle-class Denpasar, the shopping malls, cinemas, and tourist attractions that reflect images of globalized modernity. “Kampung Java” or “Java village” is a village of immigrants from the island of Madura, close to Java. Just before Indonesian independence, these immigrants were allocated land by the *Raja* of Badung to settle on the river banks of the Tukad Badung. Kampung Java is stigmatized for being “different,” and is one of the few places in the overwhelmingly Hindu city where one can see veiled women and hear the *azan*’s call to prayer five times a day. The first visits to the filming location were confronting for the teenagers who all grew up in wealthier parts of the city, and one girl described the slum as a “black spot in the city of Denpasar, the opposite of the glamour and beauty of the city.” However, after the film team had developed the script and shot list, had practiced to use the camera equipment, and shooting in Kampung Java had finally began, the team quickly adapted and warmed to “their” filming location. Before long, the students knew their way around the village and had mastered its peculiar access across a shaky bamboo bridge. The teenagers were excited to pick the “perfect” location for each shot, became comfortable approaching local residents for interviews, and were constantly followed by a crowd of fascinated children (Fig. 6).

The film crew started to feel empathy for the local residents, who depend on the waters of the Badung River for most basic daily activities – the river facilitates bathing, washing clothes and dishes, and functions as both a “free swimming pool for the kids,” according to one respondent, and a sewerage system. Most garbage



Fig. 6 Interviewing the children of Kampung Java for “Segi Lima”

produced in the community is thrown into the river, “because it is faster and easier; seldom people take the garbage to the street or to the garbage bin; that is rare,” a resident explained. Garbage accumulation and pollution of the Badung are two of the most pressing environmental problems in the village, and, according to government authorities, the river is more polluted than most other Balinese rivers (BAPEDALDA and PSLUW 2004). In the heart of the shanty town, most free spaces are covered in plastic waste, and canals leading into the river are clogged with garbage; foaming substances linger here, bubbling up as the water runs through them. Several scenes in the film portray the problems of waste management and pollution: children playing amongst piles of plastic waste; a chicken roaming a large area covered in plastic bags in search of food scraps; a boy angrily throwing a stick into the fire that burns away atop a mountain of garbage (Fig. 7).

Adult residents expressed great concern about pollution. According to a resident, interviewed while fishing in the river, the water used to be clean but was now already “coming down dirty” because of pollution further upstream, exacerbated by the behavior of locals. His hope for the future was for “the river to be really clean, just that.” The children of Kampung Java seem largely oblivious to the environmental pollution of their living environment, cheerfully bathing in the river on a daily basis (Fig. 8).

One major theme *Segi Lima* addresses is poverty and its consequences for quality of life, life choices, and environmental sustainability. Instead of just “difference,” the film examines the *interconnectedness* between poverty, the livelihoods of Kampung Java residents, and pollution of the Badung River. Local residents are shown as both victims of environmental degradation and active polluters. After having witnessed



Fig. 7 Stills taken from *Segi Lima* showing impressions of the garbage management problems in Kampung Java

the incredible resilience of the population, the students debated how to present life in Kampung Java so as not to portray the slum as a place of misery and despair (Fig. 9). One student asked during an editing workshop, “Really, is this a community of . . . sad and unhappy citizens?” The students refrained from using narration and let residents describe their lives. Aware of the danger of reinforcing the stigma of cultural difference attached to the shanty town, they decided to refer to the location as an “anonymous quarter” of Denpasar.

The film unsettles some of the foundations of “hegemonic” languages of inside and outside “Balineseness” produced by local sustainability discourses. Although the “stigma” of Kampung Java may have resulted in the students choosing this location for filming in the first place, the link between cultural or religious difference and environmental negligence or threats to sustainability, which feature in hegemonic local discourses of sustainability, was never made by the overwhelmingly Hindu film team. In *Segi Lima*, those lumped together as the “outsiders” in local



Fig. 8 Kampung Java kids enjoy their “free swimming pool”



Fig. 9 Children proudly presented their village (*left*), while boys played with a burning coal ball, drenched in petrol, a “tradition” in the shanty town (*center and right*)

discourses of sustainability become people with faces, stories, and concerns not so very different from those of Hindu Balinese. “Outside” and “inside” are constructed along different lines in the immigrants’ own discourses. The community of Kampung Java sees itself as Balinese and their river as a life source that forms part of Bali’s ecosystem. Residents are far from unaware of, or indifferent to, environmental pollution. Thus, the student documentary provides a new, immigrant perspective on the discourse of Balinese sustainability. It ends with a call to all Balinese to protect their shared environment: “What they hope for is not an issue that is removed from all our lives. Rivers are the water source for the citizens of Denpasar. Do we care whether our rivers are polluted?” One student affirmed, “The message contained in the film *Segi Lima* is that every person should always be aware of/take care of the state of the environment around them, so that we do not see things from one angle alone. . . , to open our mind to see the situation of other people.”

Conducting a sustainability project in a long-term and intensive fashion gave the students the confidence to object to those discourses they are familiar with through education and the local media, and to use their own experience of Kampung Java as a reference. The film making thus helped create a language of sustainability more inclusive than local “hegemonic” discourses. When launching the film at the NGO’s headquarters in front of 50 fellow students, teachers, and relatives, the film team engaged the languages they themselves had created and adopted during the filming process. The team now had experiences with script writing, filming, directing, and editing they could fall back on, but also self-gathered knowledge of Kampung Java, its environmental dilemmas, and the hopes and fears of its residents. In responding to criticism that the film may be a little too “black and white,” the youth film director confidently responded,

The film is black and white to some extent, but so are the discrepancies between rich and poor in Denpasar. We wanted to highlight these problems and show them to people who may turn a blind eye on them. We wanted to show that, ultimately, we are all responsible for looking after our environment.

Through the activities of the intensive action research project, the film team members found space to exercise power *to* rewrite local discourses of sustainability and to add their own languages to local debates. The film project created participatory spaces that were not entirely prescribed by adults, and confirmed that “[y]oung people’s participation is more meaningful and effective if they have initiated, and therefore own, the ideas and projects themselves” (Percy-Smith and Burns 2013, p. 328, referring to Percy-Smith 2009). As an experiment with education *as* sustainability in a country where student participation in education is still limited, this longer-term and intensive educational model in which students were given room to shape their own sustainability projects was more effective than the 2-hour workshops. It was successful in forging student-based discourses and practices of sustainability, and in creating openings and possibilities for new and different inclusions.

7 Conclusion

Sustainability is a concept that reflects the worries of Balinese about the future of their island, and a global concern that has triggered a series of discourses and policies at international, national, and local levels. The rhetoric of sustainability, as shown in this chapter, offers a multitude of discourses that employ languages of relevance, geographical scale, and authenticity to effect power – power *with* as well as power *over*. As a critical examination of Balinese sustainability discourses has shown, power as dominance or authority is not only found where scalar politics portray the global as larger than the local, but in the way local discourses are produced, shaped, and advocated.

This chapter explored the types of sustainability discourses, knowledge, and languages employed in high schools of Bali's capital Denpasar. While the DESD aimed at integrating sustainability into teaching and learning in localities across the globe, the story of sustainability at Balinese high schools shows that the translation of global concepts into localities worldwide is not as straightforward as DESD rhetoric may imply. Global knowledge of sustainability is a set of contested and sometimes conflicting discourses, and so are local ones. Moreover, international concepts of sustainable development meet a complex apparatus of locally existing discourses and concerns, as well as preexisting educational infrastructure and practices that may not allow for the critical engagement with questions of sustainability that the UN may have envisaged.

The story of high schools in Denpasar shows that international definitions of sustainability are much less represented in formal teaching and learning than are local discourses. At the same time, neither local institutional practices nor informal teaching efforts provide youth with much of a space to explore notions of future and sustainability in critical or creative ways. The experimental nature of a participatory workshop program, providing Denpasar high school students with the space to question and discuss sustainability and to create their own visions and languages of sustaining Bali, enabled both a reinforcement and rewriting of local discourses. While global concepts did not play a significant role in the way youth imagined a sustainable Bali during the workshops, the longer-term and intensive program of participatory film-making gave students greater opportunities to question and rethink local notions of a sustainable Bali – refraining from languages of cultural conservativeness and exclusion, and creating a discourse of collective environmental stewardship.

For the valuable quest of advancing sustainability efforts worldwide, this Balinese experience has several implications. Sustainability means different things in localities around the world, and although concerns about environmental and cultural integrity might share similarities at local and global levels, local discourses might enjoy much more immediate relevance in local educational settings than global ones. If sustainability education is to enjoy a global push, then institutional mechanisms need to be put in place that allow for the integration of locally relevant knowledge and discourses into teaching and learning – as it was done with Bali's local curriculum. Moreover, if education is to be a space where young people can create

languages and models of sustainability in critical and creative ways, then practices of teaching and learning around the globe have to allow for such openings. Thus, educating for sustainable development, especially in participatory, inclusive, and “all-of-school” ways may require much larger restructurings of teaching and learning processes than can be done in the course of a decade. Nevertheless, the heightened attention on education the UN Decade has generated is an important step toward making such changes, as long as local stories from around the world are allowed to shape the very foundations of this global effort.

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Engaging Young People in Climate Change and Sustainability Trails: Local Geographies for Global Insights

8

Elaine Stratford, Nel Smit, and Jenny Newton

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Abstract

This chapter considers how spatial and place-based knowledge may provide young people with confidence and competence to address challenges such as unsustainable development, biodiversity loss, and climate change, and to do so from the dynamic vantage point of their “patch” or locale. A key assumption is that for such ends, which foster an ethic of care, academic geographers and universities *should* engage with young people and others who touch their lives. One mechanism for such engagement is the campus interpretive trail – a purposeful walk through university grounds exploring different themes with a view to transform

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the walker, designer, and path walked. Here, the authors report and reflect on three such trails they developed at the Sandy Bay campus of the University of Tasmania, Australia. The trails highlight the deeply integrative capacities of geography and education for sustainability (EfS) to support young people, teachers, parents, and guardians so they can respond with resilience and optimism to global challenges at local scales. The trails invite young people to think about how engaging in their everyday worlds may be done “caringly.” Theoretically, the chapter is indebted to Doreen Massey’s ideas about “outwardlookingness” and being alive to the world, and attention turns to those ideas mid-chapter with a view to engage with them by reference to the three interpretive trails. Insights from that discussion lead to a commentary on the importance of emotion, play, and place in the work reported here. This focus is warranted on two grounds: outwardlooking connections, of the sort Massey envisages, are emotional responses to living, and participation in interpretive trails is a playful and empowering way to use EfS to explore place in caring ways.

Keywords

Education for sustainability (EfS) • Interpretive campus trails • Resilience • Engagement

1 Introduction

Challenges such as unsustainable development, climate change, and biodiversity loss affect young people in different ways. In Australia and other parts of the anglophone world, education for sustainability (EfS) is partly intended to empower young people to address such challenges. Yet there is concern among educators that parents and guardians often have instrumental expectations of education and may not appreciate the promise that EfS holds for integrative thinking of the sort required to solve complex problems – skills their children will need. Thus, as Iris Duhn (2011, p. 22) observes, “watering the garden, going for long walks, preparing produce from the garden for lunch and talking about how much rubbish one lunch box contains” are experiential forms of learning, drawing on diverse forms of intelligence; yet those same experiences “may appear as wasted time to busy parents which, from their point of view, would be better spent learning the alphabet.” Duhn acknowledges the daunting challenges educators face in developing and embedding durable pedagogies and curricula that would support EfS. Logistical challenges also exist, among them gaining access to financial, human, and physical resources to take young people from schools into adjacent or less proximate environs. Nevertheless, Duhn (2011, p. 20) provides evidence that early, sustained, age-appropriate, applied, and frank engagement is important for “cultivating a potentially life-long disposition of care for the environment.”

From another standpoint, Paul Cloke (2002, p. 591) argues the need for “geographically sensitive ethics, and an ethically sensitive geography” to furnish the

conditions in which to flourish. As geographers and educators working in pre-tertiary and higher education, the authors here take up Cloke's challenge to act upon such ethics and geographical practices. Our rationale is that between young people and teachers in schools and academic geographers in universities is a productive ground that needs to be examined, walked over, and interpreted. Motivated by such ideas, this chapter presents and critically engages with evidence suggesting that academic geographers are well placed to demonstrate how EfS can be an ethical and political project for young people and those supporting them. Here, EfS is understood as "an overarching educational orientation that offers renewal, direction and enhancement for education as a whole" (Huckle and Sterling 1996/2014, p. xxiii). It is designed to be participatory, empowering, predicated on liberty, continuous over the life course, and committed to well-being and global citizenship. It is based on an understanding that education can perpetuate unsustainable systems, processes, and actions, and is founded on a desire to shift the status quo by supporting critical and transformative ideas and practices.

Such ideas and practices, we argue, can and should include universities as partners. These complex higher education organizations operate in wider communities of place and communities of interest, and young people and those who work with them are among universities' key stakeholders. Logically, given their disciplinary expertise and commitment to interdisciplinary and integrative praxis, academic geographers should have advanced capacities: to enhance how young people participate in social life in spatially alert ways; to influence engagement in place and across spaces, locales, and regions; and to give effect to caring explorations of critically important issues implicating how we live in the world. When grasped, these capacities are fundamental to EfS – as well as being ethical and intrinsic to higher education's mission, not least in terms of the contributions that geographers may make.

By definition, EfS is political and invites transformational change across generations, situations, and scales of engagement. This agenda assumes a broad understanding of *active* citizenship, of which Silvia Golombek (2006) describes four traditional types. The first, *jus solis*, refers to people born in a particular country. The second, *jus sanguinis*, names children of parents born in that country. The third, *naturalization*, is a process of acquiring citizenship by application and acceptance, where offered. The last form of citizenship involves reaching one's *majority*. Each form is characterized by certain rights and responsibilities, but Golombek notes that *none assumes* children are *actively* engaged in life in the capacity of P/political citizens (see also Stratford 2015). This observation applies to many adults; indeed, according to Duhn's analysis (2011, p. 14), such assumptions undermine a crucially important alternative, namely, "the active status of children in constructing and determining their social lives, the lives of others, and their surroundings." Such active citizenship among children and young people is fundamental to the aspirational outcomes of EfS.

Of note, a decade earlier than Golombek, Gill Valentine (1996) argued that the social construction of children as "human becomings" warranted critical engagement, and this idea was reenergized in Skelton's (2010, p. 146) argument that young people are "political actors now; they are not political subjects 'in-waiting'."

Skelton's critique of political geography and attendant case study of Montserratian youth usefully redrafts the contours of political engagement, both theorizing and demonstrating how young people are competent political actors at varied scales of engagement. On such grounds, and by reference to Massey's ideas about the shape of progressive politics, Skelton calls for more consideration of the ways in which young people engage in political life across scales. Massey's foundational work in this respect and her ideas about the need to foster "outwardlookingness" are central to the work here; these are elaborated in more detail shortly.

Arguably, the campus interpretive trail is one tool to foster engagements among universities, geographers, teachers committed to sustainability education, young people, and those who care for them. In general terms, such a trail is a purposeful walk through university grounds exploring a range of themes such as environmental processes and cultural heritage. The work reported here is about three such trails that had their genesis as a university community engagement program entitled *Where on Earth Am I?* All three trails – which focus on sustainability, climate change, and biodiversity – are affiliated with the discipline of geography and spatial sciences at the Sandy Bay campus of the University of Tasmania located in Hobart, the capital city of Tasmania, one of several states in the Australian federation. They also gesture to initiatives at the university to make substantive contributions to the well-being of the island's young people through the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment.

In deciding to create the three trails, the authors had – and retain – a pronounced sense that, as partners in EfS initiatives, universities need to support school teachers, young people, and parents and guardians as each considers and responds to pressing global challenges at local scales. That impulse is underpinned by a desire to foster resilience and optimism and to consider whether young people who know their "patch" develop personal, reasoned, politically engaged, and embodied ways of understanding that enable them to be both outwardlooking and caring (see Hart 1997/2008; Tsevreni 2011). On that basis, the authors worked with teachers and young people to develop the three trails on the Sandy Bay campus, aided by parents and IT support staff and by spatial and information technologies. In the process, young people were invited to learn and to lead others in learning. The background to the partnership – outlined immediately below – provides context for what follows. Among other things, it highlights the important influence of serendipity – the right policy setting, appropriate skills, organizational funding, and appetite for change; all of it is useful, but all of it is subject to change in ways that render more innovation less likely without recurrent budget support from university operations.

From 2004 to 2008, *Elaine Stratford* served as one of six theme area coordinators reporting to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, her role being to advance the knowledge base on community, place, and change (University of Tasmania and Theme Area Leaders 2011). From 2005 to 2013, she was also head of school. The full suite of her roles – academic geographer, theme area coordinator, head – informed the original idea for the trails. Stratford's intent was to engage young people in learning about geography and the university and actively involve them in

local EfS programs considering global challenges. That intent was also guided by her research on children, islands, art, and climate change (Stratford 2000, 2002, 2011; Stratford and Low 2013). It was additionally influenced by the advent of strongly visible national investments in EfS over the period – a momentum that formally recognized that universities are key sites (a) for educating oncoming generations of professionals, (b) for research-led teaching about sustainability and EfS practices across varied subject areas, (c) as critically important sites of engagement with local and more distant stakeholders, and (d) as large and complex organizations able to model sustainability practice in prominent fashion (Littlelady et al. 2013).

In the present case, several nationwide developments bolstered Stratford's initial impetus. *First*, during the term of the Howard Government (March 1996 to December 2007), there were extensive discussions about the policy context for university engagement and third-sector funding for it (Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee 2005). Arising from a partnership between the federal government and the Australian Research Institute for Education for Sustainability at Macquarie University, a national framework was advanced for sustainability education (Tilbury and Cooke 2005). That work considered many public and private stakeholders and posited the value to EfS of multilateral and intergenerational engagements. *Second*, the Rudd Government (December 2007 to June 2010) later made clear its intention to introduce into pre-tertiary settings across the states and territories a harmonized Australian curriculum (Ministerial Council on Education 2008). Included in that was, from 2010, a move under the Gillard Government to reintroduce geography as a subject in the humanities and social sciences and to establish sustainability as one of three perspectives to cut across all eight other specified learning areas. This chapter's second author, *Nel Smit*, was heavily involved in writing the national geography curriculum in her role as an educational consultant who had pioneered education for sustainability in Tasmania for over two decades prior to that time, and she brought that expertise to the development of the three interpretive trails. *Third*, over time the Rudd and Gillard Governments (the latter from June 2010 to June 2013) clarified several policies on climate change (Australian Government. Department of Climate Change 2010) and commissioned major studies on mitigation and adaptation to inform those frameworks. This federal reform process was at its height when the third author, *Jenny Newton*, was working collaboratively on significant nationwide investigations into the impacts of climate change on coastal environments. Like Smit, Newton had extensive experience as an educator in Tasmania and a strong skills base in global positioning systems (GPS) and geographical information systems (GIS), both of which informed the development of the trails.

The rest of this chapter is dedicated first to an in-depth discussion of the trails. Working from the case to a broader conceptual framework is a deliberate strategy to privilege the particular and learn from it, and in this case, it faithfully mirrors the process as it unfolded: our practical work in some measure was a precursor to the theoretical labors reported here. Thereafter, a close reading is made of Massey's (2005) arguments about the central importance of spatial relations to social life and ideas about outwardlookingness, and her encouragement to others to be alive to the

world and insights about the trails are elucidated. In the final section, consideration is given to the importance of emotion, play, and place in EfS and multilateral engagements across educational generations. This work is underpinned by two understandings: that caring is an emotional response to living and that engagement in interpretive trails is a way to use EfS to explore place in outwardlooking, playful, and caring ways.

2 So Where on Earth Am I?

Over a period of three years, the authors worked to co-create and engage others in the use of three campus interpretive trails designed to draw on the integrative features of geography and serve both the aspirational elements of EfS and the needs of young people. Work on the trails was predicated on a shared conviction that young people who come to know and nurture one or more locales or patches will – over the life course – extend their wisdom from home sites to school grounds and from neighborhoods and holiday spots frequently visited to other and more distant sites. By observing and self-reflexively immersing in the rhythms, mobilities, and geographies of place on a regular and sustained basis, young people are exposed to the wonders of the world. By knowing that these are interconnected, they see the situated and mobile effects of human and more-than-human interactions (Kraftl 2013; Rautio 2013a, b). From such understandings, over time young people should be able to recognize signs of flourishing and languishing and, in their caring demeanor, be impelled to respond and to invite others to respond. This conviction's basic substance and shape prompted the authors in late 2009 to ask what would happen by working from a specific locale – the university campus – and respectfully seeking engagement from young people in an EfS program. What might it mean to hold open hospitable spaces in which these youthful citizens, and those who work with them, are able to examine issues of multiscalar importance? What might happen if young people were invited to envisage different geographical imaginaries – different futures – in ways that, as they grow, they may be able to foster in material ways, not least by commitments to further education?

Thus, the team began working with Gill Ward, then a member of the university library staff responsible for exhibitions. Ward guided the team on the principles and practical elements needed to create, first, an interpretive trail through a building on the Sandy Bay campus in which most of the geographers work. Stratford then collected materials for display, purchased several large glass display cases, and curated an internal trail as a pilot. Three professional staff learned how to guide school groups around the trail and engage them in allied activities, and Stratford hosted activities developed by Smit and Newton, among them clue-based games that encourage playful geographical explorations (Fig. 1).

School groups were actively invited to the trail, and that process was assisted by the university's central engagement team. The non-replacement of personnel in geography meant that visits were later curtailed – a circumstance that points to the



Fig. 1 Hosting a discussion about how “octocopters” and other technologies that collect geographical data aid our understanding of the world (Source: the authors)

need for recurrent funding to embed projects such as these. Nevertheless, the framework for their reintroduction and replication remains and may be taken up in the future with the university now committed to being a Children’s University (see Children’s University Australia 2015; Children’s University UK 2015).

Certainly, while this internal trail was in operation, in inclement weather, it was ideal. Yet, on better days, the lure of alternative activities and more active engagement enticed the team to consider other trails out of doors that might enable do-it-yourself approaches using smartphones and other information and communication technologies. The first of three external trails was then developed on the Sandy Bay campus. *Where on Earth Am I?* was funded in 2010 by a University of Tasmania community engagement grant. Initially, the trail engaged grade five and six boys, teachers, and technical officers from a single-sex independent school, Hutchins, which borders the Sandy Bay campus. The team began working with a teacher at Hutchins, Patricia Knight, and she and colleagues suggested that we involve students who were undertaking information technology projects.

The introduction of wider opportunities for mobility was important for two reasons. First, as Rebecca Solnit (2000, p. 5) has remarked, walking, “ideally, is a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly making a chord.” Second, together the brain and body seem to hold “the trace of past actions including a trace of their contexts” (Massumi 1995, p. 91). We learn by walking and moving in spatial tracteries, some of which are too-rapidly dismissed as “just

walking” because they can also be, and often are, “vivid, vital, loved, playful, social experiences” (Horton et al. 2014, p. 94; Mikkelsen and Christensen 2009). [We were cognizant that those who might engage in the trails could experience embodiment in varied ways, including in terms of blindness or deafness or differential. However, during the period when the trails were organized by us, this matter did not pertain simply because none of the participants experienced the world in these differential ways or required specific assistance.]

The first outdoor trail engaged young people in creating an interpreted route around the campus, assisted by virtual technologies. The trail was intended to provide a clear method for inquiry-led, place-based EfS and to demonstrate an understanding of the merits of authentic engagement. It was hoped that it might optimize public access to existing and under-utilized sites of interest. It was agreed by the team that the trail should exemplify elements of the Australian curriculum in geography, including reference to sustainability as a cross-curriculum perspective. The trail should familiarize school groups, families, and others to the campus so that – especially with repeat visits – it might become “theirs” and provide ideas for possible pathways for further education. Finally, the trail should also act as a pilot that was extensible, flexible, responsive to need, and fun. When finished, the trail provided up to 2 hours of activities and was trialed with a small group of teachers and students from schools other than Hutchins. It was transformed into a UTAS sustainability trail app (Hutchins School 2009–2010) and trialed again using iPads donated by the university.

Modest formal evaluation from the trial period suggests that the trail fulfilled the aforementioned aims (see Stratford 2010) (Fig. 2). Commenting on the merits of the trail, one high school teacher noted that students developed a greater sense of the complexity and interdependency of living organisms and responded to learning about the environment more readily when “out looking at the features of the plants [and environs].” We were also told that the “use of equipment such as the GPS is a skill that students are increasingly using on their smart phones” and that the trail provided an ideal way to acquaint them with spatial technologies. The utility of the trail for teachers trying to grapple with the newly introduced Australian curriculum in geography was also appreciated, one teacher noting that “resources such as yours will be increasingly valuable to secondary school teachers.”

Smit and Newton (2014) then went on to do all the hands-on development work for the climate change trail and associated EfS exercises in the classroom in 2011 and completed the biodiversity trail in 2012–2013. The former was funded by the Tasmanian Government’s Climate Change Office via a scheme known as Earn Your Stars (a reference to a widely recognized system of energy ratings). It involved students from the neighboring school, Hutchins, and from Corpus Christi School, based in a distant suburb, who collectively dubbed themselves the Trail Blazers. Students also interviewed climate scientists about their academic research and streamed the video-recorded conversations on a purpose-built website. The trail and website were then formally launched with officials, parents and guardians, and teachers. The trail was later described in the following terms by one student, by then in high school; he had been involved in all three trails’ developments:

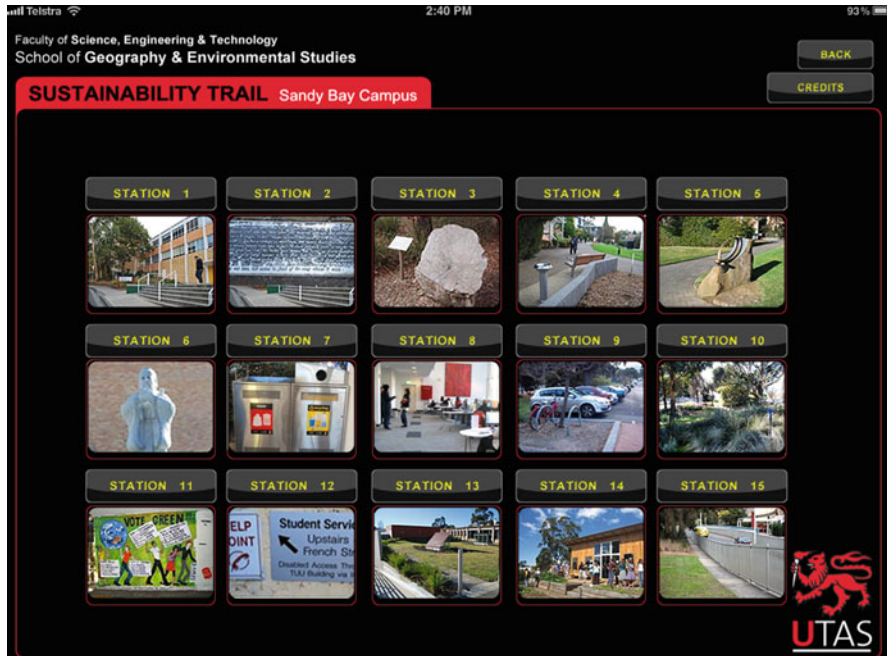


Fig. 2 UTAS sustainability trail app (Source: Hutchins School 2009–2010)

For me, working on the UTAS climate trail was a fantastic opportunity and experience. The fact that students were involved in the first place was unique and exciting for me. It was a great learning experience for all involved, and I learnt many things and many valuable skills, such as interviewing experience. The fact that much of it was student led was great for all the students involved; and correlates with the fact the trail is for the students, by the students. It was all handled professionally, and I am glad I was involved. (Dunbabin T, 2014, Feedback on the experience of building campus sustainability trails, 2 Aug [email], personal communication)

Adults also appreciated the transformational effects of the EfS program. The university's sustainability manager, Corey Peterson noted the following: "Being involved in the trails was a boon to my professional efforts . . . [and] allowed me to inform my management and others of . . . the ways in which the University can lead in mitigation and adaptation efforts" (2014, Feedback on the experience of engagement in campus sustainability trails, 3 July [email], personal communication). Peterson also noted that working with the young people was inspiring, not least on the basis that they "showed such an interest in the world around them" – a caring outwardlookingness to which we will return shortly.

The climate trail was developed as a playful treasure hunt that includes clues for young people to discover trail features relating to climate change. The trail took in a sundial, which enabled conversations about solar energy; the use on campus of recycling bins, which prompted discussions about the waste stream and carbon and

methane emissions; and a water fountain, which provided opportunities to discuss changing weather patterns.

These playful opportunities were carefully linked to other exercises enabling young people to discern how resilience – meant here as a powerful generalized capacity to bounce back – may be enabled in material ways in real places and then given effect. So, for instance, each student was invited to make a climate pledge related to his or her personal, home, or school life that was connected to reductions in energy use. This focus was one students identified from thinking about what they had learned in interviews with climate scientists and in conversations with Corey Petersen about certain features of the climate trail. In effect, students were invited to take their outwardlooking acts of walking around and conversing with others and then reflect on their own actions and the power of local initiatives – a kind of ethical double movement prompted by enriching mobile spatial practices. For example, one student, Emily, pledged to *put on a jumper [sweater] before putting on a heater, have shorter showers, and turn off appliances when she [was] not using them*. Another student, Dan, committed to *persuade his Dad to take energy saving seriously, never have a shower over 6 min, and build an energy-efficient house when he is older*. Such comments are fairly typical of the range gathered by teachers.

The infrastructure of the third trail already existed at the margins of the campus. Named the Thomas Crawford Trail after a benefactor who provided for the infrastructure in his estate, that trail had limited existing interpretation, and funds were secured from the Hobart City Council to develop a biodiversity trail that incorporated some “climate watch” activities and overlaid the Crawford facility. The purpose was to create a longitudinal EfS program with teachers, parents, and grade four students from Princes Street Primary School, a coeducational state school located near the university in the suburb of Sandy Bay. For 12 months, that work was linked with “ClimateWatch,” one of the programs of the Earthwatch Institute which does environmental monitoring around Australia. The young people were invited to record observations in different sites on the trail, using GPS, and after a year, they shared their findings with other students in a Kids Teaching Kids Conference, both on site and virtually, and involved a launch of the program with parents and the community. Finally, in 2013, five University of Tasmania computing students were enrolled in the project, meeting the team regularly to create a website and virtual resources for the trail (University of Tasmania 2013).

The biodiversity trail enveloped students, teachers, parents and guardians, and Hobart City councilors in a dynamic EfS program, developed in them seasonal and spatial awareness, and emphasized the benefits of the climate watch experience. The lead teacher at Princes Street Primary School, Fiona Officer, noted the following: The “students were engaged in authentic learning and looked forward to our regular visits to the site [and to being] guided in their experience by experts . . . using global [ICT] devices to support their learning” (2014, Feedback on the experience of engagement in Thomas Crawford Trail, 26 June [email], personal communication). She was excited about the year’s final event, an afternoon where the children “guided their parents and other adults around the trail noting any

changes which had occurred during the year”. While describing the experience as highly valuable for the young people, she also emphasized that “parents were extremely positive” about the program and learned a great deal.

The biodiversity trail built on, and complemented, *Where on Earth Am I?* and the Trail Blazers’ climate change trail in providing an educational and recreational resource, through natural bushland, for visiting schools, members of the local community, and the public. It fostered opportunities to interact with and monitor a natural environment, learn from scientists working on biodiversity issues, and participate in climate science. According to Smit, Newton, and the teachers, in terms of how students responded to the project – and going on Dunbabin’s retrospective feedback – these young people appeared to develop a sense of informed and active engagement. They also seemed to appreciate the power of having access to opportunities to work with university staff on university property, as we seek to demonstrate below.

3 Making Space for Outwardlookingness

Below, we now work to broaden the reach and analytical importance of the interpretive trail project. The intention is to make a substantive contribution to wider scholarly deliberations about the geographies of children and young people and their active and civic participation in education for sustainability, drawing on work by Doreen Massey and others.

In a touchstone work advocating *For Space*, Massey (2005) argues that too little in the way of nuanced theorizing informs ideas about time and – especially – about space. One of Massey’s exemplars is globalization – complex dynamics that turn “geography into history, space into time” (p. 5). Arguably sustainability, climate change, and biodiversity loss typify such dynamics – and concerned us in relation to the interpretive trails. Massey is critical of diverse, hegemonic, and unthinking political and social actions and effects of globalization that refuse the coeval status of the Other. This is because anyone so categorized is locked in a cosmology that “obliterates the multiplicities, the contemporaneous heterogeneities of space [and] ... reduces simultaneous coexistence to place in the historical queue” (ibid.). Specifically, Massey’s concern is for racialized others; nevertheless, the proposition made here is that her insights apply to a prevailing cosmology of young people as incompetent and dependent on adults, no matter their position in society (see James 1990). Consider in this respect, and as an antidote to such understandings, Hugh Matthews’ (2003, p. 3) inaugural editorial in *Children’s Geographies*, which acknowledges a “strong pedigree of studies,” oriented to understanding the “structural circumstances of childhood ... and the ‘milieus’ ... in which children are located” and other studies about “children as social actors ... in their own right.”

Massey’s own corrective to the aforementioned narrowly circumscribed cosmology advances the idea that space is relational across multiple scales and creates what she describes as a powerful sphere of possibility for different ways of being at one time. Indeed, without such “contemporaneous plurality,” *space as possibility* is

inconceivable and Massey therefore suggests that “we . . . imagine space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far . . . For the future to be open, space must be open too” (pp. 9, 12). Thus, encountering a sundial, a recycling bin, and a water fountain may enable those walking the university trails to sense what Massey might call simultaneity. At very least, those guiding the trails are able to suggest how the Sun’s power, the passage of time, the creation of material culture, the development of systems of production and consumption, the attendant generation of waste, and the use of resources all coalesce in a “patch,” a place, and a locale, and still resonate across multiple scales. In our experience, once that narrative is in train, children and young people are able to see how objects that are asynchronously created at a distance from each other then come into productive juxtaposition, a placing if you like. From there, they are quick to be open to and mobilize ideas about new ways in which it may be possible to live in the future.

The proposition advanced here is that such openness is not simply symbolic (and Massey is not suggesting that); rather it is performative and material. If academic geographers and others are to design and implement programs for EfS that enable participatory politics and engagement with young people, then such openness must be physical and affective. Hence the potential power of interpretive trails narrates not only what is but what might be, and that constitutes an outwardlookingness that is both spatial and temporal. Of equal and allied importance, Massey (2005, p. 30) sets out the grounds for a robust critique of the idea that space is equivalent to “representations of history/life/the real world.” Her reasoning is that this idea leads to the “most dismal of pyrrhic victories. For in the very moment of its conquering triumph ‘space’ is reduced to stasis. The very life, and certainly the politics, are taken out of it.” For Massey, the effect of such narratives is fatalistic, linear, and disempowering. Instead, she posits the need to think of space “as the sphere of a dynamic simultaneity . . . On the road map you won’t drive off the edge of your known world. In space as I want to imagine it, you just might” (pp. 107, 111). By extension, in working with young people, one might consider being less instructive and more interrogative. In ways appropriate to different age groups, one might ask, for example, how space and time are always already open to the possibility of change and invite young people to see how they can produce resilient rather than degraded futures. In principle, interpretive trails should provide a mechanism for such engagement and, in the examples we have discussed, that was the case.

Another crucial insight provided by Massey stems from extended discussions about the privatization of public space, new forms of enclosure and exclusion, and vesting of control for space management with those whose chief interests are private and commercial. Yet in Australia, outside of organized school visits to public universities, these sites are often experienced as no-go zones for young people. In short, universities tend either to be *terra incognitae* or (may seem) inhospitable for those not directly and instrumentally associated with them. Granted Massey allows that there is need to acknowledge the appropriateness of negotiated exclusions from certain spaces – restricting access dangerous

worksites, for example, or banning noisy activities from quiet places, for instance. Nevertheless, she ponders how “we might address the question of the social relations which could construct any new, and better, notion of public space” (pp. 152–153). Massey’s thinking in this regard is indebted to Jacques Derrida’s distinction between respect and responsibility and his work on *différance*, spacing, and heterogeneity. Her chief concern is with the coevalness of the Other and the need to disrupt hegemonic narratives about progress and history by invoking the respectful distance that one affords to equals and the responsibility to respond to them as such. This overarching idea of respect captures Massey’s idea that “we productively conceptualise space in terms of relations [and understand that] relations can only be fully recognised by thinking fully spatially . . . for there to be relations there must . . . be spacing” (p. 39). In the present case, this insight has meant recognizing that there are “spacings” between the authors and those with whom we sought to engage in the co-production of the three interpretive trails. Those spacings manifest, *inter alia*, as different genders, ages, stages, and capacities, but at every point, from opting in to the programs to their design and implementation, young people were full participants in the trails, as Tom Dunbabin’s retrospective feedback suggests.

Either way, Massey’s reflections on how to construct notions of public space seem well placed and applicable: in short, the proposition is that there are ways in which visits to universities by young people can advance EfS in ways that are enlivening, empowering, and informative. In fact, in Tasmania, these questions are *critically* important because, among all of its “siblings” in the federation, the island state has the greatest opportunity to significantly improve literacy, retention, and progression levels across all cohorts on the basis that it has among the lowest levels of educational attainment at the time of writing (see Australian Broadcasting Commission 2013; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014). Embedded in questions about how to transform the EfS agenda and improve educational outcomes are forms of interaction demonstrating how *place is practiced*: it is “an arena where negotiation is forced upon us” and, for both adults and young people, may lead to promising outcomes (Massey 2005, p. 154). In this sense, spatial relations, as political relations, invite theorizations about *hospitality* as a way of being in the “thrown togetherness” of the world (see Lynch et al. 2011).

Here, engagement in EfS with young people on university campuses is understood as a form of hospitality. As Clive Barnett (2005) relates by reference to Derrida and Emmanuel Levin, these ethical considerations extend respect and responsibility to those who are not-us, Other, and marginalized. Hospitality so intended is not mere tolerance, which is conditional, and instead embraces “visitation without invitation” which, for Barnett, is “being toward another” that requires a “surplus of duties over rights and . . . exceeds reciprocal obligations” (p. 13). These obligations to be hospitable are not restricted to relations involving “proximity, partiality, and care on one hand [and implicating] . . . distance, impartiality, and justice on the other” (ibid.), since caring at a distance releases justice from the violence of abstraction and is needed for its full and effective application (Howitt 2002).

Such views return to Cloke's aforementioned observations about ethics and raise additional questions about engagement for EfS among those in higher education, such as ourselves, committed to using geographical skills to assist young people to gain resilience as they face challenges such as sustainability and climate change. How to expose young people to ideas, facts, and scenarios that may engender anxiety? How, simultaneously, to open spaces for them to embrace responsibility? How to help them acknowledge how the distant actions of distant others may undermine their agency and at the same time realize that *their* actions are the actions of distant others for people elsewhere, at least some of whom will be in circumstances much more challenging than their own? Such questions implicate another of Massey's (2005, p. 184) points that "the 'lived reality of our daily lives' is utterly dispersed, unlocalised, in its source and in its repercussions." Assuredly, the local scale is romanticized as more authentic and real, a perception that offers little "hope for a wider politics" (p. 181), but Massey suggests that the "topography is very different when the local (and, concomitantly, the global) is thought relationally" (ibid.). A relational understanding of the sliding scale of varied struggles prompts consideration of the possibility of "movement beyond the local to . . . extension and meeting along lines of constructed equivalence with elements of the internal multiplicities of other local struggles" (ibid.). In other words, spatial relations of the sort Massey envisages invite a search for that which is held in common (which is not to say that which is oppressively homogeneous or that refuses the spacings between us).

Such insights invite new ways of thinking about EfS as a political act *and* a celebratory form of engaged hospitality. Arguably, the three trails highlight the "differential placing of local struggles within the complex power-geometry of spatial relations [which] is a key element in the formation of their political identities and politics. In turn, political activity reshapes both identities and spatial relations" (Massey 2005, p. 183). This reshaping process requires attention, since it implicates a shift in approach to ethics, care, and responsibility away from a nested or scalar understanding of our obligations first to home and then to locale and nation. According to Massey, fixing upon these sites enables cultures of denial "buttressed by spatial strategies which include not only distancing but also segregation and exclusion" (p. 186); denial, it seems to us, is the opposite of hospitable engagement and runs counter to the sorts of necessarily confronting elements of EfS that compel transformation. Thus, there is a need to appreciate the complementarity of the "localisation of ethical commitment at the very moment of increasingly geographically expansive interconnectedness" (p. 187), since local interconnections foster engagement, hospitality, sociability, understanding, and the space for radical becomings that are hopeful and resilient and fundamental to an EfS agenda as Huckle and Sterling (1996/2014) described it above. In other words, working to apply the insight that spatial relations at multiple scales are important to engagement in EfS is a labor that invites outwardlookingness, in Massey's terms. For university personnel seeking to engage with young people, the campus is a key resource for such goals and one that has been seen as crucial for broad-based civic engagement across the sector (Watson et al. 2011).

4 Emotion, Play, and Place

Thus far, the genesis and effects of three interpretive trails at the University of Tasmania have been outlined and then interwoven with a close reading of Massey's (2005) and others' arguments about the utility of outwardlookingness and encouragement to others to be alive to the world – to be caring. In this final section of the chapter, attention is paid to the critical importance to EfS of emotion, play, and place. Work in this penultimate section further develops the authors' understanding that caring is an emotional response to living and that interpretive trails provide a mechanism to engage in EfS in ways that enable intergenerational partnerships to foster exploration of place both playfully and caringly.

Several insights emerge. First, there is much value in play. Brian Sutton-Smith's (2009) framework for understanding this pervasive phenomenon includes mind-based or subjective play (daydreaming), solitary play (hobbies), playful behaviors (playing harmless pranks), informal social play (traveling or dancing), vicarious audience play (spectator sports or watching television), performance play (playing music or acting in amateur theater), celebrations and festivals, contests (community triathlons), and risky or deep play (caving). In turn, Tara Woodyer's (2012) work stresses the value of ludic or playful geographies. Woodyer advances "the idea that play is 'the ongoing, underlying process of off-balancing, loosening, bending, twisting, reconfiguring, and transforming the permeating, eruptive/disruptive energy and mood below, behind and to the side of focused attention'" (p. 315, quoting Schechner 1993, 41). Play is a form of *being* and a way to explore the "as-if-ness" which life invites – an outwardlookingness. Play enables people to create new geographical imaginaries, ways of being in place, and socio-spatial relations and, according to Sandri (2012), should be a chief concern among those working in EfS in higher education. We extend that insight to suggest that playful creativity should be a motivating factor in how higher education professionals reach out to others, young people included, in joint EfS programs. That is because such playful creativity "mirrors and refracts aspects of society, thereby rendering them more comprehensible ... [It is] a vehicle for becoming conscious of practices and relationships we enact or engage without thinking" (Woodyer 2012, p. 317). Play thus invites experimentation, transformation, and expansion and, in this respect, has close parallels with EfS as a form of education that fosters individual and collective good and to a simultaneous outward/inward focus and capacity to reflect (Kemmis and Mutton 2011).

Second, place is central to campus activities to engage young people. Moreover place and sense of place also involve varied emotional and ludic geographies. In turn, such affirmation of the experience of place, and of oneself and one's relations in place, will often invite and enable playful engagements based on trust and sense of security. Arguably, those experiences, too, are capable of replication, modification, and transformation. Concomitantly, the development of place-based education suggests untapped opportunities among universities to build on a certain momentum present in the primary and secondary sectors and among young people. For Gruenewald and Smith (2008, p. 346), such forms of place-based education are

critically important for equity, excellence, and “responsiveness and adaptability to the local and global dilemmas that now demand our attention, intelligence, and energy.” Pointedly, the authors argue that all citizens need to participate in processes that involve the decolonization of place and its reinhabitation in ways that eschew domination, restore respectful and grounded relationships, and foster care. Their hypothesis is that by such means “thoughtful and appropriate adaptations may arise . . . Place-based education is just beginning to demonstrate what this process might look like” (p. 347). At the same time, it is important to continue to unsettle the *idea* of place as *stasis*. Yet, place is profoundly affected by all sorts of rhythms, mobilities, and geographies that influence and, in turn, are influenced by its past, present, and emergent properties (Stratford 2015). Consider diurnal, calendrical, and longer spans of time and their effects upon the rhythms that are evident in and through place (Edensor 2010). Consider, too, the crisscross of networks – informal pathways through parklands, sidewalks, roadways, underground cables, and virtual connections – and their impact upon place (Cresswell 2002). Think about how, while moving – perhaps as commuters to school and work – vast numbers of young people and adults adjust their conduct so that, by finding their particular “spot” on a train or taking their special route via a favored tree-lined street, they “dwell in motion” (Sheller and Urry 2006).

Third and notwithstanding the foregoing, it is clear that the university is not an especially hospitable or indeed playful locale for young people and that this generalized sense of exclusivity may need to be rethought if, for example, participation in EfS programs is to be strengthened for sound effects and outcomes. While concerned with the experiences of Muslim tertiary students on British campuses, Peter Hopkins’ work on geographers and the geographies of university campuses has wider utility in this regard. Hopkins (2011, p. 158) argues that a lack of critical reflection by geographers on the spatial relations that manifest on university campuses should be addressed because these sites are important but “contested locations in terms of how they shape the production of knowledge, students’ life course trajectories and politics and power relations.” Hopkins points to research about town-and-gown relationships, universities and the sustainable development of campuses, and the experiences that students and staff have of campus life and its inclusionary and exclusionary dynamics. In relation to such matters, at least one implication of the experience of developing the three interpretive trails is clear – young people enjoyed and gained from opportunities to engage with and in universities, and academics and professional staff enjoyed fostering young people’s sense of self-efficacy in relation to pressing challenges while themselves being enriched by the processes involved in EfS programs. The additional contention made here is that these issues are deeply geographical, and geographers are invited to consider the potential of emotion, play, and place as sources of learning. These three sources have been fundamental to the development of the interpretive trails on the Sandy Bay campus and to the ways in which EfS is framed and understood.

Fourth, and as Kay Anderson and Susan Smith (2001, p. 7) have argued, “thinking emotionally is implicitly cast as a source of subjectivity which clouds vision and impairs judgement.” As a consequence, emotions have been artificially

constrained in knowledge organizations and workplaces. Lost in the process of this marginalization are powerful emotional resources that could transform work and policy (which are the authors' chief concerns in the work). In response, Anderson and Smith assert that "academics [geographers not least among them] have a role in pointing out that this is an ethically questionable state of affairs" (p. 8). Taking these arguments seriously in developing EfS projects with young people invites consideration of caring, hospitality, love of place, and understandings of the dynamics of site and scale and associated the need to extend caring and hospitable love of place to other places and peoples (*vide* Cloke, Massey). But taking such arguments seriously means that academic geographers cannot simply take on EfS projects in partnership with colleagues in the pre-tertiary sector with a view to engage young people in thinking about outwardlooking futures and new possibilities, laudable though this is. In addition, there is need to understand that these engagements may give effect to new emotional geographies and new intersubjective practices among those young people, their families and communities, and their educational settings and may be greeted by resistance as much as by embrace; diverse individual and supra-individual emotional dynamics will be evident (Blazek and Windram-Geddes 2013).

5 Conclusions

A chief proposition advanced in this chapter has been that children and young people are empowered when they are able both to produce and acquire spatial and place-based forms of knowledge alert to the power of place and locale, especially when these are conceived as a dynamic simultaneity in the terms afforded by Doreen Massey. A second argument is that such knowledge can be productively cogenerated with academic geographers and based on university campuses. Informing that assumption is another: higher education organizations have important duties to engage with diverse communities of place and communities of interest and need to do so at multiple scales. Hosting children and young people's engagement with university campuses is one way to make these institutions less like *terra incognita* and more open and outwardlooking. A corollary of the foregoing is that EfS projects are both apt and important mechanisms in producing and acquiring spatial and place-based forms of knowledge, not least because of their capacity to engender integrative thinking and action oriented to addressing complex and seemingly intractable problems of the kind that will confront children and young people over the life course. In this sense, and given their respective approaches, EfS projects are often highly complementary to the work of geographers who are also committed to working with children and young people for such ends.

These propositions arise from experience rather than conjecture. They are based on the authors' co-creation, with young people, teachers, and university staff, of three interpretive trails at the Sandy Bay campus of the University of Tasmania. Those trails engaged senior primary school students in thinking about, researching, and interacting with others who had knowledge of sustainability, climate change,

and biodiversity loss and restoration. They enabled young people to reflect on their own practices. They facilitated students becoming intimately acquainted with a locale and with pathways, sites, materials, and interactions encountered in that locale over time. They encouraged students to consider how to capture diverse and divergent forms of knowledge and of knowing, and convey them in the design and interpretation of trails that they and others could experience both physically and virtually. They asked students to grapple with a range of values, ethics, ideas, and materials. And they exposed students to the idea that space is outwardlooking: that it is feasible to constitute what we might now look upon as desire lines of connection, relation, dynamism, and possibility. This potential that attaches to the trails is not diminished by the fact that these innovations were funded as community engagement projects on so-called soft money. It was always hoped that at some point they would be taken up more permanently as university offerings to community, and the advent of the Children's University model at the University of Tasmania means that the trails may be reactivated as learning destinations.

In the final analysis, it is our contention that the trails highlight the integrative features of academic geography and EfS. Thus, they provide resources for young people and those who support them to work with a caring and hospitable approach across multiple scales and as a multiplicity of stories so far. Such ideas and others about outwardlookingness and about being alive to the world demonstrate or highlight the central role of emotion, play, and place in the constitution of this particular suite of trails and their architects' commitment to ethical engagement in EfS. This is because the sort of outwardlooking connection that Massey – and others such as Duhn, Barnett, or Cloke – envisages is also an emotional response to being alive and alert in the world. Participation in interpretive trails is a playful way to use EfS to explore place from the ethical standpoint constituted by the idea of *Homo reparans*, the caring human.

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Posthumanist Approaches to Theorizing Children's Human-Nature Relations

9

Karen Malone

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Abstract

By exploring and reconsidering the view of children's encounters with nature from a posthumanist perspective, this chapter seeks to dismantle rather than support constructions of a nature-culture binary. A posthumanist approach adopts the tools of new materialism by allowing for the rereading of research data by decentering the human and attending to the complexity of child-nature relations. This work is done in order to unpack the means through which romanticized notions of children's "nature" experiences can be embedded in Western-centric literature in the child-nature movement, a movement that is having significant currency in environmental and sustainability education literature as well. To illustrate the importance of including a diversity of stories of children-nature relations, and to explore the challenges in rereading research through these theoretical lenses, two contrasting cases are explored. One of the cases emerges from research conducted in Semey, a city on the northeast border of Kazakhstan where issues of nuclear radiation are a historical concern and the

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second draws on children's encounters of "grubs" and "worms" in an early childhood center in Melbourne, Australia. I have deliberately set out in this chapter to reveal the messiness of documenting and theorizing children's encounters with the environment in order to open up new imaginings of childhood, nature, and education.

Keywords

Children and nature • Posthumanism • New materialism • Environmental education • Nature education • Childhood research

1 Introduction

In this chapter, there will be a reconsidering of children's encounters with nature utilizing posthumanist approaches and materialist theories as the means for disrupting the nature-culture binaries. The chapter will explore the current fervor in the public sphere for simply reinserting the "child back into nature" through a variety of nature-based education practices that could be seen to reify and romanticize childhood. The author will reveal their role as a researcher and commentator in these debates and seek to problematize these theoretical positions. To do this, the chapter will draw on recent literature in children's geographies on posthumanist approaches and pedagogies and new materialisms that seek to reposition the way researchers might write about children's encounters with the more-than-human world. Then, through a retrospective rereading of data from two recent research studies, one with children in Australia and the other in Kazakhstan, these approaches are applied. The field work of both studies incorporated a broad range of visual, mobile, and verbal place-based methods. Visual and verbal methods included children taking photographs of their communities, drawings of their encounters with the environment, and their dream drawings of a child-friendly neighborhood. Interviews were held with children by researchers about each of those photographs and drawings with small narratives them being attached. Mobile methods were also used such as walking interviews, spatial observations, and guided neighborhood tours; photographs and field notes were used to document these mobile activities. There is a deliberate attempt in this chapter to reveal the messiness of documenting and theorizing children's encounters and through this endeavor seek to open up new ways of considering child in nature and its implications for un/learning pedagogies of environmental education, and education for sustainability. The chapter concludes with some challenges for educators and researchers for considering new ways of imaging children's encounters with "nature" and its implications for pedagogy and education.

2 The Anthropocentric Predicament

According to current debates in earth sciences, the planet is in a new epoch, a new geological era where humans have become the single most significant global force in determining the future of the planet. They have named this epoch the *Anthropocene* (Crutzen 2002). The call of the Anthropocene and its implications challenge us to consider new ways of thinking, knowing, and acting in our everyday lives and how we engage with the world and how the world engages with us. According to Lorimer (2012, p. 593) “. . . it represents a very public challenge to the modern understanding of Nature as a pure, singular and stable domain removed from and defined in relation to urban, industrial society” and that “This understanding of Nature has been central to western and environmental thought and practice.” While considering our relationship with the more-than-human world is not new, deep ecologist, indigenous philosophies also have presented alternative ways of being with and relating to “nature” there has been recently a lot of interest in theorizing through posthumanist approaches across a range of disciplines and fields and in particular the field of children’s environments.

By engaging with an ecological posthumanist approach, in this chapter, the researcher is seeking to (taking from Braidotti 2013) “. . . navigat(e) across the stormy waters of the postanthropocentric predicament” (pp. 86–87). This perspective opens up possibilities for rethinking the notion of subject-object relations with the more-than-human world that considers what happens if the human is decentered. If, for instance, there is a foregrounding of those elements of the environments that often act as a “context” or background to understandings of the child in relation to nature, working through these possibilities in theoretical terms is to challenge the hierarchical position of the human as exempt and exceptional to the ecology of “being.” In this difficult theoretical work, the challenge is taken up for:

. . . childhood scholars to engage with geography’s hybrid nature/culture analytic, I am not seeking to provide an answer to the ‘nature’ of childhood but to open it up to a new form of political enquiry which attends to the interconnectedness of the human and more-than-human world. (Taylor 2011, p. 432)

As a researcher and author who advocates the value of children’s engagement with the more-than-human world, it is important to revisit research and consider why and how binaries such as child-nature and subject-object have been so central to the field. This rereading of past research provides insights into how human exceptionalism and human exemptionalism is inconsequently being inserted in to, and through, the discourses told about children and their natured or un-natured childhoods. Illustrating how these past encounters of child in nature can be reconfigured differently could be persuasive for opening up debates in the child-nature movement. Such an approach also provides foundations for an “unlearning” of anthropomorphic ways of educating about the world, therefore supporting a recasting of sustainability education.

Through the import of decentering the human by using new materialist approaches, researchers have been enticed to question the centrality of the human and to reconsider the way in which they relate to, set themselves outside of, and seek to dominate the more-than-human world. Beyond addressing the global crisis, these new ways of considering relations with the planet have important consequences for understanding current debates around children's "disconnect with nature." There seems to be a fervent desire by child in nature advocates to believe that by revoking a sense of sentiment about a nature-filled past life, by reinserting the child in nature, by challenging parental fears with evidence of children's need for natural experience, and by encouraging nature-based education in schools and child care facilities, it will provide foundations for educators to recycle an old idea, that is, adults destroyed the planet but *children will grow up and save it*. In this chapter, rather than continue to rely on this old age adage, which on all accounts seems to be on at least its fourth reiteration in environmental education, the case is argued that new ways of considering human-nonhuman relations could open up new possibilities for a sustainable future. These new approaches seek to decenter the human as a means for deconstructing nature-culture, human-nature, object-subject binaries, which are limited in their capacity to consider how we live with the planet rather than to dominate it. While there are many who are already exploring child-nature-culture utilizing posthumanist approaches (Lenz-Taguchi 2011; Taylor 2011, 2013; Rautio 2013a, b), this chapter seeks to contribute to this growing theoretical discussion by seeking not to provide an answer to the "nature" of childhood but to "open it up to a new form of political enquiry which attends to the interconnectedness of the human and more-than-human world" (Taylor 2011, p. 432). This chapter will start with a critical analysis of the recent debates around the child in nature movement and its limitations to address the challenges for posthumanism in educational research. Then through a posthumanist theoretical reading of two very diverse studies around children's engagement with the natural world, I illustrate the complexities and contradiction of a universal view of "child in nature" first by exploring a very degraded and high-risk environment in Kazakhstan where human and more-than-human relations are embedded in a historical, high-risk engagement and then in contrast an intricate study of very young children in a pristine, highly orchestrated child in nature activity in Australia. The pivotal tale being that in neither place can a sentimental story of pure natured childhood be comfortably told.

3 Child in Nature

In recent years, there has been a growing return to the sentiment of the importance of providing opportunities for children to be immersed in "nature." Premised on the argument, the consequences of a disconnect mean that children's health and well-being are being compromised, and their roles to take up the challenge as global sustainability advocates will be lost: "If we want children to flourish, to become

truly empowered, then let us allow them to love the earth before we ask them to save it" (Sobel 1996, p. 39). The challenge for environmental and sustainability education has always been to consider how to encourage and entice the human moral desire to "conserve nature," to "protect animals," and to be politically active in the present and future in the big-ticket environmental issues such as limits to production, climate change, and animal conservation. Children are often viewed as having the capacity to bridge the gap between "the present and the future and being the materials from which the future will be made" (Lee 2013, p. 1). These arguments in environmental education on how to engage with children have often been more pedagogical than theoretical and place pedagogies, sustainable futures, global education, and nature-based education have all been central tools for encouraging educators to consider ways to *empower* children to give children *agency* to make a difference (Malone 2007). In many research studies, the focus has always been on the agency of humans to be active in conservation – usually under the premise that by destroying the planet also means limiting humans' capacity to survive. These earlier studies (particularly in child-nature studies) have taken little account of the nonhuman world as anything other than an object through which understanding "humanness" and "human agency" in regard to environmental ethics and responsibility was conceived. This approach has been supported in an ongoing momentum around nature education in recent times specifically through the work of Richard Louv.

In 2005, Richard Louv became familiar to the education fraternity as a significant author championing the debate around the disconnection of children from the natural world. Supported by the earlier work of Kahn and Kellert (2002) and others around biophilia (Wilson 1984), he argued that children have an innate desire and connection to nature and through lack of natural engagement were suffering as a consequence. And it was in his book *Last Child in the Woods* that Louv (2005) for the first time used the term *nature deficit disorder* to describe what he believed was the impact of children's disassociation and lack of time spent with nature. This idea of *nature deficit disorder* has become central to much of the marketing around a new child-nature movement, particularly in Australia and the USA. One aspect of this work by Louv and what some might view as a limitation is its very narrow definition of the notion of what constitutes "nature." According to Louv (2005, p. 8), the definition of nature as used predominantly in his campaigning for children in nature is narrowly "the outdoors" anything that is natural – not human-made in the physical environment. Louv (2005, p. 8) writes "... when I use the word 'nature' in a general way I mean natural wilderness, biodiversity, abundance – related loose parts in a backyard or a rugged mountains ridge. Most of all, nature, is reflected in our capacity for wonder." So a city according to his definition has pockets, spaces of wild nature possibilities, it exists out there, outside of the human and the less human impact the better – untainted or pure nature.

This focus on the human subject to the detriment of "other" possible agentic subjects in the ecology has seen a very narrow view of child-nature relations. Taylor (2013, p. 66) describing the recent conversations around other possibilities to expand the view of the child-nature collective states:

... such conversations have constellated around the challenge of thinking differently about nature, as well as what it means to be human. Those involved have undertaken to reconceptualize what counts as nature outside the bounds of the nature/culture divide, to build connections rather than rehearse separations.

While there have been positive outcomes from the work of Louv and others in the child-nature network in recent years (governments considering children's outdoor needs, including environmental education in mainstream curriculum, parents taking children out and connecting with other families, the media wanting to discuss children's health, and so forth), there has also been considerable concerns around the implications of the narrow romanticized focus and uncritical view of what returning to a past reincarnation of the child-nature relationship actually means. Is it merely the mourning of an imaginary "childhood lost" where children were once more connected to nature? Clarke and Mcphie (2014) elaborating recently on these concerns have also identified in the fields of outdoor and environmental education research many authors who still do not realize: "...the impossibility of a 'disconnection,'" quoting from the work of Morton (2007) they state we cannot mourn for the loss of a connection to nature "because we are so deeply attached to it – we are it" (Clarke and Mcphie 2014, p. 11).

4 Romanticizing and Reifying the Human-Nature Split

According to Dickinson (2013, p. 7), "Fall-recovery narratives can be problematic in how they reify the human-nature split, obscure environmental justice, influence irresponsible behavior, and normalize contemporary conditions and relationships." What she means by fall-recovery narratives is a form of reminiscing about the past that has been sanitized in order to present a specific point of view. That is, for example, the view that the past was always "good" and "virtuous" particularly in terms of the child-nature relationship and that there is a desire to come back to this as an idealized state. The past generation is sentimentalized as having grown up in a utopian dream in which all children had a childhood where they were safer, had more freedom to be "children," and were left to explore nature (particularly wild nature) without adults around to police or regulate their experiences. This emphasis on the pure romantic past life of children normalizes the perfect childhood – a kind of Disney-fied childhood where nature was accessible to all, where the wild meant freedom, and where the dominant shared parenting style was what Tim Gill (2007) might call "benign neglect." The desire therefore of the child-nature movement based on this "romanticized amnesia" is *not* to consider a new imagining of children's encounters with nature as relevant to the current challenges of sustainability and the impacts a modernist divide between human and nature have produced but to look to what we have lost and conjure up possibilities to return to our past as our new imagined future. The mantra for the child-nature movement then becomes fixated on a transformative framework that is about returning to a past state where there is "... a reunion of humans with the rest of nature"

(Louv 2011, p. 3). An assumption that past generations had a closer and more intimate relation with the planet “de-emphasizes” according to Dickinson (2013, p. 7) “a long history of environmental degradation and disconnectedness.” Essentially, embodied childhood encounters with the “natural world” are not always as restorative, healthy, or spiritually uplifting as some nostalgic stories seduce us to believe. The world “outdoors” can sometimes be a highly entangled dirty, messy, harmful place, and if humanity is to address the predicament it finds itself in, should educators and researchers be more focused on new ways of considering our relationship with the environment rather than reminiscing on the past? For Dickinson (2013, p. 7): “Fall-recovery, then, is a subjective cultural creation in how it positions the *kind* of nature and childhood to which humans should return.” A child-nature reconnect as conceptualized through the current child in nature movement is always in danger of supporting a human-nature divide and positioning humans as “exceptional” and outside of nature, a sentiment that some may say has set humanity on its current destructive path.

5 Grappling with Decentering the Human

Alternative to a romanticized child-nature relationship, a classic reinvention in many ways of Rousseau's “education of Nature” (Taylor 2013), by drawing on new materialism and posthumanist approaches the “potential to contest the arrogance of anthropocentrism and the exceptionalism of the humans” (Braidotti 2013, p. 66). This supports a process for redefining one's sense of attachment and connection to a shared world or to enhance an alternative way for knowing and enlivening “multiple ecologies of belonging.” And while there is great sympathy for the “environmental movement” in particular a Gaian view of deep ecology (that the child-nature movement is often clearly aligned), the authors support Braidotti when she states deep ecology is potentially a regressive movement reminiscent of these same sentimentalities of the romantic phases of European culture, that is, the earth deserves the same ethical and political considerations as humans. When applied, this approach “humanizes the environment” and becomes “a well meaning form of anthromorphic normativity being applied to non-human planetary agents” (Braidotti 2013, p. 85). This perspective like the idealized and romantic view proclaimed by the child-nature movement does little to disrupt well-established dualisms, human and nature, nature-culture.

A posthumanist perspective takes seriously the need to stop the anthropological machine and contests the production of absolute dividing lines between humans and other worldly matter. It recognizes the fragility and porosity of all matter and objects – not to collapse categories of objects entirely into each other but to bring to attention to the porousness of what has been viewed as distinct boundaries and distinct entities. Posthumanist theories have the direct task of decentering the human and problematizes human as exempt – where ecology and human as viewed as entirely distinct realms with humans being outside and or exempt from any ecological consideration. It also problematizes the notion of human as exceptional

whether religious or humanist, this is where human communities are distinguished by a unique ethics or politics where only they can possibly participate. To be human is to be always central to ways of knowing the world (and the universe). Both these positions assume what matters to humans is the most important, and other species and objects matter less. Some might ask: hasn't this been the work of deep ecologists for many years? And even though being sensitive to the theoretical work of deep ecologists who have critiqued human exemptionalism, it is also evident they have mostly done this by alluding to the indirect knock on and systemic effect of an ecological crisis for humans. If there was, for example, mass extinctions, environmental degradation, and climate change due to the impact of humans on the environment, it would indirectly compromise the capacity for humans to continue to exist. Braidotti (2013) provides a more helpful position when she states deep ecology is potentially a regressive movement reminiscent of the sentimentality of the romantic phases of European culture. Using this framing, the earth is seen as deserving the same or equal ethical and political considerations as humans. When applied, this approach "humanizes the environment" and becomes "a well meaning form of anthromorphic normativity being applied to non-human planetary agents" (Braidotti 2013, p. 85). According to Braidotti and others (Smith 2013; Harraway 2015), this does little to disrupt well-established human-nature and subject-object binaries. The theory of ecological posthumanism being wrestled with contests the arrogance of anthropocentric approaches even those found in deep ecology by enabling a shared sense of the world. This enabling of a multiplicity of ecologies/beings defines community as central – the world is and becomes a community of beings. At this point taking up the work of Mick Smith (2013), who defines an ecological posthumanist perspective as a strategy for supporting an "ecological community," becomes very useful.

Therefore, to grapple with in order to retheorize the two research studies, there has been a specific focus on employing mechanisms that will help the researcher to disrupt idealized ways of understanding children's relations with the more-than-human world. The first is a study set in the communities in the northern Siberian border town of Semey, Kazakhstan, where in partnership with UNICEF the researcher was investigating children's experiences of being in their neighborhood. The children were aged between 6 to 14 years. The second study is with much younger children aged 3–5 years from an early childhood setting in suburban Melbourne, Australia, who are investigating their environment through nature-based excursions into the Royal Botanic gardens. The studies have employed the theoretical device of "intra-action" as used in new materialism approaches to support documenting messy, heterogeneous relations between child and nature (Barad 2007; Rautio 2013a, b). The world, as used with this approach, is viewed as dynamic, in a constant process of "being" and "becoming" material matter. Intra-action constitutes a reconfiguring of "things" and "objects" that are not structured with a specific space or time but are enacted as agential entities flowing in a space-time continuum (Barad 2007). The focus of reality in this approach is not on the phenomena of the things (their specific properties) but how the things are "in-phenomena" (being produced through a series of entangled relational possibilities

with other objects and things). Barad (2007, p. 185) uses the term “onto-epistemology” to describe “the study of practices of knowing in being” – an understanding that is central to intra-action. Onto-epistemology assumes epistemology and ontology are mutually implicated “because we are of the world,” not standing outside of it.

This intra-action theorizing endeavors to decenter the human, to take issue with human exceptionalism, by viewing interspecies encounters as “social” where the nonhuman animals (in this case of “dirt and dogs” in Semey and minibeasts or “grubs” in Melbourne) are more than simply *objects* being directed and responding to the interaction of the human but to be understood as *subjects* in their own right who exercise agency (Barad 2007). “Posthumanism doesn’t presume the separateness of any-‘thing,’ let alone the alleged spatial, ontological, and epistemological distinction that sets humans apart” Barad (2007, p. 136). Therefore, posthumanism using an approach of intra-action can fulfill the aim of disrupting the Cartesian divide between human and animals by challenging the simplistic dichotomies of animal-human, nature-culture, and object-subject (Barad 2007). These dichotomies often construct what has come to be “viewed as nature,” what is “valued about nature,” and what happens when children are “placed in nature.”

It is then in defiance of a past idealized child-nature relationship that is being considered when exploring child-nature relations and when human and nonhuman bodies are seen to be constantly engaging in relational, mutually implicated encounters. The ideas of Harker (2005, p. 57) are useful here with his thesis around the body, embodiment, and play drawing on the work of Deleuze, “Deleuzian bodies are at once materials, semiotic, social and incorporeal, as indeed bodies are when encountered in our everyday (playful) lives,” that is, there can be a reimagining where new materialism and posthumanist approaches can support researchers and educators to consider how the child in nature discussions might be different if agency is no longer the property of humans alone (Barad 2007). According to Fox and Alldred (2014, p. 1), this new materialist ontology:

... supplies a conception of agency not tied to human action, shifting the focus for social inquiry from an approach predicated upon humans and their bodies, examining instead how relational networks or assemblages of animate and in animate affect and are affected.

Therefore, the children’s bodies become more than a “naturalized child”; they become a product of the assemblages, associations, and relations through which they are connected to more-than-human bodies in their natured lives, in diverse and complex material ways.

6 Child-Earth Radiation in Semey

The full impact of radiation exposure at the Semipalatinsk test site was not found out until after the fall of the Soviet Union and Kazakhstan independence in 1991. By 1997, studies had shown that 500 out of every 1000 babies born in

Semipalatinsk had some kind of health problem. One in every 20 was born with serious deformities. Radiation according to government reports had unleashed a plague on human and animals, infiltrating every molecular sphere of the landscape. Many reports stated cancer rates were high among residents of the villages and cities in the test region. Plutonium, a heavy metal, emits alpha radiation, and the material is most harmful when inhaled or ingested. "Scientists found very high levels in horse bones, where plutonium had become concentrated. Kazakh shepherds use these bones to make soup."

The older community members also told their own stories: "As a child, I found it interesting, the mushroom clouds were actually so beautiful, they drew our attention," "It smelt. . . you know, like hair. Like hair burning. The smell came back from the earth every time it rained." – "That lake is void of any living creature. Fish can't live there," one parent tells me. "When the wind blows from that direction, it makes people feel sick. It causes high blood pressure in some, and it also brings a very strange smell." "There is not a piece of the earth, no animal or human who has not been affected" says Umit. Results from medical screening over the years have indicated that weapons-grade plutonium from the atomic explosions has been incorporated into some of the human and nonhuman tissues, the cells of the bodies/objects within the city. A local doctor revealed authorities had been hoping to introduce a compulsory genetic passport for humans and dogs, whose genes have been damaged by radiation exposure, in order to prevent them from reproducing. The community had been resisting such moves saying this was a violation of human and animal rights.

The children recognize the fragility of human and nonhuman life and its link to the contaminated earth. They spoke often of the dust, the dirt, and the air – the way it infiltrated everything. "Dead dogs in the streets" they say are "with cancerous tumours." One child, Timur, takes the researchers on a walk: "I am afraid of the street dogs on the way home. The dead dogs stink." "Deformed babies deformed dogs, Dead dogs dead babies" writes one child. These stories are examples of children entangled in an ecological community and their dailiness of "common worlding" through exposure to dirt, dust, radiation, as "objects" and "things" that seep in and through bodies (Fig. 1).

Donna Haraway in her essay in *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) reminds us to consider these close intra-actions of species and entities as evidence of our molecular relations, "I suspect that human genomes contain a considerable molecular record of the pathogens of their companion species, including dogs." To attend to and notice child-dog-earth relations in the streets of Semey is to recognize the porosity of the matter that is being taken up within the bodies of all beings in this ecological community; the phenomenological experience of being dog in Semey is on all appearances a shared intersubjective being in the world, with and through child who are equally exposed to the genomes that have infiltrated all bodies/entities (dirt, air, beings) at a molecular level.

During the cold war, the Soviet Union chose eastern Kazakhstan as a nuclear testing site, because it was one of its remotest, most desolate areas. From 1949 until 1989, Russia conducted 456 secret nuclear tests (116 above ground rest



Fig. 1 Photograph of “Dead Dogs” by Timur

underground) at the site with a seemingly unfettered regard for the human and nonhuman bodies that coexisted there. Over the 40-year period at the site, which is around 300,000 square km (roughly the size of Germany), possibly as many as a million people, multitudes of birds, animals, fish, plants, water, the soil, the air were deliberately subjected to the impact of radiation exposure. No one was evacuated, nothing was excluded. There are rumors 1500 animals and thousands of local villagers were placed strategically in the line of the fallout during the tests. This entangled ecological post-nuclear community continues on as a “scientific” assemblage into the dust and dirt of the streets of the children’s lives (Fig. 2).

Atyem takes me to his building; he lives on the 10th floor of a typical concrete housing block in the neighborhood. When he took this photo, he explained: “I live on the 10th floor. It is very dusty and dirty. There is no light. I would like to go outside but it scares me I might become sick” (Fig. 3).

Atyem was also asked to draw his dream city. He spent a long time meticulously drawing circles as the researchers watched on wondering what they were. When the UNICEF spoke to him about his drawing, this is what he said: “This is a backyard of my dream place. The pavement is everywhere to contain the dust. I am drawing mountains in order to show that there is a life behind this fence.” The next day, walking in the main central park in Semey, one of the only parks in the city that is quite well maintained, the researcher comes across a section of the walkway that was paved and photographed it. Children-dog-bodies-earth the air, the dust, the dirt, for children it was not just a question of how they were entangled but what this meant for them and their lives. The town square pavers somehow represents this messy entanglement (Fig. 4).



Fig. 2 Photograph of “I live on the 10th floor” by Atyem

The posthumanist bodies of the animals, earth, and children of Semey coexist in an ecological “community” that has an ecological, social, and technological history. Bound together as a collection of genetically encoded messages and materials, passed on as radiation, they are reproduced in bodies, between bodies, and outside of bodies. The significance of this collection of posthumanist bodies is their cancerous proliferation of cells, the self-duplicating capacity of earth, bodies, animals, and machines to be in relation to others over time and space. The child-animal-earth are no longer singular beings, but a community of subjects and objects with molecular particles exchanging cancerous potential. Shaviro (1995) describes this move from a post-nuclear model of embodied subjectivity entering into a “viral” or “parasitic” mode, as a discerning shift in paradigms. In the task for rereading child-nature relations it raises ontological questions about being in the world with other bodies (Fig. 5).



Fig. 3 Drawing “My Dream City,” by Atyem



Fig. 4 Photograph “Town Square Pavers” by author

Throughout this materialist reading of children and dirt, dust, and contaminated air in Semey, the children’s accounts communicate the physicality of the relationships – the tactile and embodied reality of material bodies. By interrogating differently the child-earth assemblages, it opens up possibilities for exploring the human-nature binaries and for noticing and attending to questions of the



Fig. 5 Photograph “Dirt, Dust, and Bodies” by author

child-nature-place relationship that could contribute to a reconsideration of alternative theorizing. The researcher is wrestling, grappling in this retrospective analysis of children in Semey with the idea; what constitutes data as the past focus on human ethics (human rights) comes into contestation with a newly attentive focus on posthuman ethics. A “posthuman ethics” that unlike a deep ecological ethic or humanist ethics urges the researcher to apply principles of “interdependence and intra-action” in the description of subjectivity. There are ties that bind child-dog-earth to multiple “others” in a web of complex interspecies interrelations, but can it be described through science or social relations? Can it be both simultaneously? That is, humans are no longer the only agentic subject, and in this world of applying a new ethic of scientific and social relations, agency and subjectivity are being spread more widely. Children as “human” can no longer be exempt or exceptional as they are embedded in this shared ecological community, and the historical residue of radiation that binds them to a past, a present, and a future.

7 Child-Grub Cruel Nature in Botanic Gardens

Botanic gardens and other environmental centers in cities are often designed specifically to provide “child-nature” encounters with the view of alleviating children’s fears or disconnection from the nature world. Their intent is often to create positive child-nature experiences that will have lasting impact on children’s environmental behavior. The Royal Botanic Gardens are centrally located in the city of Melbourne. It is a “place” where children and adults can engage with the

plants and animals, in a highly green and animated space specifically set up to allow for restorative encounters (Malone 2004). According to their website, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne (RBG) aims “to connect people with our natural world by advancing knowledge and understanding of the value of plants.” Within the RBG is a children’s garden. The vision for the Ian Potter Foundation Children’s Garden is consistent with the idea of creating rich nature experiences for children: “. . . a place where children can delight in nature and discover a passion for plants. It will be a garden that celebrates the imagination and curiosity of children and fosters the creative nature of play” (Malone 2004). The aim of the educational excursion programs at RBG and the children’s garden in particular at the time of the study was to “educate children by and through nature and the simulation of the senses in a real and accessible garden.” The research study was focused on observing, documenting, and engaging in conversations with six 3–4-year-old children throughout their encounters of the gardens, during a series of nature-based environmental education visits. The intention of the study was to explore children-nature play behaviors, but what did come to pass was a much messier and complex array of children’s encounters with the more-than-human world that did not sit so comfortably with the idyllic romantic view espoused by authors such as Louv (2005). Research data was collected through observations and close documentations of children’s discussions and activities in the environment, drawings by children, and photographs and videos of children in the play spaces from a distance.

Previous studies on children’s perceptions of nature reveal that child in nature relations can often be uncomfortable and tricky encounters. The teenagers in Wals’ (1994a) study on perceptions of nature illustrated a view of nature as a threatening place, to be controlled and managed. In his study, the student’s perception of nature was based upon “. . . a combination of their own fantasies and the unspeakable acts that occur in local parks, which are often well documented by the media” (p. 132). In their home neighborhood, the students feared the forest and trees. One student remarked that they would prefer forests with “just enough trees to give you shade, but not enough for murderers and rapists to be able to hide behind them” (p. 135).

Wals’ (1994a, b) results are consistent with other research studies where “nature” (including animals) is viewed as both threatening and fascinating (Evans et al. 2007a, b; Phenice and Griffore 2003). Wilson (1994), in her earlier work some years ago, described children expressing fear, dislike, and violence when the environment focused toward animals. When close to butterflies and baby birds, she observed children’s responses included: “Kill it,” “Grab him and rip him apart,” and “Step on it.” This uneasiness and the tensions in the child-nature and child-animal relations are the focus of the second study. That is, rather than reproducing child-animal relation as “kin” that has been done in previous work using posthumanist theorizing (Tipper 2011; Taylor et al. 2013; Malone 2015), this study explores the intimate intra-actions between child-grub-child bodies as difficult animal mattering. Fox and Alldred (2014, p. 2) explain: “Matter,” according to Barad’s (1997) notion of new materialism “is not inert, nor simply the background for human activity, but ‘is conceptualised as agentic’, with multiple nonhuman as well as human sources of agency with capacities to affect”

(Taylor and Ivinson 2013). By approaching this understanding of matter as agential and using intra-action implies these “interdependent entities are taken to co-emerge through simultaneous activity: to come into being as of certain kind because of their encounter” (Rautio 2013b, p. 2). This study explores how child and matter (worms, grubs, and bugs) coexist and produce each other.

Sally, Matt, and another boy, Lachlan, watch the grubs. Matt observes the grubs and explains, “*Most witchetty’s sniff their butts.*” Matt wraps a worm around his finger and says, “*It’s tight, like a real snake.*” Pam comes over to see what they are doing. They show her the “worm snake” as they call it. Pam states that worms do not like being squashed. After Pam leaves, Jackie comes over. They give her a grub. She says “Ewe!” and throws it back. But she stays and watches. Matt says “Who wants me to kill a worm?” Three children answer “*Me.*” Ed and a boy are saying “Kill the butchie boys.” Ed says “Every bad spider you should kill.” He says that they found a white tail and Sally killed it.

“Pass it here. I know how to make it poo,” Matt says as he takes the worm from Sally. He holds it upside down and watches it. “It’s going to do poop, I know it. . . He’s doing poop, poops good.” Sally gets out another grub, “*Matty, you see if this one’s ready to do poop. Let’s find them and squeeze them.*” Sally finds one, Matt says “That’s a beauty!” They talk about “the doc” – “I call him Docky, hello Mr Dock” says Matt “Look at that brown stuff. He is going to blast his butt out soon.” “Look at that poo, that guys gonna blast the wee so much. . . Oooh!” “Ooooh one of them fell in the poo!”

A group of children huddle around Sally. She says, “I’m tying up a worm – I call it lunch tie up. . . Awe poor wormy. . . I can feel its heart beat, I think we should let the worms go like the spider. . . someone’s hurt this one really bad, it’s bleeding.” Sally buries the worms in a shallow dusty hole in the tan bark. The children discuss how safe this spot is – “What if children run over this patch of tan bark?”

Violence toward the more-than-human world by the children can be contradictory and ambiguous. Sally and Matt say they love “nature” and at other times they want to “kill it.” They collect the grubs so they can explore possibilities, including crushing and killing worms and witchetty grubs, swinging them to scare others and show their power in controlling their bodily behaviors. Throughout the grub encounters, the children simultaneously love, hurt, help, free, and take captive the animals. What do the grubs do to the children? How can the relationship be understood differently if we consider worms doing/producing children? What are the moral and ethical dilemmas the child-grub intra-action present for child and grub? How do grubs come to know children when coinhabiting spaces, some who are gentle and caring and others who are rough and cruel? Grub bodies are active in this relational exchange and the “affects flow through objects as they flow through humans” (Harker 2005, p. 57):

Matt talked about being bitten by a ‘wild bush’ cockroach: “I’ve been bit by one”. Holding a witchetty grub out he hands it to one boy while saying: “a witchetty bit me once”. A boy in the group suddenly jumps backwards “Ouch! Ah he bit me!”. Matt says “There’s a lesson he’s taught you! You always pick up a witchetty by its back”



Fig. 6 Matt's drawing of "Sally and him chasing grubs in the gardens"

In this encounter, Matt is fully aware of the potential of the grubs, even though they have a small impact on the children. He allocates learning from and through the grub encounter and even infers the grub is more intelligent than the boy. The grub becomes the teacher. By allocating agency to the grubs, the "simple" reading of what is a complex set of exchanges can be disrupted – a child-grub "intra-action" (Barad 2007) where children and grub are coexisting and producing together diverse things (Rautio 2013b). Motivated by a desire to generate continuous and unique encounters the children, especially Sally and Matt throughout a series of events, continue attending to the materiality of the coexisting active bodies, the doing of worms and grubs. In this short encounter in the garden between Matt and Sally, in a bid to catch a fly Matt pretends to be a tree and Sally describes the fly as knowing:

"There's one over there," Sally says and continues slapping the air. Matt says, "I'll pretend I'm a tree" and crouches in the marjoram bush, with arms up and fingers splayed and twisted to look like branches. He doesn't catch anything. Sally states: *"Maybe they know we're going to catch em'. That's why it is hard to catch them. There's one..."* (Fig. 6).

Discussions around the materiality of objects (as nonhuman materials) with agency are well established by writers such as Bennett (2010) and Rautio (2013b), but as Kraftl (2014, p. 121) recently stated, there is an "absence of materiality in education, and in particular the role material objects may play in constituting particular learning atmospheres." The children and the material objects (grubs and worms) through these encounters are influencing and knowing human and nonhuman bodies with intentional and unintentional actions (Rautio 2013a), squeezing, burying, challenging, and enticing child and grub in a series of complex coproductions. The children return back again and again to the grubs and worms,

these complex spaces that draw them in to spend hours perched on the edges of the boundaries of the garden beds (where they are not supposed to go), poking, digging, and hoping to see a glimpse of them. Occasionally, they wander into the bushes and hide with their worms and grubs so they can have secret private intra-actions, sharing stories of past encounters. Other times they run around with the worms scaring other children. Being with the worms, being grub-worm child bodies means other children view them differently, and they view themselves as produced through their worm bodies. In this next conversation, Sally and Matt are again intra-acting with grubs and this time enticing the researcher adult body in:

I ask Sally and Matt, “Why are you collecting these bugs?” Sally answers “Cause we love to do it everyday.” Matt says “Yes, we love nature. We love to look at it, be with it.” Matt has brought witchetty grubs to preschool and I want to take a picture of them above the soil. While I think about how to do this Matt sees my expression and says to me “Just stick your hand in and when you feel something soft, you will know you are touching the body. . .they will now you are touching them” I poke my hand in. Matt warns me “They can bite, hold onto their backs.” I ask, “What will you do with them?” They answer, “Release them.” Then Sally tells me and shows me a ‘fire ant,’ it is really a red bug.

Throughout this materialist reading of children and grubs, the accounts communicate the “fleshy detail” (Tipper 2011), the physicality of the relationships, and “the tactile and embodied reality of knowing animals” (Tipper 2011, p. 153). These pedagogical narratives situated with children and animals attend to the messiness of what it means to be as a child in a worldly relations with grubs. The children are coexisting with other bodies who also have agency in these exchanges and while it may seem cruel or morally wrong for children to “hurt” animals in their care, how children *express* these relations, and how they *experience* them are revealed as paradoxical and inconsistent. Representing the messy, often contradictory reality of all human-animal relations: butcher, hunting, farming, loving, death, pets, food, and animal rights. These are important learning opportunities, and through the enacting of posthumanist pedagogies and shifting away from the child as the central object of our gaze by being attentive to and noticing the nonhuman entities through which their world is being encountered, these narratives can support an un/learning, a new imagining for sustainability and environmental education. By seeking to unlearn/learn the way, we have come to “know” and “be” in the environment as “it provokes us to consider matter as a co-composing agent of knowledge production and change” (Rotas 2015, p. 94). This unlearning is a challenge as we attempt to know agency outside of the acting human body (Bennett 2010; Rotas 2015). In these precarious times, it continues to be important to consider an approach that draws attention to posthumanist ecological communities that seeks to decenter the human and has the potential to be a new configuration for interspecies cohabitation rather than deep ecological approach that still positions humans as exceptional.

8 Conclusion: Posthumanist Ecological Communities and Pedagogies

This chapter has focused on utilizing new ways of thinking and theorizing research in environmental education to consider how child-nature relations can be disrupted in order to represent the complexity of spaces where children and the more-than-human world encounter one another in a “common world.” These relational and material aspects of child-animal-earth relations have been explored by decentering the human and embracing strategies such as intra-action in new materialism to provide a different reading of child-animal-earth-bodies. Allowing us to unlearn/learn and challenge popular and dominant views that focus on psycho-developmental orientations of child-animal relations and ethics (usually focusing on psychological analysis of cruelty and lack of empathy) or an idealized view of children where children are “naturally” and innately “connected” to a pure (imaginary) nature. In the process of reading these relations between child-earth, child-grub intra-action, a new plane of existence has been revealed where a collective ecology of human and nonhuman subjects and objects as active agents is presented. So rather than thinking through relations to nature and its rights by elevating “all things nature” to the status of humans, or consistently reminding humans of their biological roots and de-elevating the human to being of nature, these ideas seek to unpack political, ethical, epistemological, and ontological questions of the human and nonhuman relations as constantly in a state of flux, vibrant and alive.

By interrogating differently the child-nature assemblage is to open up possibilities for exploring the human-nature binaries and for noticing and attending to questions of the child-nature relationship that could contribute to a reconsideration of alternative trans-species theorizing. The discussions by Miriam Giugni on her study of the ethical dilemmas of child-chook cohabitation in an early childhood setting does similar work (Taylor et al. 2013) and her use of concepts of “becoming worldly with” (Haraway 2008) providing further possibilities to consider when reading these tricky contributions animals/nature make as material agents coinhabiting, coexisting with children. While performing and becoming attentive to the way “matter” carries duration (Rotas 2015), the movement of radiation through human, nonhumans, and ecological systems in Semey evokes a knowing embedded and “invented *with* and *in* environments that affect/effect bodies” (Rotas 2015, p. 102).

Both studies focus on the potential of decentering the human as a device for educators to explore “multiple and political ecologies” through the identification of nonhuman “vital matter” (Bennett 2010). For example, Bennett notes that worms/grubs, like other matter (electricity, fats, metals, stem cells) are “actants” or what Darwin calls “small agencies” that “when in the right confederation with other physical and physiological bodies can make big things happen” (Bennett 2010, p. 107). For those teaching early childhood environmental education, they would be accustomed to this type of thinking when considering composting worms and the

life cycle. Darwin, like the children in the Melbourne and Kazakh study, had a curiosity when paying close attention and noticing the everydayness of worms, dirt, and dogs, the potential to extend “ecology” beyond a hierarchical anthropomorphic structure to “uncover a whole world of resonances and resemblances” (Bennett 2010, p. 113). This opening up (beyond anthropomorphism) allows opportunities for the nature-culture divide to be reconsidered as “ecological collective” – containing active agents of human and nonhuman elements. For educators, it allows openings for posthuman pedagogies that consider relations between material objects to be reassigned as a “vital (vibrant) kinship” between the human and nonhuman (Bennett 2010). Such an approach therefore may lay the foundations for a recasting of education for sustainability.

By reimagining pedagogies of learning and knowing in a materialist manner, this chapter explored what Braidotti (2013, p. 98) describes as “. . .the intricate web of interrelations that mark the contemporary subjects’ relationship to their multiple ecologies, the natural, the social, the physic.” A feature of this new ontological perspective is that:

. . .it shifts from conceptions of objects and bodies as occupying distinct and delimited spaces, and instead sees human bodies and all other material, social and abstract entities as relational [and that these] assemblages of relations develop in unpredictable ways. (Fox and Allred 2014, p. 3)

By shifting away from the *child* in nature as the only agential body and focusing on the materiality of child bodies and the bodies of other nonhuman entities as relational assemblages allows a new imagining for children and their encounters with nature. Without disregarding or debunking the work of the child in nature movement or nature education, this chapter has sought to challenge anthropocentrism and the type of educational learning that reinforces the exceptionalism of humans (nature exists solely as a restorative “resource” for unnatural disconnected children). It has sought to bring attention to environmental education research and environmental learning as articulated outside of the modernist divides of human-culture, subject-object, and child-nature. The analysis performed in this chapter sought to support new imaginings for interspecies and the mattering of relations through the ploy of intra-action. It opens up possibilities for educators to consider how they engage with the complexity of the child-nature, child-animal encounters in order that in their classrooms and communities they “. . .learn with rather than learn about the non-human others we cohabit” (Taylor et al. 2013, p. 59). And like Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw (2015, p. 20) in this chapter, there has been an acknowledgement that “learning through encounters with other species is not always harmonious and pleasant, is not always equal, and does not offer us “moral certitudes or simple escape routes” from the mess we are in.” Simply, posthumanist and new materialist readings of child-nature encounters, like these in this chapter, invite researchers and educators to look at data differently and invite a new imagining for a “collective ecology” of human and nonhuman for a future sustainability and environmental education.

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Part III

Children, Young People, and Urban Spaces

Sophie Hadfield-Hill

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Abstract

Children and young people’s everyday lives in changing urban environments are the focus of this chapter. It prompts researchers and those working in the context of shifting urban spaces in the majority world to consider children’s experiences of change which are underway in their street, neighborhood, and city. Here the focus is threefold: (i) on *urban remaking* projects and urban renewal schemes associated with informal housing relocation and the beautification of city spaces; (ii) *urban transformation*, considering the lived experience of children and young people in new city developments, prompted by a neoliberal urban agenda (where the vision is for eco, smart, and sustainable living); and (iii) *urban imagining*, an insight into how children and young people are often at the center of these new urban visions and imaginations, where children and childhoods are used to market new urban dreams in line with the *urban transformation* agenda. Given the rapid pace of urban change across the majority world, there is no better time to explore the geographies of changing urban environments; how children are positioned, experiencing and negotiating such shifting landscapes needs critical attention.

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Children and young people • Majority world • Urban • Changing urban environments • Everyday

1 Introduction

This chapter contributes to the growing body of literature examining the everyday lives of children and young people in the majority world, in the context of rapid urban change. The geographical focus on childhood has emerged largely from the experiences of those in the minority world (i.e., those living in countries with the “minority” of the world’s population – for example, the UK, North America, and Europe) but what about children who are experiencing life in the majority world (generally taken to mean those who live in countries with the “majority” of the world’s population – for example, India and China)? This chapter brings together research from a majority world setting with a focus on urban childhoods. Urban environments are under immense pressure, facing unprecedented challenges; what does this mean for children and young people’s lives? How are children and young people adapting to, challenging, and negotiating the change which is underway in their street, neighborhood, and city? Enhanced knowledge of children’s everyday lives in changing urban environments across contexts, cultures, and communities is imperative; evidence-based planning for shifting urban environments will lead to improved childhood experiences.

Three forms of urban change underpin this chapter: (i) *urban remaking projects* – changing structures within existing urban spaces, for example, urban renewal programs, informal housing redevelopment, and additions to cityscapes, i.e., sustainable urban extensions; (ii) *urban transformation* – new cities, eco-cities, and smart cities (see, e.g., Caprotti 2014 and Shatkin 2011) which are becoming ever more prevalent across the majority world; and (iii) *urban imagining*, where children and childhoods are often central to the visions, dreams, and imaginations of the *urban transformation* agenda. From Brazil to India and China, new urban forms are contributing to the *worlding city* thesis (Ong 2011) where “worlding refers to not a single unified political process but to diverse spatializing practices that mix and match different components that go into building an emergent system” (2011, p. 12). Urban issues, ranging from population pressure on existing towns and cities to climate change and increasingly upwardly mobile populations, are prompting neoliberal policies which often include the rolling out of privatized solutions to address urban problems. As stated by Hoffman (2011, p. 68), there is an overwhelming search “for models and better urbanisms . . . fuelled by exponential urban growth in many parts of Asia and the identification of current conditions as unhealthy, overcrowded and unsustainable” (Hoffman 2011, p. 68). These factors are contributing to the development of new urban forms, and importantly new urban experiences. Thus, acknowledging variance within borders of the majority world is important, particularly in terms of the emerging country contexts of Brazil, Russia, India, and

China (BRIC). This chapter contextualizes children and young people within the milieu of the majority world and offers insight into the kaleidoscope of childhood experiences occurring within *changing urban environments*.

The chapter is structured as follows, firstly, urban childhoods are considered via a review of the existing research in the urban majority world. This then progresses to explore a nascent body of research which seeks to address how children and young people are experiencing changing urban environments in the urban majority world, in terms of *urban remaking*, *urban transformation*, and *urban imagining*. In the final section, the chapter draws on international initiatives which consider children to be a *part* of urban change. Here examples from the minority world are drawn upon, considering key research in other communities and cultures which have examined children and young people's everyday life and participation in new urban spaces.

2 Urban Childhoods

Urban childhoods are growing at an exponential rate; by 2040, those living in urban environments are expected to double from two to four billion, half of whom will be under 24 years (Child Friendly Cities 2009; UN 2014). Currently, one-third of the majority world's population are children (Malone 2001); and by 2050, seven out of ten livelihoods will be urban (UNICEF 2012) with six billion of the world's population living in urban environments (UN 2014). This section notes the distinctions and congruencies between the experience of urban childhoods across the majority world. Urban life, for some, is a site of income-earning, a space of access to health care, diversity, protection, formal education, and sanitation; however, for millions of children and young people, their experience is far from archetypal and adequate (Malone 2001; UNICEF 2012).

Social science research into urban childhoods in the majority world have to date focused primarily on: (i) the street, (ii) childhood work, and (iii) play – although children's lives are often at the center of debates about broader societal issues of education, politics, public healthcare, and sanitation. Firstly, the *street* (as a space) is the focus of much research with children in majority world urban settings, often focusing on navigation, work, and survival (Kombarakaran 2004; Mizen and Ofoosu-Kusi 2010). In considering the Indonesian context, where life on the street is an everyday reality for many children in large cities, Beazley (2003) acknowledges the repertoire of survival strategies, which young people enact and encounter as a result of the marginalization and subordination they experience from state and society. Beazley and others (see, e.g., Evans 2006) interrogate the gendered positions of children who live on the street. Beazley shows how females are particularly vulnerable to marginalization; however, evidence indicates that they often succeed in “creating their own gendered sense of place on the street” (2002, p. 1665). Survival, resilience, and resistance are common themes emerging from research in diverse majority world contexts (Jones 2011; van Blerk 2005). Indeed, Abebe (2008) highlights the need for a shift in attention from children's vulnerable positions on the street to their agency and reciprocity. In this vein Mizen and

Ofosu-Kusi (2010, p. 441) search for friendship among those who are both victims and protagonists, “recipients and perpetrators of insult, theft, intimidation and violence.” For many of these children, Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi (2010) acknowledge the importance of friendship in a landscape of harsh realities, a place where they have been neglected by family and wider social structures which are intended to protect and provide (see also Webster 2011). Children who live in urban environments, on the street, are juxtaposed against the normative, ideal, childhoods which permeate global policies and adult imaginations of childhood. By navigating public spaces, living on the pavements, working in the open, these children challenge our minority world assumptions about childhood (Abebe 2008).

Urban environments in the majority world are the site of millions of children’s everyday working practices; current estimates suggest that there are 168 million children worldwide who are laborers (11 % of the child population), with 85 million of these employed in hazardous working environments (ILO 2013; ILO 2015). In this regard, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has set the global child labor agenda. They imply that work has potential negative impacts on childhood, especially children and young people’s potential, dignity, and their physical and mental development (ILO 2013). However, it is widely acknowledged that these figures are an extensive underestimate, given that in India, for example, it is estimated that 85 % of child laborers are hidden in the informal sector in homes, invisible, and ignored (UNICEF 2014a). While much of the work children do is detrimental and exploitative, the positive rewards for working children and young people in differing contexts has also been acknowledged (O’Dell et al. 2013; Punch 2003). For example, in considering the economic contributions, which children make to their family units, O’Dell et al. (2013) argue that further research is needed to consider children and young people’s perspectives and life worlds in local circumstances. In a similar vein, Punch maintains that while much of the important work done in Latin America, Africa, and Asia has highlighted the intensely challenging environments for some young people (i.e., via research on child prostitution, child soldiers, and street children), it has also “led to an obfuscation of more ordinary everyday aspects of majority world children’s childhoods” (Punch 2003, p. 281).

In the realm of the street and public space, we can also consider children’s play in the context of the majority world urban experience. Lester and Russell (2010), in their analysis of a worldwide perspective and understanding of children’s play habits, routines, and spaces, find that in the circumstances where a large part of children’s lives is focused on work, there are critical, temporal moments of play which are interwoven into the childhood experience. Indeed, everyday materialities and happenings of play arise in mundane locales and moments (Ward 1990). Lester and Russell (2010) cite Oke et al. (1999) in their analysis of how children appropriate everyday spaces and materials in their pursuit of play in Mumbai, concluding that “even though children maybe engaged in domestic chores, or contributing to local economic production, they will still find some way of playing” (Lester and Russell 2010, p. 11). Considering mobility more generally, Barker et al. (2009) challenge minority world assumptions about children’s personal, independent travel, demonstrating how children in the majority world contribute significantly to the mobility of

goods, food, and water, and are therefore integral to resource infrastructures, mobilities, and networks.

Childhood research in India spans the sociopolitical-cultural spectrum, ranging from health inequalities (i.e., Kumar et al. 2014; Reddy et al. 2011) to educational attainment (James and Woodhead 2014; Weiner 1991), everyday politics (Jeffrey 2010), work (Dyson 2010) and mobility and traffic and accident rates (Dandona et al. 2011). Experiences of childhood vary over space, between and within families, neighborhood, and city scales. Children's lives are undoubtedly shaped by this confluence of everyday encounters. It is well documented that children the world over have disparate urban experiences (UNICEF 2012) with aggregated social and economic statistics often masking inequalities at various spatial scales (i.e., close proximity to healthcare and education does not infer equitable access).

Children and young people's everyday lives in diverse contexts are increasingly the focus of academic attention. Jeffery and Dyson's (2008) longitudinal research of *Young Lives*, a global study of childhood poverty, following 12,000 children over a 15-year period (see www.younglives.org.uk for more information), is just one example of academic interest in exploring diversity within and between childhoods. However, given the pace of urban change across the majority world, a more focused research agenda on children and young people's experiences of *changing urban environments* is needed.

3 Childhoods in Changing Urban Environments: Urban Remaking, Urban Transformation, and Urban Imagining

Shifting and changing urban environments as spaces of transformation are the sites of everyday reality for millions of children and young people across the majority world. Three interlinking themes warrant examination: (i) *urban remaking* projects, structural changes to existing urban environments i.e., urban renewal programs, redevelopment of informal housing and additions to cityscapes; (ii) *urban transformation*, the development of completely new cities, eco-cities, and smart cities (or other interpretations of new urbanisms), which are gaining pace across the majority world; and (iii) *urban imagining*, where the urban visions, imaginations, and representations of urban change, often include children and young people as a *part* of such urban transformation. There is minimal research into the lived experience of these new spaces, particularly with regard to children and young people's lives. How childhoods are interpreted and experienced in these new changing environments will be increasingly on the agenda.

Informal settlements are a significant feature of the urban landscape across cities of the majority world – where informal structures, often disconnected from services and utilities are habitually “associated with poverty, irregularity and marginalisation” (Lombard 2014, p. 1). McFarlane (2012, p. 2798) identifies that “one in three urbanites now live within some kind of informal housing settlement.” Indeed, research in the informal sector in majority urban cities is expanding, including studies into housing provision and quality (Braithwaite and

Lawson 2014; Wu 2002), education of women and children, and children's health (Taffa and Chepngeno 2005; Unger 2013) with evidence spanning urban centers, from Delhi to Dhaka and Nairobi to Karachi, to name a few examples. Importantly, many of these are sites of *urban remaking*, redevelopment, and urban change (Doshi 2013), which warrant specific attention, particularly given the "discursive marginalisation" (Lombard 2014, p. 3) of such people and settlements. Children and young people's voices, accounts, and everyday experiences are often excluded where displacement and redevelopment are justified as ways of addressing urban disorder.

In the case of Mumbai, McFarlane (2008, p. 96) approximates that over half the population lives in informal housing "squeezed in whatever space can be found from bridges and railways to pavements and shanty towns." In line with the emphasis on urban beautification and broader neoliberal "worlding cities" (Ong 2011) projects, much of the research and focus has been on the politics and plans of redevelopment. For example, the drive to "clean up" Dharavi, an economically significant area of Mumbai, has been the focus of much academic and public attention (Arputham and Patel 2010; Doshi 2013; Mukhija 2001); however, there is limited research with children and young people about their role within such urban remaking schemes, especially the impact on their lives. In analyzing the impact of slum redevelopment in Mumbai, Koenig (2014) raises concerns over the quality of housing, access to water, and inadequate play spaces for children and young people and argues for reframing resettlement "to take livelihoods more directly into account . . . to promote inclusive growth for a more vibrant, economically robust city" (Koenig 2014, p. 146).

More recently, Chatterjee (2015, p. 479) has persuasively argued for "making children matter in slum transformation." Through an examination of two sites of *urban remaking*, children and young people's everyday lives was the focus of investigation. India's 2005 major urban renewal agenda, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), provided the context to explore children's lives in the midst of urban change. The objective of this state-driven urban remaking project was to "fast track planned development of identified cities, focus[ing] on efficiency in urban infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms, community participation, and accountability of urban local bodies towards citizens" (JNNURM 2011, p. 5). The large-scale redevelopment of informal settlements, guided by the "Basic Services to the Urban Poor" (BSUP) program, provided a focal point for Chatterjee's work. The two case studies reported showcase the diversity of redevelopment which is occurring in the informal housing sector; the first in Kerala which manifested in the complete redevelopment of a site in the form of "walk up apartments" and the other in Maharashtra, "an example of infill housing that selectively built *pucca* or new permanent houses in place of semi-permanent or *kutcha* structures" (Chatterjee 2015, p. 480). Key findings from this research included, first, that young people were not considered to be key stakeholders, given the common view that any improvements will benefit all, including children. Second, in the case of Maharashtra, while children did not actively participate in the remaking process, it was evident that they had strong views based on their experiences of the redevelopment. Third, Chatterjee noted that important lessons can be learnt about vertical redevelopment versus infill, particularly in terms of the removal

of “dynamic, multiuse, rhizomic and habitual play spaces” (Chatterjee 2015, p. 501). Lastly, in researching with young people, Chatterjee (2015) concludes that urban remaking projects should not be planned and visioned in isolation from the surrounding area, given the social, economic, and cultural importance of the locality.

From a policy perspective, there is much to do on the “citizen-front” in terms of recognizing children and young people as citizens in urban remaking processes; their needs, rights, perspectives, and voices need urgent consideration in such schemes. As acknowledged by Chatterjee (2015, p. 503), “India pays little or no attention to children and young people in urban development and [the] planning of cities, including slum redevelopment, despite the fact that millions of children are growing up in slums and other adverse living environments.” In this regard, there needs to be a concerted research focus on children and young people’s lived experience of urban renewal and redevelopment programs (building on the work of Koenig 2014; Ramakrishnan 2014 and most recently Chatterjee 2015).

Community-based initiatives are increasingly playing a role in facilitating children and young people’s participation in the urban agenda. There are two specific examples from India: first, the organization aProCH, based in Ahmedabad, works with young people to encourage a child-friendly city approach to urban development. In one scheme, the main street of Ahmedabad closes to vehicular movement for a children’s street festival, raising awareness of children and young people in the city and giving prominence to the city’s youngest citizens (aProCH 2014). The second example, Humara Bachpan, a national organization operating in 23 cities, works with young people through participatory workshops, to improve local living conditions. While not specifically focused on changing urban environments, these organizations operate to prompt and facilitate change within young people’s local communities through participatory planning.

In parallel with the widespread *urban remaking* agenda in the majority world, there is a focus on large-scale *urban transformation*: a drive to build sustainable urban environments, newly planned communities, eco-cities, and smart cities (Caprotti 2014; Shatkin 2011). New urban forms are being conceived by public and private sectors, built and lived in, emerging to satisfy a number of interlinked urban issues including: (i) the search for urban solutions to climate change (Caprotti 2014); (ii) the population pressure on existing urban areas; and (iii) the upwardly mobile, middle class communities across the majority world. In line with neoliberal policies to address the myriad of problems which face megacities and towns (Wang et al. 2010), new urban forms and urban experiences are emerging.

In China, Wu (2012) reflects on the 100 eco-city projects which have been conceived and Joss et al. (2013) highlight such projects in Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brazil. There is mounting academic interest in such urban landscapes, from discourses of inter-Asian referencing (Pow and Kong 2007; Shatkin 2011); place-based marketing (Wu 2004); privatized city-making schemes (Brosius 2010; Caldeira 2000; Datta 2015); worlding city projects (Roy and Ong 2011); and politics and people, especially those on the margins of such shifting urban landscapes (Datta 2015). In the Indian context, the McKinsey Global Institute (2010) called for the promotion of 25 new cities, positioned within relative proximity to

existing metros, accommodating up to one million residents in each. They estimate that by 2030, 590 million people will live in Indian cities and \$1.2 trillion is needed to facilitate this growth (McKinsey Global Institute 2010). The report, now widely cited in urban research, suggests a planned portfolio of cities to support this urban population growth, including: (i) three Tier 1 cities (populations exceeding 20 million); (ii) 55 Tier 2, multi-service cities; (iii) 70 specialist towns (focusing on sectors i.e., manufacturing/tourism); (iv) 5,900 other towns of approximately 50,000 population; and (v) new cities, located in close proximity to Tier 1 cities, up to one million people in each. In addition to this, 19 super corridors were proposed, connecting Tier 1 and Tier 2 to “seed future urbanisation” (2010, p. 150). In support of this agenda, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has pledged to invest in 100 smart cities across the country. Indeed, the post-election campaign has seen a national competition for locations and a completed draft policy; the rate and direction of urban change will be significant, both in terms of urban transformations to existing cities and the conception of new city-making schemes.

A central feature of the Ministry of Urban Development guidelines for such growth provides a key focus on the *citizen*. In the competition process, proposals have to “include active participation of groups of people, such as Residents’ Welfare Associations, Tax Payers’ Associations, Senior Citizens and Slum Dwellers’ Associations . . . during consultations, issues, needs and priorities of citizens and groups . . . will be identified and citizen-driven solutions generated” (Government of India 2015, no page). How do young people feature in this citizen-driven agenda? This is a crucial opportunity for considering children and young people as key stakeholders within this process.

In a recent special issue on smart cities in India, Datta (2015) and others set the agenda for in-depth research into the lived experiences of those living, working, and moving through such urban transformation projects. In the case of Dholera, a new city space conceived, planned, and imagined as a smart city development (in the state of Gujarat, India), Datta (2015) considers who are missing and removed from such city-making projects. While not explicitly focusing on children and childhoods, she argues that “Dholera reflects a new global trend in the large-scale expulsion of those that cannot fit into [the] smart-city” vision (2015, p. 5); children on the margins of such large-scale urban transformation demand attention. Ongoing research by Hadfield-Hill (see www.new-urbanism-india.com) seeks to address this gap through a focus on children, young people, and their families’ experience of a new city development in India. This project is researching a diversity of urban childhood experiences within the context of a new emerging city, including families who have bought second homes in the development and children whose families were living on the land prior to construction. Emerging findings highlight the importance of education, nature, and mobility from the perspectives of children and young people living, learning, and playing within new city developments.

In a similar vein, Caprotti (2014) calls for a focus on “the less visible” in the creation and construction of eco-city projects across the majority world, arguing that it is imperative that attention focuses on the builders of these city projects as well as “those who live in its shadows or on its fringes” (Caprotti 2014, p. 9).

Indeed, Bunnell et al. (2012, p. 2787) in their consideration of Kuala Lumpur, talk of “worlding from below” in recognizing the builders and construction workers of new urban environments and eco-city projects – the people who carry back to their villages “imaginings of urban transformation.” A consideration of the voices and experiences of the children of construction workers, who spend their childhoods growing up on building sites, is warranted within the urban transformation agenda.

In considering *urban imaginings* in the realm of urban transformation across the majority world, there are two interlinked themes to consider: (i) research which imagines projected urban transformations and (ii) the representation of young people in imagined urban futures. Research by Kruger and Chawla (2002) is an example of considering children and young people’s voices and experiences in the imagined transformation of Johannesburg, taking in to account their needs and priorities. Recommendations from children’s participation included places to play, safe pedestrian routes, and increased awareness of harassment and public safety (Kruger and Chawla 2002). This research is part of a future vision, an imagined urban transformation. What is needed is a policy and research agenda which considers children as *part* of the urban remaking and urban transformation agendas which are happening on the ground across the majority world, impacting on children and young people’s everyday lives. The second interlinked theme is how urban transformations are imagined and marketed, through the symbolic representation of childhood and youth as a central facet of urban change. Research in this regard has largely focused on the globalized façade of new city developments (Pow and Kong 2007), which has often manifested in the translation of minority world housing forms into other contexts and landscapes (although inter-Asian referencing is increasingly common). From visual interpretations to foreign street names and un-native flora, Pow and Kong reflect on some of the distinctive landscapes which *beautify* new developments in Shanghai which, they argue, “evoke exotic and romanticised images of Mediterranean America” (2007, p. 129). Similarly, in researching the Chinese setting of Songjiang New City, Wang et al. (2010) comment on the distinctively British buildings which have been integrated into the development, the duplication of housing styles (i.e., Tudor) and social inferences (i.e., a British-inspired public house), and the negative impact this has had on surrounding communities. Similarly, Benjamin et al. (2008) express concern about Indian development and the potential impact of rapid social, economic, and physical transformations on existing structures, communities, and lifestyles.

The transposition of foreign symbols (or cutting and pasting of urban forms), dislocated from indigenous surroundings, is a common feature of place-based marketing (Pow and Kong 2007; Wu 2004) in developers’ drive to attain a global audience and investment. Pow and Kong (2007) note the cultural commodification and “symbolic capital” of new urban developments, from appointing a famous architect to the translocation of award winning styles and urban form, contributing to the globalization of urban space. Here Pow and Kong draw on the work of Baudrillard (1981) in the “political economy of sign” – arguing that the choice of architectural icons is of course not incidental; they were deliberately selected to generate a feeling of admiration and awe among audiences regarding the

“comparative worth of the housing development, by drawing on already understood cultural codes” (2007, p. 143). Bunnell (2013) and others report on the Asian inter-referencing which developers and urban designers are pursuing in the name of global urbanism; Shatkin (2011, p. 79) comments that “through inter-referencing, politicians, planners, architects, and developers seek to capture the essence of ‘successful’ Asian global urbanism.” There is the potential for the foreign translocation of signs, symbols, buildings, and forms to have a significant impact on children and young people’s sense of place and belonging to their communities and neighborhoods – a further avenue of potential research.

The “urban middle class” are facilitating the growth of new city developments (Chacko and Varghese 2009). Wang et al. (2010) offer perspectives on the opportunities which these developments and projects afford the middle class, from an unpolluted environment to a more reliable electricity and water supply. These new landscapes, through effective marketing of architectural symbols and images, are offering and advertising a content, quiet, beautiful life to those who can afford it (see Chacko and Varghese 2009 for a discussion of gated communities in Bangalore). However, Pow and Kong (2007) argue that the middle classes are being presented with advertisements of lifestyles, which are dislocated from everyday social and cultural life. Furthermore, Wissink (2013) suggests that a “narrative of loss” is a dominant feature of new developments, arguing that “concentrated investments in (semi) private spaces, often protected by walls and gates, attract the elite and maximise capital accumulation . . . meanwhile, public spaces suffer disinvestment and provide refuge only to those unwelcome in premium, network spaces” (2013, p. 3). Pow and Kong (2007) remind us of Calderia’s (2000) work on fortified enclaves in Sao Paulo, which explored social norms and conduct, and how these were challenged and undermined by various residents. In India, Brosius (2010) focuses on the residents of luxury enclaves, drawing parallels with the Dubai-ization of Delhi, through middle class imaginaries and experiences (a much needed angle of research in the context of mounting urbanization and worlding city projects).

Children and young people are represented as being *part* of the urban transformation agenda in India, via their depiction in marketing images of new urban spaces. There is a recent drive to market “child-centric” or “child-friendly” homes and one advertising slogan promises “to return lost childhood to children” with “a basketball court and skateboard park to swimming pools, here’s a fun environment for your child to grow up in” (Gera Child Centric Homes 2014, no page). In the Chinese context, Pow and Kong address the familial experience. They consider the circumstance of China’s one-child family policy, arguing that developers in their promotional campaigns were using powerful images of children in safe, clean, privileged new environments to exploit the “psychological and emotional vulnerability among parents” (2007, p. 142). Using children as a marketing tool for imagining urban transformations is commonplace, with images of children playing in green outdoor space; families with children, smiling and happy; children on bikes; and children with friends frequently represented.

4 Children as “a Part of” or “Apart from” Urban Change?

Recognizing children as *a part* of the urban fabric, based on their experiences of the city (Lynch 1977) and thus as key stakeholders in planning, participation, and design, has been acknowledged in the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities (CFC) initiative (Riggio and Kilbane 2000). Emerging out of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the initiative reflects children’s rights in “policies, laws, programmes and budgets . . . [where] children are active agents; their voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence decision making processes” (UNICEF 2014b, no page). In line with the Convention, the CFC initiative has been prompted by: (i) the prevalence of children experiencing city environments which were structurally incapable of meeting their everyday needs, (ii) the mounting multi-agency effort in regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and (iii) the shift in attitude toward the encouragement of children and young people’s participation in local governance (UNICEF 2014b). Wilks (2010, p. 27) surmises that “a child-friendly city is one where children are safe and are protected from violence and exploitation, where they have access to all basic services including housing and water, where there are safe and healthy places to play and where children are able to have a voice to participate in the social and cultural life of the community.” Table 1 shows the

Table 1 Building blocks for developing a Child Friendly City (Adapted from – UNICEF 2015: no page)

Framework for action	
Children’s participation	“Promoting children’s active involvement in issues that affect them; listening to their views and taking them into consideration in decision-making processes”
A child-friendly legal framework	“Ensuring legislation, regulatory frameworks and procedures which consistently promote and protect the rights of all children”
A city-wide children’s rights strategy	“Developing a detailed, comprehensive strategy or agenda for building a Child Friendly City, based on the Convention”
A children’s rights unit or coordinating mechanism	“Developing permanent structures in local government to ensure priority consideration of children’s perspectives”
Child impact assessment and evaluation	“Ensuring that there is a systematic process to assess the impact of law, policy and practice on children – in advance, during and after implementation”
A children’s budget	“Ensuring adequate resource commitment and budget analysis for children”
A regular state of the city children’s report	“Ensuring sufficient monitoring and data collection on the state of children and their rights”
Making children’s rights known	“Ensuring awareness of children’s rights among adults and children”
Independent advocacy for children	“Supporting non-governmental organisations and developing independent human rights institutions – children’s ombudspersons or commissioners for children – to promote children’s rights”

framework devised by UNICEF for countries worldwide to address local governance from a CFC perspective. From Brazil to El Salvador, Jordan, Spain, Philippines, and Kazakhstan, countries the world over are supporting the Child Friendly Cities initiative (Chawla 2002; Riggio 2002).

A further example of international collaboration toward child-friendly environments is the UNESCO *Growing Up in Cities* program, which sought to encourage the participation of young people to stimulate the design of child-friendly urban policies and environments (UNESCO 2003) (in both minority and majority urban worlds – i.e., India, South Africa, Argentina, UK, Sweden, and Norway). Chawla (2002) and the *Growing Up in Cities* project, researched a diversity of cities to tease out convergences within and between cities thus promoting the challenge and the potential of learning from research across childhoods, environments, and experiences. The CFC movement and other more localized initiatives have moved the research and policy agenda toward “demonstrating young people’s capacities for understanding their environments and challenging the lack of attention they receive in planning and designing city spaces” (van Blerk 2013, p. 556).

The acknowledgement that children and young people have something to offer the vicissitudes of their spatial environments is thus recognized in the international uptake of the Child Friendly Cities initiative; bringing together multiple actors, including police, policy makers, town planners, architects, local businesses, children, and young people. How young people can meaningfully participate is a key debate in the literature (Hart 1997; Percy-Smith and Thomas 2010). However, given the diversity of social, cultural, and economic factors which shape childhood experiences across the world, this undoubtedly has implications for participation, how it is viewed, experienced, and negotiated in the local context.

At this juncture it is necessary to draw on research from the minority world with children and young people in the context of urban development, particularly given the broader agenda which has emerged in terms of children and young people’s participation. Kenna and Stevenson (2010, 2013) provide analysis of the lived experience of new urban developments in Australia primarily focusing on the homogeneity, predictability, and security which such living affords. However, Malone, also in the context of Australia, argues that such developments may “negate the opportunity for children to interact with children or adults in their neighbourhood streets and their design discourages children’s outside play” (2007, p. 515). Considering this, Malone (2013) reports on a unique initiative whereby an Australian developer worked with children and young people on a planned housing development of 430 properties and a local park, being built in close proximity to the existing community. Young people were invited to be involved with participatory workshops to reflect on their experiences of their locality and make recommendations for the new adjacent development. Working with 150 children aged 5–10 in two workshop settings and drawing on methods used in the UNESCO *Growing Up in Cities* program (Chawla 2002), Malone (2013, p. 392) concludes that “the study was testimony to a new way forward in a reciprocal relationship between children and

urban developers and reinforced the important role that children could play as key social agents in community planning.”

While Malone’s (2013) study was based on predevelopment research with young people in neighboring communities, researchers in the UK explored the everyday lives of children and young people who were resident in new housing developments, sites which were planned as part of the Labour Government’s drive to develop “sustainable communities.” Researchers explored children’s experiences of living in a new urban extension, an infill site and a village (planned as inclusive, “sustainable,” and “liveable”), focusing on their interactions, movements, and citizenship within these new urban contexts. Findings from the project have focused on: (i) children’s everyday outdoor mobilities and the importance of *walking* for young people’s everyday experiences and friendships (Horton et al. 2014); (ii) the governance of “life itself” and “liveability” within new sustainable communities (Krafl 2014); and (iii) children and young people’s knowledge regarding the environment and sustainability, suggesting that urban landscapes and sustainable features can be a prompt for pro-environmental behavior (Hadfield-Hill 2013; Horton et al. 2013). Research in the minority world, which has considered young people’s perspectives in the planning and design of future urban developments (Malone 2013) and their experiences of growing up in new urban spaces (Horton et al. 2014), is an important anchor in understanding children’s perceptions, experiences, and expectations of urban change.

5 Conclusion

Urban environments in the majority world are under intense pressure from a myriad of social, economic, political, and environmental agendas and issues; these pose specific threats, opportunities, and challenges to the everyday lives of children and young people living within such contexts. In providing a review of the research on children and young people’s urban experiences in the majority world, much of the research focuses on either: (i) the *space*, which children and young people inhabit, for example, the institutional setting of the school or (ii) an *aspect* of their lives, for example, their affiliation to work or play. There is a growing research agenda to work with children and young people to assess their local environments, especially within the context of urban change, stemming from initiatives such as the *Growing Up in Cities* program, the Child Friendly Cities initiative, and other more localized schemes. Chatterjee’s (2015) work on *urban remaking* projects in India, examining infill housing projects and relocation programs, is vital in recognizing the perspectives of young people in the redesign of their existing neighborhoods. From the perspective of children and young people living in sites of urban remaking, important considerations are needed so as not to erase the histories, play spaces, communities, and the “rhizomic” nature of many informal settlements which are such an

integral part of everyday life. The same goes for sites of *urban transformation*, whether they are changes to existing cities or the development of new urban forms. The experiences of children and families are vital in this regard; exploring the connections, relations, spatialities, and geographies of *urban transformations* should be a priority. How children and childhoods feature in urban imaginations has a direct relationship to the urban transformation agenda; through promotional material and advertising, future visions of cityscapes are laced with representations of young people. These growing avenues of research prompt an analysis of how children are a part of, or dislocated from, urban change at multiple scales across the majority (and minority) world.

In considering children and young people's everyday lives, voices, stories, perceptions, and experiences in the planning and design of new urban spaces, particularly in the majority world, it is useful to reflect on Hart (2008) in his analysis of children's participatory involvement in community development. He considers the paradox between them as *children* but also as children who are often socially disadvantaged, concluding that "participatory activities in villages and urban neighbourhoods rarely seem to lead to the involvement of children or the serious consideration of their concerns in regular processes of decision-making even in local forums" (2008, p. 412). Notwithstanding this cautionary acknowledgement of the multiple positionalities of children, research with young people in changing urban environments would extend empirical and theoretical conversations about children's everyday lives across different contexts, cities, and communities (Barker et al. 2009; Katz 2004; Punch 2003); thus developing an understanding of contemporary urbanization and its impact on children and young people. Indeed, Kenna and Stevenson, in considering new urban developments, agree that "given their proliferation and hence significance, there is need for continued research into the complexities of life within them in different international contexts" (2013, p. 412).

In thinking through the structural changes which are happening within and between cityscapes, this chapter has highlighted: (i) *urban remaking* and the lived experiences of children and young people who are experiencing shifting urban landscapes at sites of relocation and rehabilitation; (ii) *urban transformation* focusing on new city developments (the vision being eco, smart and sustainable) and young people's positionality within these large-scale urban agendas; and (iii) *urban imagining*, considering how children and childhood are represented within the urban transformation agenda. By addressing this growing area of research, this will contribute to: (i) a global discussion of childhood studies (Punch and Tisdall 2012); (ii) a holistic conceptualization of childhood and everyday life in *changing urban spaces*, extending theoretical and empirical literatures of young people's lives in diverse contexts; and (iii) a consideration of the Child Friendly Cities movement in the realm of urban change, thus leading to a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary urbanization and its impact on children and young people. With the rapid pace of urban change across the majority world, there is no better time to address these issues, bringing together critical questions about childhood and youth, with an exploration into the geographies of changing urban environments. How children are positioned, experiencing, and negotiating such urban change needs critical attention.

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Physical and Virtual Public Spaces for Youth: The Importance of Claiming Spaces in Lima, Peru

11

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Abstract

Today’s youth live in a world where public life is changing rapidly and public spaces are no longer restricted to the physical urban landscape. With the global reach of the Internet, youth are increasingly surrounded by and immersed in new

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technologies which offer them access to virtual space. Access to virtual space was until recently limited to the higher- and middle-income groups in Latin American cities, but the rapid proliferation of the so-called *cabinas* (cyber cafes) and cable connections at home in low-income neighborhoods has brought virtual space within reach of the hitherto excluded. This chapter explores how youngsters from a peripheral settlement in Lima, Peru, are maneuvering both physical and virtual spaces. The chapter demonstrates that in a context of adult-regulated physical public spaces and physical insecurity, processes of socialization and identity formation are increasingly taking place online. The virtual world can provide youngsters with a new realm in which they can weaken their parents' vigilance over their everyday lives. This chapter concludes that the rise in virtual socialization does not however imply that physical public space becomes unimportant for the youngsters in these settlements but, instead, reveals a fascinating interplay in marking identities in physical and virtual public space.

Keywords

Youth • Physical public space • Virtual public space • Urban poor • Social network sites • Identity • Lima • Peru

1 Introduction: New Social Realities

In the last decades, the world has seen various transformations. With the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs), today more than one-third of the world population makes use of the Internet (World Bank 2014). Especially in the ever-growing megacities, ICT infrastructure mediates the relationship between the individual and his or her social environment (Green 2002). The increased use of new technologies and the pervasiveness with which this occurs have changed ways of living in practically all dimensions of our social lives (Kakihara and Sorensen 2002). Today's urban youth are constantly surrounded by new technologies in a way that older generations were not. This change that frames social life makes the experiences of young people's social realities even more worth observing. However, youth are relatively absent from academic work that attempts to explain urban life (Skelton and Gough 2013) and discussions that do focus on youth often lack appreciation of their perspectives (Hopkins 2010). While ICT use is increasingly linked to the young generation, ethnographic research on the actual use of new technologies by these young people remains relatively scarce (Slama 2010), especially regarding young people in the marginalized global south. This study will therefore present how young Peruvians locally appropriate a global technology at a particular place and time. With public spaces being essential for social participation in the city, this study analyzes how youngsters in low-income peripheral environments, where access to the virtual world was until recently "a myth," shape their social lives by the use of both physical and virtual public spaces and how these spaces can be compared in terms of access, use, and audience.

Rather than making general claims about changing conceptions of space, this chapter provides empirical evidence that links physical and virtual spaces together as simultaneous, embedded, and related dimensions.

2 Theorizing Public Space and Youth

In order to ensure that people can participate as “fully fledged social subjects” in urban life (Amin 2008, p. 22), one needs to acknowledge the importance of public spaces as sites of civic becoming. They are some of the most important sites in which young people create space for themselves and construct and contest their identities (Hopkins 2010). As a location, public space is used to indicate places that are supposedly accessible to anyone. In more practical terms, physical public spaces are those areas where people have legal access to and can observe others, including streets and sidewalks, parks and squares, public buildings, the public sector of private buildings, etc. This is in comparison to virtual public space that is often described as a new type of space, a space invisible to our direct senses (Batty 1993, cited in Graham 1998, p. 165). Yet, the similarities in the way we speak about both physical and virtual spaces are noticeable. Regularly, spatial and territorial metaphors are used to help visualize abstract virtual space. These metaphors are related to material spaces where “daily life is confined, lived and constructed” (Graham 1998, p. 166) (e.g., *website*, *surfing* the internet, *Facebook wall*). Actually, Slama (2010) states that anthropological literature on the Internet has generated important theoretical insights by questioning a clear-cut distinction between online and offline spheres, as presumed by notions such as “virtuality.” After all, virtual space is used by diverse people in diverse real-world locations (Miller and Slater in Slama 2010, p. 317). According to Graham (1998) there is without doubt a complex link between new technologies and spaces and places that are bound up with human territorial life (see the work of Graham (1998) on three theoretical perspectives on this matter). In one of the theoretical perspectives, he outlines, the idea is presented that virtual and geographical spaces are necessarily socially produced together. They “co-evolve” within the same broad societal trends and social processes (Graham 1998, p. 171). As this chapter examines the complex relation between online and offline phenomena, these spaces will first be theorized in terms of access, use, and audience.

2.1 Space and Access

According to Hopkins (2010) a place is a unique location that is connected to other places but that is also self-contained and distinctive. Resulting from the significance a place has for its inhabitants, “a sense of place” and a strong place attachment can develop. This attachment becomes even stronger in situations of economic marginality, where it becomes a fundamental source of social identity

(Pickering et al. 2012; Fraser 2013). In general, public spaces are seen as signifying patterns of mutual influence between space and human interaction with boundaries that are necessarily socially constructed (Massey 1998). The notion “place identity” (Proshansky et al. 1983, p. 64) highlights how space is integral to the formation and maintenance of the self, because this mutual shaping of the physical and the social environment (Proshansky et al. 1983 in Gray and Manning 2014). While these characteristics of space are often attributed to physical public space, there is no reason to assume it does not apply to virtual public space as well.

While describing physical public space, Malone (2002) states that when a place has strongly defined boundaries and strong internal homogeneity, it can be considered a “closed space.” In these spaces there is often a concern with boundary maintenance and a dominant group culture can be prevalent. People can feel the need to regulate and maintain shared value systems and evade conflict in physical public space. This is then based on a vision of appropriate use and appropriate users of public space (ibid.). It is often youth’s visibility in physical public space, with their own culture and internal boundaries, that leads to conflict over the use of this space (Malone 2002). Young people are often being perceived as a potential threat because they interrupt traditional patterns of social organization (ibid.). The street is also a site of socialization, within which collective modes of behavior and social organization are constantly renegotiated; the street landscape reproduces contestation of both social and spatial control (Cahill 2000). As conflict and control are prevalent matters in physical public space, questions arise about virtual space in terms of boundary maintenance and vigilance. In response youth try to escape parental control and gain some (spatial) autonomy in often “hidden” spaces (Matthews et al. 1998).

Because virtual public space is greatly affected by the mediated nature of interaction, Boyd (2008) uses the term “mediated spaces” to refer to online spaces in which people can gather publicly through mediating technology. This compares with unmediated offline spaces in which “fundamental architectural differences affect social interaction” (Boyd 2008, p. 125). In other words, the boundaries of mediated spaces are not physically defined and access to information is not limited by physics (e.g., walls and other obstacles) that restrain visibility and audibility. This does however not necessarily make life online public. On social network sites (SNSs), there is a distinction between “public” and “private” profiles. SNSs are defined as “web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (Boyd and Ellison 2008, p. 211). While public means that profiles are visible to anyone, private implies that one decides who can see their profile, or part of it, and who cannot. Boundary maintenance in physical public space can thus be compared with the privacy settings in the virtual sphere. Yet, the most interesting point regarding virtual space and access is that youngsters can participate in the unregulated publics of virtual space even while being physically located in adult-regulated spaces (Boyd 2008).

2.2 The Use of Space

Characteristic for many young people is their desire and need for public spaces to be with friends and “hang out” with them, to feel that they belong, while at the same time having the chance to meet new people and not miss out on social opportunities (Skelton and Gough 2013). Hanging out with friends is crucial for their everyday lives, and the streets can provide space to gain some autonomy and create the rules of engagement on their own terms (Fraser 2013). Friendship groups with “similar others” (Pickering et al. 2012, p. 948) provide social and emotional support, and “hanging out” strengthens these ties. Local places and spaces, with individual and collective memory, can become blended with self-identity, friendships, and relationships that occur there (Fraser 2013). Hanging out is about young people exploring elements of their identity and what this means in a wider social context (Pickering et al. 2012). Young people often search for “special places,” away from authority, to be with friends and have adventures (Hopkins 2010). Cahill (2000) coined young people having “street literacy,” a subtle appreciation of their knowledge of the streets based on their own daily experiences, boundaries set by parents, and informal local knowledge. Street literacy is embedded both in public space, where street negotiations require sensitivity for the presentation of self and one’s relationships with others, and with one’s street environment (Cahill 2000, p. 253). The territorial markers left in claiming spaces (Hopkins 2010) can be considered the signifiers in the unspoken “street language.”

Often, identities that youth embrace within public spaces are oppositional to a dominant culture (Malone 2002). Their (sub)culture can be misunderstood and appears disruptive and deviant in the eyes of mostly adults, and young people hanging around are consequently perceived as “dangerous” (Pickering et al. 2012). From a youth perspective, physical public space is thus not an open space where they can freely participate, interact, and define their own way of using it (Valentine (1996) in Malone 2002). It is actually more a closed space where the youngsters are expected to show respect to adults and their definitions of appropriate behavior. Intergenerational conflict over public space is a common theme in accounts of young people in public space (Pickering et al. 2012). In more general terms, Graham (1998) also stresses that urban public space has always been a site of exclusion and inclusion. This led him to wonder about the socialization potential of our cities and the role of new communication technologies.

Arendt (as cited in Boy 2007, p. 2) makes the assumption that virtual public spaces play similar roles in young people’s social lives as physical public spaces do: they help them make sense of the social norms that regulate society, they allow them to express themselves and learn from the reactions of others, and witnesses can validate these expressions or acts by acknowledging them. A study by Valenzuela et al. (2009) showed that the most prominent reason for youngsters to join a SNS is to fulfill the need for social interaction and integration. SNSs can help youngsters learn more about others and let others learn more about them. Furthermore, the Internet introduces different ideas into different

homes so that youngsters can reflect on their social norms and on the way they want to be situated in the social world. The virtual sphere is described as a new social realm that offers more freedom (Maczewski 2002; Agosto and Abbas 2013).

2.3 Space and Audience

Social identity is thus often constructed in relation to peers and other members of society where public space can be seen as a stage for performance (White (1994) in Malone 2002), which depends on an audience.

While public life in the physical world was not usually documented and distributed for absent others, the Internet changed the scale and persistence of possible publicity (Boyd 2008). Consequently, youngsters today face a public life with, in theory, the possibilities of unlimited publicity with an unlimited audience. Hence, Boyd (2008, p. 126) indicates that having an “invisible audience” is a property that is particular to virtual space and sets it apart from unmediated publics in the physical space. While in offline spaces we can visually notice most people and/or we can overhear others’ speech, it is virtually impossible to determine all those who might encounter our expressions in online spaces. As will become clear in this chapter, youngsters are intentionally privatizing their use of the virtual spaces by audience management. So even though they cannot detect all those who might encounter their expressions, they can *envision* their audience. A separation between peer and non-peer audiences therefore makes online audiences seem more manageable than in physical space where audience includes people who happen to pass by.

3 Research Approach

This chapter draws on a longitudinal study of youth (aged 15–24 years) experiences with public space in San Juan de Miraflores, Lima, Peru. Between 1996 and 2000, one of the authors carried out action research in peripheral settlements in Lima. The participatory designs developed by young people for the public spaces (at that time still empty) in the settlement “20 de Mayo” in Pampas de San Juan formed a substantial part of the research (Hordijk 1999, 2000). This led to a long-term engagement with a local youth group. In a follow-up visit in 2010, major changes in the settlement were documented, including the rapid proliferation of Internet access in the settlement (Hordijk 2015). This led the authors to investigate the changing importance of physical public space. From February until May 2012, the first author conducted field research in 20 de Mayo. The material presented is based primarily upon data collected through surveys (60), participant observation by living in the neighborhood and participating in youth activities, in-depth interviews with 14 youngsters, and a range of participatory methods (e.g., mental mapping, participatory GIS, and participant diary writing). The conclusions drawn in this

study were discussed with the young people in 20 de Mayo during a return visit in May 2014. To ensure the anonymity of the respondents, pseudonyms are used throughout the chapter.

4 Physical Public Space in Practice: Access and Use

Between the late 1960s and early 1980s, most of Lima's so-called *pueblos jóvenes* (young towns) emerged out of mass invasions: usually illegal occupation of vacant land in the urban periphery. Consequently a form of "inverse urbanization" developed: land was first inhabited illegally then acquired legalization based on a municipal approval of a neighborhood-level "urban development plan", and thereafter services were acquired gradually. It is important to realize that from the very start, the settlers engaged in discussions to define how each community should be designed around a number of key public plots, which were to gradually become public spaces: a community hall, a church, a crèche, a community kitchen, a market, or a football pitch (Plyustheva 2012). The cost of urban planning and of basic service provision was borne by the settlers themselves.

Despite these efforts, low-income areas in Lima are generally characterized by a lack of public space due to a shortage of state and private investment. However, in 20 de Mayo, there are several plots of land reserved for this purpose. The neighborhood had dedicated a vast area for a park and communal services in their urban development plan presented to the municipality. Thanks to very active neighborhood leaders, the community managed to attract funding to build a communal library, which for years functioned as a gathering place for young people including a youth group. The first design for the park was developed with the youth group *Nueva Generación* (Fig. 1). They decided to give this public space three major purposes: a quiet area in front of the library where "you can sit with a book and drink a juice combined with an "amphitheater" that would serve for community meetings but would offer possibilities to get together and socialize," a long lane with small seats and dimmed lights "where you can stroll at night," and a sports place that combines playgrounds for adolescents with places where the small children can play (Hordijk 1999).

In 2000 the construction of the first section (the amphitheater, Figs. 2 and 3) was completed by the residents, supported through a "food-for-work" program of the state. The same group of active leaders and youth attracted funding to expand the library; to create a communal room; to construct a communal kitchen, a room for a children's playgroup; and to improve the conditions in a small local market. Despite all these efforts, there is still a lot of vacant land, often claimed by both adults and youth.

Furthermore, there are many little shops to be found operating out of various houses that can be considered as the public sector of private buildings. The vast majority of them are however closed off with a fence, meaning that it is not so much the shop itself, but the place in front of it that can be seen as a public space to gather. Cybercafés in the area (called *cabinas públicas de Internet*), which can be seen as new popular public spaces for youth to gather informally (Fernández-Maldonado 2001), are closed with a fence as well. Based on fear of robberies and acts of violence,



Fig. 1 Youth group *Nueva Generación* working on the design for the park (Source: Michaela Hordijk took this picture in 1998)



Fig. 2 The construction of the amphitheater by the residents of 20 de Mayo in 2000 (Source: Veronica Rondon Rodriguez took this picture in 2000)



Fig. 3 Neighbors sweeping the amphitheater in 2012 (Source: Irene Arends took this picture in 2012)

the owners of the *cabinas* say that when they do not know or do not trust a certain person, they will deny them access. Particular exclusionary and inclusionary dynamics are thus at play.

To elaborate on these public spaces that are often claimed by both adults and youth, the following sections will provide insight in the intergenerational conflict over access, appropriate use, and appropriate users of these spaces.

4.1 Hidden Spaces

Using the public spaces for purposes other than those attributed to them by the neighbors is generally frowned upon. However, for the youngsters, especially the so-called hidden spaces meet the requisites of being unsupervised, accessible, and affordable. Especially after dark these places are used to hang out, listen to music, consume alcohol/drugs, and, according to some, function as places to have sexual encounters. The youngsters can leave their mark on the urban landscape by putting graffiti, leaving trash behind, or taking material that belongs to the community. Most of the young people who hang out in these places have the reputation in the neighborhood of being loiterers or youth gang members (called *pandilleros*) and are associated with misconduct, violence, and promiscuity. It should be noted that the term *pandillero* is used loosely by the respondents and therefore also throughout this chapter. The term is used to refer both to those who form part of a group that is collectively and inherently associated with illegal and violent activities and to those

who are merely part of “suspicious gatherings” of youngsters on street corners regardless of the actual degree of violent and criminal activity (Strocka 2006).

There are complaints from neighbors about young people causing trouble which gives these public spaces a dysfunctional reputation. Neighbors increasingly intervene and are trying to actively control access to the neighborhood’s public spaces. Roberto (18) explains: “we pass time on the streets because the neighbors kick us out of the park. Because the friends with whom I hang out smoke marihuana, the people get bitter and throw us out.” The clash between these youth and adults becomes also clear when Karina (17) explains: “The neighbors are trying to prevent this and are forming neighbor groups to make gang members go away.” Noelia (17) even talks about neighbors going onto the streets with brooms to scare them. There are also plans to close off the sport’s area by putting fences around it in an attempt to keep those youth stigmatized as “creating nothing but trouble” out. It is remarkable that many 20 de Mayo youth themselves also make a clear distinction between those “creating nothing but trouble” or *pandilleros* and themselves. Most youngsters see the neighbors’ interventions as not directly aimed against them and do not necessarily disapprove of their actions. The consequences affect them just as much as the *pandilleros*, if not more.

4.2 Boundary Maintenance

Specific interventions in the physical built environment such as the appropriation and demarcation of public spaces are becoming more and more prevalent in the neighborhood. This trend is illustrated by the creation of what adults see as “appropriate places.” There are several examples found in the neighborhood, where the creation of little gardens by the neighbors as more or less privately owned places is preferred over communal spaces used by youth. By creating these gardens, a place is established in a space that otherwise would not have been acknowledged as an appropriate public place. Isabel (21) explains: “What happened is that they used it as a road while it was meant to be a park. Now it is fenced off. It used to be open and then youngsters with bad habits entered and had sexual encounters here.” [...] But now they [these youths] respect it. At a strip of desert sand (known as *las torres*) at the frontier of the neighborhood, a similar occurrence is happening. While seemingly empty, this space was “just a terrain,” but the human activity taking place there and the meanings ascribed have made it a significant place for some. The terrain marks youth gang territory and functions as a proclaimed *zona roja* (danger zone). Or in the words of Roberto (18), a self-proclaimed *pandillero*, “If we don’t know you or you mess with us, we rob you. Nobody can enter who does not live here, if it is not your place.” This proclamation makes it a closed space. However, adult neighbors have in turn tried to develop this terrain into a meaningful place by creating once again little gardens next to the road, claiming a different closed space within the same area. These measures of boundary maintenance reduce

public spaces in which young people can experiment with freedom, exploration, and socialization.

4.3 “They Have Taken My Freedom”

In 20 de Mayo, parents keep their children out of public spaces as a way of “good parenting.” The reason being that hanging out in the streets is associated with the bad habits of loitering youth. Actually, the presence of young people “hanging out” in public spaces has led to a “moral panic” (Cohan 1972), a disproportionate reaction to youth as a threat to social values. This moral panic serves the social functions of boundary maintenance as outlined above, with the appropriation and demarcation of public spaces as a result. Another reason for parents to try to keep their children out of public spaces is because these places are perceived as dangerous.

Harvey (cited in Verrest and Jaffe 2012, p. 3) refers to fear of violence as creating living environments that are more exclusionary. The way in which places are perceived thus impacts the way places are used. Of all possible threats, youth gang violence is the most significant in 20 de Mayo and youth gangs occupy an important space in the neighborhood. Since the threat of violence and youth gang activity are part of the lives of all 20 de Mayo youth, they know in specific detail about who is a member of which gang and who is not, what are the important conflicts, what are the symbols used by different gangs, and what are the gang territories. Both male and female youth in 20 de Mayo emphasize that they know how to move, how to act, and how to fit in – how to use their street literacies – in their neighborhood. Karina (17) states: “For the persons who don’t know the neighborhood it is unsafe. Because when you come here and you don’t know it here [...] they will rob you, surprise you [attack you]. Instead when it is your neighborhood you can walk around here just fine.” The youngsters however give several accounts of how their mobility was restricted or had to be adapted due to safety concerns. Rosa (17) explains: “Right now, for example, I am bored and I want to say to my friend ‘let’s go out.’ But since it is evening and sometimes the guys are fighting, we cannot go out.” Noelia (17) explains: “My mother’s work is in front of my school so my mom sees when we get out and gives us ten minutes to get home.” She adds: “The door in the house has been closed [in a figurative sense] and they have taken my freedom.” It is very common, especially for girls, not to go out after dark. However, we must not forget that it is the youth gang members themselves who suffer most from socio-spatial exclusion. They suffer social exclusion as a result of the stigmatizing images of public discourse, and they experience spatial exclusion through the limits on mobility rival gangs impose on one another.

Street negotiations in 20 de Mayo exemplify the intergenerational conflict over “appropriate places” and its uses, resulting in the creation of public spaces with a private character, and youth who try to generate their own territory. In the meantime, the remaining youngsters are those who seem to lose out from this boundary maintenance. Even though there are many spaces in 20 de Mayo reserved as public

spaces for the neighborhood (including the amphitheater, sports place, and library that were realized in collaboration with the youth), none of these can be seen as a “special place” for the youngsters to hang out with others, a place for themselves, and the more hidden spaces are considered too dangerous, even by many youngsters themselves. Yet, intersection of the physical public spaces of the neighborhood with virtual space should be acknowledged, as the following sections will show.

5 Virtual Public Space: Access and Use

In the literature an uneven pattern of social access to communication technology within cities is often assumed. However, in Lima from 1998 onward, the rapid proliferation of so-called *cabinas públicas* de Internet in low-income neighborhoods enabled the low-income population to benefit from relatively cheap and widespread public access. Consequently, a high and growing proportion of Internet users in Lima comes from the lower-income sectors (Fernández-Maldonado 2001, p. 38). In 20 de Mayo, all youth have access to the Internet one way or another. This can be attributed to the existence of these *cabinas* but also to individual ownership of computers that increased over the last 15 years due to economic developments in the area. In 2012 60 % of the youth in 20 de Mayo had access to Internet at home, in contrast to almost none in 2000. The other youngsters indicated they make use of the *cabinas* (and some of both). A return visit in 2014 revealed that within a short time, Internet access through cell phones became a common practice as well, something that was mentioned only in 3 % of the cases as a prime source of Internet access in 2012. Even though accessibility to the Internet is relatively easy, the frequency with which they use it differs considerably among the young people. Those who have access to the Internet at home spend, for example, significantly more time online than their counterparts who go to the *cabinas*. This latter group indicates that they would prefer to spend more time on SNSs. They mention the following obstacles in achieving this, in order of importance: lack of (free) time, restriction by their parents, *cabinas* that are too crowded, or not having more money to spend. Within the group of Internet users at home, girls are more restricted in their use. An explanation can be found in gender-based household chores and family duties of girls while present in the house.

Of all youngsters in 20 de Mayo, 97 % make use of one or multiple SNSs, with Facebook being the most popular one. The most prominent reason for youngsters to join a SNS is for the objective of communication and expression. More and more, the use of SNSs can be considered a part of young people’s routine in social life. Youngsters use strong terms to express how much they value SNSs. They state that if they would be disconnected from SNSs forever, “my life would change; I would feel like I was missing something” (Paula, 17) and “my life would be a disaster” (Maria, 21). The use of SNSs is frequently referred to as “fun” or “a way to distract,” hence fulfilling a recreational purpose. This is in contrast to findings only a few years ago in the same area where being on the Internet was never mentioned as a way to spend free time (Olthoff 2006). Noelia (17) states that “in

this [offline] life I get bored.” She explains further: “Before, when I did not connect to Facebook, I always went outside and talked to people. But since my parents do not let me go out anymore, now the communication is different.” “Now Facebook means everything to me.”

The following sections are dedicated to understand the actual use of new technologies by the young people of 20 de Mayo.

5.1 Virtual Presence

Having a virtual presence moves beyond the geographical coordinates of a person. Since a virtual presence is actively “written into being” (Boyd 2008), this brings forth the subject of identity and self-presentation. Young people face peer pressure to conform to what is perceived to be “cool” and popular among friends while exposing themselves to their public. Through the informal interactions away from supervision, youngsters’ social identities are “affirmed, contested, rehearsed, and reworked” (Hall et al. 1999, p. 506). The construction of identity should be seen as a public process that not only involves an “identity announcement” made by the individual claiming identity but also involves “identity placement” by others who reinforce (or not) the claimed identity (Zhao et al. 2008). Furthermore, Mallan et al. (2010) state that identity formation is something that ultimately relies on the dialogic of the social relationships that are enacted. Making certain implicit identity claims by showing off social ties (e.g., by the online displaying of group pictures) can be seen as an attempt to claim one’s social connectedness and popularity among friends (Zhao et al. 2008).

With identity construction, conforming to established social norms and situations is relevant and these norms are defined by contextual cues from the social environment (Boyd 2008). Self-presentation is about influencing others’ views of oneself in the ways they wish to be seen. A process of performance, interpreting others’ responses, and subsequent adjustments follow (Boyd 2008). While in social encounters in physical space, the presence of one’s physical body diverts people from claiming identities that are inconsistent with their physical characteristics and shared knowledge of each other, in the online environment people can take on different online personae that differ from their identities in the physical world (Zhao et al. 2008). The youngsters mention, for example, that online they sometimes lie a little bit to come across as happier than they in fact feel. However, due to a direct link between offline and online identities (the primary audience of the youngsters mostly consists of peers that they also know offline), they are still constrained in their freedom to make identity claims and are inclined to present the side of themselves that they believe will be well received by their peers (Boyd 2008). However, socially desirable identities can be established by overcoming physical features such as shyness and insecurities about their appearance.

Among the 20 de Mayo youth, indirect online identity claims are most common. Through texts, images, audio, and video, a virtual presence is developed and impressions are given off. This “showing” rather than “telling,” “displaying” rather than “describing” oneself (Zhao et al. 2008), and the subsequent comments made by others can be seen as a strategy to evoke (positive) remarks by others without

having to use self-praise: “You’re so pretty” is, for example, a common response to girls’ profile pictures.

5.2 Online Sexuality

Young people have power and knowledge in the virtual domain and in some instances this leads to the display of agency through online media. To explain this further, a link will be made to a study by Slama (2010) on Indonesian youth. Slama argues that the young people in his study are experimenting online with romance and intimacy in ways that they would not dare offline. Within the Indonesian context, the showing of emotions is interpreted as inappropriate and undermining self-control and self-restraint, something that does not conform to local ethics. Slama shows therefore that this online practice is at odds with offline adult standards. Our study suggests a similar occurrence within the Peruvian context regarding female sexual identity claims.

In Peru most paternalistic sectors of society ideas and norms of appropriate femaleness (*marianismo*) dictate that the showing of female sexuality is morally wrong. Girls are supposed to act as “good” girls, as “virgins,” and as “saint-like” in order to be socially valued as women (Olthoff 2006, p. 83). This contrasts with being a “bad girl” and as promiscuous and “easy.” Online, however, this dichotomy is being challenged. The example of Karina (17) serves here to illustrate a trend that has been observed among a number of the young women. Karina regularly posts “sexy” photos of herself on her Facebook page. Girls publishing pictures of themselves scantily dressed, with a provocative tongue out of their mouth or in sexual poses, can be interpreted as “bad girl” behavior. However, among these photos the following comment posted by Karina stands out: “Even though my parents are at a birthday party of my uncle, I’m not going out because I am a good girl [...]” This shows that girls can play out different roles that might be interpreted as “bad girl” behavior (the online pictures) while still self-presenting as the “good girl” in offline society. Seemingly contradictory “good girl” and “bad girl” behaviors are at play. This is illustrated by a photo Karina displays in which she portrays herself in a sexy manner while adding the following text onto the photo: “Be who I don’t want to be is being your indulge” and “I am not for you, and I never was.” Similarly Rosa (17) posted a Facebook cover photo stating the phrase: “I am single and I do whatever I want. But that doesn’t mean I hook up with just anyone” (likely this was taken from a song text or the like).

These young women are maneuvering online in making assertive identity announcements and they are adopting a more open sexual script. They do this within the virtual sphere among their peers, where it might be more acceptable. This can be interpreted as these young women’s agency in the sense that they believe they are capable and morally strong enough to select a different identity than their culture dictates, at least online (Ingrid Gercama, 2013, personal communication). It must be stressed though that these forms of agency do not conform to dominant offline cultural ideas and are not approved by older generations nor by all young

people. Some youngsters expressed their moral criticism and dislike of these practices; however, they will still be exposed to them through some of their peers. In line with the findings by Slama (2010), this research thus confirms that “online interactions are real enough to be experienced as an expansion of individual agency and are virtual enough not to evoke feelings of guilt or shame, as they would do offline” (Döring in Slama 2010, p. 324). The showcasing of gendered sexual agency through online mediums must foremost be understood as a practice of identity experimentation and does not necessarily translate into immediate counter-discourse. It remains to be seen whether these practices represent a change in offline social norms as well.

6 Identity Marking and Territoriality: Intersections of Physical and Virtual Space

Regarding more direct identity claims, what stands out is the frequent occurrence of territorial references in the photos the young people of 20 de Mayo upload on their Facebook pages. As an example, in one of these photos, you can see five young men posing in front of a graffiti-painted wall. The graffiti painting makes reference to “La Grone,” referring to the “sympathizers” of the Alianza soccer team, often associated with gang affiliation. Additionally, the text: “La 108 Grone en su barrio de los cabroz de lc 7” (“La 108 Grone in their neighborhood of the guys of lc7”) was added to the photo. “la 108” is slang mentioning a neighborhood situated downhill from 20 de Mayo, and “lc7” is a particular building block number 7. By understanding and appreciating the relationalities and intersections of particular places, a sense of identification associated with place can be acknowledged (White in Malone 2002). Mentioning physical places while making identity claims in virtual space proves important to them and shows that locality is central to their identity. Their localities are places that these young people feel that they belong to and also that these areas belong to them. They utilize place to shape their “embedded identities” (McLaughlin in Pickering et al. 2012) and they wish to do this visually online as this sphere is increasingly important in their identity construction. Thus, a new and different scale of identity marking is occurring in the hybrid offline-online environments, that is, related to increased territorial marking of physical space.

An aspect that makes socialization in virtual spaces unique in comparison to physical spaces is the asynchronous communication that is enabled and the extended period of existence of any speech, text, or act (Boyd 2008). Unlike speech in the physical space, SNSs enable users to communicate asynchronously with others. But there is more to it. For instance graffiti on a wall in the public space of the neighborhood persists if no one paints over it. But when a photo of the graffiti-painted wall was uploaded online by 20 de Mayo youth, the scale of public exposure changed and it became possible for everyone to search for and see it. With the increasingly popular practice of recording live events to broadcast social realities online, a new and increased scale of territorial marking becomes evident. By utilizing, for example, the video-sharing website YouTube, what is

happening in physical space today can be displayed in online spaces as well. This way, any speech or act can become visible for others to see at any place and time. Clear examples are territorial claims in these recordings and subsequent public online display of fights that burst out between rival youth gangs in the *pueblos jóvenes* of Lima. Roberto (18) explains: “[We put the videos on YouTube] so that they [the rival gang] see it. We take pictures, videos. . . One time someone filmed how one of them was killed during a fight. [. . .] Someone filmed it with his cell phone. Later he put it on YouTube so that the ones from “Alianza” see how we kill them.” This explains why in certain instances, youth from rival gangs become Facebook friends even though in the offline world their friendship seems impossible. The young people need each other in their social circle to validate their acts and statements. The claims about geographical space concern in fact the connections between people and their surroundings, reinforcing the idea that space is inherently social.

7 Audience and Audience Management

SNSs make it possible for youngsters to articulate and make visible their social networks. Besides family, friends, and acquaintances that are already part of their offline network, “latent ties” are also activated through SNSs. Latent ties are those connections that are technically possible but not yet activated socially (Haythornthwaite 2005). It turns out that latent ties in the form of friends-of-friends connections are frequently activated online by the youth. Hence, SNSs help the youngsters to connect with those they already know and extend that connection to those they do not yet know, thereby transcending geographical and social distances (Urry 2002). However, the online social networks of the youngsters in 20 de Mayo are generally based around physical proximity and social similarities. Still, considering that a decade ago, the social life of the 20 de Mayo youth took place in their own neighborhood (Hordijk 2015), having social contacts living in another part of Lima is already a noteworthy development.

Normally, youth’s presentation of the self toward friends and peers is different from that intended for family members. Where in the physical space people can deliberately interchange their identity announcement to adjust to their audience at that specific moment, the youngsters in 20 de Mayo evidently face difficulties in determining how to behave online as this is visible to all those who have access to their profile. How could they at the same time be “cool” to their peers and be acceptable to adults and family who are part of their SNS audience? Cesar (18) explains that he does not like it that his adult sister can see “another side of him” besides what she is familiar with within the context of the home. His sister, in turn, was affected after seeing a photo of Cesar and his friends seemingly drunk in a discothèque with beer bottles in their hands. A speech follows in an online comment on the photo in which Cesar’s sister insists on “thinking about the future” and “there is nothing more important than family and oneself, studying, and working.” As they

grow up, most youngsters have a growing desire to increase their sense of autonomy and individuation and become less satisfied with their parents' authority over their personal lives and activities (Mesch and Talmud 2010). This is illustrated by Noelia (17) saying "my parents think Facebook is the worst thing that has ever existed. They don't like it. But they don't know anything about it. [. . .] I don't like it when my mom wants to know with whom I am chatting and what we are talking about. It bothers me." "When my aunts connect to the Internet and go on Facebook, they watch what kind of photos I have, etc. And then when we meet at a family reunion, they always talk about this subject." Noelia expresses here the negative feelings her family holds against SNSs and her annoyance of the resulting social control. Luckily for the 20 de Mayo youth, it is not (yet) common for their parents to have a Facebook account with which they can monitor their children's behavior. And even if they do, the youth will use their skills to continuously take precautions to minimize adult control through social convention and barriers. Using slang in their online communication and creating a second "fake" profile are already examples. Here, young people's acquired "virtual literacy" becomes apparent, on which they increasingly rely to adapt to the new possibilities that the virtual space has to offer them.

Even though in theory it might seem as if there are no limits to audience in mediated spaces, the virtual world does bring the opportunity for youngsters to "write their community into being." As adults play their part in "privatizing" public space in physical space, youngsters in their turn seem to find deliberate ways to privatize their usable space in the virtual domain. It is interesting to note that while youngsters are changing the privacy settings on their SNS profiles in an attempt to minimize adult control, this can affect peers engaging with each other if they are not SNS friends either. This probably explains the frequently observed "promiscuousness" with which the youngsters are willing to add "friends of friends" on their SNSs. Isabel (21) states: "I will take a look at the person and if he/she seems interesting, I will accept the friend request." In general there are some criteria set out by the youngsters to decide on becoming SNS friends or not. Age seems relevant in this: "First I have to check if he is young or old. If he is old I don't talk to him" (Karina, 17). However, the most decisive criteria is if they have any friends in common (a feature that can be checked easily on Facebook). For most youngsters, having a friend in common is reason enough to let the other person enter their online circle of social contacts. By audience management the youth can maintain control over the structure of their SNS account while at the same time having a significant audience that can witness and acknowledge their acts and expressions in "public" life. This also explains the Facebook connection between young people of rival gangs: they need each other in their online social circle to validate their identity announcement, just as they need each other offline. It becomes clear here that the term Facebook "friend" is rather misleading since connections do not necessarily stand for friendship in the popular sense and the reasons people connect are varied (Boyd and Ellison 2008).

8 Conclusion

Social life in 20 de Mayo's physical public space epitomizes the general patterns of intergenerational conflict (Pickering et al. 2012), practices of boundary maintenance (Malone 2002), appropriation, and social and spatial contestation (Cahill 2000; Malone 2002) mentioned in the literature. The physical public spaces have to a significant extent become adult regulated and become more private in character. Moreover, youth gangs exert their boundary maintenance over these spaces. These practices of boundary maintenance in physical space are paralleled by the privacy settings deployed in the virtual sphere. By using privacy settings, the virtual sphere is appreciated by youth as a space unregulated by controlling adults. As pointed out by Boyd (2008) access to this unregulated space is relatively assured even when physically located in adult-regulated spaces, and this is a unique characteristic of online socialities (see Table 1).

Whereas in adult-regulated physical public spaces, youth grouping together is often misunderstood and stigmatized as troublesome, threatening the social order, young Limeneans find online spaces among their peers that provide more freedom to embrace a range of identities, including those oppositional to the dominant culture. Challenging the fixed gender roles, young women from 20 de Mayo offer alternative identity statements and debate a more open sexual script with their peers. This illustrates how some online practices can be real enough to be experienced as an expansion of individual agency while being virtual enough not to provoke the same effects as they would do in the offline world (Döring in Slama 2010). It does however require a high level of "virtual literacy," with an acute sensitivity "for the presentation of self and one's relationships with others, and with one's virtual environment" (to paraphrase Cahill's street literacy), with its "envisionable" audience and asynchronous communication. One expression or image misunderstood can have yearlong consequences.

This study showed that the online sphere is an increasingly important facet of youth's identity construction in peripheral Lima. By "writing themselves into being" (Boyd 2008), their "embodied presence" can be turned into a "virtual presence," and by audience management, they can "write their audience into being," moving from a visible audience to an "envisionable" audience. The growing importance of virtual space does not mean that physical space becomes unimportant, as is demonstrated by the increased scale of territorial marking and identity marking. Social-spatial sentiments are constantly used to shape "embedded identities" (McLaughlin in Pickering et al. 2012). Youngsters' online activities should therefore be regarded as embedded in other social spaces, which are extended and integrated across online and offline realms (Graham 1998). It has become clear that the young people of 20 de Mayo are not necessarily searching for a public space in itself, since this implies both non-peer and peer audiences, but they are searching for a specific *youth* space where they can "hang out" with peers while avoiding adult regulation. In search of this "special space" to socialize, today's youth are navigating both physical and virtual spaces. It is however by their acquired virtual literacy, as the online equivalent to offline street literacy, that

Table 1 Access, use, and audience in physical and virtual public space

	Physical space	Virtual space
Access	Boundary maintenance Adult-regulated spaces	Privacy settings Unregulated spaces (even when physically located in regulated space)
Use	Suspicion and stigmatization Fixed gender roles Appropriating space, territorial markers	Identity exploration Experimentation with gender roles Increased scale of territorial marking and identity marking
Audience	Non- peer and peer audience Visible audience Embodied presence Live feedback	Peer audience by audience management “Envisionable” audience “Writing yourself into being” Asynchronous communication
	Navigate with street literacy	Navigate with virtual literacy

young people have found ways to weaken their parents’ regulations of their everyday lives.

Whereas Table 1 might suggest a binary between youth’s access to, use of, and audience management in physical and virtual spaces, this chapter has illustrated how physical urban spaces and SNSs in the virtual realm stand in a state of continuous interaction, shaping each other and shaping youth identities in complex ways (Graham 1998). Both in the physical and in virtual space, the goal is to be visible and to be heard by similar others, in a “space of their own.” While there is a considerable overlap between youngsters’ offline and online contacts, it is in virtual interactions that physical barriers can be overcome, and more freedom is experienced in processes of identity formation, autonomy, and socialization, away from parental control. By anticipating the new and different scale of territorial marking that is occurring in the hybrid offline-online environments and by acknowledging the co-constitutive nature of the formation and maintenance of place identity, future research is better prepared to understand the lifeworlds of today’s youth in diverse parts of the world. This chapter has already revealed the significance of this global phenomenon for young Peruvians at a particular place and time.

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Teenagers' Sense of Neighborhood in Barcelona

12

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Abstract

Young people and children have the neighborhood as an essential place in their everyday lives. The neighborhood is the place where young people not only have their daily geographical experience but it is also the place that shapes their identities. The intersections of gender, class, and ethnicity are basic for understanding how young people reshape the socio-spatial imaginations of their everyday life at both the city and neighborhood scales. This chapter analyzes the everyday lives of young people, specifically teenagers, boys and girls (aged 14 and 15), in Barcelona's Besós-Maresme neighborhood, a traditionally peripheral area which has undergone extraordinary urban changes in recent years that have led to major morphological and social changes.

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Focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and participatory walks have been used to approach teenagers to ascertain how they construct their identities in the neighborhood, what they do in their free time, whom they share it with, and what spaces around them they frequent the most. The teenagers expressed their opinions and criticisms regarding spaces they feel are their own, where they felt included in public space and shared opinions on what they would like changed. Using the spaces, appropriating them, sharing opinions or intervening directly in these spaces are activities and attitudes that form a sense of citizenship.

Keywords

Young people • Teenagers • Neighborhood • Gender • Identity • Barcelona

1 Introduction

Young people and children have the neighborhood as an essential place in their everyday lives. The neighborhood is an ideal scale for ascertaining the everyday practices and material and relational resources around which children and young people organize their lives. The neighborhood is the place where young people not only have their daily geographical experience but it is also the place that shapes their identities. The intersections of gender, class, and ethnicity are basic for understanding how young people reshape the socio-spatial imaginations of their everyday life at both the city and neighborhood scales, based on their struggles, hopes, dreams, and desires (Fenster 2004; Vaiou 2013). In this chapter, we shall analyze the meaning of neighborhood for a group of young people, specifically teenagers, who live in Barcelona. The meaning of neighborhood is a set of feelings, perceptions, desires, and needs built on young people's day-to-day practices and activities carried out in everyday spaces. The study reported here is framed within the field of geographies of childhood and youth and is inspired by studies that have analyzed the everyday lives of young people in relation to the place they occupy in the city and their use and appropriation of urban public spaces (Churchman 2003; Karsten 2003; Blackford 2004; Valentine 2004; Baylina et al. 2006).

Several studies corroborate the universal need for public spaces in cities and the role they play in the processes of inclusion (Borja and Muxí 2001; Lieshout and Aarts 2008; Ehrkamp 2008; Beck 2012; Garcia-Ramon et al. 2014). Public spaces are places of relationship, social encounter, and exchange, where groups with diverse interests converge. In addition, public spaces contribute to the collective identity of a community when many people use them and when a wide range of activities are developed. Public spaces are continually reinvented by the citizenship. Young people use and move around these spaces previously imagined by urban planners (Delgado 1999). The collective local action at a neighborhood scale has a key role in the creation and consolidation of public spaces (Borja 2014). The experience of Barcelona in the 1980s and 1990s of the last century shows how public spaces planned by the local administration and

claimed by social movements have transformed the city (Borja 1995, 2014; Montaner 1999; Capel 2005).

Childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood are categories that are difficult to define, and the age brackets which are used often vary depending on who is defining them. Aspects like the phases of biological and psychological development, dependence, the need for protection, the acquisition of autonomy, and the construction of one's own identity, among others, shape the discourses over who is a child, adolescent, or young adult. What is clear is that they are socially constructed concepts, not universal ones, and that they are historically and culturally variable. The major differences in culture, class, and gender mean that their meaning and boundaries are ambiguous and change over space and time (Boratav 2005; Evans 2006). Adolescence (from 12 to 16 years old) is the stage that has been studied the least and is the focus of this study. This is a necessary transitional stage, one that is confusing for young people when they fluctuate between the desire to maintain the protection they received as children and the desire to exercise their rights as adults. What mainly identifies teenagers, besides their age, is their increase in independence and the fact that they are not so closely watched over by their adult family members, both at home and outside it (Weller 2006). In Spain, the shift from primary to compulsory secondary education (age 12) is a major factor signaling teenagers' greater autonomy, since it often implies a change in school and educational model to one that is less supervised.

Adolescence is marked by transitional rites to young adulthood (e.g., first real responsibilities, job experiences, sexual experiences, etc.), and the first negotiation of public space alone, without adult supervision (Cahill 2000). Cahill also created the concept of "street literacy," an interpretative framework that prioritizes local informal knowledge based on personal experiences in a specific context. According to the author, the environment, and the street in particular, is a meaningful context for learning where the young adult can explore their relations with the neighborhood. And in this context, teenagers have a great deal of knowledge of the protocols of this environment and acquire environmental negotiation competencies at the neighborhood scale, thanks to their lived experiences with their parents, other adults, and other youth.

Along these lines, several studies have been conducted that examine the interaction between teenagers and public space, focusing on their free time (Vanderstede 2011), their participation, and representation in spaces of consumption (Matthews et al. 2000; Thomas 2005; Kato 2009), networks of friendship (Reynolds 2007; Giró 2011), and the subjectivities and discourses on adolescence (Raby 2002). Some studies show these topics from a gender perspective, examining the diversity of behaviors, perceptions, and experiences in the public space according to gender, ethnicity, social class, or sexuality (Hyams 2003; Morris-Roberts 2001, 2010).

The street as a place of autonomy, a place to construct personal and collective identities (Gough and Franch 2005) and to develop friendships (Bunnell et al. 2012), is also a place where the regulatory impositions of adults must be dealt with (Matthews et al. 2000). The public space is a space with no supervision and with freedom, which allows youth to meet other people in an uncontrolled way,

or at least not in the same way as at home. However, this supposed space of freedom collides with what is called the *adultification* of public space or the fact that urban public space is constructed by and for adults and produced as an adult public space (Driskell et al. 2008). This fact, coupled with the conception of youth and young people as needing protection and/or as a threat, means that young people often feel excluded from or unwelcomed in public space. In this sense, the street plays a key role for youth as a place of learning and constructing the self (Holloway et al. 2010). However, the street is not always the same for girls and boys. The heteropatriarchal structure of our societies determines roles for each gender and disciplines their bodies so that they behave appropriately in the public space (Rodó-de-Zárate 2010). Therefore, the use of public space and the experience of it in the neighborhood vary depending on gender, and boys and girls may also assign different meanings to spaces. On the other hand, public space should be regarded as a culturally constructed space, a product of society which plays an important social role (Lieshout and Aarts 2008) both in terms of its capacity to construct difference, similarity, and identity and because access to it is a necessary condition for the exercise of citizenship (Ehrkamp 2008).

This chapter analyzes the everyday lives of teenage boys and girls (aged 14 and 15) in Barcelona's Besós-Maresme neighborhood, with a special emphasis on ascertaining how they construct their identities in the neighborhood, what they do in their free time, whom they share it with, and what spaces around them they frequent the most. With the understanding that their primary activity is studying, which they do at school and which occupies the core of their days, we analyzed their activities and experiences outside the school and school hours. With this purpose in mind, we wondered what the neighborhood offers to teenagers, what spaces they use the most, and how they use these. In this sense, we consider the teenagers in Barcelona's Besós-Maresme as a social group constructed in relation to age but also based on specific social relationships and the interactions of culture, politics, and institutional structures that take place in a specific space. Space here is understood as the result of interrelations and interactions at all scales, a product of young people's everyday practices, relations, connections, and disconnections (Massey 2005).

This chapter is organized as follows: first we present the main features of the area studied, Barcelona's Besós-Maresme neighborhood; next we outline the main qualitative techniques used; we then analyze the main results of the study; and finally we offer our reflections.

2 Barcelona's Besós-Maresme Neighborhood

The Besós-Maresme neighborhood is 1 of 73 neighborhoods in Barcelona, and it belongs to the Sant Martí district. The neighborhood has a population of 23,732 inhabitants and covers 1.3 km². The age structure of its population is quite similar to the average for Barcelona, with 13.4 % of the population under the age of 14 and 18.3 % over the age of 65. The presence of foreign-born residents is quite

significant, accounting for 30.7 %, compared with Barcelona's average (22.1 %). The neighborhood, which is located in the northeast of the city, is regarded as one of the poorest neighborhoods in Barcelona (according to figures on per capita disposable family income, if the index is 100 for Barcelona, for Besós-Maresme it is 51.8) (Barcelona Town Hall 2012).

The neighborhood was built over farmlands in the 1950s and 1960s to deal with Barcelona's housing shortage stemming from the arrival of immigrants, most of them from southern Spain. During the early years, the lack of urban planning in the neighborhood, as well as the lack of services and facilities (the extremely poor quality materials used to build the apartment buildings and the lack of schools, healthcare centers, green spaces, and public transport) seriously diminished the quality of life of the people living in the neighborhood. Improvements came slowly but surely, thanks to residents' protests, just like those staged in other neighborhoods on the outskirts of Barcelona.

The neighborhood has undergone spectacular urban transformations in recent decades. A major sporting event, the 1992 Olympics, served as the excuse to transform part of the eastern coastline, resulting in the creation of the Vila Olímpica (Olympic Village) and improvements in the beaches. Another event, the 2004 Universal Forum of the Cultures, continued the transformation to the east, spurring the creation of a new neighborhood, Diagonal Mar, which revitalized its surroundings (Figs. 1 and 2). This new neighborhood is adjacent to Besós-Maresme, and



Fig. 1 Old stores of the Spanish railway company in the Forum's space in 1962 (Photo: archive of the neighborhood association)



Fig. 2 Public space of the Forum in 2013 (Photo: girl during participatory walks)

apartment buildings with old structures thus coexist alongside skyscrapers and luxury hotels. What is more, the neighborhood's landscape has embraced Diagonal Mar Park, the Diagonal Mar shopping center, and the public space of the Forum, all built in the early years of the twenty-first century.

However, as Borja (2010) has noted, while the construction of the Olympic Village posed no problems of integration with the rest of Barcelona nor did it stir up any negative social reaction, Diagonal Mar and the Forum were controversial because they entailed a rupture with the "democratic" urban development which had been practiced to date, which promoted a social and functional mixture. The construction of the isolated towers of the Diagonal Mar neighborhood was harshly criticized by residential and professional movements because it did not create continuity, contributing to scarce social city life (Borja 2010). Likewise, the Forum was not an entirely successful event, although it did allow a large public space to be built in a part of Barcelona that had traditionally been forgotten. According to Borja, the Forum was controversial, but the decision to create a new area of centrality (mainly based on hotels and luxury office buildings) in a marginal area was the right choice to revitalize the area.

The success of these new developments – the Diagonal Mar neighborhood and the Forum – depends on whether the new urban fabric integrates with the old working-class, industrial neighborhood, namely, Besós-Maresme. These

sociologically distinct areas will only merge when the urban quality of the Besós-Maresme neighborhood improves substantially. With regard to this point, we should note that this neighborhood was chosen to receive aid from the Catalan government from 2008 to 2012 aimed at rehabilitating the most dilapidated homes, renovating public spaces, providing more public facilities, and launching programs aimed at social remediation and the promotion of commerce in Besós-Maresme.

3 A Qualitative, Inclusive Methodological Approach

The fieldwork was conducted during 2010 and 2011 at a public secondary school in Barcelona's Besós-Maresme neighborhood with students between the ages of 14 and 15. In order to encourage participation in different ways (in writing, orally, and visually), students were approached through different qualitative techniques: focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and participatory walks around the neighborhood. The first two techniques were held in classrooms at the school, while the third was conducted in the neighborhood. The fieldwork was carried out during weeks when school was in session, and research activities were included as cultural activities within the school's regular schedule of cultural activities. In addition to different exploratory tours of the neighborhood, teaching staff at the school, the presidents of the residents' associations of Besós-Maresme, and qualified informants from the civic and neighborhood center were all interviewed in order to learn more about the urban and social context of the teenagers in the neighborhood.

The first activity was held with 40 teenagers, and it consisted of holding four mixed discussion groups (approximately ten people per group). Gathered around a table with the three researchers in the classroom (moderating the debate and observing), they were told the objectives of the study and were thanked in advance for their participation. They were asked to fill out forms with personal information (name with a pseudonym to protect their anonymity and age) and to answer questions related to their everyday activities in the neighborhood. Later, in front of a map of the neighborhood and its surroundings, each one was asked to use different-colored labels to show the places they frequented the most, their favorite places and the ones they avoided for any reason, as well as their place of residence. It is important to clarify that the neighborhood limits were not drawn in the map provided, so they were able to present their own perception and experience of neighborhood limits regardless of official administrative definitions. This dynamic enabled us to get an overall map to begin a discussion about their experiences in the neighborhood. In all four groups, there were heated and extremely lively debates, and a pleasant atmosphere was created where any kind of comment was welcome. At the end of the session, which lasted approximately one hour, they were asked to evaluate the activity, and then we asked them if they wished to participate in later stages of the study (individual interviews and participatory walks) if they enjoyed it.

The second activity with the teenagers consisted of semi-structured interviews. A total of 28 interviews were conducted (17 girls and 11 boys); five of the interviewees were born abroad. The questions revolved around their daily activities (at school, in the neighborhood, and at home), their friends, their experiences in the neighborhood (use of public spaces, places they frequented, mobility, and personal autonomy), their opinions on all the urban development changes the neighborhood had undergone, their knowledge of Barcelona, and their future expectations. All the interviews were held in a relaxed atmosphere, lasted around 30–45 min and were recorded, transcribed, and later coded based on keywords.

The third activity enabled us to directly observe everything that had been debated and expressed previously in the classrooms. A total of nine participatory walks were held in which the boys and girls, in groups of three to four people accompanied by a researcher, walked freely around the neighborhood, pointing out the most important places related to their everyday experiences. Six groups of friends of the same gender were assembled (between two and five members), with members either born locally or abroad. For around an hour and a half, the teenagers guided the tour, commenting on what they saw and taking pictures of everything they wanted to point out for any reason. In parallel, they were shown a map of the route, and the girls' and boys' descriptions and comments were recorded so they could later be transcribed and analyzed. This technique allowed images, impressions, and criticisms that had not previously surfaced in the group discussions or individual interviews to emerge. It also encouraged spontaneous dialogue between the teenagers and the researcher, and it encouraged the youngsters to reflect on the spaces in their everyday lives.

At the end of the fieldwork, the research results were presented to the students who participated in all the phases and to the teachers at the school. The presentation of the main results was held in the school auditorium enlivened with music and pictures of the neighborhood girls and boys had taken on the participatory walks. This activity was held to thank the students for their participation and to get their impressions of the results.

4 Neighborhood, Place, and Everyday Life

There is no question that well-being and place are closely related (Atkinson et al. 2012; Navarro 2002). Our study shows to what extent the emotional connection with the place is a highly significant component of the well-being of young people in Besòs-Maresme. The affective ties with the place, in this case with the neighborhood where they live, are constructed from different facets that are both complex and dynamic. Their childhood memories are linked to the neighborhood, their friends go to the school in the neighborhood and live near them, the neighborhood offers a wide variety of spaces for meeting up and enjoying their free time, and the neighborhood is also perceived as a safe place with services, well connected to the rest of Barcelona. We should also note that the huge urban renewal in recent years has “redrawn” the neighborhood and “situated” it within Barcelona, leading

young people to perceive that they live in a neighborhood where “things happen” and where one can live comfortably.

Generally speaking, young people are well aware of how their neighborhood has evolved and transformed since the 1980s. The adults have told them that “in the past it was all just fields” (José), that “everything used to be a mess (. . .) the Rambla was all sand” (Pablo) and that “the beach was really abandoned” (Joan). The same kinds of perceptions appear in the memories of Cristóbal, a key informant who is now 46 years old. He was born and grew up in the neighborhood during the 1980s, and his words allow us to compare his past experience with teenagers' perceptions about the same everyday spaces:

My everyday life during the early years of my adolescence was closely tied to the neighbourhood. With my first friends from high school, we would meet in a kind of garden on Rambla Prim [a central boulevard in the neighbourhood]. Rambla Prim wasn't the super-boulevard it is today; it was a wide-open area with benches and a bit of grass. We spent lots of afternoons there eating sunflower seeds. The other alternative was a café where we would have a Cacaolat [chocolate milk] that would last us hours and hours. Now there is a supermarket run by Pakistanis where the café used to be. And there wasn't a civic centre back then. There were a few country homes, one of which had a shop where I remember they sold snails. Between the country homes and the apartment buildings there was an open field and an enclosed courtyard where we would climb in to throw stones. (Cristóbal, key informant from the neighbourhood) (Figs. 3 and 4)



Fig. 3 Rambla Prim Boulevard as it was in 1967 (Photo: archive of the neighborhood association)



Fig. 4 Rambla Prim Boulevard in 2013 (Photo: Anna Ortiz)

The two pictures illustrate Rambla Prim before and after Cristobal's memories. In the 1960s (Fig. 3) Rambla Prim was just an empty space over a water-course without being urbanized. In 2013 (Fig. 4) the space looks completely urbanized.

4.1 A Neighborhood with Multiple Meanings

We can also consider the idea of the neighborhood as a patchwork. Cope (2008) uses this notion to analyze the perceptions and urban geographies of a group of children in a New York neighborhood, with all their varied textures, tensions, contradictions, opportunities, and social interactions, and we can, too, to understand the multiple experiences of the teenagers interviewed in Barcelona. In this section, we shall see which spaces are frequented the most and which ones they avoid using.

As a whole, there were four public spaces or publicly used spaces the teenagers in the Besós-Maresme neighborhood frequented and liked the most: Diagonal Mar shopping center, Diagonal Mar Park, the Forum area, and the beach. Even though they occasionally mentioned other areas around the neighborhood, these were the newly built re-urbanized spaces with modern designs in and near the neighborhood that were cited and used the most.

The shopping center is one of the most often cited as a favorite place to go; it is where they go almost every day to look at, touch, test, and sometimes buy goods. They like it because they find many distractions (shops, bars, bowling, and cinemas), and they can also meet other young people. There the girls look at clothing shops, while the boys pay more attention to sporting goods, electronics, or video games. Their behavior is similar to that of adults, but locating their bodies in these places created and designed for adults represents a physical exploration, a representation of their identity, and a way of transgressing a space essentially designed for adults (trying on clothing without the intention of buying it, putting on makeup in the stores, among other explorations; occasionally the transgression can go even further, such as trying to sneak into the cinema).

These spaces of consumption have been identified as places where young people can socialize and develop their own identities. What is more, for teenagers with limited economic resources, shopping centers are often contradictory spaces in that they are places of consumption of desired goods that they cannot buy because they are unaffordable (Matthews et al. 2000). In fact, the girls and boys interviewed go to the shopping center not so much to consume as to walk around, look at shop windows, sit, and talk.

A second space identified as often visited and perceived as large, pleasant, quiet, and beautiful is Diagonal Mar Park. This is a large space with different areas where the teenagers state that they feel at home, where they can talk easily and express themselves with a considerable degree of freedom, since it is less frequented by the adults in the neighborhood, including relatives, so they feel less control over their presence in the park. They also like it because it is very close to the high school and it allows them to “disconnect” from school.

I like it because it is the newest and prettiest part of Barcelona. (girl from discussion group C)

In the park there is a hill where there is always nobody and you can lay there and listen to music with your girlfriends, just relax and everything . . . (. . .). And on the beach, too, there are some rocks where you can sit with your girlfriends and just talk. (Mónica)

The presence of natural elements in this space, with plants and trees, the lake, and even insects and birds or other small animals is important and is cited when speaking positively about the park. There is a green hill in Diagonal Mar Park with a few individual benches surrounded by bushes that give the sense of greater seclusion and a kind of protection.

On the hills in the park. . . we sit there and talk all afternoon long. . . We tell each other stuff, talk about the landscape, make jokes and things like that. (Jenifer)

The Forum, a newly created multipurpose, cultural and entertainment, venue is another space cited in the teenagers' free time, although it is frequented less often and prompts contradictory opinions, since not all these girls and boys like it. The majority recognize its monumentality, but while some find it to be a quiet, pretty spot, others regarded it as a meaningless and underused space. Despite the fact that

it is in their itineraries, it is not a prime spot in their spatial networks, except when concerts or parties are held there, which are very popular.

Another of the spaces frequented a lot is the beach, which was refurbished during the latest urban planning changes in the neighborhood. They say that the beach is pretty, quiet, yet relaxing, a place where they feel at home and gives them a sense of freedom. They consider it a privilege to have the sea and beach so close to their home or school, something that they are aware is not true in the majority of the Barcelona's neighborhoods, which contributes to their positive view of their everyday environment. Like the park, the beach is also perceived as a place of privacy, a place where they can be without feeling watched over by adults, or at least the adults in their family.

We go to the beach and we stay there talking, we like this atmosphere. . . (. . .). In winter there is nobody there, we're all alone. . . (Aina)

The beach. . . is great because in the summer it's great having the beach so close. And then there is the breakwater on the beach, rocks where you can sit down with your friends and talk easily too. (Mónica)

However, the beach environment is also the target of criticisms and negative environmental perceptions in terms of its maintenance, filth, foul odours. . .

The purifying plant leaves the water on the beach dirty and foul smelling. (girl from discussion group C)

The flip sides of the coin are the spaces that the young people find inhospitable or unpleasant (for environmental reasons, such as the water-purifying plant) or spaces that may be within the same area but are rejected and rarely visited by the young people. When speaking about the neighborhood as a whole, we noticed that they said they felt at home everywhere precisely because it is "their neighborhood," but there were some major exceptions on which they tended to agree. One clear example which appeared in both the interviews and the discussion groups was the zone near the neighborhood that is stigmatized for poverty and social marginalization, as well as narrow or abandoned streets, which made them feel unsafe. In these cases, we noted a clear gender difference, and we also saw how the teenagers had learned to negotiate this environment and fear.

When I was younger I didn't feel safe, but as the years go by I have figured out how to avoid things, how to walk in a zigzag, and I feel safe. (Joan)

The question of fear has been analyzed as a main feature of gender inequality (Valentine 1992; Ruddick 1996) reinforced with other axes of inequality such as class, culture, and age (Gough and Franch 2005; Evans 2006; Hyams 2003; Ehrkamp 2008). Fear appears as a clear example of how gender discourses and the visibility of a sexualized body condition the use and the appropriation of public spaces (Rodó-de-Zárate 2013). Girls experience some specific restrictions because

of their gender, and for that reason they give different meaning to spaces than boys. However, in order not to reproduce stereotypical notions of young women, Pain (2001) points out that girls also consider cities as a place of opportunity, adventure, and excitement.

There are numerous reasons why certain spaces are rejected. The girls more clearly express a rejection of the violence, either real or perceived, which might happen in certain streets or spaces, which leads them to avoid walking there or frequenting those places. Other times the perception of a given place is marked by a previous negative experience, because they have been attacked or harassed in the public space. As Pablo recounts, once some time had elapsed they dared to return to a place that had been one of their favorites before such an incident:

I was beaten up once, once they tried to rob us and we ran away because there were lots of them (...). In the little park there (...). After that experience we spent like two months without going back there, because you know, we were afraid... then we went back and got over it. (Pablo)

We believe that it is important to note how the same public spaces have different meanings based on the experiences and the emotions experienced there. Thus, we can see how a common, favorite place can be rejected based on an attack or appropriations of the space by groups perceived as unfriendly or threatening. On the other hand, the girls feel very closely watched in the public arena. They are aware that their bodies are regarded as sexual objects, and the discomfort, insecurity, or fear that this perception causes them leads to restrictive effects in their everyday use of the space. This is a clear sign of the extent the patriarchal structure affects teenagers, both female and male, in the public space.

It depends on the time. If it is night-time and there is a narrower street where no one goes and it's darker, of course I avoid walking there and might turn around. (Mónica)

Adolescence... a boy experiences it differently than a girl. A boy may think about some things and a girl other things. I don't know, maybe a boy thinks more about girls, about women, you know, sexuality and all that, about having sexual relations, and a girl might think about other things. (Omar)

These two quotations show the different power positions among genders. The girl interiorizes her position as much more vulnerable or as possible victim of harassment showing a clear structure of male dominance structure. The boy naturalizes the assumption that men are the ones who experience sexual desire and initiate sexual relationships.

The narratives cited are sufficient to note that despite the generally positive view of the neighborhood, its urban transformations and its public spaces, there is still room for improvement. There is now a chance to create new spaces that address unmet needs and offer opportunities to certain groups, such as children, young women, or the elderly, who still find it difficult to find a place where they feel at home, a place that is safe and healthy.

4.2 Daily Experiences and Well-being in the Neighborhood

Young people's daily experience in their surroundings is a major factor in their well-being. Their everyday practices (studying at school, free-time activities, mobility within and outside the neighborhood, etc.) are all closely tied to their friends, with whom they share their time and everyday places. These everyday experiences facilitate a wide range of social and environmental interactions with different people and places, contributing to the construction of personal and community identities (Jack 2012).

Educational opportunities, social relations, and imaginary worlds are all influenced by the place where we live and the people around us. In the case of our young people, many of their friendships date from their childhood, when they attended primary school together, and were reinforced at high school, both of which are located in the same neighborhood. The high school is the main place where friendships are made and where teenagers construct their identities. Other friends are made in the neighborhood, on football teams, etc. According to Jack (2012), rootedness in a place depends on the positive cognitive emotions created by repeated experiences in places during childhood and grows on the basis of many routine activities, everyday experiences, and significant events. Thus, on the one hand Adriana proudly says, "We grew up together," while two boys refer to their memories and experiences to explain their roots in the neighborhood: "My street is a special place for me. . . I always have friends there. . . You know they're there" (Unai) and "I've had great times in the square near my house, my first experience riding a bike with friends, football matches. . ." (Jordi).

Our walks through the neighborhood with young people enabled us to capture their degree of knowledge of the neighborhood, as well as their perceptions of safety and the determination with which they moved through its streets and public spaces. We walked calmly through the neighborhood as they made comments about their surroundings in a very natural way, truly enjoying their free time spent pointing out their everyday spaces (streets, parks, squares, meeting points, shops, etc.). Just as Jack (2012) states, we believe that the power of having enlisted the participation of this group of teenagers (walking and talking with them, as well as interviewing them both individually and in a group) enabled them to recall memories and develop stories that expressed the significance of the places and the role they play in the construction of their identity. The majority of the places photographed by the girls and boys were built during the latest urban renewal. They are outdoors, like Diagonal Mar Park and the beach, places where they feel at home, can talk easily, have a sense of freedom, and find spaces where they can "seclude themselves" and find protection from adult supervision.

Young people were very positive about the most recent urban interventions because they have more spaces to enjoy their free time. Also they perceived the arrival of tourists in the new spaces as a positive reflection on the improved image of their neighborhood.

Teenagers' overall assessment of the urban development changes experienced by the neighborhood is positive and it has enhanced their sense of belonging in the

neighborhood. They recognize that their everyday environment has improved, thanks to these changes, and they also admit that their spatial practices and opportunities have been expanded by the improvements and the advent of new spaces in the neighborhood and near it. This is a positive effect that shows the active role that teenagers play in appropriating the everyday environment.

The neighbourhood used to be abandoned, it was like we weren't from Barcelona. (boy from discussion group A)

The teenagers reported their daily movements throughout the neighborhood were relaxed and safe. Just like the results of Mitchell et al. (2007), the route they take walking from home to school, as well as the games they play and the walks they take with their friends through the neighborhood, enables them to learn about their closest surroundings. This gives them freedom of movement and greater personal autonomy than if they had to leave the neighborhood and move around the city. This vision corroborates what other authors have stated: on the one hand, safe, accessible neighborhoods help to maintain good social relations (Gilroy 2012), while on the other, neighborhoods that facilitate social relations, where children and young people live near school and have friends in the same neighborhood, foster the acquisition of independent mobility and a positive view of the neighborhood (Brown et al. 2008).

In parallel to these positive opinions, and without contradicting them, they criticized aspects related to the construction of more homes and hotels, as well as how the Forum area is being squandered and wasted. Despite this, these girls and boys define their neighborhood very positively, and the words they used the most to define it were: active, dynamic, alive, with lots of people, diverse, intercultural, welcoming, fun, changing, growing, expanding, sociable, pleasant, normal, complete, and a good place to live.

They feel at home in the neighborhood because there are places that are important as meeting points, places to gather together with their group of friends, or because these places are closely tied with each teenager's personal history, and especially because they are the places they know the best, places they feel are their own turf. They are personal and group micro-spaces, such as a given bench on the central boulevard, a given corner at a street intersection, and the doorways of their own buildings or their own street. This closer scale is where we find extensive knowledge of the neighborhood, which the teenagers have constructed over time as they have grown up there.

Here in front there is a primary school, Ruyra school, we always meet there. Whenever we decide to meet is always in front of this school. (. . .) It is a central point. For example I live there and other friends live over there, it is always a central point where nobody has to walk more than the others. (Lidia)

Something really personal for me here in the neighbourhood is my school. Ruyra School. . . The school I went to, for me, there are a lot of emotions. . . (Joan)

[Besós-Maresme] is where I grew up and I have everything here: friends. . . everything. I know it inside and out. (Pablo)

It's the place you've spent your entire childhood and your memories are still here because you've lived part of your life here. (Joan)

Since I live here I'm familiar with all the spaces and I always feel at home. (girl from discussion group A)

Studying everyday life and people's relationship with the spaces where they live is an extensive, crosscutting topic because it interlinks different spatial and temporal dimensions: education, family, friends, the neighborhood, identity, the sense of place, etc. The everyday experiences of these teenagers in Besòs-Maresme may not be very different to what the teenagers in other working-class neighborhoods experience, in Barcelona or elsewhere in Spain. However, at the same time, we can say that this is a unique experience in that these everyday experiences take place in a specific geographic context characterized by major urban transformations that generate new opportunities and new spaces.

4.3 The Group of Friends as the Meeting Place

I like doing anything as long as it's with my friends. (Toni)

Indeed, as this boy points out, for the majority of the 28 teenagers interviewed, their friends play an important role in the construction of their identity and in strengthening their sense of belonging to the neighborhood. Their usual practices, their relationships at school, and their free time are closely related to their friends, with whom they share everyday spaces and time. They even move around the neighborhood together, weaving a web of mutual togetherness.

Their friends who live in the same neighborhood are also classmates at their school. They have known their friends since childhood; they went to primary school together and are now at the same high school. Others have more than one group of friends: those from their previous school, from the neighborhood, from their football team, etc., depending on who they decide to spend time with. However, there are exceptions: the girl who said quite honestly that she has no friends and that she spends her free time alone or with her elder sister; the girl originally from Pakistan who said that her family forbids her from having male friends; and the teens who spend more time with their boyfriend or girlfriend than with their friends.

Many groups of friends are mixed gender, made up of both boys and girls, although sometimes, primarily depending on where they go or what they decide to do, they may break up into single sex groups. For example, when they decide to go play football or have "*botellones*" (outdoor parties with alcoholic drinks), the groups are male, and when they decide to spend the afternoon at the shopping center, they are female.

The groups of friends are homogeneous in terms of social class and more heterogeneous in terms of their ethnic composition. There are some groups with only Spaniards, but others are made up with boys and girls of different nationalities. The girls and boys born abroad whom we interviewed are never the only foreigners

in their group. When this issue was discussed in the interviews, a positive discourse toward cultural diversity, and specifically toward immigration, emerged.

It's more comfortable, it's not just a neighbourhood of Spanish people; there are various cultures. . . . (Omar)

There are many cultures and it's not a really quiet neighbourhood but it's good, the people get along with each other and almost everybody knows each other. I don't know it's a habit, I like my neighbourhood, I have always lived here, I know everything, the people and everything and I like that. (Zaida)

There are gender differences related to the activities they do in their free time with their friends. While the girls prefer to take walks, go shopping, or talk, the boys prefer to play football or go to a cybercafé or play videogames. The activities they do in their free time help them to define their femininity and masculinity, and we noted that there were no practices or spaces where they can alter/contest these gendered identities. The gender stereotypes shine through in their opinions, so while the girls are noticeably calmer and quieter, the boys are more active and inclined toward action (even if just virtually):

The boys are always thinking about soccer, soccer, soccer. . . we like soccer, but not as much (. . .). They're always the same. . . some are Barça fans, others for Madrid and they are always going at it. . . . (Adriana)

The girls are calmer and they're more . . . playing soccer all the time or that sort of thing, hyperactive (. . .). We sit down and start talking. (Zaida)

The basketball courts and football pitches are always full of boys (. . .). They outdoors, you go and there are baskets, goals. . . [The girls] don't tend to go there. (Lidia)

Only boys go to the cybercafé because we play games of strategy, the ones with army and stuff like that, and the girls don't like them (. . .). We go to the cybercafé to mess with all our classmates. . . . (José)

Young people's experiences within their neighborhood cannot be disassociated from their network of friends, and the friends give meaning to the spaces they frequent, turning them into meaningful places in their construction and testing of identities. With their spatial practices, they give places meaning, use them, interpret them, and negotiate them. The teenagers interact with the public space in the neighborhood autonomously and on a daily basis. This means walking to school, running household errands, visiting relatives, or spending time outside the home with their friends. Still, they do have some spatial restrictions from their adult family members both inside and outside the boundaries of the neighborhood, such as not being allowed to go to the city center or to come back home too late.

5 Conclusion

As we have seen, the teenagers have a great deal of knowledge about their everyday environs and express their own opinions. The research with them also sheds light on an interesting conceptual contribution, the definition of "their" neighborhood,

which does not necessarily dovetail with the administrative boundaries or with the experience of adults in the same neighborhood.

This chapter is a reflection of the authors' desire to show the strength and validity of the "geographies of childhood and youth" approach internationally by contributing a case study from Spain, Mediterranean Europe. The study reported here complements and compares with the countries where more studies have been performed, especially in English-speaking countries. Depending on each geographic location, youth participate in urban life with their activities (with more or fewer limitations) and challenge exclusionary uses of the urban space to a greater or lesser degree (Hörschelmann and van Blerk 2011). Learning about and understanding the life of youth people, and specifically teenagers, in urban environments enables us to ascertain their interests and needs, to get to know their daily urban experiences, and to examine the power relations and social hierarchies that come with categorization by age.

The group of teenagers researched live in a traditionally peripheral neighborhood which has undergone extraordinary urban changes in recent years that have led to major morphological and social changes. Despite the controversy sparked by these changes at first, they have improved the teenagers' quality of life and the neighborhood's environmental quality, and they have enhanced young people's sense of belonging to both the Besós-Maresme neighborhood and Barcelona as a whole. Despite views of the neighborhood that were optimistic and pragmatic, there were some critical voices in relation to the buildings and the kind of activities they attract. The girls and boys expressed their opinions and criticisms regarding spaces they feel are their own, where they felt included in public space and shared opinions on what they would like changed. Using the spaces, appropriating them, sharing opinions, or intervening directly in these spaces are activities and attitudes that form a sense of citizenship.

Public spaces are core places in the everyday lives of these teenagers, and at this stage in life, they are also a refuge for their interactions and activities. The hobbies and activities showed a clear preference for newer places, which are more spacious and have more modern designs, in stark contrast to the buildings around where they live, which are older and more crowded together. They also prefer these spaces because of the activities they could do there and because of the privacy they found there, since their family members rarely used them. Even though their age is a factor that largely homogenizes the urban life of these teenagers, their specific experience of the public space is not gender neutral. Because of the status and roles assigned to them, the girls revealed particular interactions with places that translated into a more restricted use of space.

Public space is a product of society and therefore of the teenagers who live there too. Their everyday use and appropriation of the new public spaces is an exercise in citizenship since they express, negotiate, and represent their identities there. Therefore, their experience and opinions are very important in both evaluating the results of urban planning projects and designing future changes in urban areas.

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Slipping as a Sociospatial Negotiation: Teenagers and Risky Landscapes

13

Femi Adekunle

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Abstract

This chapter analyzes the circumstances of how and where young black men grow into maturity within a small area of East London. The focus is on how a small, connected group of young black men balanced, understood, experienced, and reacted to the opportunities and threats of competing types of belonging as they grow up. In particular, the chapter focuses on a socio-spatial construction these young men called “slipping.” It describes how they conceptualized and evaded risky places and practices and balanced different scales of belonging while also offsetting encounters with the unknown, fear, and marginalization. “Slipping,” rather than constituting a simple description of their growing maturity,

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describes the sophisticated ways they negotiated space/place and their own agency at a time of their lives when they were on both sides of the threshold to adulthood. Theoretically, it examines how spatial imaginaries are created and represented. “Slipping” therefore adds to the literatures on street practices and accounts of how young people negotiate risk and fear within the city. It gives a more subtle description of young men’s lives from their perspectives, which illustrates the complexity of belonging, by emphasizing different linkages between space, place, personal history, and identity.

Keywords

Ethnicity • Liminality • Slipping • Ethnographic data collection method • Intergenerational and intragenerational dynamics • Social structures • Street-scape • Transgression • Social inequalities • Socio-spatial negotiation • Cultural approaches • Fear and crime • Moral panics

1 Introduction

This chapter introduces what a group of young people in London called “slipping.” The concept explains the motivations and practices of a group of young men (aged 17–22) as they explored the public and private spaces neighboring their homes. They called this “slipping”: a term that covers a code of behavior and method of negotiating space. Founded upon a multi-method study of a basketball team over a year, this chapter will consider how they negotiated local spaces they defined in terms of “no go” areas, danger, and threat. Contained within the idea of “slipping” is a socio-spatial strategy that sometimes enabled and sometimes cautioned against entering unfamiliar spaces based on a fear of how unfamiliar young people there would react to them. It also depicts the manner by which new places and spaces become familiar and even comfortable as part of a process of growing up and becoming more independent.

“Slipping” describes more than these young men’s reading of “risky” areas combined with a pragmatic harm prevention strategy; it includes “slipping” across age stratifications. In analytical terms, in order to distinguish themselves from “children” (those aged 5–15) and “youth” (those aged 16–30 cf. Skelton 2009), “young people” position themselves (and are positioned by analysts) in an interesting place. They are older and “able” to harness all the resources and opportunities for sociability and recreation offered by an urban landscape, which is an important part of “growing up” and identity formation (Chatterton and Hollands 2003), yet must balance this against perceived and actual threats. Young people can and do face different kinds of restrictions to, or possibilities for, their urban mobilities based on gender, ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic status (Skelton 2013). These young men’s practices indicate how they conceptualized their accelerating

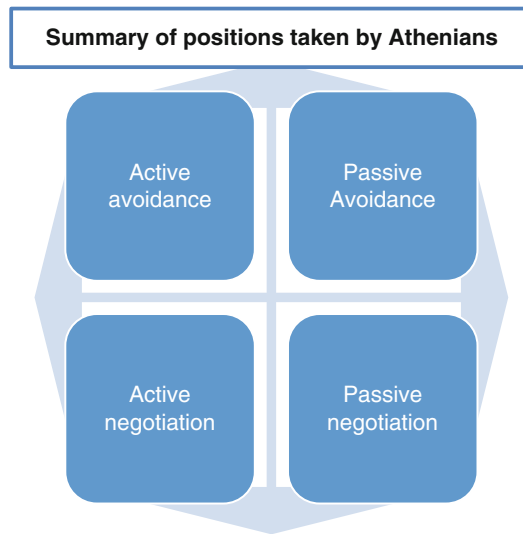
independence from parents and the spatial components of their transition to adulthood. By listening to how this group of young black men from London spoke about their experiences, it is possible to see how contemporary youth research is shaped not only by changes in the experience of youth but also by the conceptual resources deployed to predict and explain it (Furlong et al. 2011). Perhaps the best way to imagine the idea is to borrow a term from anthropology: “slipping” corresponds to a form of “liminality.” Liminality – a phrase coined by Arnold van Gennep (2011) and popularized by Victor Turner (1987) – describes being “in-between.” It is an intermediate state of being in which individuals have the potential to leave behind their usual identity and stand on the verge of personal or social transformation. In short, “slipping” is a way of acknowledging what many youth researchers now acknowledge: how the boundaries of childhood, youth, and adulthood are blurred, indistinct, and porous, how this has a spatial dimension, and how this orbits around risk.

The first part of this chapter will contextualize “slipping” within a number of fields of study showing how it emerges out of and adds to these literatures. It will look at how geographers and other disciplines have analyzed risk, fear, vulnerability, and violence and how ethnicity – as well as other social characteristics – can affect how people use space. After that, it will describe the research process with a group of young men. The months of research with this basketball team – given the pseudonym, the Athenians (for ethical reasons, all the Athenians are given pseudonyms and no area of London is named specifically) – will, for the sake of clarity, be broken down into an illustrative case study. From the basketball team, four archetypes were chosen to represent the range of navigation strategies available (see Table 1 below). What these models show in the context of their shared socio-spatial setting is the creativity and range of options of a group of young men while giving a sense of when and how this creativity has boundaries.

1.1 Risk in Theory and Practice

To provide context, there are a number of different theories of youth, space, and risk that are relevant here, and this account must show how and when each idea can act as the fulcrum for the others in analyzing the lifeworlds of an entwined group of young Londoners.

To start, it is almost trite to say that risk has become a common feature of everyday life and, as a result, there remain a number of competing definitions. Commentators have used it to describe almost any process, activity, or event that contains some degree of indeterminacy (Bauman 2007; Beck 2009; Tulloch and Lupton 2003). Indeed, Frank Furedi has argued that the word has been (over)used to the extent that:

Table 1 Risk strategy in terms of outlook and action. Summary of positions taken by Athenians

risk has become permanent condition that exists separately from any particular problem. [It] hovers over human beings [and] seems to have an independent existence. The consequences of this are clear since... by turning risk into an autonomous omnipresent force, we transform every human experience into a safety situation. (Furedi 1997:4–5)

Nevertheless, as van Burgt (2015) asserted, risk and chance are often viewed as inextricable features of everyday life since they are a key feature of modernity (Giddens 1991). This development and emergence of “risk” as a defining feature of late modern western society is normally associated with the erosion of traditional social networks, the growth of flexible work patterns as well as underemployment, and a marked increase in the fragility of trust between individuals (Furlong et al. 2011).

Indeed, perhaps the foremost theorist of risk, Ulrich Beck argued risk is socially constructed through “relations of definition” (Beck 1992, p. 227; Beck 1996, p. 116). Within these “relations,” rules and regulation-setting institutions like the police play a critical role in risk assessment and management (Mythen 2014). Scientific and technological bodies, national governments, the legal system, and mass-media institutions stand as the most obvious examples, but the challenge here is in defining risk at a local “street” level. “Slipping” provides new insights about how risk was conceived and sidestepped by young black men living in London. It gives an idea of how these young men applied their own understanding of their situation and agency in a context where regulation-setting institutions such as the police were not uniformly present and/or trusted.

Closer to this “street level,” scholars have considered the extent individuals, and groups assess risk as “actual” or “perceived” and the relation of this to “fear” (Pain

2000, 2006). Notwithstanding the intricacy of these debates, the view taken here is that an individual's or group's vulnerability is informed by social context and perception of risk which is only partly determined by the statistical likelihood of harm (Whelan 2013). Much like official and government appraisals of "recorded" crime (HMIC 2014), critiques of "objective" fear have pointed out that fear of crime:

is profoundly affected by a range of factors including income, class, area of residence, housing status, sexual orientation, disability, experiences of victimisation and many other life experiences. (Pain 2001:901)

What researchers like Rachel Pain and others have highlighted is how an individual's or group's vulnerability, or their ability to deal with challenging or difficult circumstances, is shaped by both sociocultural factors and individual variables (Pain 1995, 2001, 2002). While perceptions of risk might follow class and other social inequalities, Beck claims these structural foundations are being eroded, with individual lives becoming more affected by risk calculation and negotiation (Beck 1992; Peterson 1996). "Slipping" addresses this process of erosion and shows how, within shifting social structures, there is some agency and opportunity: young people are not passive victims of risk. For young people, this also manifests itself in being feared by others as potential perpetrators of violence while themselves remaining fearful of becoming victims (see next section for more details).

With this in mind, this chapter most closely follows the definition of risk developed by the anthropologist Dame Mary Douglas (1986, 2013). "Slipping" was discovered in the study reported here, using the same ethnographic data collection method she pioneered (see later for more details); Douglas therefore has a significant contribution to make about how slipping can be interpreted. She points out how attributions of danger and risk are not uniform across different cultures and often function as a means of establishing social cohesion. In this way, the extent to which incidents, people, or processes are deemed risky is culturally contingent and correlates to social structure. Objects, things, and processes are therefore not risky in and of themselves; rather, they acquire a sense of danger through social processes of attribution (Mythen 2014). Before considering how risk might manifest, it is important to acknowledge that whenever individuals encounter dangers, they do so with a preexistent set of cultural beliefs and assumptions (Douglas 1992, p. 58).

Moreover, for Douglas, when we interpret people's perceptions of risk:

we should not be making judgements about whether they amount to reasoned vistas of harm at one end or hysterical responses at the other. (Mythen 2014, p. 43)

Instead, attitudes to risk are expressions of broader worldviews and reflections of degrees of trust, and when shared, an acknowledgement of dangers acts as a sign of social solidarity.

1.2 “Fearful” or Risk-Taking Youth

As Jeffrey (2010) pointed out, academics in any number of disciplines have developed complicated, flexible, and empirically informed ideas about the change from childhood to adulthood, often via that intermediary period of “youth” (see, e.g., Horschelmann and Van Blerk 2013, and especially Johnson-Hanks 2002). Young people in the west are increasingly imagined to be developing complicated “pathways” (Furlong and Cartmel 1997), “navigations” (Vigh 2006), or “routes” to adulthood (Evans and Furlong 1997), and each, in its own way, is “risky.” As a result of Douglas’ analysis (above), we might also ascribe a shared view of risk as an attribute that most young people share, for example, a working definition of what it is to be young entails consideration of what young people are afraid of. The concept of “slipping” is presented as an idea that depicts how people navigate through uncertainty in order to move beyond the idea of teleological “markers” of young people’s development (Jeffrey 2010).

Traditionally, portrayals of young life and danger in the city focus on violence and the “official” police response. The literature around fear (here defined as an emotional reaction to the possibility of violence and victimization) adds another important element. Moral panics about dangerous groups, places, and behaviors, which inform policing and community safety policies, invariably focus on young people (Pain 2008) as perpetrators. Young men can be doubly victimized, once by other young people and second by the police. This exacerbates social and spatial disparities while contributing to the demonization of those social groups who are at the sharp end of fear (Hopkins 2007; Pain and Shirlow 2003; Pain 2008).

This chapter presents what a group of young black men thought, as opposed to what others thought of them. At the heart of this stands a certain view of young men and consequently of youth and gender. As both “feared” and “fearful,” young men – and especially young black men – are often victims of multiple discriminations (Pain 2003). This, as a number of researchers have pointed out, often means that the link between fear and crime is often tangible since young men in areas of high street violence often carry a knife for self-protection in communities where they do not trust the police (Clayman and Skinns 2012; Ralphs et al. 2009). Indeed, fear of crime has been consistently cited by some young people (particularly boys) as motivation behind the “crime” (in legal jargon merely “possessing a bladed article in a public place” is a crime regardless of circumstances or motivation. It is contrary to s.139 Criminal Justice Act 1988 (as amended by s.3 Offensive Weapons Act 1996). Also see the case *R V DADA EMMANUEL* (1997) CA (Crim Div) (Swinton Thomas LJ, Harrison J, Judge Dyer) 09/12/1997 of carrying a knife (Lemos 2004; Owen and Sweeting 2007; Parkes and Connolly 2011).

This is not to prioritize young men’s experiences above all others. While boys and young men will be the focus here, this account does not preclude the experiences of gay and/or young women in London. There is, after all, a strong relationship between marginality and fear, as contours of anxiety within cities tend to follow topographies of inequality (Pain 2008). This work pays attention to the

hidden harm in private and unpoliced spaces, which includes violence among and between young (mainly black) men, racist violence, violence against the homeless/dispossessed, homophobic violence against queer young people, and Islamophobic abuse (Pain 2009). When an identity is not white, heterosexual, able-bodied, and/or male, it is not culturally intelligible which will be demonstrated via the data presented later (Butler 2004). It is for this reason that “slipping” is presented as a spectrum of strategies that the Athenians deployed, as a way of thinking beyond identities as separate and fixed differences added incrementally to one another. Rather, it is an attempt to think about the way different categories interlock, forestalling efforts to calculate oppressions using metaphors from geometry and mathematics based around addition, multiplication, location, position, and so forth (Valentine 2007; Crenshaw 1991).

With this in mind, the fourfold conception of “slipping” is meant to show how different strategies can and do interact with each other. The table below shows a simple graphical illustration of the ways that the Athenians interpreted risky youth and space (something to be avoided or conversely to be engaged) and more importantly, the degree to which they engaged with it (actively or passively). It is a simplification but what is lost in complexity is gained in legibility, and the table shows the variety of positions available. It is specific enough to apply to the Athenians but broad enough to be of use in other contexts. Some Athenians actively took on strategies that included taking risks or put themselves or their peers at risk (Percy-Smith and Matthews 2001; Pickering et al. 2012) while others were more coy. In accordance with many geographers of youth and young people, an important theoretical starting point is that young people deserve to be acknowledged as active social agents in their own right (Prout and James 1997). The notion of “slipping” makes these choices visible in an account that combines material inequalities with the specificities of place and the creativity of agents. In late modernity, a key skill is the ability to navigate uncertainty and resourcefulness, and life-management skills assume an increased importance.

Within the entire team – roughly 17 in total – each could be roughly located within one of these categories. Though these categories were not absolute, with each of the team member occupying various positions during the period of data collection, each had a propensity to be drawn toward one of the four corners of the taxonomy above. Their positioning there was based on a number of interlocking variables – family background, personality, geography, or a combination of all the above and, of course, their own understanding and agency.

1.3 Risky Spaces

For geographers, the potential of this idea of slipping is built upon a number of interlocking points. As a case study, “slipping” can show how differences between and within groups of young people are not necessarily defined only in terms of conventional sociological signifiers such as gender, ethnicity, and location but by sets of shared interests, behaviors, and circumstances and so can often give rise to

multilayered geographies coexisting in the same location (Percy-Smith and Matthews 2001). “Slipping” is thus based around the idea of a streetscape where spaces and places accommodate “flows of meaning managed by small groups of people that meet on an everyday basis” (Wulff 1995, p. 65) and combinations of personalities, localities, and collective experiences.

It is uncontroversial to point out that young people experience geography and space differently from adults and even differently from each other based upon whether they are in the older or younger age groups (Aitken 2013; Freeman and Tranter 2011; Holloway and Valentine 2000; Evans 2008). “Slipping” represents a certain way of seeing space and (re)acting within it that acknowledges how the street is a particular form of landscape that continues to be an important part of young lives (Valentine 2004). Even if young people still use the same means of transport as adults – cars, buses, trains, cycling, etc. – they will experience it in distinctive (but sometimes similar) ways (Skelton 2013). In theoretical terms, “slipping” is something akin to the “street literacy” of New York teenagers (Cahill 2000), the territoriality of young people in the UK (Pickering et al. 2012), and the “code of the street” (Anderson 2000) in certain areas of London (Gunter 2008). It means “slipping away” and sometimes even confronting “the aggressive and systematic abuse of power” (Randall 2001) and bullying encountered in particular spaces and places (Pain 2003; Pain et al. 2005; Percy-Smith and Matthews 2001).

Slipping also remains – so far at least – an urban practice. The research that does exist has highlighted disproportionately high levels of fear in urban areas, with the highest levels within the UK reported in London (Children’s Commissioner 2009). Indeed in rural and urban areas, it is clear that for young people, safe, efficient, and affordable public transport, secure pathways for walking, and use of their own vehicles (cars, motorcycles, etc.) are important (Skelton 2013). Nonetheless, it is also clear that young people can and do have very ambivalent experiences and understandings of the city as they develop their independent geographies (Benwell 2009; Gough 2008; Skelton 2013).

In defining “slipping,” the avoidance of violence remains one of the most obvious considerations for the Athenians. A description of “slipping” must therefore respond to the research on violence and its relation to other social characteristics – from “gender”-related violence (Seidler 2010), “race” (Garfield 2010), and, of course, “youth” violence (Whelan 2013). Nonetheless, fear and the very real possibility of attack is of more than abstract interest to many young people in urban areas (Pain 2003; Nayak 2003). Commentators have long been articulate about the way bullying often has a spatial component and can take different forms, whether this is physical (hitting, kicking, or taking belongings), verbal (name-calling, insults, or racist remarks), and/or indirect (excluding someone from social groups or spreading nasty rumors) (Percy-Smith and Matthews 2001; van Burgt 2015). Any definition of violence also has to include gun, gang, and knife-related aggression. In response to all these considerations, researchers have created a growing and increasingly sophisticated literature focused on young people’s perceptions of risk and strategies of safety (Harden 2000; Tucker and Matthews 2001; Backett-Milburn and Harden 2004; Aretun 2009; Bromley and Stacey 2012).

There are, of course, much wider implications of violence. Indeed, Les Back (2004) acknowledged how defining violence is both a philosophical and moral task that implies an aggressive action to which we must attach a moral judgment. Bufacchi's (2005) "minimalist" conception of violence defines it as an intentional act of excessive or destructive force: a "narrow" conception that follows the "different forms" described above (bullying, name-calling, etc.). "Slipping", as category, presents itself as something separate from the comprehensive reviews of 'recorded' and 'unrecorded' crime or fear of crime that authors such as Pain have painstakingly compiled. Other commentators have examined hospital figures and point out the inconsistencies between the numbers of young men injured through knife-related injuries and the reporting of these injuries (Booth et al. 2008). The literature relating to victims of violence seems overwhelmingly related to "vulnerable" women (Pain 1997, 2001, 2003). The data collected here and in other contexts would suggest the situation is more "slippery" than this (Gilchrist et al. 1998; Pickard 2014). Still, there is a vast amount of the literature based around the fact that men are significantly (over)represented as both perpetrators and victims of interpersonal physical violence at the hands of other men (for the "other" side of this argument, see Ness 2010) which the empirical case study will address later.

This is not to dismiss the relationship between violence and power – "violence appears where power is in jeopardy" after all (Arendt 1970, p. 34). Moreover, in Anderson's (2004) discussion of the "Cultural Shaping of Violence," he advocated an improved analysis that comes from individual, social (and spatial) understandings. Research which tries to understand the context of youth violence already exists: for example, Anthony Gunter (2008; Gunter and Watt 2009), in his descriptions of various street practices, has detailed how a deliberate and conscious adoption of a mantle of "badness" softens a young man's experience of street culture and victimhood (2009). Parkes and Connolly (2011) have already noted the significance of social networks for enabling young people to more effectively negotiate the potential for violence. By extension, the focus here is on broadening this research by focusing on the *avoidance* of violence and how space and place are factors in this.

2 Methodology and Participants

In describing the context for this study, some background context is useful. Youth research has generally evolved into two approaches: the "cultural" and "transition" perspectives (Furlong et al. 2011). "Cultural" approaches tend to focus specifically on visible aspects of youth culture and consumption marked by distinct fashions and styles, frequently with links to the music scene (see, e.g., Shildrick and Macdonald 2006). Those experts who use a "transitions" approach have tended to be more interested in the relationship between education and work and use large-scale quantitative and longitudinal research that explores young lives in different locations over a period of time (see, e.g., Du bois et al. 1995). Unsurprisingly, these different methodological orientations have inevitably provided different insights

into young people's lives which are often presented in direct opposition to the other (Furlong et al. 2011).

In methodological terms, this project combines (at least superficially) the two approaches while also clearing space for the voice of young people to be heard. The provenance of the project was a doctoral project organized by an experienced detached youth worker (detached youth work is a form of youth work that endeavors to encounter young people in those areas that they feel most comfortable – parks, playgrounds, and other public areas (see Whelan 2010)). This translated itself in research terms into using techniques from youth work *and* youth research – specifically a very deliberate focus on leveraging the skills and knowledges of the participants into the research design: – *they* were the experts and “adult” researchers very much followed their lead. Consequently, at numerous stages during the project design, young people were given the responsibility for data collection and analysis.

In addition to the qualitative data collected over a long period of participant observation, data was triangulated against reiterative waves of surveys, individual/group interviews, and focus groups. This rich dataset was further supplemented by data gleaned from a smartphone app called “epicollect” (see Aanensen et al. 2009). It collected locational data over a number of months, and it was this interaction of different data methods that allowed the perception of something as subtle as “slipping.” By using all the potential of a smartphone (camera, locational, visual, and audiovisual data collection), a large dataset of spatial and temporal data was collected and small-scale data which focused on local expressions of conviviality, mobility, and sociability. A quasi-quantitative approach was deployed with geographical data (specifically Keyhole Markup Language coordinates (see Crampton 2009)) to create a longitudinal database, which provided a set of variables around which to triangulate qualitative data including surveys and photos to create a richer dataset.

The basketball team in East London was chosen because they were mobile and an active competitive team, which allowed a sustained focus on their embodied habitual mobility whether through their need to train or play formal and semiformal competitive basketball matches. On the basis of their commitment to the sport, the Athenians were obliged to travel, to meet up often, and to keep in regular contact with one another. Consequently, the choice to research a sport's team went beyond the fact it allowed the easy recruitment and retention of a small dedicated sample of young mobile men. Firstly, it was a youth-organized platform that was not adult-sanctioned or supported. Secondly, there was a link between individuals, through wider social structures, to participation in local sociocultural traditions such as playing sport, school, “hanging out,” and everyday activities. The team also regulated a great deal of their internal relations. It created an internal structure and a group identity, and there were allocated roles within this, which meant that they had certain well-regulated ways of dealing with conflicts. It even allowed them to go to areas that were renowned for having a “bad reputation.” It created a group cohesive enough to go to “other” places, competitive enough to be respected by local “rude boys,” but who deliberately did not present themselves as threatening.

The competitive ethos of the sport was also a repository of discursive resources, biographies, and spatialities that facilitated talk about slipping.

Sports provided a framework for collective and individual self-discovery that included the practice of different identities. A team context provided a canvas to evaluate individual change and provide a basis to explore relational connections across and between neighborhoods. The team provided an opportunity for these young men to experiment outside of formal institutions like home and school and deal with issues of agency and safety, which is the focus here.

In theoretical terms, the team provided the opportunity to see the “everyday transportation. . .and spatial relations of mobility and immobility” (Sheller and Urry 2006, p. 212), which is important in human geography (Skelton and Gough 2013; Skelton 2013). It provided an arena to view “everyday materiality [i]n which people dwell” (Latham and McCormack 2004, p. 702), which subverts traditional static binaries of informal/formal, public/private, and micro-/macro-politics (Wood 2012, p. 338).

3 Slipping in Young Men’s Own Words

I will tell you a funny story, I bumped into somebody. I was coming here,[to training]. I can’t remember what day it was, during half-term and I bumped into a guy. I was waiting for the bus and a guy was looking at me. And at first I was like, why is this guy looking at me for? And then he was like “Luke!” and I was like “Yeaaaaaaah. . .?” [Shook his head in mock apprehension] How does he know my name? And he was like “We used to play basketball together at Valentine’s Park” which is at Ilford and I genuinely didn’t remember him though. I actually had no clue. I had no clue.

Luke

This extract does not do justice to the range of emotions that he was communicating – the wary anticipation (“a guy was looking at me”), the fear (“why is this guy looking at me”), and to sheer relief at the story’s conclusion (“I actually had no clue”). Luke followed a routine of where he went and how he travelled – new faces and experiences were not necessarily expected or even welcomed.

“Slipping,” such as this instance conveyed by Luke, expressed how routine habits established norms of practice, which made breaking them immediately clear and apparent. The breaking of these norms evoked unease. Why was Luke so anxious about somewhere he called home? He had just arrived back from his first year at university, and he was feeling somewhat out of sync with what he used to do and who he used to do it with. He commented further on his bus stop encounter:

[Y]ou will get that a lot when you have been out of the area for so long and then obviously, your face just reappears and suddenly someone just happens to recognise you. I mean, sometimes it is surprising when you bump into someone you [have] known for ages. You can walk, I have done it before, you can walk straight past somebody deliberately just to see if. . . Yeah, and they haven’t seen you.

“Slipping” was, in these examples, a transgression of the code of seeing and being seen: none of the Athenians expected to be welcomed by young men outside of where they called home. Luke believed he should remain conspicuously visible in his area for his own safety since new faces can and were challenged over their presence in public. All the young men in the Athenians conveyed the emotional toil and cognitive effort needed to navigate the city. Fitting in and belonging was something that one achieved through physical and mental exertion. Creating that “ease with one’s self and one’s surroundings” (May 2011) that defined belonging on a local level, as Luke implied, was an effort in everyday life.

Even more worrying for the young men was an anecdote they:

There was one time when me and my boys, Obi, Han and one of the boys that was there previously, we was in Stratford. We was just coming home and grabbing something to eat and some boys, little boys, came and just like took our basketball. So we asked for it back and then we went to KFC [Kentucky Fried Chicken] and then we was ordering and we looked around and looked outside and there was 30–40 different guys and we was like “What’s this?” So they come to the shop and come up to Obi, Han and like pick out a pocket knife. And they say, “What have you got for us?” And we say, “We don’t have anything for you what are you talking about?” And they are like, “Nah, come outside let me show you something” . . . and I don’t know because God must have been on our side because some black man came in with his wife and he was like “Is there a problem here?” and the boy was like, “No, no, no”. And [the man] was like “Leave these boys alone, rah, tah, tah” and the guy just drove us home in his car.

Tim

There are a number of things to take from this. First, it emphasized how even familiar areas could become dangerous. Second, and more significantly, it illustrates the intergenerational and *intragenerational* dynamics that have to be negotiated to avert violence. Even “little boys” were a potential threat. Third, the transactional way that they were threatened, not any hint of macho confrontation but an almost friendly and familiar “what have you got for us?,” alluded to an almost commercial negotiation. The lack of force or ferocity again demonstrated the way that confrontation was prosaic and not spectacular. What was also fascinating is how an older man stopped the “little boys” in their tracks.

So I was figuring, I think I kind of [need to] be careful. I need to stop going [out], and I wasn’t really going out much anyway, but I kind of need to understand where’s the right place to go; when I shouldn’t really be there.

Keith

What Keith expressed confirmed two research findings. “Fitting in” was a project with greater consequences than potentially being seen as unsociable. He believed in the prospect of violence if the challenge of moving outside of their area was taken too lightly. “Fitting in” also had a benign aspect – it was more than keeping safe because it was a characteristic of belonging which was multidimensional and encapsulated a collective identity, a certain reading of place and vocabulary of practices.

Jack gave me the clearest demonstration of “slipping.” He had lived in the United States for a number of years and so had a noticeable soft American twang to his accent which, though marking him out as different, he had also positioned as something positive (he was similar but not *too* similar).

Well, there was a time when I was approached by a group of guys and I don't look at them in fear [or] as if I am looking down on them. There are a few times [when people have] came up to me and said “Where you from? Where are you going and what are you doing?” I said “[Place close by], I am just chilling and not really doing much and had to go see a girl real quick”. And they said “What, you from America?” You know what I mean? And we just had a conversation [and then I said] “Ok, ok, and I got to go now”

What is significant here was what Jack negotiated. It did entail “being off guard”; Jack was subsequently forced to negotiate: “I didn't look at them in fear and I didn't look as if I am looking down at them.” It was just one component of a very quick calculation that he described. The result of this negotiation showed he was neither a pushover nor a threat. The mention of a “good” reason to be there (“had to go see a girl real quick”) that the unknown boys could empathize with and the presentation of himself as someone different by speaking about America were all revealed in one exchange. Jack made a socio-spatial assessment and calculation of risk, but its conclusion must be borne in mind – the way that the story finishes with “Ok, I got to go now” is revealing. Once the danger was past, or at least nullified, he got out of the situation as soon as was polite.

3.1 Passive Avoidance

Luke, however, personified a very different incarnation of the safety/“slipping” equation. He shared with Hannibal (see later), another member of his team, a long and rich association with East London – his family had lived there for at least two generations – but he had a very different reading of its dangers. On the subject of territoriality, he was almost reticent to admit it was an issue:

Nah. . . I have heard about it, I have heard about the whole postcode wars and if you are from the wrong area and they see you ‘slipping’. It is more like, they see you and [if] they have never seen you before, they see that as a reason to come up to you and ask you a whole load of questions or take your stuff or do whatever they think necessary to prove a point that this is *their* area. I have heard about it but I am lucky enough to have never experienced it.

Luke

He described himself as happy to go into new areas but aside from being “sensible” did not see it as a great issue. Accordingly, as a position among the different views displayed by his friends, he was an outlier: perhaps because he was at a university outside London in contrast with his fellow Athenians who had enrolled or planned to enroll in a university within the South East. His contribution suggested that personality, or some attribute of agency, had a considerable part to play in

“slipping.” Of all the Athenians, Luke was the most likely to explore based on his spatial data and participant observations. Indeed, his version of “slipping” placed him somewhere very different from the rest of the team in that he was aware of it and happy to talk about it, but his approach showed it was possible to avoid and/or ignore violence. At least on the surface, it appeared that he experienced little fear or any real discomfort. Still, there seemed to be a willful element here, as he was the author of the vignette earlier (“I will tell you a funny story, I bumped into somebody. . .” in the section above) which contrasts this nonchalance against a backdrop of vigilance especially apparent when exploring new unfamiliar areas and even returning to old ones.

3.2 Active Avoidance

Tim, the captain of the Athenians, presented the clearest and most overt correlation between slipping and personal safety. As a young Londoner born in the South of the city, the move into East London when he was 7 years old was based upon the wish for “something better” by his mother, and his description of past and present was intimately connected to place and locale. Area, place, and belonging were all overt and clear concerns for him. He expressed the dangers of being “rushed” (physically attacked and robbed by a group) and told how he had often had:

guys come and approach me and ask whether I got anything, I just talk like normal and say “I don’t have nothing for you rah, tah, tah”.

Tim

For him, this commonplace and almost polite attempt at mugging typified his experience of violence in its banality. The initial encounter was transactional and lacked any aggression though it could quickly escalate especially if the “wrong” thing was said. As a result, he was clear about what he needed to do to stay safe, and this meant something as simple and all-encompassing as only rarely going to places that were new and/or unexplored. For him, even seeing young people in East London he did not recognize was a signifier for trouble since:

You only go to certain places if you are looking for trouble. If you find people from certain areas in your area, they are probably looking for trouble, unless they are visiting families.

Tim

Consequently, for him slipping was intimately connected with the unfamiliar, and he reported how the risk of going further than familiar places meant:

people are going to recognise that you are a new face. . .and then they are going to try and approach you and you have got to keep humble and if they pull out a knife, you got to know what to do, you can’t fight over a phone. Just give up.

Tim

The threat of robbery and violence (in that order), though not personally experienced, was real enough to severely curtail the places he visited or would want to visit.

3.3 Active Negotiation

Hannibal presented a subtler manifestation of “slipping.” As a local to East London, his relationship within the area was intricate and profound in terms of his family background and history. Given this, it was easy to understand his insistence that concerns over violence:

don't really affect me... I mean especially living in the area [for so long].
Hannibal

He was proud of his area and used his intense involvement in East London as a way of bypassing the possibility (or expectation) of “trouble.” Even more than this:

Most people know you and if there is... I mean that there are a few people that really [you] don't want to be involved [with but] they know you from the area so they are not going to hassle you... I have been to so many areas across London and I think it is one of the most peaceful areas in comparison and I will never complain.
Hannibal

Still, he was prompted to deal with issues of safety more directly than Tim, based around a different set of factors. As an 18 year old, and partially due to the fact that he had taken sport so seriously, he had only recently begun to discover the joys and distractions of the local nighttime economy. As a self-confessed extrovert who was developing a burgeoning taste for “raving” (partying) in local and Central London nightclubs, house parties, and pubs, he was obliged to be relatively mobile to look for new experiences. He did indeed travel to other areas. He had only recently begun to socialize with new and exciting people but was always cognizant of the dangers. He did this based on information from his large group of friends. He recounted second hand a story about some of his friends:

They had been dancing one minute and a whole crew of people can come in and they messed up the whole party, or someone could have said something bad, and a fight starts. One of those people on the one side belongs to a gang that is in that area and they wanted to bring their guys, and that person wants to bring their guys. [Pausing to think]. Most of the time that actually happens when I think about it.
Hannibal

This did make the pursuit of new experiences and a good time, a task that had spatial implications. By preference, based around past experience, he had learnt:

If you want to rave people will say central London is definitely the right place, totally, they hope the security would be better.
Hannibal

This preference was based on past hard-earned knowledge. Ensuring clubs which had an efficient manner to restrict entry, to eject troublemakers, and to maintain order were prized by him. His last attempt at hosting a house party for the Athenians and friends had resulted in “drama” because:

Some young people [started] messing up and trying to start something up. Like, it was almost like, ‘this again’. We had to get in the shelter room. Something happened, I don’t even know how to explain [it]. It wasn’t even minor at the time because the girls were screaming and was actually a bit weird. Then I heard that someone had a gun and I thought “OK. . .a bit scary” but ummm. . .I don’t know. . .boy, it is a little different when you get a little bigger.

Hannibal

Leaving aside the transitional aspect of this (“boy, is it a little different, when you get a little bigger”) – it is striking that he had even considered designating an area of his house as a “shelter room,” illustrating that “trouble” was and remains a realistic possibility for any gathering of young people in that area. While he negotiated with the troublemakers – since he knew them – others were kept conspicuously away to minimize the potential for violence and for future repercussions. “Slipping” for Hannibal meant an on-going compromise between new experiences and the prospect of confrontation.

3.4 Passive Negotiation

Robert presented the most complex negotiation of space of any within the Athenians. He had grown up in East London, an area which had over the last dozen years or so earned a reputation as being occasionally violent. For him though home was generally “pretty quiet”:

It [had] the gang culture that you would expect. . .so loads of the kids actually joined a few gangs [close by]. There was a little [trouble] but it wasn’t too serious. I don’t think it was too serious. I think the most serious thing that actually happened was someone [once] getting stabbed in the back of the head.

Robert

Despite this spectacular example, he did not see his neighborhood as deserving of its violent reputation. He considered the possibility of becoming a victim of violence as far from remote, but nevertheless, the issue was very much in the past:

I think it has been an issue for everyone: well at least for everyone in my vicinity when I was growing up.

Robert

He was part of very large family, meaning that he furnished all his examples with either what his siblings or his siblings’ friends had said. The inference was that he was very well known in the area since the network of people he knew was

exponentially larger than everyone else's in the group based upon his thick tapestry of familial contacts. Founded upon that, he had the same ability to negotiate his way out of potential violent conflict that Hannibal had shown, though each had gained this skill through different avenues.

What was also noteworthy, and an emergent theme, was the issue of transition and maturity and territoriality: it was more of an issue for Robert "when I was growing up." He described to me how now that he had returned home after his first year at university it was "different," but he still thought in a territorial manner, though perhaps the areas he kept away from were different. The process of transitioning was very gradual and for him, slipping was invariably something he associated with adolescence. Since reaching young adulthood:

I wouldn't be as quivery as I was when I was, I don't know, a younger age. And especially when you grow up in size, I think a lot, especially a lot of the nonsense, the robbing phones and all rest of it, a lot of it happens by young people as well, so they target other young people as well. I am not being general.

Robert

As a confirmation of themes within "slipping," this was salutary. It also illustrated the resources that the Athenians could bring to bear in order to stay safe, while confirming the existence of a number of competing dynamics. The instrumental purpose of violence, the "targeting of young people by other young people," and even a temporal dimension of where to go and when ("I wouldn't be idiotic enough to go to [certain areas] very late") were some of these dynamics.

4 Conclusion

4.1 The Importance of (Not) Slipping: What It Is and What It Meant

The Athenians thus epitomized a variety of positions. Indeed, the only position the young men shared was their view that their security had to be "managed" through their own efforts. This research finding exemplifies the point made by Goodey, of how young men's fearfulness, "is progressively downplayed as normative adult identities are adopted" (Goodey 1997, p. 402). There was an assumption all the young men seemed to follow that if the perpetrator of violence can see its effects they are unlikely to stop, and so the only way to escape violence is to show one is not "shook" and hide its effects – a potential dynamic within Tim and Luke's studied nonchalance (Thomson et al. 2002). Previously, researchers explained how a culture of heterosexual masculinity shaped risk, fear, and the nature of associated coping strategies and constraints (Stanko and Hobdell 1993; Walklate 1995; Goodey 1997), which made the issue of safety emblematic of a transition to heterosexual adulthood. Yet, studies of the spatial dimensions of young men's fear of crime are not well developed, though studies such as Hay's (1993) suggest

this fear does lead to tangible constraints on behavior and use of space for a large proportion of male urban residents.

To go back to Douglas' typology: academics have often used her work as a tool to explore divergent understandings of risk according to social solidarity, political worldviews, and cultural values. Here, slipping is a floating signifier – a word that absorbs rather than emits meaning. It is a word that meant different things to different people and perhaps describes a direction of motion: each Athenian was shifting away from different things. It meant variously slipping away from risk, away from violence and trouble, away from boredom, and away from markers of childhood and adolescence. It was linked to the idea of home and comfort and meant a physical space for Tim, an emotional and social positioning to transcend and grow out of for Hannibal, a near-mythical crime and safety issue for Luke, and a battery of spatial memories for Robert. The different views of the young men presented an eclectic set of socio-spatial identities and complicated any simple collective account of place *despite* the young men's shared history. Jointly, the young men embodied the manner in which places, and cities, are networks of flows, where people's immobilities/mobilities collide with each other, creating friction (Skelton 2013, p. 471), demonstrating how "social subjects are created through the city" (Ruddick 1998, p. 345).

What is significant is how much the Athenians each stressed how things were different now that they were no longer adolescents and how getting physically bigger (with the possible exception of Tim) had changed how they perceived their safety. Ethnicity is often aligned to mobility here: for example, some young men remained in or close to "black neighborhoods" because they felt safe, but if resources and opportunities for social mobility are limited, they may be disadvantaged. Perhaps Granovetter's classic paper, *The strength of weak ties* (1973), has particular relevance in seeking to understand these young men's experiences. Granovetter's work suggests that different ties generate different resources. The "strong ties," in this case most associated with ethnic-specific bonding of the "black neighborhood," imbue individuals such as Robert with a sense of belonging, practical resources, and coping strategies in the face of discrimination. In contrast, "weak ties," such as those crossing racial or social class lines, which are generally found outside "black neighborhoods," enable individuals to develop networks and resources outside their own immediate networks and with people belonging to different social and cultural backgrounds. It is important to stress, however, that the value of these "weak ties" is very much dependent on an individual's ability to utilize these ties to their own advantage and to access further resources, knowledge, and capital.

To a large degree, entrenched forms of societal inequality or social mobility are governed by related forms of "capital": cultural, social, economic, and symbolic capitals (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). "Slipping" is similar to John Urry's idea of "network capital" (2010), which is applicable to Hannibal's network of friends and Robert's web of associates. By accentuating this aspect, it is possible to see how this form of capital is built up by individuals, a form of information-sharing to "slip away" from obstacles.

Local networks matter. Previous studies have examined how residents manage fear of crime in high-crime, inner-city areas of Salford, which have strong local identities, where “being local” matters since “your *place* in relation to crime *places* you in a community of belonging and exclusion” (Evans et al. 1996, p. 379, emphasis in original). This work confirms that young people have a wide range of strategies for dealing with risk and promoting safety in public space. Within London, these strategies were slightly different from Danielle van der Burgt’s (2013) comprehensive taxonomy of Swedish teenagers’ avoidance strategies, risk-confronting strategies, and empowerment or boldness strategies.

“Slipping” spoke to all these themes, as did age, confidence, and experience. The city street is a place to evade, hedge, or, at times, confront risk. Consequently, slipping could and did mean avoidance strategies, risk-confronting strategies, and/or empowerment and boldness techniques (van Burgt 2015). Participants’ use of the word “slipping” itself seemed to encapsulate the hard-to-grasp process of becoming independent. It seemed to have both voluntary and involuntary connotations that the young men spoke about, often alluding to something that took considerable courage with something that was crassly risky. As was shown, it meant variously “being off guard and careless,” putting yourself in a position where you’re vulnerable, and/or deliberately entering unfamiliar areas where violence was a potential consequence. “Slipping” in all instances expressed something about how routine habits established norms of practice which made breaking them immediately clear and apparent.

Collectively, the Athenians demonstrated the ways that these young men took risks and experimented with different identities in various contexts as they forged their identities. A neighborhood can become a significant setting for self-discovery as it provides a range of possibilities for experimentation. In this account “slipping” can be understood as a motif in young men’s accounts of adulthood, portraying the different ways it reflected inequalities and power relations (Holdsworth 2009). “Slipping” shows how identity is a continuous process of moving in and out of different subject positions depending on recognition of multiple identities and an ability to comprehend others’ perspectives (see Skelton 2013). It also shows how notions of mobility were central to the Athenian’s collective and individual sense of self as they made the transition into adulthood, whether this was in the form of access to an independent social life, being able to move around their community safely, travel for leisure (in the form of holidays), and/or the rite of passage of going to university (Taylor and Thompson 2005).

In summary, the Athenians’ different interpretations of “slipping” provides more than an insight into the transitions of young black men to adulthood in London. The Athenians articulate an alternative model to the rigidly linear spatial models of teleological “transitions” to adulthood that are often expressed in everyday language (“growing up,” “moving out,” etc.). Rather, “slipping” speaks toward the porous borders of transition in a liminal setting and is a (partial) challenge to the idea that young people achieve adulthood in a prescribed manner. The Athenians, in short, show some of the many routes by which a young person might begin to call themselves adult, including the varying nature of risk and risk-taking, space and place, and agency and creativity this process entails.

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Abstract

Discourses of place are implicated in the urban regeneration strategies of government authorities that attempt to shift representations from those of poverty and disorder to creative, “cosmopolitan” living. Young people have had a particular role to play in this process, at times becoming part of the discourse of dysfunction in a portrayal of both disorder and risk, their presence on the street needing to be managed by particular forms of urban planning. This chapter argues that a more polysemous account of urban transformation is needed to understand young people’s diverse attachments to place and the politics of representation that they engage in to manage positions of inequality. Using participatory filmmaking, five young people from the east London Borough of Hackney reimagined their place in their neighborhood, challenging discourses of

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both degeneration and gentrification. While separately the films provide subjective imaginations of Hackney, entangled they generate narratives of contradiction, loss, synchronicity, and mobility that present a more complex picture of Hackney as home.

Keywords

Youth • Place • London • Belonging • Home • Urban • Culture • Film • Visual methods

1 Introduction

The idea of home as a fixed point continues to trouble a view of the world in which mobility and change have gained cultural predominance. A fluid understanding of home as a place in process, partial, incomplete, and subject to re-evaluation, belies a need to ground it: to make it real through text and representation, through naming and placing. Ubiquitously described as a space of security, of memory, and where friends and the familiar can be found, home makes real identity and belonging, embedding the intersubjective, emotional attachments and affective responses of comfort (e.g., Ahmet 2013; Butcher 2011; Blunt 2005).

What then happens when “home” is disturbed by the arrival of new faces or demolished within the febrile housing markets of neoliberal cities? The east London Borough of Hackney, like other parts of London and cities globally, has in recent years undergone a process of regeneration and gentrification leading to the displacement of buildings and residents. For young people in the borough, this has meant the need to reevaluate their sense of belonging, at times replacing home in the process. It could be argued that this is an inherent part of “growing up”, but, as highlighted in this chapter, a shifting built environment drives this process in specific ways, largely through its concretized reflection of a discourse that designates who and what is now desirable in public space.

However, this discourse is neither deployed nor received unilaterally. Notions of power and marginality are complicated by contestations over place, its meaning and use. As this chapter will argue, young people have the capacity to create polysemous understandings of place that, in their ambiguity, highlight the cracks in any unitary discourse. Polysemy is used here to denote the multiple meanings that can be attributed to place and highlights that, while referring to “young people” and “youth”, this is a multivocal demographic. Polysemy includes the politics of representation embedded in visual practices, both informal (e.g., dress, graffiti) and formal (e.g., the intervention of participatory video research). Focusing on five films made by peer researchers in the *Creating Hackney as Home* project (CHAsH, 2013–2015, see www.hackneyashome.co.uk), the following visual analysis highlights a multilayered perspective of the constitution of, and conflicts inherent in, producing a place called home, including entanglements of contradiction, synchronicity, loss, and mobility.

2 Youth and Visual Politics

As substantial users of public space, young people play a particular role in perceptions of urban disruption, inflected with intergenerational opposition and shifting cultural values. Their presence in and interactions with the built environment are impacted by their “otherness” (ethnic, classed, and aged) intersecting with changes to physical spaces including gentrification and commercialization. There is both pleasure and tension in streets as diverse young people negotiate and adapt to spaces of adult, commercial, and cultural dominance, in turn impacting on their, and others’, sense of home and the forms of belonging they choose to enact (Clayton 2012).

Visual cultures reflect the experience of these transformations and are used in this chapter to investigate the complex, ambiguous processes of growing up in a rapidly changing urban neighborhood. The choice of the visual to explore home is one that reflects particular themes in academic research with youth. It is argued that visual methods can be more in tune with young people brought up in a digital age (Mallan et al. 2010). There is the argument that visual methods may be better able to capture the sensory experience of living in a city as soft bodies encounter its hard edges (e.g., Simpson 2011; Lorimer 2010; Spinney 2009); an idea we are asked to question by Rose (2014). Visual methods enable participatory approaches, shifting the relationship between researcher and researched and between media landscape and audience, as young people are given the power to depict their own lives and to tell their own stories (e.g., Blum-Ross 2013; Askins and Pain 2011; Fenge et al. 2011).

However, it is the politics of representation embedded in visual practices that is the primary focus of this chapter. As a “young person” is brought into being through family, government, institutional, and media discourse (Katz 2013), the politics of this process becomes apparent in an analysis of visual contexts set within a milieu of redevelopment and gentrification (see Hamnett et al. 2013; Watt 2013). Representations of place are inextricably connected to hegemonic discourses and the marginalization of dissenting voices. This is particularly evident for young people who can be excluded not only from sites of government authority that manage processes of urban regeneration but also within family units that manage access to public space and decisions to relocate home.

For example, a place like Hackney has in the past been defined in the media landscape as poor, drug and crime ridden, with streets burdened with names such as “murder mile”. This representation and subsequent imagination of disorder generates a wider discourse of deserving and undeserving places that, according to writers such as Wilson (2007), enables the more easy removal of the latter. Social categories contribute to the construction of this discourse, such as the representation of young, black men in Hackney as more likely to be “at risk” or “risky” (discussed further below). More recently, with its regeneration connected to its position close to the financial center of the City of London and the Olympic redevelopment site, Hackney’s contemporary portrayal is more likely to be as a place in the process of

becoming a creative, fashionable hub, a center of “hipsters” and “yummy mummies”, and where industrial history has been effaced.

Given the particular form of urban redevelopment within Hackney, widely regarded as gentrification, displacement is a key risk for socioeconomically marginalized young people. This has entailed both physically decanting residents from social housing now on valuable land and affective displacement engendered in classed and intercultural interactions in Hackney that generate responses of discomfort and subsequent avoidance or exclusion (Butcher and Dickens [forthcoming](#)). Similarly, the speed of change, rather than its form alone, has generated a sense of spatial dislocation resulting in disorientation and changing access to space. Yet in the exploration of these processes a more complicated relationship between young people, place, and power is made visible.

While the discourse of the necessity for urban transformation predominates, responses to it cannot be assumed to be homogenous. There can be complexity in the relationship between gentrifiers and local residents, as well as ambivalence toward the impact of gentrification rather than straightforward rejection of it (Butcher and Dickens [forthcoming](#)). Sassen (2014) has argued that displacement generates new kinds of politics centered on locality and presence. These elements create a distinction between being powerless and having the capacity to act even though lacking power, as action is created outside existing power relations (Butcher 2009). This analysis aligns with Pile’s (1997) argument for a need to redefine the relationship between power and powerlessness through a recognition that the city is part of interacting fields of influence that include forms of affiliation other than ethnicity and class, such as neighborhood.

This chapter suggests that one such set of affiliations can be found in the polysemous representations of home generated by young people. It could be argued that the ambiguity generated in polysemy is itself an act of dissent, as diverse youth voices attempt to critique, claim, or transform the meaning of a place. An illustration of these dynamics is found in a study with young people in a lower socioeconomic locality of Delhi (CyberMohalla, Butcher 2009). The contrast was obvious between their makeshift homes in an informal settlement, marked for demolition, and those of wealthier suburbs in the city. Yet through the creation of texts, audiovisual imagery, poetry, photography, and animation, these young people engaged in a process of reimagining the city and their place within it, challenging the belief that a “slum” is devoid of intellectual life and therefore can be more easily removed. Ultimately the polysemous discourses generated within this locality do not prevent the precarity of life there nor the threat of demolition, but an archive of its existence remains. Through a critical mass of voices, CyberMohalla’s creative practices brought into being a sense of place that challenged the unequivocal discourse that this locality should be removed. While acknowledging that inequality is still central to their experiences within cities (Hörschelmann and van Blerk 2011), this work with young people can shift thinking from the binary position of placemaking as powerful versus powerless to incorporate more subtle indications of where power can be contested.

Similarly, the CHAsH project proposed a polysemous approach as necessary for understanding the complexity of placemaking within the churn of London's housing market. Theoretically drawing on the field of urban affective geographies, that is, the embodied experience of cities (see, e.g., Rose et al. 2010; Jiron 2008; Montserrat-Degen 2008; Wise 2005), CHAsH used a participatory video methodology incorporating film production, the use of video diaries, and discussion, both online and in workshops. Working with a community partner, *Immediate Theatre*, five peer research assistants (PRAs), 16–18 years old, were employed in April 2013 to conduct research on the theme of “home” within the context of their changing borough. The filmmakers/PRAs, Matthew, Tyrell, Monét, Michael, and Shekeila, from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, had all grown up in Hackney social housing estates. Initial workshops with the team focused on techniques of geographical research and filmmaking, enabling the PRAs to engage in what Grasseni (2004) has called “skilled vision”, that is, learning what to look at and what to look for, exploring the meanings of what is seen. With support from the senior researchers and professional filmmaker on the project, the PRAs devised, scripted, and shot their own films, undertaking research around their chosen themes and working within different genres (from documentary to spoken word performances).

Capturing differing experiences of the same urban context, the films were both individual and entangled forms of placemaking that together sought to understand the experience of their changing home from multiple viewpoints. As Pink (2008, p. 14) has argued, different media, each with their own narrative and agenda, can “be understood as a set of entangled pathways that inter-reference each other to create place”. Intertwined with everyday practices of visual cultures, mobility, and leisure, the PRAs captured key debates surrounding the politics of representation, youth and urban geographies, including managing change through reimagining place; embedding place through everyday practices of identity and belonging; coping with (mis)perception, stereotypes, and cultural encounter; and redefining boundaries between the public and the private.

Enabling the explicit representation of polysemous imaginations of the city, the films became part of an iterative process of placemaking that destabilized homogeneous categories of place and youth. As the following visual analysis will highlight, together the films provided a multilayered perspective of the constitution of, and conflicts inherent in, producing a place called home, including entanglements of contradiction, synchronicity, loss, and mobility.

2.1 Dalston Changes (Matthew's Film)

My film is about the rapid changes in Hackney and who they are for. This topic was inspired by my general awareness of changes in regard to infrastructure. However when I dug a little bit deeper into the circumstances of the changes, the morality of the situation played on my mind because I could be the next person to be moved out of Hackney. This film asks whether the changes, which seem positive, are for those who were originally living here, or for those who want to move here because of how popular Hackney has become. To answer

this I asked local residents and business owners for their opinions and used their responses to help me think about my own view on these changes. (Matthew)

Matthew introduces Hackney as a place where the debates surrounding social inclusion and cohesion coincide along cultural and structural fracture lines as new residents and existing communities compete for space. A rubric under which a diversity of life is subsumed, Hackney is demarcated by the geometries of terrace rows and the blocks, grills, and walls of housing estates. Beginning with a vox populi of local residents in the streets around Dalston Junction, a central shopping and transport hub within Hackney, Matthew's film becomes a one-word montage of rapidly edited clips to describe this place: "vibrant," "cool," "fun," "unique," "diverse," "trendy," "the NY in London," "busy," "better," "could be better," "amazing," and "not sure if it's good or not" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRiUnEdWp2s). This last remark highlights the ambivalence filtering the boosterism of Hackney's regeneration that has become iconic of urban change: where new apartment blocks, cafés, hotels, and shopping precincts have replaced terraces and social housing estates.

Using interviews with key stakeholders, such as council representatives, community organizers, local shop owners, and residents, Matthew explores the nature of these changes and their capacity to disturb the cultural frameworks that delineate home. Spatial and temporal shifts are evident in the tropes and devices used in the film. Change is captured in the juxtaposition of green and industrial, worn and newly built estates, and the shine of contemporary youth centers versus the griminess of Georgian derelicts. Images of new developments and new facilities are linked to the increased pressure to decant some residents and repopulate with those that can afford the new price tags. This is Smith's (1996) "revanchism" teamed with Sibley's (1995) "purification of space", supported by discourses of disorder that draw together youth (unruly), class (poverty), gender (male), and diversity (also unruly) to add to the justifications for regeneration (Wallace 2014; Seamark et al. 2011).

The intensification of social change in tandem with this shifting built environment is captured in high-speed footage and long shots of streets around Dalston that focus on the diversity of people and housing stock: commercial units, social landlords, affordable housing, and luxury apartments. The juddering quality of a handheld camera shooting from a moving car perhaps encapsulates the stated unease with the speed of this change. Temporal shifts are visualised by contrasting past archival images and present maps, supported by interviews where the quality of change is acknowledged as slow to begin with "and then suddenly speeded up over the last few years". Matthew feels the loss of familiarity, for example, building a relationship with local shopkeepers over time. There is nostalgia for past arrangements of concrete and steel even from young people. Streets must now be navigated by memory as an older resident recalls the former tenants of business premises that changed hands and then changed again. The owners of a local noodle bar, noticing the changing composition of their clients ("more white", more "higher class"), are able to adapt their products, but they also notice the increasing rents and business

rates which make life more difficult. This particular restaurant has now closed, replaced by a USA-style diner.

As the film lingers at a busy intersection, with people crossing from different directions, the ambiguity of change is highlighted. It offers aspiration as Matthew imagines himself living in one of the new apartments, but this requires him to negotiate his relationship with gentrification. Acknowledging that some changes within Hackney are “good”, particularly “the look of the new buildings and facilities”, there is the problem of displacement that must be reconciled as he notes in his final voice-over: “If you believe there is no place like home, then you should believe in having the choice without the pressure of change”. Matthew’s film highlights how displacement pressure affects more than just the ability to rent or buy in a neighborhood; it can also require a realignment between a sense of self and place, a theme explored further by Tyrell.

2.2 Hackney Style (Tyrell’s Film)

My film is about style and dress in Hackney. In this film I am going to unravel stereotypes to do with dress and appearance. I have conducted interviews with my friends and locals to explore these ideas. My film asks three questions. Does the clothing we wear affect the way people judge us? Does the way we dress give us a sense of belonging? Do we wear certain clothing to adapt to our surroundings? (Tyrell)

With a focus on the material practices of fashion in the construction of home, for Tyrell the visual encapsulates the performance of identity, from his own, studied, ever-changing dress to the reconstruction of stereotypes, the “gangster” look, for example, as two young men pose for his film in baggy jeans and hoodies. He uses voice-over and interviews to elicit the fluidity and multiplicity of identity and to explore how the built environment becomes a platform for its formation and expression by young people (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo0-CYtRmSw>).

As with Matthew, Tyrell uses the device of juxtaposition, visually comparing one of the areas marked for demolition, Whiston Road, with its bleak, bricked up estates, to the vibrant, bustling Broadway Market, a gentrified area regarded as being a center for “hipster” congregation. As the appearance of Hackney has changed, this new social demographic, predominately young, white, fashionable, and associated with the creative industries, has become increasingly visible. Yet Whiston Road felt like home for Tyrell when he lived there because “it didn’t matter what you wore”. While this may seem like a call to individuality, he goes on to invoke the collective practices of “everyone dressed the same” (tracksuits being popular among young men). In this synchronous activity is the demarcation of home as a place of comfort and familiar relationships as noted by one of Tyrell’s interviewees in the film, Selin: “My friends are from Hackney. We dress the same. We have a certain style”.

Collective practices of belonging are supported by the affective comfort of “fitting in” (Butcher 2010), maintaining the power to make claims over the

demarcation of territory, boundaries of inclusion/exclusion, and who and what is permissible within those boundaries. For Selin, the pressure to fit in is “almost like a reflex you know, you just feel you should look good, you should look in a certain way when you go somewhere”. But that “somewhere” has to be a place in which they know what is permissible and what will look “good”. It is not just anywhere as Selin adds: “If you don’t dress like everyone else you’re not going to fit in”, and if you don’t fit in “people are just going to look at you”. There is recognition of being seen in right and wrong ways that leads to later criticism of stereotypes and judgment. To “fit in” is to denote then a sense of belonging, supported by everyday practices such as dress but also a willingness to adapt as Tyrell does: “Ultimately I think that people should wear what they want to wear and they shouldn’t be influenced by anything or anyone . . . although I recognise I have adapted to fit in . . . and I feel comfortable . . . and I feel like I belong”. But this is always an intersubjective relationship with another who is looking and subsequent contestation of what “looking good” entails.

Tyrell summarizes the complexity of these debates with the question: Does a tracksuit now fit into Broadway Market? The scene shifts from the estates on Whiston Road to the market street with new boutiques and pop-up designer shops, cafés and bars, art bookshops, and gastropubs. Again temporal speeding of the film compresses the flow of people and activity in the street. Hamza, interviewed at a local “art” café, describes a shift from when “everyone used to wear tracksuits” to a street that now contains people who are “trendy and fashionable”, wearing tight jeans and chinos in shades of yellow or pink. The new aesthetics of street and dress co-constitute this place, reinforced by a critical mass of “the new”. Here the pressure to fit in is leading to observations of more people wanting to “dress with that ‘hipster’ look because that’s how everyone else around them is starting to dress now. It’s very popular”. But Hamza no longer feels he fits in: “Not anymore, no. Not at all. Not in this area at all to be honest because . . . I think I’m the only one here in tracksuit bottoms in the whole road not like how it was before”. The discomfort of not belonging, being out of place, drives affective processes of exclusion as much as signs forbidding children from certain areas and the decanting of residents from social housing tower blocks.

The categorization of dress is read in conjunction with race. Another of Tyrell’s interviewees, Bilal, notes the pressure not to wear a sweatshirt that might feel more comfortable “because you’ll be categorised as a ‘hoodie’”, with its associated signification of criminality and danger. While race and age are read off the body, there is a third aspect not explicitly raised by Tyrell, and that is gender, with an overrepresentation in media outlets and public discourse of young black men as antisocial. Such stereotypes lead inevitably to misrecognition. Hamza, dressed in what he describes as a “youth” look, puts his hoodie up when it rains to protect his hair rather than to intimidate. He confesses he did not know what the “gangster look” was but people tend to say he dresses that way.

On the other hand, being unable to be placed can have its advantages, a fluidity perhaps in the ability to move across social lines. Bilal wears a suit when working in the classroom, only dressing in something more comfortable at home where he

becomes “just me”. During subsequent screenings of the film (throughout 2013–2015), there has been an audible murmur of surprise from audiences when Bilal, dressed in T-shirt, bling, and a reversed baseball cap, mentions his profession as a teacher; members of the audience perhaps realizing their own propensity to judge.

2.3 Growing Up and Out of Space (Monét’s Film)

My film was inspired by a dream I had early on in the project. I have tried to recreate that image in my film, using camera angles to give the perspective of a child. In my film you will be following me through the ages of six to sixteen, and the differences that occur across these ages. My dialogue is partly spoken word and partly my poetry, which gives a sense of my personal feelings over this time. (Monét)

While Matthew and Tyrell focus on wider structural changes that impact on their imagination of the relationship between home and city, Monét’s work centers on the spatial implications of the reclassification from child to adolescent that also requires a replacing of the subject. Increasingly there is recognition of the need to incorporate age into the analysis of home as it is imagined differently at different stages of life (Ahmet 2013). Similarly, there are connections between the understanding of self and place: spaces are “grown out of” (e.g., playground) and others grown into (e.g., clubs, bars) (see Butcher and Thomas 2003). Consequently what is represented as home can change.

For young people, debates surrounding age and place have centered on the right to play. In the context of the city, there is overwhelming criticism of the commodification and surveillance of public space that disproportionately impacts on youth (Hörschelmann and van Blerk 2011; Travlou 2003). In tandem with commodification is a discourse of “risk”; that young people must be protected but that they also pose risks to themselves and others (Karsten 2002). To this end, local authorities dedicate spaces such as adventure playgrounds that are dispersed throughout the city.

For Monét, home was concentrated in the south Hackney neighborhood of Hoxton where the adventure playground is designed to allow younger children (6–16 years) to play safely within bounds (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRFZ3GLX_H0). In a spoken word performance, accompanied by images that roll both forward and backward through time, Monét creates a spatial and temporal description of the shift from playground to street and her sense of loss in the process. The film captures the scale of childhood in the low perspective of the camera. The importance of fitting in, being in sync, is engendered in the rhythmic clapping of hands and cadence of poetry. As queen of her castle, the camera captures the views from the high-rise where she lived as a child that stretch to the city of London, with its towering structures paying homage to its importance as a global financial center. Turning inward to home, emotions and memories are simultaneously recalled in a montage of comfort; the clock ticking and fading

school awards on the wall are reminders of time passing. This reverie is disrupted by sunset and aging. Light, enhanced by the soundtrack, creates an ambience of playfulness during the day and then a greater sense of risk after sunset as tungsten shadows disperse the concrete blocks of her estate. Half-hidden youths walk slowly toward the camera, hoods up.

This series of images charts Monét's relationship with a space that at first felt like home, familiar and therefore safe, but then from which she is now considered a risk to younger children as she turns 16 and can no longer play there. As with Matthew's work, there is a sense of loss in this film as childhood is somehow interrupted by the city and the needs of others. The inevitability of growing up sees repeated cycles of intergenerational conflict and an antinomian tension between release and restraint as young people move from spaces of childhood into a wider public realm. The resulting contestation of public space is well documented and leads at times to young people's withdrawal or removal as a result of exclusion, supplemented by their own geographies of avoidance.

Yet these actions diminish the role of public space in generating encounters and opportunities for interaction (see, e.g., Smithsimon 2010), the imagining of risk as a pleasurable act, and the need to get lost in order to develop the capacity to find one's way back home. The withdrawal of young people from play in public spaces links to wider questions of power and diversity. Crane (2000), among others, has noted that young people appear adept at reappropriation, finding interstitial spaces as Monét did in the stairwells or the vacant decks of her housing block. However, the unpredictable outcomes of encounter result in streets that, for some, become stressful rather than pleasurable and uncomfortable rather than homely.

2.4 Home Team (Michael's Film)

My film is about playing basketball, being part of a team and how this is, for me, a way of life. In my film I talk about these ideas with my team-mates and coach. My film gives an inside look at what we do during basketball training at my school: like drills, practicing matches, discipline and hard work, as well as the fun side and our team spirit. I hope my film will portray a different image of what young men like me enjoy doing together on a Friday night. (Michael)

Michael's film begins with the premise that young, black men represent a sense of discomfort for others within the apparent "cosmopolitan" context of Hackney. It seems impossible not to reflect on race and belonging and their presence in public space. Public discourse is infused with the worry of parents and the stereotypes of media. Yet for young people embedded within Hackney's "super diversity" (Wessendorf 2013), proximity to difference is something they grow up with as a marker of home. This is not necessarily in the sense of cosmopolitan or convivial atmospheres but rather where there is both everyday interaction and everyday resentment (Karner and Parker 2011). There is the demarcation of territory according to the imagined possession of land by local authorities, by friends, by

“gangs”, by developers, and by class. Yet, at all times, these boundaries must be crossed and differences managed.

As a reflection on cultural diversity, Michael’s film incorporates a desire to create a different representation of young men in Hackney but also emphasizes a common thread that begins to entangle all the films: the need or wish, at least, to generate a sense of synchronicity, in this case, teamwork. For Michael, the basketball court becomes the place where he reimagines home as belonging, with the only things missing being his “bed and jollof rice”. Footage captures the motion of bodies and their energy and interaction, extending from the court to moving up an imagined social ladder, of “trying to get out, to make it big” [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbMTJppju5A>]. These young men are part of the perpetual motion of the city, constantly propelled in different directions, not always of their choosing: being moved on, as well as moving themselves. This movement forms part of the overarching dynamic of different stakeholders trying to gain control over the direction of change in Hackney and the city as a whole.

As they run, drop, and get up again, from one end of a basketball court to the other, these bodies are set within wider discourses of risk and order, but rather than acquiesce, they attempt to shape themselves into a mold of their choosing. In interviews with his teammates and coach, we see that their desire for mobility encapsulates both negative and positive drivers: the former, “to *not* be a stereotype” in their representation of themselves as orderly and disciplined. Rather than dysfunction, there are drills and collaboration. For the latter, positive drivers, it is to stand out, to “represent yourself” rather than have others do it for you, “presenting another image of Hackney” and by extension of themselves while aware of the judgment of others. As counterweight to Tyrell’s reflection on the need to “fit in”, Michael’s narrative supports arguments that there is in fact a dual process at play, that is, the need to belong but also to feel different. Playing basketball becomes a means of standing out from the crowd of football-playing friends, being special but within the security of a team.

Michael’s love of basketball, influenced by time spent on holiday in the USA, highlights that place cannot be studied in isolation. Moving across boundaries, local, national, and international, connections are imagined to other places. Their movement, at times caught on a shaking personal flip cam as well as the professional camera, shows the mutability of home and maps stretched by experience and autonomy. Borders between neighboring boroughs, such as Tower Hamlets, are fluid as the friends and familiarity that demarcate home ignore local authority boundaries. But this mobility can go further as Shekeila’s film highlights, destabilizing ideas about where the boundaries between public and private lie.

2.5 Hackney, Space and Me (Shekeila’s Film)

Hi, my name is Shekeila, I am 17 years old and I live in Hackney. I have lived in Hackney for all of my life and honestly would not change that for the world. I wanted to take part in the Creating Hackney as Home project because the opportunity to learn how to make a film

and do research appealed to me a great deal. To me, Hackney is very important. The borough holds many memories for me and it is somewhat a part of me, and I hope you understand that from my film. (Shekeila)

Shekeila traces her journeys through the city, connecting her mental maps with the routes she chooses to wander, reifying place in the process: “Born in east, raised in north, work in west, and study in south. People ask what does Hackney mean to me. It’s not just my home. It’s a part of me”. Her style is more reflective, quiet, with minimal voice-over accompanying images and soundtrack, using at times fast film and handheld camera to create an effect of intimacy (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJ4T0o9R7T4>). Traveling by foot and bus, navigating with a sense of “freedom”, she roams aimlessly: from walled gardens to the central market and back to Broadway; along the canal with its graffiti, flowers, and reflection of the city in the murky water; through the regenerated Gillett Square and past black, white, and Jewish residents. Open spaces become places to think and to escape and at times are “even better at night”, belying the sense of risk that comes with darkness. This mobility is part of a geography of routine, repetitious activity and routes that generate the sense of security that comes with familiarity.

As Shekeila moves through Hackney, her reflections challenge any easy dichotomy between public and private. Instead, there is ambiguity as the boundaries between the two become porous. Work now takes place in the home or the privately owned public cafés of Broadway Market, while the commercialization of public space not only restricts its use for young people but also impacts on the definition of private. Shekeila utilizes this leakage for her own ends, using the public spaces of Hackney as an intimate space for private reflection. However, this reworking of the functions of public and private is at times a necessity for some young people when housing becomes tenuous as a result of eviction, requiring the sharing of rooms and couches. Public space has become a place to regain some privacy outside Hackney’s overcrowded housing stock.

Shekeila’s film also highlights the importance of disposition in any analysis of the relationship between young people and place. She walks against the flow of the crowd coming out of Hackney Central overground station, deliberately choosing to cross the city everyday to study in south London, to “get away from the normal”, to force herself to not fit in. She feels discomfort at times but this enhances the pleasure of return: “It’s good to leave, to get away from the normal but a relief to come home”.

3 Entangling Polysemy

In these intimate portraits of not only Hackney but themselves, the films demonstrate the capacity of young people to formulate polysemous discourses in the process of claiming a place-based sense of home and belonging. Individually they generated a subjective imagination of place, utilizing spatial and temporal engagement in the construction of the films and their accompanying text, with their own

narratives and at times an explicit agenda as seen from their profiles. Matthew and Tyrell's films in particular have a didactic approach in trying to highlight to audiences the impact of gentrification and stereotyping, respectively. Others, such as Monét and Shekeila's work, are more reflective, gently leading the viewer on a journey through the built environment or through a process of growing up and out of space. Tyrell and Shekeila's representation of Broadway Market illustrates how different voices can create place in different ways and from different perspectives.

However, while each of the films provides a singular perspective on Hackney, together they constitute a place through threads of shared experience. This is an iterative representation that provides an understanding of the nature of placemaking and the politics of representation that underpin it. The films evoke the multisensory and material practices that constitute Hackney's homelike nature and invoke a strong sense of place in the process of weaving together sites of pleasure, belonging, comfort, and discomfort. Citing Pink's (2008, p. 12) notion of "sensorial engagement" that entails "not just looking, but feeling or imagining the ground underfoot", their choice of footage, archival images, voice-over, and interviews and the use of devices such as temporal and spatial manipulation all attempt to reproduce the sensory experience of growing up in this locality. As a result, Hackney becomes a place of historic industry, contemporary grime, social inequality, comfort and homeliness, difference and fitting in, love and anxiety. Their work depicts the juxtapositions of an urban context in flux, noting the discomfort that can come with change but that this discomfort can also at times be deliberately sought.

These accounts challenge the discursive landscape that bifurcates Hackney into past dysfunction that future gentrification will resolve through the removal of certain buildings, certain behaviors, and certain youth from public space (see Kennelly and Watt 2011; Lees 2003; Garbin and Millington 2012 for their examples in London, Portland, and Paris, respectively). Gentrification in this sense is posed as "cleansing, beneficial, and city-serving" (Wilson and Grammenos 2005, p. 297), designing out any perceived disruptive presence. The films, however, present a counter-narrative that challenges this notion that young people are inherently disorderly. In reality, Hackney is something much more complex, requiring a jumble of multiple stories and multiple meanings. While each film uses a range of techniques to focus on a discrete theme, taken together they form a representation of place that is more than the sum of their parts. This entangled perspective provides a position from which this place might be understood and even experienced vicariously given the power of the visual to generate physical and emotional empathy (Pink 2008).

There are particular threads that pull throughout the films in order to create this sense of entanglement, including contradiction, the synchronicity of fitting in, narratives of loss, and the desire for mobility, both physical and social. Taking the first thread, contradiction is clearly seen in the contrast of old and new buildings alongside which Matthew juxtaposes his feelings of pleasure and regret. His choice of imagery and selection of interviews reflects a council striving to balance the tensions of change: its need for investment and social cohesion. Tyrell highlights a

point of contestation in his contrasting of Whiston Road and Broadway Market. Monét and Shekeila address the disjunctions in space provision for young people, whether it is the need to refind home after turning 16 or the need to find privacy within public space.

Working against the centrifugal forces of contradiction is the rhythmic synchronicity of “fitting in” that holds together their sense of belonging and home amidst complexity and change. From Michael’s drills and the discipline of teamwork to Tyrell’s explicit discussion of local fashion demarcating spaces of belonging, there is evidence for the centrality of synchronicity in ordering social life and subjectivity. However, Shekeila’s film is a reminder that there is always the capacity to move against the crowd, to be willing to accept the discomfort of dissonance. Just as the built environment can hold contradictions so it is not unusual for young people to hold contrasting positions. Matthew may question the rationale and impact for gentrification in his film, but he reflects afterward that he would still like to live in one of the new apartments on Dalston Square. In his film, Tyrell may talk of Whiston Road as a place where it is possible to wear what he wants, but later conversations revealed he has also had to struggle with the opprobrium of some of his peers who felt his appearance was no longer “fitting in”. The seemingly simple act of dressing to fit in with a crowd or a subjective sense of self highlighted Tyrell’s complicated relationship with his contradictory neighborhood. As with Michael, he straddles the desire to both belong and be different, a dual tension that marks everyday practices and performances depending on the space they find themselves in, for example, Whiston Road or Broadway Market.

With the dissonance of this process comes a sense of loss that also entangled the films: explicitly the loss of that which makes Hackney home. The familiar memories, the ability to “move along together”, or what Wessendorf (2013) has referred to as the “ethos of mixing” that marks social encounters, are the characteristics that appear in danger of being lost. Contributing to this sense of loss is declining security of tenure under conditions of displacement and changes to government policy relating to social housing and welfare. This is a narrative absent from revanchist representations of beneficial redevelopment but also evidence of the power against which forms of cultural production such as the CHAsH project have limited impact. The movement of residents is made invisible as people imagine a future for Hackney without their presence in it, squeezed out by new compact apartment blocks that contain less affordable housing and family-sized homes as well as new urban landscapes that generate affective displacement (e.g., Vyas 2014; Butcher and Dickens [forthcoming](#)).

Yet the films demonstrate that young people can still develop different imaginaries of their lives in the city, including an ambiguous relationship with gentrification associated with a desire for social mobility. As Crane (2000), Butcher (2011), and Hörschelmann and van Blerk (2011) have noted, young people have the capacity to manage processes of change through adapting both their sense of self and their built environment. Tyrell molds his appearance and Monét creates spaces for play, while Shekeila reappropriates the public for private reflection. Not without conflict or a sense of loss, yet through everyday practices that circumscribe

home they have the capacity to navigate change and make space, reimagining a place for themselves within it.

Therefore, alongside the thread of loss, there is a reflection on mobility embedded in the films as they come to represent the motion of bodies within the contestation of place (Skelton and Gough 2013; Jackson 2012; Butcher 2011; Barker et al. 2009). This is not just the physical mobility of journeys through Hackney's public spaces, negotiating access and intercultural interactions along the way, but social mobility and aspiration. This physical and social movement is in tandem with the mobility of the city itself. The city as solid is an illusion. It cracks and dissolves and is rebuilt. Its populations move out and in again, from the inner city to suburbia back to the inner city, breathing in and out, space made and remade.

This mobility stems from and engenders feelings of autonomy and independence, "freedom" as Shekeila puts it, as they find their own niches and carve out their own sense of home. Yet while the films capture this sense of, or desire for, mobility, it is counterbalanced at times by centripetal weights. The dynamics of how a place like home is made and ruptured, and the capacity of young people to be involved in that process, are dependent on the strength of ties to hegemonic discourses that also embed them in place. In other words, their visual interrogation of home not only generated discourses of belonging but simultaneously not belonging, highlighting processes of exclusion such as judgment and economic limitations in the process. Definitions of what is permissible or not in particular spaces and who can access that space are demarcated by social categories including age and other people's imagination of the disorder and risks that young people face and/or generate (Hörschelmann and van Blerk 2011). Michael's play, in the bounds of a basketball court, is acceptable. Monét's use of interstitial spaces around her estate (rooftops, empty decks, corridors marked by signs that state "no ball games" and "no children") is not.

4 Conclusion

In producing their own urban imaginaries, the films enabled a visualisation of the extent to which understandings of the city are reliant on particular relational understandings of age, inflected with class, gender, and ethnicity, challenging unitary placemaking reinforced in local authority and media discourse. The filmmakers were consistently sensitive in preliminary discussions to media depictions of young people, including television series such as *Top Boy* (2011, 2013, a UK television series based in east London featuring the story of a young black man's climb to the top of a drug syndicate) and news coverage of the area in which they felt both they and Hackney were judged negatively. More recently, the media landscape has accumulated graphic designs and billboards of new apartment complexes branded as "luxury", "contemporary", and chic "inner city living", with names such as "Mettle & Poise".

However, while it was a specific aim of the CHAsH project to facilitate the production of films to counter these mainstream images, allowing the filmmakers to

devise how they would like to be seen, the use of visual methods to explore the polysemy of placemaking has its limitations. It is acknowledged that the films are a snapshot in time (made over the summer of 2013), allowing for the possibility that the position of the filmmakers will change. One PRA, for example, felt they would have made their film differently if they could do it again. The imagination of home therefore consists of ways of seeing that must be allowed to shift over time.

Additionally, this chapter has not addressed the role of the research team. While trying to remain invisible, two senior researchers and a professional filmmaker (Melissa, Luke, and Denise, 35–48 years) were always lurking in the background. The experience of the senior filmmaker in particular was invaluable and by necessity had to hold the films within particular constraints (for reasons of budget and technical realities). There is then an inevitable co-constitution of place within the team, of which this chapter is part as an interpretation of the visual via text through the author's own analysis and experience of working with the filmmakers over the course of a year, as well as being a resident of Hackney herself.

A further act of interpretation would be that of the audience. The films have been screened for a general public, for youth workers and youth groups, and for local policy makers. It is part of the power of the visual in that it is a portable, vernacular artifact for use by others. But while the films may inform how an audience could imagine the lives of the filmmakers, they do not do so unproblematically (see Dickens and Butcher [forthcoming](#)). For the most part, the viewer is left with space to imagine this place called Hackney for themselves, overlaid by their own cultural filters and ways of seeing.

Unlike Pink (2008), who maintains '(audio)' in parenthesis, the audio is as important as the visual in the imagination of home in the CHASh project. Dialogue, interviews, background noise, and the choice of soundtrack (not chosen by the filmmakers) contextualises the images. And just as there is a place for sound, so too is there a need for supporting methods. While the films give insight into processes of change in Hackney and how this has impacted on five young people in the locality, in-depth ethnography and ongoing discussion supported the visual production. To this end, the films were just one part of a wider research project that enabled a deeper insight into the formation and maintenance of home and belonging in a rapidly transforming built environment.

With these caveats and supporting data, it can still be argued that the films, individually and as a whole, created a polysemous sense of place centered on the exploration of a home textured by material practice, private thoughts, processes of dissonance, and points of care. In this way, visual methods contain the potential for young people to reimagine the city and a place for themselves in it. Yet they also capture the dilemma of home being at once subjective and in process, correlating with identities that may be multiple, reflexive, and in flux but also needing to be embedded in place(s). Therefore, visualizing a place like home can generate diverse representations, but it is also a means to navigate subjectivity and encounter in complex, transnational spaces such as Hackney.

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Abstract

This chapter details how parkour can be used as a lens to renegotiate the debates about activism and young people. It argues that parkour is *childlike*, not because it is undertaken by children and young adults but because it demands a more youthful “state of mind” that inculcates a subversive politics of the urban. Such a view foregrounds emancipatory, “childlike” agency of the subculture of parkour, rather than the spectacular “youthful” corporeality that it has become synonymous with. This chapter argues that parkour offers a “way in” to urban activism, not through a direct engagement with political or anti-hegemonic activities or reactive protest against the forces of neoliberal capitalism but through a “softer politics” of rediscovering the urban environment around their own beliefs, expressions, and desires. By engaging in parkour, people are moving away from cultural provisioning of the modern global creative city that is too often prescribed and formulaic and instead participating in a process of urban citizenship that is allowing them to discover the urban and all the

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experiences it has to offer for themselves. It is this process that characterizes the “childlike” characteristics of parkour.

Keywords

Parkour • Activism • Young people • Subcultures

1 Introduction

The academic literature on parkour has proliferated in the last few years, with a multitude of theoretical inferences (Daskalaki et al. 2008; Mould 2009; Atkinson 2009; Ameen and Tani 2012a; Sharpe 2013; Kidder 2013) and empirical observations (Ameen and Tani 2012b; Kidder 2012; Lamb 2014). Much of the literature has focused on the themes of embodiment and its relationship with the city. The contributions have brought parkour to the attention of a wide academic (and nonacademic) audience, and it has aided significantly in the rich and varied discussions in which parkour can affect positive change in people’s lives and the way they perceive and/or construct urban space. Given its relative novelty (a crude search on online databases shows that the first mention of parkour comes in 2003, and is restricted to niche conference papers (Gaye et al., 2003) and Rolling Stone Magazine (Smith, 2003)), there is still a great deal of scope for the advancement of parkour as a means of social scientific inquiry; particularly its relationship to the literature on the geographies of children and young people, given that the vast majority of its participants fall into that category. However, the literature so far has generally represented the practices of traceurs as they go about conducting parkour (often in and on the urban terrain), rather than empirically investigating or theorizing their cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, saving recognition that they tend to be generally white, middle class, young, and male (Atkinson 2009; cf. Kidder 2013). Given the overtly “playful” aesthetics espoused by parkour and its preponderance to be characterized as having a “youthful” mind-set (i.e., extolling childlike behavior Angel 2014; Ameen and Tani 2012b), then there is a danger of uncritically adopting the view that to be playful in the city (and all the political and emancipatory affectivities that such behavior engenders) requires occupying normalizing gendered ground (i.e., to be male, physically able, and to be of the “young-adult” age bracket).

Moreover, such identity normalization is pervasive through parkour literature (and often in the communities themselves) and is therefore an important characteristic to highlight as it can skew the gendering of urban spatiality that is constituted by its practice. The spectacular movement (which is often learned methodically, painfully, and emotionally (Saville 2008)) is the fundamental property which has catalyzed the appropriation of parkour by capitalistic tendencies (Daskalaki and Mould 2013). However, given that such movement is most frequently performed by young, mesomorphic, and able-bodied men, the practice is associated with (and mediated by) “young adults” who will have the corporeal propensity for the intense performative dimension. Such assumptions however mask more complex identity

issues within the subculture of parkour which has seen a rapid increase in participation, particularly among the very young, females, and the disabled (Edwardes 2009; Angel 2011). Such participation is challenging the masculine, mesomorphic, and aged bias and brings to light new ways of conceptualizing the “youthfulness” of parkour. Indeed, if we think of age relationally (as Hopkins and Pain 2007 argue), then the very nature of parkour as a pastime for “young adults” (and all the corporeal and performative biases therein imbued) can be unpacked.

This chapter will therefore contribute to the ever-burgeoning literature on parkour by arguing that it is *childlike*, not because it is undertaken by children and young adults (although of course these are the predominant participants) but because it demands a more youthful “state of mind” that is politically subversive, particularly in relation to the city. If parkour is viewed in this light, then its more emancipatory, “childlike” agency comes to the fore, rather than its spectacular “youthful” corporeality. By analyzing the parkour oeuvre thus far and relating it to the literatures of the geographies of young people, this chapter will tease out the (sometimes conflicting) relationalities and posit a more nuanced connection between parkour and its urban political dimensions. Specifically, the chapter will do this by highlighting parkour as a “way in” to urban activism, not through a direct engagement with political or anti-hegemonic activities or reactive protest against the forces of neoliberal capitalism (as is the case with other urban subversive activities (Mould 2015)) but through a “softer politics” (Amin 2008) of rediscovering the urban environment around their own beliefs, expressions, and desires. By engaging in parkour, people are moving away from the spoon-fed cultural provisioning of the modern global creative city and participating in a process of urban citizenry that is allowing them to discover the urban and all the experiences it has to offer for themselves, and it is this process that characterizes parkour as “childlike.” The chapter will argue this in four parts. The first will analyze the parkour literature thus far, highlighting how it can (very loosely) be categorized into two (overlapping) areas of theoretical discussion, namely, the body and the city. Second, the chapter will highlight the relevant literature on the geographies of children and young people. Third, it will show how parkour is being institutionalized and to realize its more “youthful” subjectivities, and then we need to realize its ludic “tacticalness.” The fourth section will postulate that parkour allows everybody a chance to engage in urban politics via their own agency and to experience childlike play in the city.

2 Bodies and the City: A Review of the Parkour Literature

Whether it’s on the cinema screen, in computer games, television advertisements, purpose-built parks, or people repeatedly jumping on and over walls in urban areas around the city, parkour can be seen in an increasing variety of media, virtual and physical places. As Edwardes (2009, p. 8) has argued however:

In one sense, parkour has existed for as long as man [sic] has either moved out of necessity, for enjoyment, or for practice. It exists as the basis for all human movement, from the play of children to the lifestyles of tribal cultures and from the discipline of the traditional martial arts to the methodology of modern athletics.

However, since 2003, parkour has rapidly entered into the popular consciousness, aided by its spectacular corporeality. Through two of its main protagonists in the early years of the twenty-first century, David Belle and Sebastian Foucan, parkour became a globally recognized performance sport/art/practice/pastime/philosophy. In the UK, it entered the public gaze through two high-profile television appearances, a BBC ident featuring David Belle called *Rush Hour* (2003) and a Channel Four documentary, *Jump London* (2003) featuring Sebastian Foucan. From there, major films (such as *Banlieue 13* (2004), *Casino Royale* (2006), and *Die Hard 4.0* (2007)) and computer games (*Assassin's Creed* (2007), *Grand Theft Auto 4* (2008), *Mirror's Edge* (2009), and many, many more since) have utilized the spectacular movement of traceurs to animate their products; parkour institutions have been set up in order to teach it to anybody who wants to learn, and parkour "parks" have been built in many cities across the world where people can go and practice their parkour skills. So in little over two decades, parkour has gone from being a pastime carried out by a group of French school friends to an internationally recognized, commercially viable activity.

In this short space of time, the "subculture" of parkour has also engendered a great deal of academic debate (Daskalaki and Mould 2013). One theme that pervades much of the literature emanating from the more established, recognized, and vocal traceurs will talk of the Eastern and quasi-spiritual philosophies that pervade the practice, and many of the earlier iconic short films would have Eastern martial arts, ancient Japanese, or Buddhist aesthetic referents (Mould 2009). However, in contrast to this, others (participants, observers, and researchers alike) have articulated the innate reactionary ethos of parkour, with Daskalaki et al. (2008, p. 61) claiming that parkour is "a form of 'urban activism' that poses a challenge to fixed, sterile organisational behaviour, rigid models and ready-made answers." Such a reactionary ethos of parkour is commensurable with flâneurism. Drawing on the work of Benjamin (1999) and Atkinson (2009, p. 174), for example, suggests that traceurs "deliberately call attention to the late modern city's spatial organization and its environmentally sterile, commercial policing," thereby embodying similar urban critiques that characterized the flâneur. Fuggle (2008, p. 205) similarly argued that parkour has subversive qualities that "challenges and subverts our daily experience of the city and city life." Traceurs, through their spectacular movement across the city, are reacting against the confinement of their lived experiences, what social theorists often articulate as the "smoothing" out of otherwise striated, constricted, and power-laden space (Ortuzar 2009).

To say that one of these two different ideas (serene rediscovery and reactionary activism) dominates the "philosophy" of parkour would be to oversimplify matters; parkour can be a simultaneous mix of the two yet contains even more political characteristics. The complexities of the practice and the infused ideologies of Eastern Zen-like philosophies often espoused by traceurs mean the reactionary

ethos can be somewhat deadened by a more serene “rediscovery” of the city over time (Mould 2009). Another research has talked of how parkour is less reactionary and instead “loosens” public space (Ameel and Tani 2012a) and that traceurs have “parkour eyes.” This is when “traceurs notice spaces and details in the environment that are easily missed by other urban dwellers. They see walls, fences, rails, stairs and benches as opportunities that they can use in a creative and playful way” (Ameel and Tani 2012b, p. 169). It is perhaps this reappropriation of the urban environment (subversively or otherwise) that is a common theme across much of the parkour literature, and it is a fundamental aspect in its function as a means of urban politics. By realizing alternative functions of particular urban objects (see Lamb 2014), there is very much a consensus within the parkour literature that it has an emancipatory potential from the confinement of existing urban power structures, however covert, tacit, and “soft” this emancipation may be.

From a more affective perspective, given the extreme corporeality that parkour mediates, the emotional engagement with it (particularly that of fear) is always highly prominent. Fear, as has been contextualized in related literature on the geographies of children and young people, is often seen as something to be avoided (Nayak 2003) or as something that is materialized in the child’s environment (Pain 2006). However, with parkour fear is a fundamental part of the practice (Saville 2008). The high risk of physical (and emotional) injury associated with the practice means that fear as an emotion is directly associated with the corporeality and part of the embodiment of parkour. Rejecting a Cartesian dualism of mind/body, parkour inculcates a phenomenological body-mind nexus. Hence, being “fearful” of not making that jump or injuring yourself while rolling has consequences of how it is practiced, moreover how it *looks*. It is of little surprise then that one of the earlier offerings from academia came from Saville (2008) that discussed the role of fear in parkour and its role in embodiment. Saville argued that far from being the “fearless” endeavor that was purported by mainstream media representations of parkour, fear was a fundamental emotion to its practice. The intricate, faithful, and meticulous practice of parkour involved the utilization of fear as something that is not “static, singular or dishearteningly negative” but something which takes “on an array of different textures and colours, many of which were not as unpleasant as has hitherto been theorised” (Saville 2008, p. 910). He notes how fear engenders physical attributes (e.g., sweaty palms) but draws the body toward danger rather than away from it. The exploration of fear as an affective, nonrepresentational aspect of parkour was a catalyst for further research into its embodied (physical and emotional) nature. For example, Sharpe (2013) details how “fear can be incorporated into habituated practices, which it animates rather than paralyzes” (Sharpe 2013, p. 170). He goes on to theoretically explore how the embodiment of parkour is intricately embroiled with its habitual nature, and that fear plays a fundamental part in that habituation and the eventual complex articulation of parkour’s “grace.” In other words, “the vertigo of bodies, the cheating of gravity, the mastery of mobility, and the harnessing of speed all steer a fine line between grace and fear and grace and awkwardness” (Sharpe 2013, p. 171).

The intense relationship between emotion (in particular fear, but also triumph, anxiety, and so on) and the physical embodiment of parkour also extends to the materiality of where parkour is practiced. While starting off in the woodland areas around Paris, parkour is first and foremost recognized as an urban activity. Unlike other “urban subcultures” that use a nonhuman intermediary between themselves and the architecture of the city (i.e., skateboarders have a board and wheels between them and the concrete; trial riders have a bike), parkour is an intense connection between the body (and maybe a layer of clothing) and the city. The physical connection with the city is one that Chow (2010, p. 150) argues, revealing hidden realities of the urban experience:

Participation in these movements, in dialogue with the built environment, moves beyond the imaginary/spectacular – in touching the cold concrete, jumping and holding onto an impossibly high wall, the traceur gains a ‘real’ awareness of the oppressiveness of the space.

The “oppressiveness” of the city is realized through an unadulterated physical encounter with it. The urban terrain that is most practiced upon is usually hard, rectilinear concrete forms which espouses a physical, emotional, and mental oppressiveness. The body therefore can uncover such realities but can also imbue within them further materialities and intensify the human-urban nexuses. Drawing upon the work of Elizabeth Grosz (2001) and Lamb (2014) argues that the architecture of the city is the articulation of our being in the city. And so through parkour, traceurs are writing (and rewriting) urban experiences, inscribing a palimpsest of meanings into the city by continually acting upon it.

To date then, the parkour literature has articulated its contested urban embodied politics. While some have emphasized its reactionary and subversive nature, others have countered this by suggesting that such transgression is only momentary, with parkour now contributing to urban consumerist tendencies rather than reacting to it. Other facets of the literature contribute by discussing the articulation of the political ideologies of parkour as a wider contextualization of its more visceral emotionally embodied values. What is clear though throughout the academic literature is that almost exclusively, the majority of the studied subjects (via interviews or auto-ethnographies) are young, able-bodied men, with little exploration of marginalized groups (cf. Angel 2011). One exception to this is Kidder (2013) who has expressively articulated the way in which parkour masculinizes the urban environment, arguing that it “allows for the accomplishment of masculinity” (Kidder 2013, p. 2) and can “marginalize certain people, even while offering transgressive potential to others” (ibid., p. 4). He goes on to argue that through parkour, the city becomes “a space for symbolically asserting the male body in action” (ibid., p. 16) and that through risk and dangerous acts, traceurs are asserting a masculine ethos upon the subversion and reappropriation of the urban environment. Such assertions risk mirroring the view of hegemonic structures that parkour is eulogized as resisting. Therefore, to mitigate against this, the overt masculinity of parkour then requires further denunciation and critique, if its activist, reactionary, and above all, playful and “youthful” ethos are to be further recognized and qualified.

Such playfulness though, while explicitly talked about in reference to parkour, has a more concretized link with the literature of the geographies of children and young people. Therefore, in order to espouse the playfulness of parkour as something that is not confined to normalized identities (i.e., to young, able-bodied men), then we must first excavate the relevant literatures that relate the geographies of young people to the emancipatory politics of parkour.

3 Geographies of Childhood Politics

Paralleling chronologically the growth of the parkour literature, the scholarly work focusing on the geographies of children and young people has engaged more with politics and thinking about children politically (Philo and Smith 2003; Kallio and Häkli 2013). The main thrust of these debates has been to articulate the “political lives of children beyond adult-constructed ideas of the rational liberal subject” (Mitchell and Elwood 2012, p. 801), thereby recognizing the agency of children within broader spatial politics. However, there has been some debate as to what constitutes politics in the young, with Kallio and Häkli (2013, pp. 9–10) arguing that “youthful political action may thus take all kinds of forms and mobilise gradually anywhere. Yet not all children and young people act politically in all kinds of ways, and there is notable variation to their politics vis-a-vis the situation.” Such a distinction mirrors the broader debates about what constitutes “the political” (see Wilson and Swyngedouw 2014) and has influenced how scholars have sought to theorize political action in children and young people. Some have suggested that children are “citizens in waiting” and only able to contribute politically once they have “reached the age of reason” (Arneil 2002, p. 70). Young people therefore can be empowered to partake in a process of societal, economic, developmental, and/or cultural change but in and of themselves do not espouse any politics. It is only by engaging in a political system outside their own making do they become political subjects. For example, in researching how children used language as resistance in Palestine, Habashi (2008, p. 279) found that children “inherited the political discourse not only from the Palestinian community but also from global interaction and the Israeli oppression.” The children being studied here therefore took on the political linguistic characteristics of the wider geopolitical context of the Arab-Israeli conflict to articulate their resistive activities. In order to be political, they had to engage with the prevailing language of conflict. Such a viewpoint reflects a broader line of argument within the literature that sees children as political only when they engage in existing political structures and narratives, perhaps those that can be seen as constituting “adult” politics or adulthood more generally. Such a view is contrasted against a constructed “childhood” (see Kraftl 2006) which only serves to depoliticize children by labeling them as not adults, and therefore not in the political realm. Such a view, when aligned with the literature on parkour, would serve to reduce its politics and see it confined to the notion of “childhood.” Indeed, as Horton and Kraftl (2006) have noted with the title of their paper, politics is not always about growing up but also about going on.

So, other schools of thought within the geographies of children and young people have countered such a view and see children's actions as political in their own right precisely because they eschew the centralizing and normalizing forces that "adulthood" enforces upon them. Wood (2012, p. 344) argues "that conventional binaries which classify Politics/politics (Formal/informal; Public/private; Macro/micro) obscure the liminal position which young people occupy at the interstitial intersection of these extremes." Such political actions are often "less seen" but are no less instrumental in changing the lives of those involved in relation to their social and spatial contexts. Skelton (2010) talks of children occupying a "liminal" space between engrained institutional Politics (with a capital "P") and more everyday politics (with a small "p"), and such liminality "enables them to occupy two *Political/political* spaces at the same time" (ibid., p. 148, original emphasis). Such a viewpoint, when taken in the context of thinking about parkour, is more useful as it encourages us to think of children's activity as overtly political because of its denormalizing qualities. Moreover, the "unsocialized" character of children and their reaction to adult-centered spatial and social codes of conduct are often posited as un-normalizing or even subversive behavior (although such actions themselves are however being normalized as "childhood" (Kraftl 2006)). Therefore, to be "childlike" in behavior is an act of becoming that is somewhere in between the identifiable and articulable "states" of adulthood and childhood (Skelton 2010; Wood 2012). To be *childlike* then, as one of the characteristics given to parkour, is to break from centralizing forces of socialization and conformity (both from the adult and the child) and to participate in activities that question, critique, and go against such behavior.

Parkour therefore can be viewed as very much aligned with such a childlike epistemology as it involves a break from using the city "normally." Another useful line of inquiry to unpack such normalization, I argue, is to emphasize its "youthful" tendencies and its recalibration as "play." Such an ideology aligns with the liminality of children's politics and helps us to better articulate the "youthfulness" of parkour. Indeed, as the numbers of people (and their diversity) who partake in parkour continue to grow, more purpose-built parkour sites have been developed so younger people can train in a safer environment than urban public space. Such "institutionalization" of parkour has many observable benefits, but by removing it from the urban realm, creating structures and official programs arguably necessitates a *reduction* in the politics of parkour. In the following section therefore, I want to argue that by focusing on playfulness in parkour, we can rediscover its emancipatory (perhaps even resistive) qualities, through a questioning of how parkour's critical edge has been redacted somewhat by these parkour "parks." Moreover, by injecting playfulness into the politics of parkour, its participants are hence given a "childlike" agency to affect change in their environment.

4 Playing at "Parkour" or Playing in "Our Park?"

In order to deconstruct the potentially deleteriousness of parkour parks on its playful politics, we need to briefly understand what we mean by play. The term can take on a number of different meanings depending upon its usage: to play football, to play the

drums, playing the game, to get played, seeing a play, playing at politics, child's play, a play on words, "stop playing with my emotions," "I was only playing," and so on. There is a sense that playing can either be used to indicate activities that are based on particular rules or systems (like playing a game, sport, or an instrument) or that playing can somehow go against a system (playing around), being unpredictable, creative, and perhaps even subversive within or to an existing set of prescribed guidelines. Additionally, play is often seen to be the purview of children and young people. In the antithesis of work-life, play is something that is done by those as yet unsocialized (Denzin 1977). Once we "grow up" and start to work for and within a capitalistic (or even adult) system, we compartmentalize playing as being *outside* that system. Such an approach however belies how instances of "play" can occur constantly within the everyday. It is perhaps pertinent to talk of the work of De Certeau (1984) here, as he has theorized most readily how the practices of the everyday contain instances of playful activity. He distinguishes between what he calls "strategies" and "tactics." Strategies contain, compartmentalize, and conduct the rules of the game; they "assume a place that can be circumscribed" (1984, p. xix) or a "place that can be delimited as its own" (1984, p. 36). De Certeau offers some examples of such strategies, including a business, an army, a scientific institution, and a city. Tactics, he argues, are those instances of incursion into a strategy. The tactic insinuates itself into the other's place but never takes it over fully. "Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities'" (De Certeau 1984, p. xix). While De Certeau does not use the language of play, we can see epistemological commensurability if we understand play as Schechner (1993, p. 42) does as "the on-going, underlying process of off-balancing, loosening, bending, twisting, reconfiguring, and transforming the permeating, eruptive/disruptive energy and mood below, behind and to the side of focused attention."

Tactics are "guileful ruse[s]" (De Certeau 1984, p. 37), in that they "play" with the established order of things. Lacking the ossified resistive stance of more subversive anti-hegemonic ontologies such as anarchism, tactics subvert from within, manipulate, and change strategic power. One particular example of a tactic De Certeau offers is "la perruque," which "is the worker's own work disguised as work for his [sic] employer" (ibid., p. 25). Different to stealing, pilfering, or absenteeism, la perruque is using office supplies for personal use or "writing a love letter on company time" (ibid.). Whatever the instance, la perruque is not claiming a space within the strategy but rather claiming time (and therefore wasting time for the employer). He suggests that la perruque is "becoming more and more general" (ibid.) and can be considered part of the everyday nature of things. There are many other instances of "being tactical" that could be offered, and indeed Wood (2012) aligns De Certeau's conception of tactics with the liminality of childhood politics as discussed in the previous section. She argues that:

Focussing on young people's politics in liminal spaces provides a chance to conceptualise moments . . . as tactics which young people employ to enact change, subvert or manipulate a situation, and are intrinsically concerned with shaping the society we want to live in. (Wood 2012, p. 344)

Performing parkour is highly applicable to such a view given that it is playfully interactive with the city and not as reactionary as other urban subversive activity (Mould 2015). So far from being the sole purview of children, or something to do outside of work, playing can be seen to be occurring in the everyday, as it has the effect of disrupting (however small) the established order of strategies. Woodyer (2012, p. 322) has comprehensively outlined this by arguing, “By liberating playing from the preserve of children, we are better placed to address its relations to the everyday, its inwardly oriented politics and its more-than-rational/representational feature.” Moreover, being tactical is infiltrating the “strategy” of the imposed adulthood/childhood dichotomy (Krafft 2006). Drawing from Lacanian psychoanalysis, we can say that the (continuing) socialization of children into adults by societal forces (including the family, the city, religion, capitalism, and so on) can also be seen as a strategic operation – the circumscription of a set of acceptable socialized human characteristics and behaviors (usually conformity, wealth generation, and productivity). Therefore, the very act of being playful, of subverting and changing pre-given authoritarian or even dogmatic “rules” (in a tactical way), is essentially enacting childlike subjectivities. Such subjectivities can be affective, in that they inculcate a creative curiosity, a constant search for how the strategy can be altered. But also, it can be corporeal, particularly with parkour as the movement can be seen to be childlike: jumping, rolling, climbing, and so on.

Parkour entails having almost a “naïve imagination” that combines “physical maturity with disciplined practice” (Ameel and Tani 2012a, p. 18). It is unsurprising that much of the literature equates parkour as being a “playful” act (see Saville 2008; Mould 2009; Atkinson 2009). Indeed as has been noted by Ameel and Tani (2012a, p. 21) during their research, parkour looks “bewildering” to onlookers:

One of the prime causes of bewilderment. . . was the playful element in parkour and the fact that the playful behaviour was acted out in public by adults and teenagers rather than by children. To the bewilderment of onlookers, traceurs tend to create a “ludic” city.

Within the context of the city, parkour is playful in that it transforms the built environment, however briefly, from a place of work, consumption, and capitalistic accumulation into an arena for play, experimentation, and body-architecture improvisation, fuelling the ludicity of the city. Traceurs deliberately use the urban environment as their playground, both public and private spaces. The playfulness of parkour therefore further engenders it with youthful subjectivities, insofar as it necessarily entails an “unsocialized” (or un-grown up) state of mind, as well as a childlike “ambivalence” to embodied risk (explored so articulately by Saville (2008) and others). This is why the aesthetics and corporeality of parkour gets more “appealing,” the younger the viewer is, as further noted in Ameel and Tani’s (2012a, p. 22) research:

Children often started to copy parkour moves. Teenagers remained more aloof and tended to comment on the actions they saw. Their reactions, however, were also often positive and perceived as refreshing by the traceurs. The reactions of adults ranged from encouraging comments to indifference, negative reactions and even aggressive behaviour.

And so we can say that parkour is “youthful” not because it is undertaken predominantly by young people (although this is certainly the case), but it actively encourages a continual process of childlike embodiment (physical *and* mental) through adhering to a tactical ethos in relation to the strategies of the city and adulthood.

So with this in mind, it is possible to see why purpose-built parkour “parks” are lessening the *tacticalness* of parkour. The physical architecture and layout of these environments are designed using an intricate knowledge of the technicalities of parkour as well as its philosophy of a freedom of movement. Many of the outdoor parks (such as the LEAP Park in London) also replicate the aesthetics of the urban environment (more or less) with hard concrete surfaces, metal railings, and sharp edges. Some are indoors (such as Brooklyn Beast in New York) and use crash mats, soft edges, and more “gymnasium”-style equipment. These places are formulated for people (young and old, although minimum ages are in place for some) who want to get involved in parkour and can practice it in a safe environment with training from professionals. Some of these parks charge an entrance fee and require a particular level of certification in order to use them unsupervised.

Such parks champion parkour’s inclusivity and actively encourage physical exercise and sociality and forge strong communities of practice (Wenger 1998). They have encouraged people to get engaged in parkour who would have otherwise remained “inactive” or perhaps even turned to more destructive social communities. They engender a collective “spirit” of togetherness among children and young people, something that they can claim as their own; they are “our parks” (is a phrase often iterated by those frequenting them). For this they are to be celebrated and championed as having a constructive and positive mode of effective change on the behavior, attitudes, and health of young people. These positive effects are not to be downplayed in any way. However, while they espouse healthy bodies and constructive social bonds, they are, to a greater or lesser extent, reducing the tactical nature of parkour’s playfulness. The politics of tactical incursion that parkour engenders when conducted in the urban realm are rendered less distinct in these purpose-built environments. Also, the layering of commercialism, finance, health, and safety exacerbates the diminution of not only the corporeal experience of the architecture of the city but also the “playfully” subversive politics of parkour. However progressive they are in the wider sense, there is always an underlying accusation that they are taking parkour off the streets and into an institutionalized environment, however briefly or irrelevant that may be to the people who use it. In essence then, these parkour parks could be said to be the strategy of the city taking hold of the tactic of parkour and redacting the subjectivities of social critique.

While parkour can engender a childlike mentality that aims at being tactical and playful, such subjectivities are reduced in the environment of a parkour park. In effect, they reinstate adulthood (via strategic qualities of health and safety, financialization, commercialization, and the like) and physically relocate parkour off the streets, however temporarily, thereby reducing its playful qualities. Hence these parkour parks could be said to represent those “liminal” sites of conflicting politics of young people’s activist tendencies (as articulated by Skelton 2010). On the one

hand, they further engage young people in parkour, but on the other, the childlike subjectivities of playful tacticalness are being redacted by the establishment of strategy. Parkour's "youthfulness" comes not from the fact that it is aimed at the young, but because it encourages youthful behavior in everyone, and such youthfulness is highly empowering and emancipatory. Therefore to exemplify this and to understand more readily the childlike politics of parkour, we need to return to the street.

5 Parkour as Facilitating Activism in Young People

The Vauxhall Walls is a small area in South London that is regularly frequented by traceurs (see Fig. 1) and has become one of the UK's most recognizable parkour spots for training, sociality, and also virtual dissemination.

This area was originally formulated as the communal part of the adjacent tower blocks. It was built in 1966, at a time when modernist architectural housing initiatives were being erected across London. The "garden" area that can be seen in Fig. 1 is made up of low-level concrete walls and harsh, exposed stone seating. There are also occasional concrete pillar protrusions which were, ironically, once stepping stones for children's play. Nearly half a century later, the concrete



Fig. 1 Vauxhall Walls parkour spot, South London (Source: Author's photo, 19th February, 2013)



Fig. 2 The Vauxhall Walls in use by one young man (Source: James Taylor, July 13th 2013)

rectilinear design of the 1960s has become tired, out of fashion, and neglected by the residents, the council, and other users for which it was intended. However, the relics of this place have inadvertently made for a highly architecturally appropriate place to practice parkour (or free running as it is known to the locals). It has, as many traceurs have indicated, become almost a right of passage for anyone who takes parkour seriously in London. The ideal layout is very inviting for many people starting out; it provides a location whereby people are encouraged by other users (known to them or not) and has a sociality that actively encourages “beginners,” as well as allowing more “advanced” traceurs to hone their skills. Through word of mouth, online dissemination through community forums, videos, and user-generated maps, it has become one of the more “famous” parkour spots in London and the UK. Figure 2 below shows the Vauxhall Walls in use.

The reappropriation of the walls (in this case) as a vaulting device shows how practicing parkour has a visceral tacticalness to it. By vaulting over the wall in this way, this young man is turning this neglected space into a space of playful rediscovery of urbanity.

It is however, a contested space. Haymans Point is a residential area maintained by the Vauxhall Gardens Estate Residents and Tenants Association (VGERTA) and Lambeth Council. Over the years since the traceurs/free runners have been practicing and performing here, they have been largely unwelcomed by the local residents and businesses. Signs have been put up insisting they stop (see Fig. 3)



Fig. 3 Sign marginalizing free runners at the Vauxhall Walls (Source: Author's photo, 5th August, 2014)

and online forums often tell of verbal abuse from residents. Insults have been heard from local residents, and despite the traceurs attempting to extol the virtues of parkour, they are threatened with police action (even though their practice is not illegal). Overall, the traceurs are viewed as “antisocial.”

The continued marginalization of traceurs from the site by “official” means (such as signage seen in Fig. 3 and police action) and more “informal” actions (like verbal insults and physical intimidation) has been matched by the resolve of traceurs to continue using the site. Far from being a neglected “garden” for the local residents, for the traceurs who use and engage with it, it is a place of intricate preparation, of personal and collective triumph, and of achievement and a place where individual histories were made. Their desire to continue using the site in the face of strategic marginalization articulates the political activism that is inherent in traceurs using the site. The childlike nature of parkour is in evidence because of their tactical incursion of the strategy to practice, perform, and experience the architecture of this site corporeally and emotionally.

The ability of traceurs to reappropriate this space, to realize a new function as a place to practice parkour, is also an innate political act. They are engaging in “soft” activism that is not overtly reactionary, but as Atkinson (2009, p. 174) notes, “deliberately call[s] attention to the late modern city’s spatial organization and its environmentally sterile, commercial policing” via reappropriation of the Vauxhall

Walls. They are, as the traceur in Fig. 2 demonstrates, rediscovering alternative urban subjectivities that would otherwise remain unrealized. They are finding a new function for this place that has not been designated by the official urban narrative, but rather by the subculture of parkour that is maintained through its sociality. Online distribution of videos, institutions using the site as a place for beginners to practice, online forums, stories, and anecdotes are the narratives that the traceurs who use this site are contributing to. As such, they are being tactical not within the strategy of parkour as a recognized (and highly commercialized) activity but within the strategy of the officialdom of the city, in this case made up Lambeth Council, VGERTA, the police, local residents, and so on. In the summer of 2014, this area has officially been earmarked for redevelopment into a landscaped garden (Mould 2015). After which, given the plans, it is hard to see how traceurs will continue to be able to use the site. Therefore we have seen the further marginalization of the tacticalness of parkour. It could be said to have taken the place of the Vauxhall Walls fleetingly, but it has now succumbed again to the hegemonic powers of the Global City. To paraphrase De Certeau (1984), parkour won it, but it didn't keep it.

The agency of the traceurs in this case was, however temporarily, in resisting the official city to practice parkour how they wanted to. Through being playful and tactical, they resisted the city and engaged in emancipatory politics. Their agency brought to light a new city, however fleetingly. And it is this agency that engenders a politics of playfulness to parkour. There are still of course normalizing aspects to it; an able body is required, there are overt masculine practices and aesthetics, and such biases are intrinsic to the "creation" of a subculture. The childlike nature of parkour is therefore not through a playful tacticalness with the established normativity of masculinist subcultures, rather it is realized in the playfulness with the strategy of the city. Such agency can have even more "radical" emancipatory results. Much like the young people in Palestine that Habashi (2008) wrote about, Thorpe and Ahmad (2013), through research into parkour in Gaza, have highlighted how young people have agency within a region where dominant forces of hegemony seek to suppress it. Young men in Gaza, they contend, are using parkour to engender activism and inculcate fighting for a right to the city. In their research, they highlight a particularly telling correspondence with a traceur:

We demonstrate that this land is our right and we do what we like in a place that we want, even if you have to kill us or bomb us. . . we will continue to practice our sport in any place and at any time.

(Thorpe and Ahmad 2013, p. 15)

The risk of being "killed or bombed" is certainly one which inculcates a highly subversive politics to parkour in Gaza; practicing parkour with the risk of imminent death from external forces is certainly a far more extreme set of circumstances than being told to move on by the police or suffering verbal abuse from local residents (as was the case at the Vauxhall Walls). Such continued defiance of hegemony by the traceurs in Gaza does, Thorpe and Ahmad (2013) argue, highlight their emancipatory agency. Moreover they also tie parkour's important virtual dimension to

the traceurs' ability to stay connected to a "global" parkour community while remaining reflexive to the highly volatile situation locally. So not only is parkour giving the young people of Gaza (and other parts of the Middle East) a way to claim their right to the city, it is also giving them a reason to connect, communicate, and collaborate with other like-minded individuals from across the globe. In so doing, the traceurs of Gaza are able to tell the rest of the global parkour community of their local oppression and showcase their agency in defying it. As such, we see the empowering political activism of parkour within the young people of Gaza. Thorpe and Ahmad (2013, p. 21) go on to argue that:

We should not overlook their agency, nor should we assume them to be victims, ideologues or fundamentalists. Some youth are demonstrating remarkable agency in creating sporting opportunities that cater to their own and other local children and youths' physical, social and psychological needs

So within the context of geopolitical violence, parkour has tactical agency. The youths of Gaza are eschewing their labeling as "victims, ideologues, and fundamentalists" to produce new youthful subjectivities of powerful traceurs who are critiquing the hegemonic strategies that attempt to direct them.

6 Conclusion

This brief foray into the parkour literature has shown that there are three related, yet conflicting, epistemologies. First, parkour has been debated of late as highly corporeal and embodied practice that allows for the "rediscovery" of the city through a quasi-subversive politics that is not overtly resistive but playful. Second, such playfulness inculcates childlike qualities, as it is tactical to the strategies of the city, the body, and an adulthood/childhood dichotomy. As such parkour is not necessarily the purview of the young but can be considered to encourage childlike behavior in all that partake in it. This is why parkour parks can have an unintentional effect of reducing the activist politics of parkour because they are reinforcing the strategic control of the city onto the youthful practice of parkour. Third, the childlike nature of parkour increases agency in people that realize different urban subjectivities and situations in which they can eschew attempts to label them as something else.

Therefore, we see that parkour has a rather complicated relation when it comes to thinking about young people and children. On the one hand, the increasing mediation and institutionalization of parkour can have a detrimental effect on the way in which young people can use it to express their agency. The spectacular corporeality that parkour engenders can render it "out of reach" of people starting out. Additionally, institutions offer training and build parkour parks but, as has been shown, are redacting the more visceral political agency of parkour that is seen "on the streets." On the other hand though, parkour has the ability to engender a childlike activities, one that encourages De Certeuiantacticalness, a playful

engagement with the city that questions both existing urban power structures, as well as the masculine, able-bodied, aged biases of the practice.

It is worth highlighting though that the “institutionalized” parkour parks are important because they show young people that practicing parkour is not about trying to achieve the spectacular imagery often seen online, on TV, and in films but realizing alternative possibilities of their own body and the environment around them through the intense movement that parkour entails. The original term for parkour is *l’art du placement*, the art of displacement. And this is perhaps the most appropriate term given that at its most visceral, it is “a return to a more natural way of moving and a method by which to unlock the enormous potential hidden within your anatomy and physiology” (Edwardes 2009, p. 11). Whatever that produces (be it spectacular jumps or simply being more sociable with people), parkour has an innate ability to allow people to “break free” from whatever strategies contain them. However, as this chapter has argued, by institutionalizing the practice via the building of parkour parks, by wrapping the practice in layers of bureaucracy, and by mediating and marketing it as a commercialized entity chip away at such emancipatory characteristics and reduce its political playfulness. In effect, it reduces its childlike qualities and creates more concretized childhood identities. In so doing, it creates ontologically a different kind of practice from that which was shown with the cases of the Vauxhall Walls and in Gaza. Put crudely, the politics of parkour (as opposed to parkour as political) often marginalizes the “voices” of its younger participants.

So the “youthfulness” and childlike nature of parkour come not from the overwhelming majority of participants but from realizing that it is a political act that is “childlike,” however “soft” (Amin 2008) that politics may be. There are of course issues around its identity normalizing tendencies; much of the institutionalized literature seems to unproblematically extol the virtues of pure physicality and celebrates the freedom of movement. If one however does not have this ability, if one uses a wheelchair, or if one has severe arthritis, for example, parkour, as it is currently mediated, is out of reach. It is also still a highly masculine practice, partly because of the way many urban subcultures manifest themselves and partly because as parkour has become more commercialized and institutionalized, it begins to mirror the masculinity of more mainstream corporeal and/or sporting practices. However, if we realize these biases and continue to pursue the celebration of parkour’s agency in being playful, inculcating a youthfulness that critiques *all* forms of strategic control (including gender and identity normalizations), then we can continue to fan the flames of its activist potential and admonish the attempts to control it.

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Abstract

Backyards, streets, and public spaces such as parks and playgrounds have traditionally been the play arenas of an urban childhood – the neighborhood spaces in which children seek out each other to play, explore, and socialize. While neighborhoods continue to be important sites in children's lives, in many developed countries, the freedoms that afforded children to roam unsupervised by an adult have contracted over recent decades. Heightened concerns for children's safety, especially fears relating to traffic and strangers, have triggered major shifts in parenting practices. Where children once walked and cycled to school, they are now more likely to be chauffeured by parents in cars, and, for many children, outdoor play has become an adult-dependent activity. This chapter looks at why outdoor play and other forms of independent mobility are important for children's well-being and discusses possible explanations for their

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decline. It also reports on children's use and experiences of diverse urban neighborhood environments, and parenting practices around children's mobility, drawing on data from Kids in the City, a research project conducted between 2010 and 2014 in Auckland, New Zealand.

Keywords

Neighborhoods • Play • Active travel • Independent mobility • Urban design • Parenting

1 Introduction

The most dramatic change in children's lives over recent decades has been the loss of children's freedom to play and to freely explore their own neighborhoods and cities as they mature. (Freeman and Tranter 2011, p. 19)

Children learn through interaction with their surroundings, and their experiences of people and places contribute to their physical, social, and cognitive development. For most children, their first independent forays into the world beyond home and school take place in the local neighborhood – in the streets, houses, and amenity destinations close to home. Safe places to play, socialize, and explore independently are important for children's sense of belonging, identity formation, and healthy development (Gleeson and Sipe 2006; Moore and Wong 1997; Proshansky and Gottlieb 1989).

When asked what they like or want in their neighborhood, children from many nations, rich and poor, have responded with remarkable consistency – to be able to move around their neighborhood safely, to have places to play and socialize with friends, and to feel they belong (Chawla 2002). Some responses may be more context specific. For instance, other features noted by New Zealand children include safety from traffic, knowing neighbors, and access to nature (Freeman and Tranter 2011), while children from the UK voiced concerns about traffic safety, rubbish, and graffiti (O'Brien 2003). But many urban neighborhoods are not child-friendly and do not provide safe and inclusive places for children to meet, play, and interact (Gleeson and Sipe 2006). As the Freeman and Tranter (2011) quote above indicates, the consequences of this for children's freedom to play and travel in their neighborhood without adult accompaniment – their independent mobility – have been profound, with marked declines in children's independent mobility recorded in many nations over recent decades (Fyhri et al. 2011; Hillman et al. 1990; Shaw et al. 2013). Although independent mobility is not an unequivocal good, children can be energetic, enjoy, and learn new skills by participating in all forms of mobility, structured and unstructured, in the company of family and other adults. But playing and exploring independently with peers have added benefits: it is fun; children make friends; they learn social and cognitive skills as they problem-solve together; and their spatial understanding grows as they navigate local environments.

Intergenerational studies confirm a progressive increase in the age at which children are allowed to play outdoors alone and an increase in the restrictions parents place on their spatial freedoms. As a consequence of these changes, the time children spend in outdoor and unstructured play has dropped, and compared to earlier generations (Gaster 1991; Karsten 2005; Witten et al. 2013), such play is also now more likely to take place in designated “child spaces” such as playgrounds and school grounds and less likely to occur in wild and natural spaces (Freeman and Tranter 2011). Louv (2008, p. 36) has coined the phrase “nature deficit disorder” to describe the effects on children’s well-being of alienation from nature, including “diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses.” The domestication of play has been characterized by an increase in the time children spend in structured, supervised, and indoor activities (Gaster 1991; Karsten 2005).

Similar declines have occurred in active travel in many countries. In 1990, Hillman and colleagues reported rapid changes in the numbers of children being chauffeured to school in England, a fourfold increase over two decades. In New Zealand over the past 20 years, the proportion of children who usually travel to school by car has increased from 31 % to 58 % (Ministry of Transport 2013), and the average time per week children spend in active travel has almost halved. A comparison study of children’s everyday mobility in the UK, Denmark, Finland, and Norway found that trends over time in all countries were toward less walking and cycling and more car travel (Fyhri et al. 2011), although with some differences among the four countries: rates of walking to school were higher in the UK than the other three countries; cycling was highest in Denmark, followed by Finland; and while public transport was used by approximately one in five children in Norway, Finland, and Denmark, it was infrequently used by UK children, who had the highest rates of car travel (Fyhri et al. 2011).

The following section examines why outdoor play and other forms of independent mobility are important for children’s well-being. A New Zealand-based study, *Kids in the City*, is then described, and findings from the study are presented to illustrate diversity in children’s mobility behaviors and the mediating role parenting practices play in children’s use and experience of urban neighborhoods. The chapter’s concluding section discusses the findings in the context of changing social and cultural practices as they are reflected in household routines, transport behaviors, neighborhood design, technology access, and family practices.

2 Why Does a Decline in Children’s Outdoor Play and Other Independent Mobility Matter?

Physical activity is essential to children’s physical and psychological health, and outdoor play and active travel are vital components of children’s overall physical activity (Janssen and LeBlanc 2010). In New Zealand, a third of children were insufficiently active for health and a third of 2–14-year-olds were overweight or obese in 2006/2007 (Ministry of Health 2007). The health implications of inactivity

in childhood are substantial as inactivity in children tracks through to adolescence and adulthood (Stettler et al. 2003) increasing an individual's long-term risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and some cancers. Regular moderate physical activity is also associated with maintaining a healthy body size. The impacts of obesity in childhood are pervasive, affecting not only physical health but also children's self-esteem and academic performance.

Children's trip to school (accompanied and unaccompanied) is their most frequent journey and has been studied more closely than other aspects of independent mobility such as neighborhood play and unsupervised trips to other destinations. Evidence suggests that active travel to school is associated with increased overall physical activity levels, less risk of obesity, and better cardiorespiratory fitness (Gordon-Larsen et al. 2005). How children travel (actively and/or independently) can also influence the level of physical activity they accumulate at a destination or over a day. The UK-based CAPABLE and Children's Car Use studies found that children who walked to activities engaged in higher-intensity physical activity on arrival than those who traveled by car. Time spent independently walking and cycling also correlated positively with the proportion of the day children spent engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity, an important point, as added health benefits accrue from higher-intensity activity (Goodman et al. 2011).

Children walk differently when alone or with peers, compared to when they are accompanied by an adult. Their movements are less linear and purposeful and more playful. Describing children's accounts of walking independently, Carroll et al. (2015) write:

The street was more than just a thoroughfare, providing many opportunities for play: children jumped on walls, balanced on kerbs and avoided stepping on cracks; they ran, skipped and spun in circles; and they played various games incorporating manhole covers, shadows and other street features.

Being out and about strengthens children's intertwined senses of place, inclusion, and personal identity (Proshansky and Gottlieb 1989). As Spencer and Woolley (2000, p. 187) note, children's continuing transactions with places "contribute importantly to their developing personal identity." The familiarity of a street, a special tree, or a favorite shop can all contribute to children's sense of place (Carroll et al. 2015). When children lack the freedom to independently explore their environment, it is difficult for them to develop a sense of connection with their neighborhood or community – a sense of place – which is in turn important for their personal sense of identity (Lalli 1992).

Children's cognitive and social development can also benefit from independent mobility. Being out and about without adult surveillance increases young people's social skills and street literacy (Cahill 2000). When moving about unsupervised, children need to hone their skills in navigating, assessing risk, and making decisions. A comment made by a 10-year-old participant in Kids in the City illustrates this learning process:

If I know it's like a place that's all good, like, I might take a different route to get there or like have a bit of fun on the way but if it's like somewhere I don't know I'll just like, follow the rules. . . .

Problem-solving skills, processing skills, spatial analysis, and environmental understanding have all been found to be better in children with higher levels of independent mobility (Cornell et al. 2001; Rissotto and Tonucci 2002). In terms of environmental understanding, direct and independent experiences in nature – including exposure to wind, sun, and rain and fauna and flora – have been linked to children's awareness of environmental concerns (Freeman and Tranter 2011) and to responsible environmental behaviors later on in adulthood (Wells and Lekies 2006). Independence in the outdoors can also improve children's motor skills. Turning to social development, children with higher levels of independent mobility are more likely to have friends in the neighborhood (Veitch et al. 2010), to visit and play at friends' houses (Wen et al. 2009), and to report a greater sense of community during adolescence (Prezza and Pacilli 2007).

The decline in children's independent mobility and presence in public places has repercussions for wider society. Environmentally, ferrying children to school contributes to traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change. Socially, children's absence from public spaces reduces their vibrancy and can lessen the sense of place and social cohesion experienced by others (Weller and Bruegel 2007). At a street or neighborhood level, children playing together can facilitate connections between parents and other adults and, over time, build familiarity and trust. Neighborhood networks, where they develop through such banal connections, can provide a social resource to support local parenting, from passive surveillance of children's outdoor play to shared care arrangements, or more formal collective action.

Studies in which children's independent mobility has been conceptualized as mobility in the absence of adults have been criticized for paying scant attention to the interdependences of child and adult mobilities, for downplaying the relational qualities of mobility practices and rendering peer relationships invisible, and for an implicit acceptance that children's mobility follows an age-related continuum from supervised to unsupervised (Nansen et al. 2014). In the physical activity field, the accumulation of physical activity is the outcome of interest, and relational aspects of children mobility are of lesser concern. However, where the rights of children to play and to access open space are the focus of attention, children's agency and how they negotiate their mobility amidst the interdependencies of children's and adults' worlds and the availability of new technologies are of paramount interest (Nansen et al. 2014; Kullman 2010).

Kids in the City investigated children's neighborhood use and experiences and parental decision-making around their children's outdoor play and independence. Implicit in the study's conceptualization was children's right to play and to have a voice in urban planning decisions that impact on their daily lives. The following sections introduce the study and report on findings relating to where children go in their neighborhoods, what they like and do not like, their independent mobility, and the neighborhood environments experienced as "places of play" and "spaces of fear." Oldenburg's (2001) theory of third places is used to structure the discussion.

3 Kids in the City

Kids in the City is a mixed-method study involving 254 children, 9–12 years, and their parents. Auckland, the research setting, is a low-density, car-dependent city of approximately 1.4 million people. The study has investigated how different neighborhood environments are experienced by children and parents and relationships between neighborhood urban design attributes, neighborhood safety perceptions, and children's independent mobility and physical activity levels. Experiential data were collected from children during individual interviews at home and while walking in the neighborhood and in school-based focus group discussions. Quantitative data on their mobility and physical activity over 7 days were gathered using trip diaries, geographic positioning systems (GPS), and accelerometers. Parents were also interviewed (Carroll et al. 2015; Witten et al. 2013). The data presented in this paper draw on analyses of children's trip dairies and interviews with children and parents (Carroll et al. 2015).

Study participants were recruited through nine schools, four located in suburban low-income neighborhoods, two in medium-income suburban neighborhoods, and three inner-city schools in mid- and higher-income catchments. Housing in suburban Auckland predominantly comprises stand-alone dwellings with gardens, while inner-city neighborhoods have a mix of high-rise apartments, medium-density developments, and detached dwellings. The poorer suburban neighborhoods are not appreciably different aesthetically from the mid-income suburban neighborhoods, although children living in the two mid-income suburban neighborhoods and the inner-city children had to contend with main arterial routes, which the children from the lower-income neighborhoods did not.

4 Where Auckland Children Go: Accompanied and Independently

Auckland children live diverse lives in both suburban and inner-city settings. Some participants had never left home unaccompanied by a parent or other adult, whereas other children roamed widely and confidently alone and/or with peers. As analyses of the 7,267 trips recorded in their travel diaries indicate, children visited a vast array of destinations over 7 days, from routine trips to school and church to extraordinary visits to recreational venues. Across the nine neighborhoods, there were both commonalities and differences between the children's mobility patterns (Carroll et al. 2015).

School and shops were children's most common trip destinations (Fig. 1). Unsurprisingly, school was the most common destination in all neighborhoods with most children going five times a week. However, whether the trip to school was adult supervised or not ranged from 25 % of trips unaccompanied in the mid-income suburban neighborhoods to 38 % in the inner-city and 49 % in low-income suburban neighborhoods.

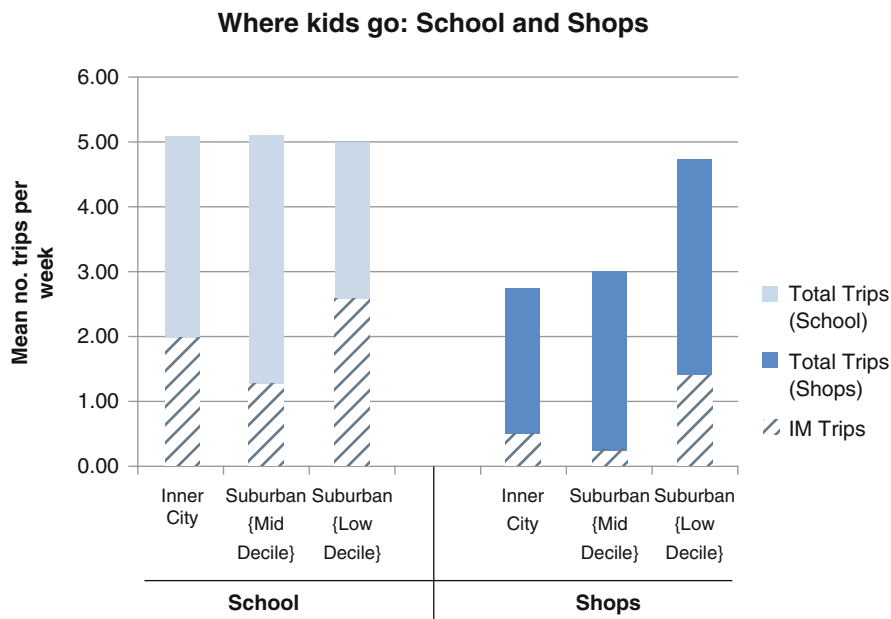


Fig. 1 Trip frequency: school and shops

The frequency of shopping trips varied between neighborhoods, with children in low-income suburban areas averaging 4.8 trips per week compared to 3.0 and 2.8 weekly trips, respectively, in mid-income suburban and inner-city, mid-high-income areas. Rates of independent travel to shops were lower than for school trips but followed a similar pattern with children from lower-income suburban neighborhoods making more independent trips (29 %) than their suburban mid-income (8 %) or inner-city peers (18.5 %) (Carroll et al. 2015). Other common trip types included social visits to friends, family social trips, and trips that involved formal physical activity (i.e., sports practices, training, and games) and informal physical activity trips (i.e., playing, climbing, walking, scootering). Trip frequencies varied across trip and neighborhood type.

Inner-city children had over two trips per week on average to formal physical activity-related events, twice the trip rate of children living in suburban mid-income neighborhoods and four times that of suburban children from low-income neighborhoods. Conversely, children from poorer neighborhoods recorded around two trips per week on average for informal physical activities, twice the number as other groups (Fig. 2). Whether children were supervised or not also varied markedly by trip type. Informal physical activity trips (approximately half of which were to a park) were two to three times more likely to be unsupervised than formal physical activity trips (see Carroll et al. 2015). Four out of five trips to and from sports-related events were by car in all neighborhoods, whereas children reported traveling independently on 65 % of informal physical activity trips in low-income suburban

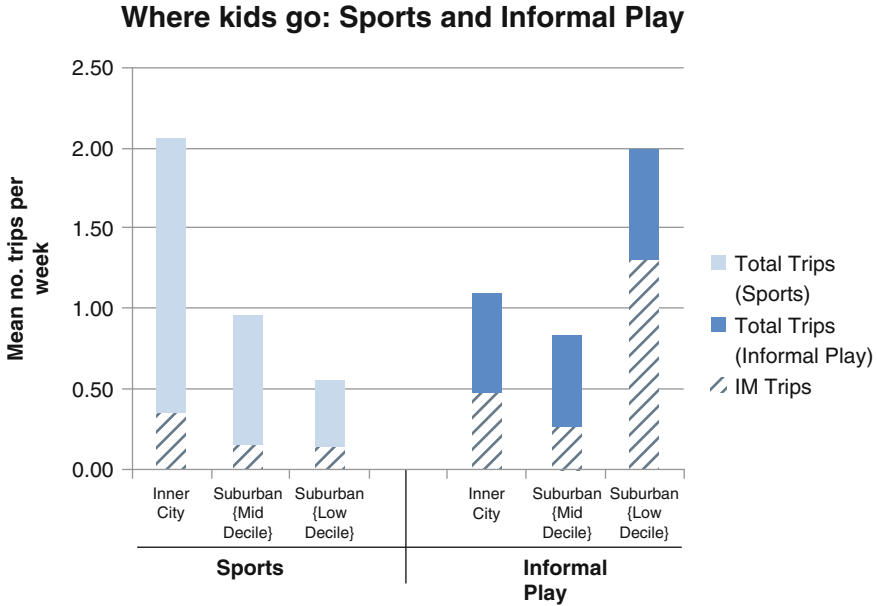


Fig. 2 Trip frequency: sports and informal physical activity

areas, 41 % in inner-city neighborhoods, and 29 % in mid-income suburban neighborhoods.

Of the six types of trips discussed, children living in all neighborhoods traveled independently most often on neighborhood social trips to friends’ homes (Fig. 3). Over three quarters of these trips were unsupervised for children from low-income neighborhoods, almost half in the inner city were unsupervised, and about a third of trips in the mid-income suburban areas were unsupervised.

Trip frequencies and the rate of independent mobility varied across the different types of neighborhoods, but in all neighborhoods, the trips most often taken by children alone or with peers were visits to friends’ houses, informal physical activity trips, and the journey to school.

5 Children’s Experiences of Neighborhood Spaces and Places

In keeping with earlier accounts of what constitutes a “good” neighborhood for children (Chawla 2002; O’Brien 2003), *Kids in the City* participants generally liked their neighborhood environments, with the most favored attributes being places to play, having friends nearby, feeling safe, and access to quiet, peaceful places. The children’s neighborhood likes varied little between inner-city and suburban neighborhoods, and prominent among the dislikes in all environments were things that made them feel unsafe.

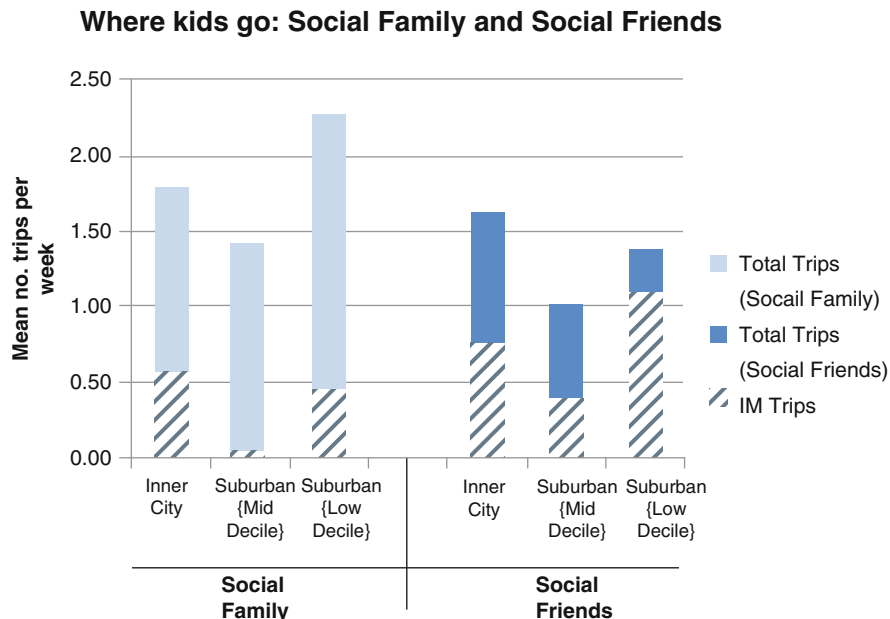


Fig. 3 Trip frequency: family- and friend-related social trips

Oldenburg’s third place theorizing offers a useful framework for discussing children’s neighborhood experiences and the “places of play” and “spaces of fear” referred to in the chapter’s title (Carroll et al. 2015; Oldenburg 2001). Third places are conceptualized as accessible public spaces such as parks, libraries, cafes, and streets in which children and adults alike can meet and socialize – anchor points in community life. Oldenburg distinguishes third places from the more confined physical and social environments of first place (home) and second place (workplace/school).

Kids in the City data gathered during interviews with children at home, while walking around local streets, and in school-based discussion groups can shed light on children’s experiences of home, school, and neighborhood third places. Home and school as “places of play” will be briefly mentioned before turning to children’s experiences of neighborhood third places, directing our gaze on physical and relational attributes of third places which can either facilitate or constrain children’s use of the public realm, their levels of outdoor play, and other independent mobility, neighborhood exploration, and social interaction.

Home and its immediate surroundings were the favorite places to play for most children, irrespective of the type of dwelling they lived in, and indoor play on computers and Xbox or reading or watching TV were common and enjoyed by inner-city and suburban children alike. Home-based play was almost always sedentary for inner-city children living in apartments, but suburban children commonly

accessed backyards, street verges, and driveways for outdoor activities. The appeal of home is illustrated in this child's comment:

I just like it in the apartment. Inside our apartment. . .all the things we need are in here. . .if we want to play something we can just play it. But at the park we can only play one thing – go on the playground or just ride around.

Schools were important sites for playing and interacting with friends. Many children took the interviewer to their school during walking interviews, and some talked about playing on the school grounds with friends and siblings after school and on weekends. Most, but not all, school grounds were open outside school hours. Like home, schools were generally considered safe places to play by children and their parents. A viewpoint evident in the data, but a minority position, was that home and school were islands of safety in an unsafe world.

All kinds of third spaces provided play opportunities for children, but only if they felt safe. Children's fears, like their parents' concerns for them, primarily related to traffic and strangers. They felt unsafe and disliked fast and dangerous traffic and drunk, "weird," and/or homeless people in the inner-city and drunk people in some lower-income suburban areas. They feared older youth who could be bullying or intimidating and were afraid of "scary" dogs, particularly in the suburbs. Rubbish and graffiti were also disliked and seemed to be especially concerning when spaces allocated to children's use, like playgrounds, were affected (Carroll et al. 2015).

Children's independence was largely determined by the boundaries set by their parents, but children are also self-restricted. They avoided spaces in which they felt uneasy or fearful. For some children, feeling safe was contingent on being close to home and having family close by. Others who had parental license to roam fairly widely did not feel comfortable doing so, or only felt secure in situations where there were a lot of people around, as indicated by the comment "I just want to be in, like a crowded place."

To discuss children experiences of neighborhood third places, distinctions will be made between destinations, threshold spaces, and transitory zones (Carroll et al. 2015). Common third-place destinations frequented by children included local shops, parks, playgrounds and skate parks, libraries, churches, and community centers. Threshold spaces, the semiprivate spaces that lie between the home and wider neighborhood, differed in inner-city and suburban areas. In suburban localities, driveways, courtyards, and street verges were common examples, while in higher-density housing, foyers, stairwells and landings, car parks, and communal facilities fulfilled a similar function. Streets, footpaths, crossings, and alleyways, the routes between places linking home, school, and other destinations, were the neighborhood transitory zones used by children.

Of the three types of third places, threshold spaces, where they were available, offered fewest barriers to independent play. Their location, adjoining children's homes, gave them a mantle of safety in the eyes of parents and children. Siblings and neighbors would congregate in threshold spaces and children often described

site-specific games they had created. Medium-density housing tended to have attached or adjacent outdoor car parks as part of the complex, and these made convenient places of play. Paved surfaces were ideal for soccer, biking, and scootering, and curbing and cracks were recognized affordances for tricks on scooters and skateboards. A car park in an adjacent lot, used by office workers during business hours, was transformed into a play space by neighboring children after hours and at the weekend. A high-end wall was perfect for tennis volleys. Outdoor threshold spaces were rarely available for participants living in the high-rise apartment blocks, but corridors and apartment lobbies and stairwells provided spaces to play.

Under the stairs there is a big space [where] sometimes we play with a ball and sometimes with a hula hoop.

Although threshold spaces were generally seen as safe, play boundaries were still sometimes set by parents:

My mum says that I have to only go up [the stairs] a little bit because I might get lost – maybe like three or four floors up or down.

Noise associated with children playing in these threshold spaces was not always welcomed by other residents and children talked of being moved on.

Shops and parks, the most common third-place destinations children visited unsupervised by adults, were variously experienced as places of play and spaces of fear. Children went to parks together to explore, have adventures, and play imaginative games. They rode bikes and scooters, used playground equipment, climbed trees, played informal sports games, and took part in quieter activities like reading and people watching. But children were also wary of strangers, and the presence of unfamiliar youth or “freaky” adults could deter their use of familiar play places, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

...across the road from where we live um, there's often hobos who sleep underneath the slides and stuff and then you'll go there after school and you'll see them or you'll see their sleeping stuff and then you don't want to play at the park or anything. Yeah. Cause it's kind of...[you] don't know what they've done.

In keeping with the time-sensitive territorialism described by Day and Wager (2010), a number of boys said they avoided going to a skate park at times of the day when it was frequented by older youth.

Transitory spaces were both places of play and spaces of fear. Games were played walking or scootering along the street, especially on the journey to school, and unsupervised visits to shops were generally positive experiences. However, at times children found themselves in situations that were unsettling and scary, mainly when they passed “creepy,” “freaky,” or homeless people, terms that included people with mental illness. K Rd, a street in the inner city, was a notable example. It was a street children avoided if they could, and if not, moved along at speed, eyes

averted to deter unwelcome encounters. The odor of street people and the site and smell of rubbish and vomit were particularly offensive. Children were also uneasy and embarrassed passing massage parlors, adult shops, and other markers of the sex industry that are common on the street (Witten et al. 2015).

Feeling wary moving about the neighborhood unsupervised did not mean it wasn't a valued experience. Fears were often situation specific and offset by a range of benefits such as learning about the neighborhood, being active and fit, hanging out with friends, fresh air, feeling free and happy, not being embarrassed by your parents, and being independent. Independence was variously described as "making your own decisions" and "taking responsibility for yourself." In the words of a 9-year-old boy:

For your whole life you'll never have someone who's always there, unless you are like a billionaireso you kind of need to learn to look after yourself.

Familiarity with local streets and public spaces and the people inhabiting them gave children confidence that they could look after themselves. Sights and encounters that were once disturbing became less so over time. Parents were an important source of advice on how to stay safe, but children had also learned from other children and their own experiences.

6 Parents' Views on Children's Independent Mobility

Analyses of parents' survey data found that their belief on the appropriateness of allowing children to travel alone to various neighborhood destinations (e.g., school, park, convenience store, friend's place) was a stronger predictor of the number of active trips and active independent trips taken by Kids in the City participants than sociodemographic and built environment factors. When parents were asked during home-based interviews about the freedoms and restrictions they placed on their children's mobility, viewpoints ranged from a belief that their child should always be in the care of an adult through to parents who promoted independent exploration. Perceptions of risks underpinned the former view, as illustrated in the following comment from a parent.

It's just too dangerous. For me, as a mum, I have to be with them. ... any stranger could just manhandle them and just walk them and you know? Anything could happen and [I] just can't. I won't put myself in that situation.

Parents' views generally fell between these positions with most seeing their role being to train and prepare their child for greater independence as illustrated:

...children do have to learn to take responsibility for themselves and to feel comfortable and safe and independent. . .But you do it in small steps.

“Small steps” tended to be incremental changes in the temporal or spatial rules or boundaries parents placed on their children’s independence, but a few parents described a graduated physical presence such as walking at an increasing distance behind their children until they were confident that they had mastered the skills to go it alone.

The perceived advantages of greater freedom included social benefits:

... it’s really important for children to be able to explore without being hovered over. And, you know, and if there’s a few of them, they sort their own problems out, you don’t necessarily have to be there to fix everything.

Some parents who advocated greater independence were at times frustrated by their children’s disinterest and resistance to exploring the neighborhood and getting about unsupervised. After saying how rare it is to see unsupervised children, one parent commented, “so when your child is the only one, it could be a bit odd for them,” and later, echoing the notion of collective freedoms, the parent went on to say:

if there was just a shift back to giving kids more unsupervised time, I think that would be great, you know, as a community, as a big community, because you sort of can’t do it just on your own.

Play was considered an important part of learning by most parents, but a small group also felt that some risk-taking was part of learning and these parents encouraged greater independence in their children. Conjecturing on children’s reluctance to be more independent, reference was made to the practices of handing children over from the care of one adult to another and of schools asking for parental approval before a child could be collected by someone other than a parent. Are children’s fears an understandable consequence of lifetime exposure to talk and practices aimed at keeping them safe? When asked if they felt that the limits their parents placed on their independence were too restrictive, about right or a bit loose, all but a few children felt their parents had it about right. And when asked about places they would like to go alone or with friends but were not allowed, it was rare for a child to identify places. These responses were not anticipated by the investigators, who had recollections of roaming widely and independently during their own childhoods.

7 Discussion

The Kids in the City accounts of children’s neighborhood experiences and influences on their independent mobility are largely consistent with research evidence discussed earlier in the chapter. Children live very diverse lives. They may live in the same city, same neighborhood, same street, or same dwelling, but their experiences, opportunities for outdoor play, access to wild spaces, and independent

mobility may be different. In part these differences can be attributable to factors intrinsic to the child – their age, sex, ethnicity, or interests – but strong influences also operate at family, neighborhood, and wider community levels. Built environment factors such as distance from home to school and traffic speeds and volumes influence whether or not children travel independently to school. Parenting norms; the type of dwelling a child lives in; household and neighborhood access to social, cultural, and economic resources; and the social and transport norms of the society in which the child is growing up in can either enable or constrain children's opportunities for outdoor play and other independent mobility.

The evidence is clear that independent outdoor play is declining and sedentary indoor play is increasing across many countries. Freeman and Tranter (2011) assert that children are driven to explore and play. Do these trends in play practices contradict this claim? Sedentary indoor play can be social and independent, and according to some Kids in the City children, it can be an adventure. When asked what having an adventure meant to them, a number of participants described an electronic experience. This type of sedentary play may satisfy children's drive to explore and stimulate their cognitive and social development. It may also increase their environmental understanding, and there is some evidence that active video games can have a positive effect on body composition, with their use suggested as an intervention to replace sedentary behavior with physical activity in young people. However, outdoor play and active travel offer significant developmental experiences unavailable through sustained indoor play: encountering strangers and learning skills in street literacy; the sensory and sometimes restorative experiences of engaging with nature; the fun of running through water; and environmental understanding arising from exposure to wind, sun, and rain – to name a few.

Concerns over the decline in children's independent mobility have heralded from various quarters including play advocates, parent and neighborhood groups, academics, and local government agencies. Explanations for the decline include changing parenting practices, the rise in car culture, city and neighborhood design that prioritizes adults and cars over children and pedestrians, media that highlight rare but catastrophic events, new technologies (e.g., computers, game consoles), and fundamental shifts in the routines of family life.

Protecting young children from harm and filtering their experiences of the world beyond home are core elements of parenting. Safety concerns relating to traffic and "stranger danger," the latter fuelled by media reports of rare cases of children being harmed by strangers (O'Connor and Brown 2013; Valentine and McKendrick 1997), have led to safety-conscious parenting practices becoming commonplace in many countries (Fyhri et al. 2011; Karsten 2005; Mackett et al. 2007). Children are chauffeured between home, school, and other local destinations and supervised while playing outside. Children's independent mobility has been replaced by adult-dependent mobility. Terms such as "helicopter parenting," "bubble wrap kids," "paranoid parenting," and "back-seat generation," suggestive of risk-averse parenting and cocooned childhoods, have been coined to describe the phenomenon and bring it to public attention. The contrasting minority notion of "free-range kids" (Skenazy 2009) evokes images of a different type of childhood, one in which

children are allowed to wander and explore without their every move being monitored by an adult.

Major changes in social and cultural norms, such as women's increased participation in the workforce, the ubiquitous use of motor vehicles, and the uptake of communication technologies, have transformed the routines of family life (Fyhri et al. 2011). As the pace of life quickens, parents face "time scarcity" (Strazdins and Loughrey 2008), and opportunities to maintain neighborly networks diminish, which in turn has implications for the casual monitoring of local children's outdoor play and active travel. Juggling work and home commitments and driving children to destinations in the course of "trip chaining" (when several destinations are visited in sequence) can be a convenient solution to parent's scheduling demands (Dowling 2000).

Reflecting on the "back-seat generation," Dowling (2000) comments on a cultural shift in notions of "good mothering" in which protecting children from risks through constant surveillance has become a mark of good parenting, and conversely, children in public spaces without a watching adult, indicative of poor parenting. In some settings a child alone in public can trigger official intervention, as illustrated by media accounts of the Florida mother arrested for allowing her 7-year-old to walk to the local park on his own (Warren and Associated Press 2014). Mobile phones provide parents with another means to track children's movements. Without being physically present, parents can check in with their children and follow their children's whereabouts using apps and GPS-enabled phones. The appeal of screen-based entertainment technologies (e.g., computers, game consoles) and emergence of the "electronic bedroom" have also contributed to the decline in children's outdoor play (Biddle et al. 2009; Wen et al. 2009). Sedentary pastimes have always been a part of childhood; however, studies have shown that screen time has increased and is generally associated with higher rates of sedentary indoor behavior, lower levels of physical activity, and more negative health outcomes in adulthood (Aggio et al. 2012; Biddle et al. 2009).

Neighborhood street design and local mobility cultures are also likely to influence whether children are allowed to play in the street and move safely and easily between home, school, and other destinations. The volume and speed of traffic, the presence or absence of safe crossings, visual surveillance from adjacent buildings, and whether a street is deserted or vibrant with street life can all influence perceptions of neighborhood safety. In countries like the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where car culture is pervasive, walking and cycling rates have dropped off for adults as well as children. With the loss of people on the streets, there is the accompanying loss of the "eyes-on-the-street" that Jane Jacobs (1961) saw as important benign surveillance for the well-being of others.

Various other factors have been linked to children's declining freedoms. Often these are secondary to changing social norms already noted and include a decline in public transport availability, increases in car ownership and use, and an increase in the distance between home and school for many children. A rise in out-of-zone schooling as parents seek a "better" school than the local school increases the distance to school for those going to out-of-zone schools, thus reducing the numbers

of neighborhood children available to accompany those walking to the local school. Passive surveillance, as a function of being one of many on the street, is lost. Anxieties about the increasingly competitive world their children are living in can underlie parents' decisions about seeking "better" schooling and also encourage children's attendance at extracurricular activities. In neighborhoods where ethnic diversity has increased as an outcome of changing migration patterns, uncertainty about the parenting norms in unfamiliar households may also contribute to the restrictions parents place on children's freedom of movement between neighborhood households (Witten et al. 2013).

While declines in children's independent mobility are widespread, internationally the pace of change has varied from country to country. Explanations for these differences have received some attention. With regard to transport mode use, in developed countries where children's independent mobility is higher, such as Finland, Japan, and Germany, public transport is more commonplace and daily destinations are more accessible than in countries like Canada, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, where declines have been sharper (Freeman and Tranter 2011; Thompson 2009).

A range of strategies have been proposed to reverse the decline. Prominent among these have been calls to create more child-friendly public spaces and local moves to reclaim the streets for children's use (Gleeson and Sipe 2006). Reducing traffic speeds and volumes and investment in walking and cycling infrastructure are key approaches to improving neighborhood safety for children. Traffic calming measures take various forms such as lower speed limits around schools and in home zones, gateways, and chicanes to narrow sections of a street and closing residential streets to through traffic. "Self-explaining roads" is an intervention designed to make roads more user-friendly for all road users (Mackie et al. 2013). The visual characteristics of roads are designed to influence driver behavior. For example, on low-speed residential roads, minimal road markings are used to create an informal street environment, trees are planted in the middle of the road, and community islands are spaced intermittently along the road to limit forward visibility. Introduced concurrently, these treatments have been found to reduce vehicle speeds and vehicle crashes in residential streets (Mackie et al. 2013). Corresponding improvements are made to pedestrian and cycling facilities to increase the appeal and safety of active travel.

The trip to school is a useful journey to target for intervention: children, when asked, say they would like to be driven less and walk or cycle more to school; active travel to school contributes significantly to the children's accumulation of physical activity, and it is a behavior that can become habitual if integrated into daily routines. Safer routes to school and walking school buses have both been adopted to increase children's active travel to school. Safer route programs improve the walking environment within a school catchment and walking school buses (re) introduce children to the pleasures of walking with peers and experiencing the physical environment. However, on a walking school bus, children remain under adult rules and supervision, so their school travel is active but not independent. Chauffeuring is on foot rather than by car.

Children's needs are seldom to the fore in city planning policies (Gleeson and Sipe 2006; Whitzman and Mizrachi 2009). Investigating how planners take into account children's use of public space in New Zealand, Freeman and Aitken-Rose (2005) found that practitioners had a limited understanding of the diversity of children's lives and interests. Children's needs were seen as being met by providing recreational amenities such as playgrounds, skate parks and sports fields, and educational facilities. How children moved through streets and used transport networks to reach the public spaces designated for their use were largely outside their purview. Urban intensification is another planning arena that potentially affects children's access to play spaces and safe mobility. Will wild and natural places and spaces that foster children's sense of inclusion be lost or preserved as neighborhood densities increase? And will intensification processes play out in different ways in different types of neighborhoods? Guidelines for planning child-friendly higher-density neighborhoods are a useful starting point (City of Vancouver 1992), but it remains an open question whether planning practices can adapt so that cities become less "child-blind" and provide for "streets in which children can safely walk alone," one of UNICEF's (2009) urban design principles for a child-friendly city. As the Kids in the City findings highlight, it is not only safer streets and destination parks and playgrounds that matter for children's use of urban space, but it is also the in-between spaces, the liminal zones between homes, and the street that provide opportunities for unsupervised outdoor play.

A children's rights perspective has also been drawn on in calls to reclaim the streets for children's use. Local activism over the inadequacy of children's play spaces has been the impetus for periodic street closures in residential areas and social events that have in turn become rallying stages for more sustained action. The "20's Plenty" movement is an example of community action that has successfully reduced traffic speeds in districts throughout the UK (20's Plenty for Us 2014). Community action that repopulates streets and builds trust in neighborhood social networks is a promising strategy for improving children's collective freedoms. So too is elevating children's voices in planning processes. To do so draws on their play expertise and experience of public spaces as well as acknowledging their rights to participation in the design of child-friendly spaces.

8 Conclusions

Are children's neighborhoods "places of play or spaces of fear"? They are neither one nor the other. Sites experienced at times as places of play may be seen as unsettling or feared places at other times or by different children and/or their parents. While children's spatial and temporal freedoms have been declining in many countries, the rate of change has varied between countries, and the reasons for these differences are not always clear. As portrayed in this chapter, multiple and complex social, temporal, and physical factors have influenced children's changing use and experience of urban streets and neighborhoods. Nevertheless neighborhoods retain a salience in children's lives as places of exploration, learning, and socialization.

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Part IV

Home Spaces and Homeless Spaces

Marit Ursin

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Abstract

This chapter explores the temporal and socio-spatial aspects of sleep geographies of a young male street population in urban Brazil. It sets out by providing an overview of relevant academic debates on young people living on the street across the globe, related to issues of marginality, mobility, and belonging. It then narrows the focus to the less explored field of sleep geographies of young street populations, before it presents four different sleep patterns detected among boys and young men on streets of Salvador da Bahia. These patterns are closely linked to four collective identities available for young people in the street environment – *menino de rua* (street child), *pivete* (street thug), *maloqueiro* (vagrant), and *favelado* (resident of shantytown). The empirical material reveals that a range of

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individual and structural factors – such as drug use, crime involvement, physical maturity, and mainstream attitudes – influence the choices on where, when, and with whom to sleep. Sleep is thus shown to be socially constructed and spatially defined, and a life course perspective that embraces the dynamic character of street life is proposed.

Keywords

Street children/youth • Sleep geographies • Marginality • Mobility • Belonging • Street identity

1 Introduction

This chapter aims to demonstrate how young people's maturing relation to the street environment is extremely complex and shifting, illustrated by studying the sleep geographies of Brazilian boys and young men who live or used to live on the street. The empirical material reveals that a range of individual and structural factors – such as drug use, crime involvement, physical maturity, and mainstream attitudes – influence the choices on where, when, and with whom to sleep. The four different sleep patterns which are detected are closely linked to four collective identities available for young people in the street environment – *menino de rua* (street child), *pivete* (street thug), *maloqueiro* (vagrant), and *favelado* (resident of shantytown). The study of the socio-spatial and temporal character of sleep patterns thus reveals essential processes of identification and categorization (Jenkins 2008 [1996]). This chapter begins with an overview of relevant academic debates on young people living on street, related to issues of marginality, mobility, belonging, and sleeping in public. It then presents the empirical material, focusing on the four mentioned street identities. How sleep is socially constructed and spatially defined among young people on the street is examined. Sleep is shown to be intertwined and interdependent with street identities and a life course perspective that embraces the dynamic character of street life is proposed.

Sleeping on the streets is “where poverty becomes visible, public, and open to judgment and action: to be tolerated, avoided, ignored, tallied, or intervened into” (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015, p. 2) and thus an important reason for the marginalization of people living on the streets. Yet, sleep among young people on the street remains under-researched (Nettleton et al. 2012). A few notable exceptions are summarized in this chapter (Kovats-Bernard 2006; Mizen and Ofusi-Kusi 2010; van Blerk 2006). This research is linked to theories that regard sleep as a highly social and spatial phenomenon (e.g., Schwartz 1970; Williams 2002, 2007a). There is also a growing body of research exploring young people's spatial knowledge (e.g., Young 2003; van Blerk 2006) and their sense of belonging (e.g., Beazley 2000; Ursin 2011) with relevance to this study.

This chapter draws on empirical material from an ethnographic study of street life in a middle-class neighborhood in Salvador, Brazil, conducted over three periods (2005/2006, 2008/2009, and 2011). Although there were some girls

present in the street environment during the first period of fieldwork, by the second period (when narrative interviews were first conducted), the street population had become pure male. This chapter only includes male voices, which influences the analysis of sleep geographies in public space, as public space is primarily a male domain in Brazil (Gough and Franch 2005). To capture the flow of street life, 24-h participant observation was conducted in multiple sites, including in the nightscapes of Salvador (see Ursin 2013). Retrospective personal accounts were added to observations as “narrative interviews continue to offer one of the most appropriate methods for capturing [the] fluidity and unpredictability of life courses” (Hörschelmann 2011, p. 381). Although life course geographies are rare, such an approach perceives age and life course stages as relational and socially constructed categories, thus adding new layers to our understanding (Hopkins and Pain 2007).

Identities, from a life course perspective, are inherently dynamic and developmental (McAdams 2001), and the longitudinal character of this study enabled increased understanding of the transitions between childhood, youth, and young adulthood in the street environment (Thomas de Benitez 2011) and revealed how the identities of the boys alter as they mature. The four categories discussed in this chapter emerged from the data and represent collective identities “as generated simultaneously by group identification *and* categorization” (Jenkins 2008[1996], p. 111); the former is based on collective self-perceptions, while the latter is based on discursive perceptions. While *menino de rua* is a term seldom employed by the young people themselves, they often strategically embrace some of its connotations, as discussed later. The other categories – *pivete*, *maloqueiro*, and *favelado* – are all categories with prejudicial undertones that young people have appropriated and given their own positive meaning.

2 Academic Debates on Young Street Populations

Young people inhabiting street environments typically lack permanent shelter and often have only distant familial relationships. In most academic literature, they are referred to as “homeless youth” or “street children” (“street youth”). The choice of terminology is geographically anchored: while “street children” inhabit the Global South, “homeless youth” are encountered in the Global North, mainly in Anglo-American areas (Hall and Montgomery 2000). Researchers seem to lose interest in the “street children” of the Global South as they grow up – research with “homeless” adults is done mainly in Anglo-American areas (May 2009). These differences in terminology and research have “silo-ed research and dispersed knowledge” (Thomas de Benitez 2011, p. 20), resulting in a lack of comparative perspective on young people on the street (van Blerk 2005).

Although used worldwide, the concepts themselves are also heavily debated. The epithet “street children,” is, as is “homeless youth,” rooted in mutually constructed oppositions of home/street, moral/amoral, and social/antisocial (Ennew and Swart-Kruger 2003). Young people bearing these labels are spatially

defined, as “street children” are depicted to belong to the street, while “homeless youth” are marked by placelessness, belonging to nowhere (Kawash 1998). They are only visible when occupying urban city centers, as poor, unsupervised children occupying the streets of poor neighborhoods are just called “kids” (Scheper-Hughes and Hoffman 1998) and homeless people inhabiting rural space remain invisible (Milbourne 2009). Thus, the construction of homelessness and its problematic nature are tightly interlinked and interdependent in discursive images of the “clean glamorous images of consumer capitalism” (Gerrard and Farrugia 2015, p. 8) of urban metropolitan areas.

When the international focus on young people inhabiting the streets of the Global South – Latin America in particular – exploded during the 1980s, politicians, journalists, social workers, and researchers chose the term “street children” as it was purportedly free of derogatory connotations (Hecht 1998). The expression later became regarded as inadequate for several reasons; it is imbued with conceptual stigmatization, its imprecision obscures heterogeneity, and it strongly differentiates young people on the street from their “home-based” but equally poor peers, disregarding the latter in academic research as well as in policy making (Bush and Rizzini 2011; Panter-Brick 2002, 2004; see also McLoughlin 2013 on a similar debate regarding “homeless youth”). The term “homeless” is also a hazy and prejudicial concept (Ploeg and Scholte 1997). While “homeless” has been suggested as a key descriptor in the Global South (Ennew and Swart-Kruger 2003), “street youth” is increasingly preferred in research in the Global North (Thomas de Benitez 2011), though neither expression is normally employed by the young people labeled as such – research has shown that young people only refer to themselves as “street children” in conversations with adults, street educators in particular (Hecht 1998), while they consider the word “homeless” as stigmatizing and disempowering (Kidd and Evans 2011).

Although the Gordian knot of suitable labeling remains, innovative and valuable research continues to be conducted with young people inhabiting street environments globally. These bodies of literature have evolved in tune with paradigm shifts within research on young people in general. Prior to the 1990s, developmental theory within psychology and sociology dominated research, focusing on dysfunction, pathology, and psychological breakdown among young people on the street (Ennew and Swart-Kruger 2003). This research often utilized adult “experts,” such as social workers, rather than young people themselves (Boyden and Ennew 1997). When children came to be recognized as meaningful research subjects, young people on the street were increasingly invited to share their memories, thoughts, and opinions. The emerging body of literature was greatly influenced by one of the main “mantras” of the new paradigm – young people’s agency (Tisdall and Punch 2012). Perceptions of vulnerable orphans abandoned by their caregivers were gradually set aside, while young people’s street knowledge, resilience, strengths, and aptitudes were increasingly recognized. In line with the “discovery” of agency of young people, researchers began exploring their dynamic and multidimensional relation to urban space.

2.1 On the Margins?

By migrating from family homes to urban streets, young people contradict ideological discourse on both childhood and family values and transgress the “normative geographies” of public space (Cresswell 1996), becoming seen as “out of place” (Beazley 2003; Connolly and Ennew 1996; Scheper-Hughes and Hoffman 1998; Young 2003). While children are regarded as vulnerable and endangered in public space, youth are considered endangering (Valentine 1996). Both groups are experienced as a “polluting presence...challenging the hegemony of adult ownership” (Matthews et al. 2000, p. 63). Young people who domesticate public space often evoke harsh sanctions, ranging from “cleaning up” operations to arrests, torture, and extermination both in the Global South (Beazley 2003; Ursin 2012; van Blerk 2013) and the Global North (Pain and Francis 2004; Ruddick 1998). Their public presence is interpreted as resistance, which inspires efforts to conquer and to create different spatialities from socially defined norms (Pile 1997).

People inhabiting the street are not only socially marginalized but also often encountered at the geographical margins of city centers, inhabiting “spaces which are of little value to the mainstream city, and where [they] are least likely to taint the spaces and practices of ‘normal’ people” (Cloke et al. 2008, p. 243; see also Bodner 2012). Young Ugandans on the street encroach upon “untouchable” spaces perceived as impossible, impractical, or immoral by adults (Young 2003), while children in Ukraine occupy the underground heating system as it renders safety, group collectivity, independence, and escape from formal social control (Naterer and Godina 2011). Their access to and occupation of public space is also defined by temporal patterns of other users of public space. Californian street youth use marginal spaces at marginal times (Ruddick 1998), while young people on the streets of Kampala take (temporal) advantage of the emptiness of night spaces (Young 2003). Similarly, the social position of the youth in this study shifts from inferior to superior after dusk (Ursin 2012), a circadian shift that often involves a change of activities (from legal to illegal), attitudes (from serving to hostile), and reaction patterns (from adaptation to revolt).

However, accounts of urban homelessness have also embraced cartographies of mobility within prime city space. In Uganda, young people on the street are not only marginalized but also accepted and incorporated in some socio-spatial settings, often involving leisure or legal livelihood activities (Young 2003; see also Naterer and Godina 2011; Ursin 2011, 2012). Young people living on the street often seek out places characterized by intense social traffic – such as bus stops, marketplaces, shopping malls, bars, and hotels – as they offer livelihood opportunities (e.g., Geenen 2009; Naterer and Godina 2011). Young men on the verge of adulthood on the streets of the Tanzanian capital occupy a paradoxical space, spatially marginalized from emerging global spaces while simultaneously integral to them, negotiating benefits for themselves at the edges of a globalized cityscape by stealing or doing odd jobs (Moyer 2004).

2.2 Street (Im)Mobilities

For centuries, both popular and legislative imaginaries have presumed the experience of homelessness to be one intimately, if not inevitably, connected to mobility (Jackson 2012). As part of the “mobility turn” (see Cresswell 2010), the mobile practices of street life are being identified around the globe. From the first introduction to street life, mobility plays a key role in the migration from rural or peri-urban homes to city centers (Thomas de Benitez 2011; van Blerk 2013). However, street mobility should not be understood as linear single movements but rather as fluid and circular and “involved in wider geographies, moving across greater distances and adapting to changing surroundings and environments” (van Blerk and Ansell 2006, p. 449; see also van Blerk 2005), driven by a search for “new identities” (Beazley 2003; van Blerk 2005), livelihoods and survival (Abebe 2008; Evans 2005; Ursin and Abebe *in press*), and safety and freedom (Butler 2009; van Blerk 2012). In Mexico, young people with street backgrounds also manage to “harness” this spatial mobility and become “global travelers,” migrating transnationally (Jones and Thomas de Benitez 2009).

Although mobility is part of young people’s daily survival and identity formation in urban areas, these mobilities are framed within wider socioeconomic and political structures (Langevang and Gough 2009). Traditional perceptions of mobility as essentially positive, liberating, and empowering are increasingly being challenged (Cresswell 2006; van Blerk 2013), suggesting that mobility is *differentiated*: “some are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don’t; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it” (Massey 1993, p. 61). Jones and Thomas de Benitez (2009) found “reluctant mobility” among young Mexicans on the street – oscillating between street and institutions due to unhappiness rather than choice – while van Blerk (2013) witnessed how the everyday geographies of young people on the street in Cape Town were heavily constrained by the FIFA World Cup. This suggests that fixity is not always opposed to mobility but that some people become fixed in mobility (Jackson 2012).

2.3 Sentiments of Home and Belonging

Defined as “out of place” and inherently mobile, street populations’ sense of belonging and notions of home were long neglected within academic research. While some focus on home as family home or previous home (e.g., Evans 2004; Robinson 2005), others urge to broaden the understanding of home to exceed “home as residence” and embrace “home as place,” home as movement, or home as state of mind (e.g., Kidd and Evans 2011; May 2000; Ursin 2011). Discussing home with children on the street in Indonesia, Beazley (2000) detected feelings of homesickness. Other studies report feelings of severe disorientation, isolation, and displacement among street populations (e.g., Daya and Wilkins 2013; Kidd 2004; May 2000; Robinson 2005). Such sentiments were primarily encountered among

young people in their early “homeless careers” in a North American study, having “not yet established the necessary street relationships and alternative worldviews” (Kidd and Evans 2011, p. 767).

Their more seasoned counterparts, however, often rejected dominant meanings of home and homelessness while being able to feel “at home” in the street environment due to experiences of comfort, safety, and belonging (see also Cloke et al. 2008, on squatters). By occupying certain areas of urban space over time and becoming part of the street culture, children in Indonesia developed strong feelings of belonging (Beazley 2000; see also Conticini 2005; van Blerk 2006). Young Australians on the street “searched for and found particular places of ‘connectedness’ in which they felt emotionally and physically safe, supported, or simply free to think and talk” (Robinson 2005, p. 55). These studies suggest that rather than “assuming that the longer a youngster stays on the street the more homeless he is, it can be the opposite” (Ursin 2011, p. 231). A recent study in New Zealand reveals that the length of time on the street might not solely explain feelings of being “homed” or “homeless” (Hodgetts et al. 2012). By dividing the street populations into “drifters” (lower-class background) and “droppers” (middle-class background), it became evident that the former attempted to make a home on the streets, whereas the latter complied with the domiciled definition of homelessness and simply sought to survive while desiring a shift back to domiciled life. Studies among youth in the UK (Kidd and Evans 2011), Brazil (Ursin 2011), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Geenen 2009) suggest that as many young people eventually grow weary of street life, feelings of being “at home” may alter to those of “homelessness” (see also May 2000).

3 Geographies of Sleep Awaken at Last

Traditionally, sleep was understood as a time away from the social world and regarded an a-social, if not an antisocial, state of affairs (Williams 2007a). Half a century ago, Aubert and White (1959) argued that sleep was an important social event, and Schwartz (1970) explored sleep as a social and spatial phenomenon a decade later, before the academic debate on sleep dozed off again. Then at the turn of the century, some sociologists blew dust off the old classics, arguing that, indeed, when, where, how, and with whom we sleep are all sociocultural matters (e.g., Williams 2002). In human geography, a similar attempt of stirring their discipline was made in an editorial by Smith (1996) without much success. More recently, Kraftl and Horton (2008) argued that sleep is fundamentally spatial, urging researchers to map sleep as part of everyday spatial-temporal routines and geographies.

To sleep in public spaces – on sidewalks, in parks, in vehicles, or other places not intended for human habitation – is emphasized in research about young people on the street in the Global South. The act of sleeping in the public realm separates certain young people from their equally poor peers, who also commonly play, work, and hang out in city centers. Where they sleep defines their status as either children

of the street or children *on* the street, a dated typology established by UNICEF (see, e.g., Bush and Rizzini 2011; Hecht 1998; Panter-Brick 2002). A similar division can be found in the homeless literature of the Global North, defining youth as either “shelter homeless” or “street homeless” (Jencks 1994; May 2009). Where these young people sleep is also a highly political issue, as estimated numbers of young people on the street depends on these definitions. Chosen definitions often reflect the agendas of different organizations, echoing tensions over funding and political prioritization (Berry 2007; Panter-Brick 2002). Yet, the mobility of street life complicates such categorizations (Hecht 1998; Jencks 1994; Ursin 2013) and estimations (Berry 2007; Bush and Rizzini 2011). Street populations are usually estimated by late-night counts despite its inaccuracy – people sleeping on the street are particularly vulnerable at night, and for that reason, many tend to hide from the public gaze (Berry 2007).

Family home is often implied as the “proper place” for children (Ennew 2002), where beds and bedrooms are defined as “proper” places for sleeping (Aubert and White 1959; Kraftl and Horton 2008). By sleeping in public, young people are not only considered “out of place” but also outside childhood (Ennew 2002). The defenselessness involved in sleeping on the street is severe, and as Kovats-Bernat (2006) underscores: “A street child’s vulnerability is never more heightened than when he or she is sleeping” (p. 137). This vulnerability places them at the bottom of the social hierarchy (Williams 2002). However, in strategizing to increase safety while sleeping, their sleep patterns position them socially as well as spatially, generating membership and identity (Schwartz 1970): where and with whom one sleeps depend on age, gender, and interests. In Mumbai, children of street-based families assert their independence by sleeping with peers rather than parents as they come of age (Webster 2011). To avoid harassment by older street boys, young boys sometimes sleep next to older girls in Haiti (Kovats-Bernat 2006). The youngest generation of Ugandan street children seeks protection in visibility and police presence in the city center as those “that personify the innocent apollonian vision of childhood are more likely to be harassed by older street youth than law enforcers and will trade off being visible for safety” (van Blerk 2006, p. 64). Their more matured peers prefer sleeping in hidden locations away from the public gaze because they risk being harassed or arrested by the police. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some older street boys seek privacy and security in rental shacks (Geenen 2009). Since the public realm is understood as a male domain in most societies, the sleep geographies of young people on the street are also highly gendered. Girls on the street are very vulnerable and often employ strategies to reduce the risks of sexual harassment and rape. For instance, Haitian girls sleep in groups of three or more and often take turns keeping guard (Kovats-Bernat 2006), while girls in Uganda may rely on protection from boyfriends or security guards, sometimes in return for sexual favors (van Blerk 2006).

As mentioned, while sleeping, one is “off guard” to potential harm (Williams 2002, 2007b). Sleeping together – whether on the street or in abodes – is a source of security, denoting mutual vulnerability and trust (Schwartz 1970; Williams 2007b).

Studying sleep patterns and positions among street children in Accra, Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi (2010) notice that:

Their tactility, the customary positioning of hands, feet, elbows, legs, torsos so as to connect with one another, provides a physical manifestation of their social interdependence; the simple exchange of human contact and physical proximity a source of shelter, security and protection. (p. 450)

However, peer relations on the street are both a source of protection and conflict and danger. In Bangladesh, newcomers have to pay seasoned peers to sleep in their territories (Conticini 2004), while *lagèdomi* – sleeping wars – are widespread in the Haitian street ambience (Kovats-Bernat 2006). These wars start out as low-intensity animosities and escalate into a sequence of violent acts, physically attacking enemies while asleep.

Social networks often facilitate creative sleeping arrangements (Nettleton et al. 2012). To be able to establish a regular sleeping place depends on a continuous negotiation of trust with local residents, care organizations, night guards, gatekeepers, and other employees of businesses and public facilities (Rensen 2003; Ursin 2012). As observed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, street gangs must avoid criminality and keep troublemakers away to gain acceptance in a neighborhood (Geenen 2009), while street youth in the capital of Tanzania pay night guards to sleep on the doorsteps of buildings (Moyer 2004). Establishing trust relations with the police is more ambivalent, since police officers are source of both security and persecution (Kovats-Bernat 2006).

4 Maturing Sleep Geographies in Urban Brazil

The backdrop of this research is a prestigious neighborhood, Barra, with modern high-rise, chic shops and restaurants, nice beaches, historic attractions, and tourism. Young people from poor *favelas* (shantytowns) are considered “out of place,” contaminating the safe, quiet, and high-class ambience. Although middle-class residents and businesses invest large amounts of money to deter street populations, the place continues to attract poor, young people who are searching for livelihood possibilities and domicile alternatives.

In order to explore perceptions and practices of sleep among the young men in this research, understanding their sense of socio-spatial belonging is paramount. Most of the men have come of age in this neighborhood, roaming its streets since their early teens or even before that. Sentiments of autonomy, safety, and belonging are both essential in their narratives of home (Ursin 2011) and echoed in their narratives of sleep. Yet, equally essential is how, as they mature, geographies change according to level of engagement in drugs, property crime, and street violence. In the next sections, four different collective identities are explored through their distinct sleep patterns: *Menino de rua* (street child) is a child or young adolescent who lives on the street, but normally avoids hard drugs and

crime. *Pivete* (street thug) is an adolescent or young adult who lives on the street, who often uses harder drugs (crack cocaine and cocaine) and engages in crime. *Maloqueiro* (vagrant) is an adult living on the street who often uses hard drugs but avoids involvement in property crime. *Favelado* (resident of shantytown) resides in the poor *favelas* and usually tries to avoid both harder drugs and property crime as such activities are incoherent with living a “righteous” life. However, it is important to emphasize that these are categories based on collective identities (see Beazley 2003). As will be argued later, individual identities are multiple, shifting, and complex, for instance, in regard to drug use and crime involvement. Moreover, this list is non-exhaustive as there are other masculine collective identities available in the street environment (e.g., linked to gangsterism, queerness, and mental illness).

4.1 *Menino de Rua: The Age of Innocence*

Recalling their first nights as *meninos de rua* (street children), several of the young men told of feelings of fear and loneliness. Josivaldo (all participants are given pseudonyms to protect their identities) went to the street the first time as a 6-year-old, escaping his stepmother’s maltreatment and his father’s alcoholism and negligence. Recounting the first night almost a decade later, he said: “It was horrible. I didn’t know anyone, slept on cardboard.” The sleep patterns of many of the boys were marked by ruptures and risks prior to street life, by, for instance, being hit while asleep if wetting the bed. Josivaldo had to wake up at 6 in the morning to do domestic work while his stepsiblings continued sleeping. He explained: “[I went to the street] because I could be at ease there, I knew I could wake up whenever I wanted, I knew that I wouldn’t be beaten or maltreated or anything”, emphasizing a longing for both increased autonomy and safety (see also Ursin 2011; Butler 2009).

Josivaldo befriended Caio some years later. Caio had an alcoholic father and a loving mother and arrived at an older age in the street environment. They were among the youngest among their peers in 2005, being 15 at the time. Since their bodies had not yet fully developed and they were not notably involved in property crime or hard drugs (Josivaldo sniffed glue and Caio had not yet started using drugs), they managed to hold on to the image of innocent *meninos de rua*. Many of the passersby gave them food, clothes, and money. As sleep is often regarded a state of innocence and since the “proper” place for children to sleep is in their family homes, children who sleep in public often evoke pity and sympathy. In this sense, sleeping in public can be interpreted as a livelihood strategy as people may feel called to help. This also included offering them protection and access to safe sleeping places. For instance, a girl who worked nighttime at a kiosk next to the bar where Josivaldo slept used to watch over him.

During the first fieldwork, Josivaldo and Caio usually slept at a small square or outside a bar close to a police station. Josivaldo explained how he felt safer while sleeping across from the vigilant 24-h police station.

I went to Barra and got used to [sleeping on the street] and wasn't afraid of anything. At Lapa[the central bus station] I felt more afraid [because] there was no one around. And in Barra you had the police station and I was unconcerned.

Another young boy encountered in a later fieldwork explained that he slept at a permanent and unhidden spot: "I have my fixed spot. [. . .] It's exposed on the grass. Everyone who passes sees me. But no one messes with me." One of the older boys confirmed this when thinking of his childhood:

When we are children, Marit, look over there, those for instance [pointing to young children working at the traffic lights], they're fine, they go to the traffic lights to earn some money, pick some card-box paper, put it under a roofing like that over there and sleep. I've done a lot of this. Today I don't do it anymore. I don't have the courage.

The youngest generation of street boys expressed a deep trust in their surroundings as they sleep in the open, in stark contrast to the older boys, as will be further explored below.

In the first years of their lives on the street, many also prefer to sleep huddled together, two or more, as demonstrated by the memories of Bruno, one of the oldest and most experienced in the street environment. Shortly after arriving in Barra, a middle-class family wanted to adopt him. He explained why he eventually left the family: "I had problems with trauma. There were times when I couldn't sleep. I stayed crying inside my room because of illusions. I was seeing my dad fighting with my mum." Sleeping at a "proper" place, an individual children's bedroom, Bruno felt lonely and was haunted by traumas. On the street, among his peers, he managed to keep the trauma away by, in his words, "exhausting the mind by talking." This shows not only the feelings of comfort, belonging, and trust the youngest generation feels among their street peers but also how sleep is, in Bourdieusian terms, a habitus learned through sociocultural and spatial practices over time.

When not engaged in street crime or drugs, most boys used to go to sleep when the last bars and restaurants closed. There were several reasons for this: it was natural to be tired at this time; it was more comfortable to sleep at night as it is cooler, calmer, and darker; and, most importantly, there were fewer livelihood opportunities as most mainstream citizens were asleep. Many of their older peers, as discussed more fully below, continue to be awake until dawn, sometimes robbing those asleep, as Caio revealed in the second period of fieldwork in 2008:

When I was little I had trust. Everyone, in my eyes, were my friends, everyone ate of my food, everyone slept together with me, but the thing is [. . .] that when I was little, I slept with money and woke up broke.

It is apparent how the ones awake have a distinct advantage over their sleeping peers (Williams 2007b).

In addition to theft, violence is a way for experienced boys to exercise their territoriality rights (see also Beazley 2003). Josivaldo was harassed by one of the

older boys but managed to put an end to it: “After I stabbed him with a bottle, he began to respect me. [...] He didn’t fight with me anymore. When I was sleeping he didn’t take my sheet, he didn’t take my things anymore.” Caio strategized differently to avoid waking up broke. In the second period of fieldwork, he used to remain awake until the older boys went to sleep:

At night you have to stay awake, you have to, see, because if not you will be robbed or fucked over. [...] If I was to sleep at night, one would have passed, taking my sandals, another one putting his hand in my pocket, taking the money the tourist had given me.

On the street, it is crucial to be – and be perceived as – *ligado* (observant and on guard). Sleeping, being drunk, or high is seen as loss of control and strength, making one an easy prey for others. The bodily need to sleep is hence perceived as a problem, something that must be resisted (Williams 2007b). In Caio’s case, he managed to partially control his sleep and remain awake and alert throughout the night due to the stimulating effects of crack cocaine and cocaine. He eventually became one of those who “fucked over” their sleeping peers:

A guy looks at me and says: “The guy over there is sleeping, let’s rob him.” I’m thinking [that] he has probably done this to me too, I won’t do it. “Buddy, just go ahead.” Many times I would even do it, at the times of drugs, but knowing that it was wrong. [...] I’ve stolen sandals, but as well, [compared to] what I have stolen, I’ve lost much more.

Thus, Josivaldo and Caio approximated themselves to the older boys rather than distance themselves from them. They gradually lost their image as innocent, and a new phase of street life began.

4.2 *Pivete*: Street Life Hardens

If [children] sleep at whatever place, there are people who might want to do something but then they see that it’s just a child who’s sleeping there [and they don’t do it]. Thus it’s more dangerous for us who are men, who have developed bodies.

One of the young men thus captured how the embodied difference between boys and men contains different levels of (perceived) danger when sleeping in public. Gradually, street life hardens due to a mutually reinforcing process of physical maturation and increased involvement in drugs, crime, and violence on the boys’ behalf and a change of attitudes in the surroundings, turning the passersby’s pity to fear and sympathy to hostility. During the interviews in 2009, Caio was no longer perceived as a *menino de rua* but rather as a *pivete* (street thug). He explained: “When you start getting a beard . . . they see that you’re growing up, getting stronger. Those who gave you food and clothes will ask you to work.” Public acts that contradict innocence reinforce this change of attitude among mainstream citizens:

When that person, who used to help me, sees me smoking cigarettes, he gets surprised: "Look, he's already smoking! He's already hanging out with that guy!" Thus we're the ones excluding ourselves from society and approximating marginality.

There was a vital difference between the nocturnal hours of *meninos de rua* and *pivetes*, as illustrated by the following excerpts:

At night, when I had money in my pocket I would stay at the bar, drinking beer. Afterwards I would go to the beach, staying at the beach playing [ball] until I got sleepy, taking a bath at the beach, talking with the guys. Then I went to sleep. (Josivaldo, interview 2008)

[A buddy] gave me R\$10 because I set him up [by introducing him to a tourist who wanted to buy cocaine who his friend later ripped off]. Afterwards [another friend] appeared and we smoked pot the whole night. Then [another friend] arrived and invited me to sniff powder [cocaine]. Then I sniffed powder until five in the morning. [Between five and eight in the morning] I drank two Smirnoff Ice and bought a beer for me and my sister [who works as a commercial sex worker]. Then I slept in the car of [the bar owner]. (Caio, interview 2011)

There is no certain age or incident that marks the transition between being (regarded) a *menino de rua* and a *pivete* – it is a gradual two-way process where both the boys and the surroundings react to the physical (and mental) maturation, as well as to each other's reactions.

Unresolved conflicts and previous wrongdoings accumulate with time spent on the street and involvement in drugs, theft, and violence. As a result, peer relations become increasingly saturated with mistrust and fear. Most of the young men have personal stories of *lagé domi* (Kovats-Bernat 2006) and scars to confirm them. Braian, a young man originally from the interior of the state, had been harassed by an older boy in his early teens. Together with his friends, he decided to get revenge:

A guy, older than us at that time, tried to burn us, burned us, maltreated us. And this made us angry, so we got together and said: "Let's burn him!" We acted like it was all just a game, we threw alcohol at him, lit fire, and then he died.

While the *meninos de rua* often sleep gregariously, the *pivetes* find it much harder to trust their peers and prefer sleeping alone or in pairs. For them, sleeping together is strongly tied to trust and companionship.

Although the relation between young people on the street and the police is riddled with ambiguity, negative encounters increase as they mature. A young man who was involved in property crime stated: "We don't like them [the police], we feel safe [around them] but at the same time we don't, do you understand? It's a psychological thing. It's the psychology of the moment." The police may offer protection against third part enemies, such as street peers or drug cartels, yet they may also gravely harass the young men, as witnessed by the crippled leg of one participant:

[The police officer] threatened to kill me, and shot me. [...] It hit my leg and came out on the other side. [Later] he went by me in his police car and shouted: "You remember what I promised you, right? Don't forget the promise I gave you!"

The *pivetes*' relationship with middle-class residents and traders is also increasingly ambivalent. Most of the young men have *fregueses* (Ursin 2011; Ursin and Abebe forthcoming; see also Hecht 1998, p. 53) – people who help them regularly. However, these relations depend on proving trustworthiness. As some of the men become engaged in crime, this trust is eroded (Ursin 2012). These same relations become saturated by skepticism and hostility, both on an individual and a general level. One of the young men said:

Sometimes the rich guys, cowards, pass by; bother us while we're sleeping. Gather a gang and beat us [. . .] Because they're well off and want to take advantage of those who don't have anything. If you have nothing, you're worth nothing.

Although Braian did not steal where he worked and slept, he often did so in neighboring communities (see also Naterer and Godina 2011). This impacted his sense of safety on the street, recalling: "I was insecure because. . . whether I liked it or not – there were many victims, right?" The fear they generate in the area eventually turns back on them, fearing police and past victims.

As their relations to peers, police, and mainstream citizens gradually deteriorate, the sense of safety reduces. Fear related to sleeping was pervasive, as Braian concluded: "The street is a place where you sleep and don't know if you wake up." The fear strongly impacts their geographies of sleep, enforcing them to strategize differently than the *meninos de rua* to manage rest. As already mentioned, most of them avoided sleeping in groups. The two other strategies often employed were to remain awake all night, as Caio did, and to avoid visibility while asleep. The deserted streets and the absence of "credible" witnesses further reinforce feelings of fear at night. After dawn the squares and streets fill up again, with street vendors and people commuting to school and work. Sunrise therefore symbolized reduced risk for most of the young men, as the words of one man illustrate: "On the street it's impossible to even wink, I'm not able to sleep on the street. Honestly, I don't manage. But when the sun rises I'm able to sleep." In this manner, sleep is not only spatially but also temporally at odds with social norms and conventions (Nettleton et al. 2012) as they reject the collective "time schedule" that defines the "proper" time for sleeping (Schwartz 1970) and become "anarchic sleepers" (Williams 2007a). However, it is important to note that fear is not the sole reason for staying awake. For those who are engaged in illegal activities, the nocturnal street offers opportunities for burglary, assault, or drug use with reduced chance of negative consequences (Ursin 2012). This is in line with research among both young and adult street dwellers elsewhere, demonstrating that many prefer to stay awake at night because of safety issues, livelihood options, and drug use (Conticini 2004; Rensen 2003).

Their third strategy of reducing risk while sleeping is to withdraw from the "public gaze" (van Blerk 2006). Even though being a street child yielded income when they were younger, they eventually try to distance themselves from the street stigma to reduce tension in interacting with mainstream citizens (Ursin 2012), as it no longer evokes sympathy but fear and prejudice. Sleeping in public is also increasingly perceived as humiliating as the boys reach puberty and become more self-conscious.

Sleep involves a suspension of normal everyday consciousness (Williams 2002) and can be reckoned a “role release” (Goffman 1963). Although these periodic remissions are both desired and necessary for the young men to cope with everyday life, these “role releases” are incongruent with their street image as *ligado*. The feeling of loss of control involved in sleeping is dreaded, as illustrated by one young man:

Many times on the street I want to sleep, I want to rest a little. My body is very tired by always staying awake all night. And I don't trust lying down in the shade somewhere, like over there [pointing to the shade near the lighthouse] and lay down at ease and sleep until whenever I feel like it without worrying. Sometimes I wake up and “Shit! I slept too much!”

Sleeping becomes an “embodied negotiation” (Meadows 2005) between physical need and a continuous estimation of (in)security.

In search of a “backstage” (Goffman 1990) to let their guard down, some *pivetes* sleep at a cheap hotel as it entails privacy and a much needed time-out from the street, as one emphasized: “When I sleep at a hotel, I sleep at ease.” There is one hotel in which street dwellers may use in Barra. It is mainly frequented by prostitutes and sex tourists, but an occasional backpacker also checks in. Trusted *pivetes* who are allowed to stay there check in after midnight to fill up empty rooms. Although the rates are cheap for the *pivetes*, they still have to be able to afford it. The decision whether to sleep inside or outside, both short and long term, is strongly influenced by their drug use as the need for safe rest competes with their addiction (Rensen 2003). Those who are addicted usually prefer spending their money on drugs and sleep for free.

To be able to sleep hidden without paying demands a profound spatial knowledge about the area. Hidden spots range from backyards and abandoned houses to trees, rooftops, and fishing boats. Braian used to sleep on the veranda of a middle-class residence. The secrecy of the spot was essential. He confessed:

There was this ideal place where I always slept, and slept well, really peaceful, because I never let anyone see me entering. And I always made a detour up the *Oito de Dezembro* street to avoid going up the [main street], always looking behind my back to see that no one was following me. When I arrived at the spot, I climbed the wall and jumped.

Having positive trust relations with the residents or traders who are in charge of potential sleeping places may also be vital to sleep in peace. In Braian's case, the owner of the veranda used to wake him up in the mornings: “He was a guy who has helped me a lot, he was practically my security.”

The young men were aware of the vulnerability of sleeping hidden as well, being easy targets while sleeping soundly and in isolation. Inviting peers to their secret sleeping places therefore signaled deep trust. In fear of being betrayed, they consciously swapped sleeping places to avoid predictable patterns (see also Johnson et al. 2008), as one of them explained:

Recently I don't have a fixed place to sleep; I never had, actually. I never liked having a fixed spot to sleep [. . .] because when I sleep I sleep with someone [. . .] and this drug [crack cocaine] makes people insecure, insecure, and mistrusting. And I don't trust in no one. Never have. But at the same time I trust and mistrust.

The strong ambivalence of trusting peers is evident – they continuously struggle between fear and trust, and pervasive fear distorts their social relations (Koskela 2009) at the same time as being able to trust others, and being regarded trustworthy neutralizes this fear and increases their security on the street (Ursin 2012). This trust was sometimes wasted, especially by those with severe addiction, for instance, by revealing the secret sleeping spots of others in trade for money or drugs, making trust relations fragile and temporary.

Even though the *pivetes* struggle to find safe places to sleep, they enjoy the freedom of street life. Caio had a friend abroad who wanted to help him get off the streets:

She asked me to look for a rental house and she would send money. I said “that’s fine.” But I didn’t look for any damn house. I like to be free, Marit. I don’t like to give satisfaction to no one, do you know? [...] I don’t have a woman; I don’t have anyone. I will rent a house to live alone? Huh, Marit? Seriously...

Renting a house was associated with cohabitation and a more responsible way of living. He reasoned that a house would be incompatible with his lifestyle since his peers would hang around, using drugs, concluding: “This wouldn’t be a home; it would be a hang out.” Being single, he did not see any reason to leave the street. Characteristic of being a *pivete* is to have risky behavior, often including drugs and crime. As Caio, they reject conventionalist ways of living and find the hustling of street life pleasurable and the insecurity of everyday life thrilling. However, as the years pass, many get weary of fighting, fleeing, and fearing imprisonment and death. Those who do not die or end up in prison often find new ways of adapting to their sociocultural, economic, and societal conditions as they choose their own versions of being young adults, most commonly as a *maloqueiro* if they continued on the street or as a *favelado* if they abandoned it.

4.3 *Maloqueiro: Coming to Terms with Street Life*

Many among the oldest generation expressed that street life had become the only way of living for them, “a habit.” Those who occasionally returned to relatives’ homes found it difficult to adapt. Even to sleep in a domiciled bed felt strange after many years of sleeping on the asphalt, as one stated:

I woke up [at my sister’s house] and felt very warm because it’s very stuffy there, and here a guy sleeps at ease because of the fresh air. We get used to the street and don’t want to stay inside the house anymore, that’s the case.

Sleep is thus a bodily technique (Mauss 1973), and what is an “unsleepable” situation for some may be “sleepable” for others (van der Geest 2006). Bruno was one of the men who continued to embrace street life and consider Barra’s streets his home even as an adult. He was a characteristic *maloqueiro* (vagrant) in the latter

fieldwork periods. His sleep geography in 2009 differed from his younger peers in several ways. He had a permanent and visible sleeping spot at the rocks near the sea, feeling safe in the gaze of mainstream society:

I'll be honest with you, Marit, I feel more secure in the eyes of the society where I feel that I'm being observed, where I feel I'm being seen. In hidden places I don't feel seen. [When] I'm seen by educated people, they [potential assassins] are afraid to commit a crime because they fear the consequence.

Another *maloqueiro* underscored that visibility equals safety: "Here it's impossible to come and kill, do you understand? This is a place with security, police everywhere, security guards who like us." He strategized by appearing honest and hardworking in order to be perceived as a "sufferer" by the local community, consciously using the street stigma instead of distancing himself from it. Three years later, Bruno still slept at the rocks, announcing: "I continue the same place. This is my haven where I can talk with God." Even though the presence of God and passersby was valorized, he was aware of the risks by sleeping in public as well. He slept without complete loss of control, securing a harpoon and with his ear glued to the rocks to hear footsteps at a distance. This kind of "socially attuned sleeping" (Williams 2007a) was very common and often described as sleeping with "one eye open."

Bruno had been a typical *pivete* and was involved in property crime in his younger days. In the later stages of this study, he despised such activities and peers involved in them. He found it problematic to live in harmony with the local community when his peers robbed and assaulted in the same area. It was particularly troublesome if the thieves slept beside him, as victims or death squads might not differentiate between them if they sought revenge. *Maloqueiros* therefore seldom sleep in company with others but prefer sleeping alone or with domesticated street dogs.

Being a heavy drinker and a crack user, Bruno clashed occasionally with the police. He recounted an episode where his sleep was challenged by police:

They [police] would come and beat me, saying that I was too much, ordering me to go to sleep. I said: "Man, I'm a *maloqueiro* who only sleeps when my head tells me to. [...] I left home to not be ordered by my dad, so here on the street I will not be ordered by anyone."

He woke up being hospitalized, faintly remembering his rage as he broke the windows of the police station as a response. However, the most common sleep interference by the police was not orders to go to sleep but orders to wake up and move on, as another highlighted:

Sometimes they [the patrolling police officers] get uptight, and with people who live on the street, they don't care at all. They want to kick, they want to wake up, hit, put in the trunk and imprison [...] In some aspects I think they're right, because their obligation is to chase thieves, but it isn't to chase street dwellers only because they're on the street. A street dweller lives on the street, not doing anything wrong. [...] You shouldn't wake up a person who is a street dweller.

The young man reasoned that the police was entitled to wake up and harass those involved in property crime but classified the “street dweller” as having citizen rights, allowing them to sleep in public.

Some of the maturing *pivetes* turn into *maloqueiros*, seeking a more peaceful way of living on the street, even though they continue to valorize the lack of responsibilities characterizing street life. Bruno acknowledged:

I don't have a time to go to sleep and I don't have a time to wake up. I don't have obligations to fulfil, I don't have satisfactions to give, thus my time to sleep is when the sleepiness arrives and I feel like it. [...] To wake up is the same thing because the sleepiness disappeared, the body rested, the mind is back to normal, how it should be, so my body gets up and there I am, ready for war, for another day.

Others are incapable of finding peace on the street or yearn for a more conventional way of adult living and return to the *favelas* to establish their own homes.

4.4 *Favelado*: Leaving the Street

Both Daví and Braian had returned to the *favelas*, living in houses with their girlfriends, in the second period of fieldwork. They had reduced their crack cocaine habits and were earning money mainly legally, selling porridge and minding cars to pay the rent. Having spent most of their lives on the street, they did not see this as a possibility anymore, as Daví stated:

Because lots of people have passed here thus lots of people know a lot of [sleeping/hiding] places, I don't believe this is the safest place for me to live anymore. Safer for me now is my home.

The positive aspects of domiciled sleeping were many in the eyes of the “retired” street dwellers, especially in regard to comfort and safety. Daví summarized:

[The best thing by having a house] is to know that you have a place to spend when it's raining, that you have a place where you really can relax without anyone harassing you, without anyone bothering you, without you being afraid of anyone coming to drop a stone on your head, put fire on you. It is to be able to sleep unconcerned.

On the contrary to the *maloqueiros*, the physical construction of the house was appreciated, as Braian said: “Inside a house you have a door to defend you, a fence, a gate.” In addition, the secrecy of a home address also increased the sense of safety, as one young man reflected: “No one knows where our house is, no one knows where our neighbourhood is.”

Another feature cherished was the privacy and autonomy that having a house affords. One argued: “In your proper house you can feel at ease, the house is yours, turn the volume up if you want, you can smoke your pot if you want.” Clearly, the search for autonomy that initially drove some of them toward the street when

younger (Ursin 2011, see also Butler 2009) may also push them off the street when older. However, it is crucial that the house is *theirs*. Most of them preferred the street over living at friends' and relatives' homes as a favor. Braian spent a period at his aunt's place but left because he disliked "taking up the space of others."

Having enough money to rent a house usually required to earn money legally and regularly and to reduce drug use. Having a female partner often worked as a motivation for taking this step, as Caio touched upon above. Living in a proper house therefore represented responsibility and the "righteous" life, as opposed to street life. This was also illustrated in their night lives, as Braian emphasized:

Inside your home you'll find what? A small television, if you have, to watch, a small radio, your wife, right, besides you to give you advice, caress, hugs, and kisses. Not on the street. On the street there are only drugs, prostitution.

Both Braian and Daví felt privileged being housed. Braian said: "Sometimes when I see people sleeping on the street, I pray for them. I thank God. I ask Him to bless me, me as much as them."

Yet, as there is nothing final about living on the street, being housed also implies uncertainty. In the last fieldwork period in 2011, Daví lamented: "Everything has changed dramatically because I became a father, had a woman, we got separated, and now I'm on the street again, trying to survive once more." He recognized that his crack cocaine addiction was incompatible with family life. Shortly after, he killed a former street peer, received a death warrant from the victim's brothers, and was wanted by the police. He felt "trapped," confessing:

Friends at this hour, Marit, only God, because many people know what happened, but they don't help, they don't say: "Damn, brother, I got a place for you. Damn, brother, give it some time in this hideaway". Do you understand? Become invisible.

Their visibility is never more sensed than when they know that people want to kill them. This kind of danger is contagious in the streets, and a common saying was: "No one wants to sleep with someone who has a death warrant." Social networks disintegrate and sleeping possibilities vanish. Daví spent weeks nearly without sleeping, wandering the streets, and fighting exhaustion until the risk cooled off.

5 Conclusion

By conducting a longitudinal study of the sleep patterns of boys coming of age in the street environment, three important points surface, which will be discussed here: the character of sleep as socially constructed and spatially defined, sleep and identity as interdependent and interlinked, and a life course perspective to encapsulate the dynamic character of sleep over time. The empirical material demonstrates how sleep is far from an a-social state of affairs (Williams 2007a) but rather a multifaceted socio-spatial phenomenon. The four different sleep patterns are

Table 1 A simplified division on how crime/drug involvement, societal perceptions, and sleeping patterns are interrelated

	Crime/drug involvement	In the eyes of society	Sleeping patterns	Sleeping hours
<i>Menino de rua</i>	No	A victim who needs protection	Groups	After closing hours
	No		Visible	
<i>Pivete</i>	Yes	A menace who needs correction	Pairs/alone	After sunrise
	Yes		Hidden	
<i>Maloqueiro</i>	No	A sufferer who needs help	Alone	Whenever they are tired
	Yes		Visible	
<i>Favelado</i>	No	A poor man who needs work possibilities	With family	Suitable to work schedule
	No		House	

related to social categories and (visible) involvement with crime and drugs, summarized in the table below (Table 1).

The empirical material does not only shed light on the young men's sleep patterns but also demonstrate how their routines and practices are deeply intertwined with the social environment they inhabit. Choosing between hidden and visible places and between sleeping alone, in pairs, or in groups always involves risk calculations depending on who they trust – peers, residents, and police – and who they fear, older street peers, police, former victims, and drug cartels. These reinforcing cycles of trust and fear are strongly influenced by their crime and drug involvement, their social relations with mainstream society, and mainstream society's attitudes toward them (Ursin 2012, 2014).

There is great ambiguity among people who sleep in public. In a positive sense, some hours of sleep might give them a needed “role release” (Goffman 1963) from a stressful everyday life. The vulnerability of being asleep sometimes also works as a livelihood strategy. Yet, being asleep is incongruent with the street image of being *ligado*, on guard, and is often a dreaded necessity as times of supposed rest often entail risks of being robbed, harmed, or even killed. Peers might be a source of comfort, trust, and security when sleeping, but they may also cause fear. Likewise, the presence of police and mainstream citizens may deter violent attacks, yet they may also perpetrate violent attacks. Even the space is contradictory, where both visibility and seclusion might increase safety as well as danger. Sleeping in public is always about compromise (Rensen 2003), about consciously and continuously making choices about where, when, and with whom to fall asleep as safety and danger are socially, temporally, and spatially defined. Yet, domiciled sleep is also problematic. Contradictory to conventional views of “proper” places to sleep, the boys' and men's sleep experiences in previous residential homes were imbued with regulations, fear, and solitude. This demonstrates how “spaces themselves are porous and may have multiple meanings, so that there is no simple distinction between public and private space, or ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ places or people” (Pain and

Francis 2004, p. 107). In this sense, the study of sleep geographies affords new understandings in human geography (Kraftl and Horton 2008).

The four categories – *menino de rua*, *pivete*, *maloqueiro*, and *favelado* – have “nominal” and “virtual” dimensions (Jenkins 2008[1996]). The nominal dimension is defined in discourse, such as *meninos de rua* being innocent and *pivetes* being criminals, all four being stereotypical, prejudicial, constraining, and enabling, each in their distinct ways. The virtual dimension involves the individual behavior of those categorized as such, e.g., Caio’s way of “doing” *menino de rua* and *pivete*, relating to individuals’ distinct ways of being these categories. The distinction between nominal and virtual dimensions of identity categories is helpful as the latter contains “a plurality of virtualities” (p. 99), as “some part of the virtual is always individually idiosyncratic” (p. 100). Hence, the categories do not easily correspond with a distinction between those engaged in illegal activities and those who do not: First of all, an individual may only engage rarely or periodically or strategize to conceal “facts which, if attention is drawn to them during performance, would discredit, disrupt, [and] provide ‘destructive information’” (Goffman 1990, p. 141). Second, as the categories are generalizing, those not involved in illegal activities may still be labeled as such, e.g., Josivaldo who rejected the *pivete* status and avoided street crime and harder drugs, but still often was regarded as a menace by passersby. Likewise, those labeled *menino de rua* might rob and smoke crack. All identification combines the nominal and the virtual. Their identities are not primarily linked to biological age but rather to involvement or lack of involvement in the aforementioned activities, yet physical maturity inevitably shaped the repertoire of collective identities available, which depends partly on public displays of innocence or deviance but also physical maturity.

The young men’s choices concerning sleep generate membership (Schwartz 1970) first and foremost of street life itself (as opposed to returning to a residential home at the end of the day) but also of different groups among the street population. These four group identities have distinct characteristics, livelihood options (Ursin and Abebe [in press](#)), and connections to mainstream society. Thus, sleep is not only part and parcel of street life but also street identity. Their individual identities are not fixed, but emerge out of and through their social relationships (Hockey and James 2003), continuously negotiating their identities in encounters with friends and foes in a wide range of contexts. They possess *multiple* and *fluid* identities, which shift depending on their circumstances, the spaces they occupy, and their daily interactions (Beazley 2000). As young people on the street engage in – and are made subject to – different processes of identification (Hockey and James 2003), they sometimes embrace the categories and at other times reject them. When they strategically play the “public role of victim” (Naterer and Godina 2011) (or define themselves as “street children” in encounters with adults), they welcome the image of helpless *meninos de rua*. In other contexts, they may discard this image and cultivate fear rather than innocence through being visibly involved in harder drugs or assaults. Such “role discrepancy” (Goffman 1990) might happen involuntarily as they have reduced access to private space, but it might also be done consciously to assert rejection of mainstream society, as identification also involves resistance

(Jenkins 2008[1996]). This touches upon how the “working consensus” (Goffman 1990) of one setting can be different from another and how young people on the street struggle to find their sociocultural as well as spatial place in society, seeking belonging in street culture while often relying on acceptance by their surroundings, as their street identity draws upon a set of values and morals that are in conflict with the mainstream society (Ursin and Abebe *in press*). As Caio remarked, “we’re the ones excluding ourselves from society and approximating marginality.” By displaying their street identities, they enforce their marginality by increasingly repelling society (Beazley 2003). This may result in life transitions, seizing to be (perceived as) a *menino de rua* and becoming (regarded) a *pivete*, though the four categories should not be interpreted as developmental stages, as they may move back and forth between (some of) them, e.g., not all youth on the street are considered or consider themselves to be *pivetes*, while some young adults do.

By employing a life course perspective and “stretching identities across the life course” (Hockey and James 2003), it becomes evident that the identities of young men on the streets are dynamic and transitional – not only in their youth but throughout life. Their relation to space is crucial in unraveling their identities, as “geographies are constitutive and participative in life transitions” (Hörschelmann 2011, p. 378). Vital changes are encapsulated in their sleep geographies, such as moving from home-based to street-based residency (and in some cases, to home-based again) and from fearing public space as newcomers, while sentiments of trust gradually evolve alongside increased belongingness to feeling fear again as they become more involved in drug use, violence, and crime (Ursin 2012). Thus, the longitudinal study of sleep patterns shows the ways in which identities unfold across the life course. How they are positioned and position themselves according to the street stigma – embracing or discarding it – is encapsulated in the way they sleep (visible or hidden), which again is related to mainstream society’s perception of children and adults on the street as victims and sufferers, yet youth as menaces. Physical maturity in the street environment is integral to their identities, but is also often in tension with it (Hockey and James 2003) as they may want to appear younger in encounters with mainstream society while older and tougher among their peers (see also Beazley 2003; Naterer and Godina 2011).

Although a life course perspective is rarely used in research on children and young people’s geographies, this study shows that such a perspective “opens up” and embraces both their pasts and their futures. Adulthood is essentialized (Hockey and James 2003) rather than perceived as an “arrival” (Wyn and White 1997) and as a permanent, one-dimensional, and self-explanatory category (see also Evans 2008; Hopkins and Pain 2007). For some of the young men, adulthood signifies coming to terms with street life and congeniality in social relations. For others, adulthood involves settling down in a housed home, preferably with a spouse. Yet, as seen in the story of Daví, there is nothing final in becoming housed or reaching adulthood. Transitions are “linked to changes in a person’s appearance, activity, status, roles and relationships, as well as associated changes in use of physical and social space” (Vogler et al. 2008, p. 1) and should therefore be perceived as “occurring across the life course rather than at predefined, age-related points in life” (Hörschelmann

2011, p. 379). As reversals, recurrences, and reinventions happen continuously, adulthood is inherently multiple and dynamic (Ursin and Abebe *in press*). This is not to say that life courses are linear – people move back and forth – nor cyclical, as Davi’s experiences of living on the street as a child, as a youth, and as a young adult are inherently different.

This chapter has provided an overview of some of the core aspects of the rich body of research conducted with young people living on the street, linked to issues of marginality, mobility, and belonging. The longitudinal empirical material presented, describing the sleep patterns of boys coming of age in the street environment, also indirectly sheds light on these issues, by showing how the boys are increasingly marginalized as they mature, which jeopardizes their feelings of safety and belonging, and sometimes enforces them to seek other places of residency. Thus, the study of sleep geographies provides an increased understanding of the socio-spatial dimensions of street life as well as the temporal changes in the life course of young people on the street.

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Abstract

The theoretical and methodological approaches presented in this chapter are grounded in empirical research that explores the role affect and emotion play in processes of children's place-making in areas of rapid change, more specifically the peri-urban development occurring in Melbourne, Australia's southeastern growth corridor. While this is a project located in a specific time and place, the issues and challenges raised speak more broadly to geographical work that seeks to address the complexities of everyday life and what it means to critically engage with the tacit and embodied sets of knowledge imbued in place. In considering what comprises children's geographies, such an embodied approach can tell much about the making of meaningful places and the significance of the noncognitive, affective, and emotional processes in shaping ideas of social relations, notions of belonging and exclusion, and home places. Researchers have pointed out that the methodological framing of children's geographies has

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had a significant influence on the subject matter and empirical material collected. Creative approaches make possible new ways to consider the everyday lives of children. Recent geographical research has turned to the experiential and the performative to try and capture the messiness and complexity of daily life. Within this broader research agenda, work on sound makes an important contribution.

Keywords

Affect • Body • Emotion • Everyday • Participatory methodologies • Place-making • Senses • Sound

1 Introduction

Scholars working within the field of children's geographies have raised important questions about the theoretical and methodological approaches that underpin research about children and their conceptualizations, engagements and processes of making places, and being in the world. Much of human geography's recent focus has sought to critically address debates about the nature of childhood (Ansell 2009; Holloway and Valentine 2000). While we need to be cautious in how we define childhood and acknowledge that this social group, like all groups, is heterogeneous (Matthews and Limb 1999; Holloway and Valentine 2000), in such approaches we find that the lens of childhood geographies offers differing perceptions in the making of place. This is not to romanticize childhood but rather to take on board – and contribute to – contemporary human geography's considerations of the poststructural, postfeminist, and nonrepresentational processes of place-making (Horton and Kraftl 2006a; Thrift 2008). This chapter begins with an overview of recent work in the geographies of children and the conceptual approaches used, with particular emphasis on the broader debates taking place in the geographies of affect and emotion, and how these concepts have been taken up in the exploration of children's place-making. However, this is no straightforward task as geographers have drawn on many differing positions from which to explore the diverse aspects of personal and social life. What is presented is a summary of recent work in children's geographies that has turned to children's embodiment, emotional geographies, non-representational, and more-than-representational theory as a means to "give voice" to children (e.g., Horton and Kraftl 2006b; Philo 2003). Yet even within such frameworks, researchers are faced with the challenges of how we attend to children's ways of being in the world. Most empirically driven research has tended to delineate children's place-making to the intimate and small scale, which is then used to position children's spatial practices as differing to those of adults (Matthew and Limb 1999; Philo 2000). The local should not be dismissed as unimportant (Gibson-Graham 2002; Kraftl 2006) for these intimate geographies do contribute to broader geographic research interests particularly that of immediacy, affect, and direct bodily experience. Nonetheless, as Nicole Ansell (2009) argues, the focus on the local in children's

geographies is a concern because it fails to address how children perceive and engage with the world at multiple spatial scales. A focus on the local need not exclude children's perceptions of broader social and environmental contexts; for example, the work of Cindi Katz (1986, 1991) has examined the ways in which the local lives of children in rural regions are impacted upon by global economic restructuring and change. Often, too, the concern around children's bodies and activities arises out of adult perceptions and concerns rather than children's rights to, and control over, space (Aitken 2001a; Harker 2005).

The challenge of children's geographies lies in the methodological framework deployed, as this has significant influence on the subject matter and empirical material collected, and this is the basis of discussion for the next section. As Ann Lewis and Geoff Lindsay (2000) maintain, we need to draw on more innovative and participatory methods as these can facilitate better access to how children view and make sense of the world. This is important for, as Bethan Evans (2010) points out, essentialized constructions of childhood, such as the innocent victim, limit children's agency. These assumptions about childhood also position children "as more capable of revealing the future on the basis that they are less able to assert 'conscious control'" (Evans 2010, p. 34) over their environment, yet this needs to be questioned as it assumes a singular and somewhat fixed trajectory to adulthood. Participatory methods emphasize the child as an active participant within his/her community in a range of activities and recognizes agency and competency in the making of place and meaning (Ansell 2009; Béneker et al. 2010). This then leads to a final discussion on the role of the senses and the body in the creation of places, with specific emphasis on researching children's perspectives and conceptions of place-making. Within the broader framework of participatory methodologies, recent work on sound and music offers innovative ways to consider the complex relationships between the intimate and personal with wider social and sociopolitical relations and networks. An example of such work is presented which draws on the ideas and debates of emotional and affect geographies, as well as feminist concerns with embodiment and viscosity.

The theoretical and methodological approaches presented are grounded in empirical research that explores the role affect and emotion play in processes of children's place-making in areas of rapid change, more specifically the peri-urban development occurring in Melbourne, Australia's southeastern growth corridor. While this is a project located in a specific time and place, the issues and challenges raised speak more broadly to geographical work that seeks to address the complexities of everyday life and what it means to critically engage with the tacit and embodied knowledges imbued in place. A careful examination of sound and the processes of listening are offered as ways to consider the interconnection and co-constitution of bodies, subjectivities, and places (Duffy 2013; Duffy and Waitt 2013; Waitt and Duffy 2010). In considering what comprises children's geographies, such an embodied approach can tell much about the making of meaningful places and the significance of the noncognitive, affective, and emotional processes in shaping ideas of social relations, notions of belonging and exclusion, and home places.

2 Conceptual Approaches to Children's Geographies

The New Social Studies of Childhood (NSSC) has, since its initial work in the 1990s, encouraged interest in the examination of childhood as a social construct that varies with time and place (Prout and James 1990) and children as social actors who are active beings rather than preadult “becomings” (Holloway and Valentine 2000). These approaches focus on how childhood and childhood spaces are constituted, with particular emphasis on the influence of socio-spatial differences (Anderson and Jones 2009; Ansell 2009; Horton and Kraftl 2006a; Jones 1999; Philo 2000). Moreover, this work challenges the conceptualization of childhood as passive and instead urges rethinking the ways in which children do have agency. NSSC's positioning of children as social actors opens out approaches to empirical work that enables researchers to better comprehend how children perceive and engage with the world in ways that differ to that of adults (Ansell 2009), with emphasis on socio-spatial relations within home, school, and play spaces (Valentine and Skelton 2003; Evans 2008; Hörschelmann and Colls 2009). However, this is not to state that a rigid child/adult dichotomy exists. As social anthropologist Allison James (1995) proposes in her study of language acquisition, children develop their own vocabulary and particular patterns of use, and through their own discourse, they carve out their own identities, and “patterns of belonging are laid down” (James 1995, p. 59). James argues that children are not a subcultural group in their own right but create and inhabit a temporal culture, and children move into and out of this in the process of their socialization. Hugh Matthews and Melanie Limb (1999, p. 70) suggest that, in a similar way, children learn to articulate their own patterns of land use and create their own “cultural locations” within the land use frameworks produced by adults. This questioning of how childhood is constituted has important implications for rethinking children's subjectivities and identities because it contributes to broader concerns for the multiple ways in which people constitute and inhabit place. In addition western ideas about individuated bodies must also be questioned because of the ways this then frames children's agency. As Evans et al. (2011, p. 324) point out, the “conceptualisation of the embodied-subject as individual and bounded” has meant children are increasingly “held accountable for their actions in ways equivalent to adults” when what is more appropriate is the lived dynamics of age (Hopkins and Pain 2007; Vanderbeck 2007) and collective responsibilities for children (Colls and Evans 2008; Holloway 1998; Robson 2009; Evans and Becker 2009).

Working within these broader frameworks, recent research in cultural geography draws attention to a range of modalities that help explore and tease apart what is recognized as the much more entangled, embodied, and heterogeneous series of relationships fundamental to the constitution of place and subjectivity. Theoretical and methodological ideas that frame such research include that of the performative, sensory, bodily, emotional, affective, nonrepresentational, and more-than-representational geographies (Anderson 2006; Dewsbury 2010; Longhurst 2001; Lorimer 2008; McCormack 2008; Philo 2003; Rodaway 1994; Thrift 2008). Central to this work is the argument that bodies and the spaces they inhabit are inseparable

(Duffy et al. 2011; Probyn 2005) and co-constituted (Massey 1994). Researching *through* the body rather than focusing on the body in its inhabitation of place unsettles the norms supporting the privilege of the detached, objective researcher (Longhurst et al. 2008). Furthermore, these approaches unsettle the search for grand narratives and ““useful”” explanations” (Horton and Kraftl 2006a, p. 72) and instead ask us to consider the significance of our everyday lives, those “mundane everyday practices that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites” (Thrift 1997, pp. 126–127). The everyday is an important field of research in children's geographies, for, as a number of geographers have pointed out, what matters to children often differs to what matters to adults, and we need to recognize the importance of the immediacy of experience in its conscious and unconscious shaping of the social and spatial relations we have with places, environments, and other people (Aitken 2001a). As John Horton and Peter Kraftl (2006a, p. 72) suggest:

theoretically, too much of ‘the everyday’ (or ‘everydayness’) is too-often misunderstood or effaced in accounts of children's lives. . . ‘Children's Geographies’ has (and have) much more to say about the ways in which the everyday might be conceptualised. They have the opportunity to enliven and extend the adultism of theory-making, with its self-indulgent attention to the everyday, which never stops to think that children's appreciation of everydayness might be different.

Yet, a focus on the everyday and banal need not limit children's geographies to the realm of the local, the intimate, and a world of “minute interactions” (Horton and Kraftl 2006a, p. 75). Chris Philo (2000) makes the important point that the apparent localness of children's daily lives in particular places does not mean children's geographies occur in isolation; rather they remain located within broader political-economic and social-cultural processes. However, methodological practice to date has tended to position children as separate to the adult world and its concerns (Ansell 2009). In addition, researchers have sought to access the geographies of children through a focus on the child's body that is understood as “profoundly embedded in [his/her] local environments” and the child's “direct experience of the world”(Ansell 2009, pp. 191, 193). Influenced by the child-centered approach of the NSSC paradigm, participatory methods provide an effective and ethical means of gaining access to children's lives in terms of their articulation of experience (Ansell 2009). Yet, we need also be mindful that this approach may be unable to capture the ways in which the adult world of structural processes and theoretical abstractions that are the context of everyday life do impact on children (Ansell and van Blerk 2005).

3 Geographies of Emotion, Affect, and the Body

Before turning to the significance of participatory methodologies in children's geographies, it is important to consider the conceptual frameworks that underpin such approaches and how they help uncover the processes of children's

place-making. Since the late 1990s there has been a renewed interest in emotion and affect in the humanities and social sciences. For geographers the interest lies in how these aspects of personal and social life are significant to concerns of place, power, and subjectivity. As Kay Anderson and Susan Smith's influential 2001 editorial stated, a geographical exploration of the more human dimension of the everyday world is needed because without acknowledging the role played by emotions in all arenas of daily life, we fail to understand how we "both know, and intervene in, the world" (p. 7). This line of thinking has links to the humanistic perspectives of geographers working in the 1970s, who drew on phenomenology in order to better understand how we perceive and hence attribute meaning to our everyday places.

Thereafter, feminist scholars have made important contributions to our understanding of the bodily and the emotional aspects of daily life through a critical assessment that demonstrates how the body and emotions have been used to differentiate and contain certain (i.e., nonwhite, male) bodies and subjectivities (Longhurst 2001; Rose 1993). Place is given meaning through the bodies it contains, and this has ongoing ideological and emotional importance. The public realm is the site of bodies conceived as solid, autonomous, rational, and hence male, while private home spaces house the fluid and irrational bodies of women (and children, who are still in the process of becoming adult). This notion of containment is especially important, for as feminist geographers have pointed out, women's bodies challenge conventional ideas about the assumed boundaries that separate the body from the world (Longhurst 2001). As Bondi argues:

By questioning assumptions about the autonomy and boundedness of human subjects, feminist geographers have troubled distinctions between persons and environments as well as the boundaries around individuals. (2005, p. 436)

Hence feminist geographies have offered important critiques of theoretical positions that start from the position of a universal and male subject and have demonstrated how "emotions framed and circumscribed sexed and gendered experiences of place and spaces" (Pile 2010, p. 7). Although a detailed discussion of the various traditions that inform differing understandings of emotion and affect is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to delineate how these concepts have been taken up in geographical research.

Emotion refers to psychological states, such as anger, disappointment, resentment, joy, and so on, that are at least partially contained by the subjectivity and conscious state of an individual. In this way emotions are conceptualized in frameworks of judgment and cognition. However, emotion is not simply something felt within an individualized body but is produced within networks of relations, both human and nonhuman (Bondi et al. 2005). Emotions, then, are embedded within cultural knowledge and discursively produced and socially formed (Clarke et al. 2006). This means that within these relational contexts, individuals will witness and be to some extent able to interpret and give meaning to these bodily expressions of emotion.

While *emotions* in geographical analysis are able to be expressed and translated into forms of representation (Probyn 2005), *affects* are conceptualized as non- or precognitive and transpersonal. The range of disciplinary accounts as to how affect operates reflects the differing accounts of what this term means and how it acts everyday. Affects are argued to be variously biological, neurological, social, and psychological (see, e.g., Brennan 2004; Massumi 2002; Probyn 2005), and the meaning of the term is further complicated by its association with terms such as emotion, feeling, or sensation. Yet, as Pile (2010) argues, the emotional and affect geographical literatures are not entirely discrete; rather they have a shared ontology in that both emotion and affect are considered mobile, moving between people and things, which in turn “privileges proximity and intimacy” (p. 10). Some researchers, however, make “an analytic distinction between the corporeality inherent in a notion of affect and the more mindful conception of emotion” (Watkins 2011, p. 137) in order to apprehend the complex relations between these states of being. Others argue that separating affect and emotion remains unresolved (Kenway and Youdell 2011). Nonetheless both frameworks draw on phenomenology and the body as the initiator of knowledge. Where they differ lies in the linking (or not) to cognition and thought.

Influenced by the work of Massumi (2002) and Deleuze, affect is most commonly used in geographical literature in the Spinozan sense as a bodily capacity to act and be acted upon. Pile's (2010) overview provides a detailed discussion of current understanding, noting that in the geographies of affect, there is a distinct conceptual break with the geographies of emotion. Geographies of affect start from the premise that affect is beyond cognition. Affect, then, is relational, integral to an “emergent and transforming experience” (Thrift 2008, p. 176). Affect moves *between*, “as a vehicle connecting individuals to one another and the environment . . . connecting the mind or cognition to bodily processes” (Brennan 2004, p. 19). Affect can be distributed across a complex range of networks (biological, neurological, social, and psychological). Moreover, as Ben Anderson suggests, affect is “a transpersonal capacity which a body has to be affected (through an affection) and to affect (as a result of modifications)” (2006, p. 735). Hence, this approach seeks to explore the importance of the affective relations in-between the human and nonhuman elements of a space, as well as the in-betweenness of the body itself – the ways in which the body's chemical and neural processes influence our experiences of daily life (McCormack 2007). Yet, this conceptualization of affect means that, unlike emotions, affects cannot be made known or represented (Pile 2010). So how may we utilize these ideas in children's geographies?

Recent work in children's geographies has drawn on these literatures of affect, emotion, and embodiment in order to better understand the relational and spatial aspects of children's place-making. Important work includes the exploration of play, particularly as a creative negotiation of spatial access and control (Aitkin 2001a; Harker 2005), the ways in which children's spaces and subjectivities are constituted in everyday life in schools (Kenway and Youdell 2011; Kraftl 2006; Watkins 2011; Youdell and Armstrong 2011), as well as the ways in which

children's bodies are defined and managed through the mobilization of certain affects such as guilt and shame (Colls and Hörschelmann 2009; Evans 2010; Evans et al. 2011).

4 Participatory Methods and Children's Geographies

As researchers working in the field of children's geographies have argued, there is need for participatory, child-centered research methods and approaches that offer children the opportunity to give voice to their own interpretation of their lives and that acknowledges differently constituted lived spaces. Participatory methodologies have a key aim of building capacity among research participants, that is, research is conducted with and for research subjects (Blazek and Hranová 2012). As such, the participatory research process is underpinned by engaged examination of power relations, agenda setting, ownership, and outcomes. While these principles are in themselves contested domains, there is an additional need for critical assessment with child-centered participation located within adult researcher-led projects (Franks 2011). An important critique of this approach is that attention to "contextualized knowledge and personal experiences" means participatory research "has necessarily placed an emphasis upon the local, often failing to theorize connections to broader social processes" (Cahill and Hart 2006: ii). Nonetheless participatory research methods are an important means to gain access to children's perspectives of their daily lives (Lewis and Lindsay 2000). Researching "with" children acknowledges that they are active participants in their communities.

A particular emphasis in geography is to study the ways in which children negotiate socio-spatial processes such as identity formation and constructions of belonging (Aitken 2001b; Green 2014; Holloway and Valentine 2000; Valentine 1997, 2000). Participatory research has produced rich and valuable insights into these processes, uncovering the nuanced and complex ways children can and do actively create and attribute meaning to the everyday worlds they encounter (Béneker et al. 2010). However, there is an important distinction to be made between participatory methods and participatory approaches when working with young people (and in research more broadly). Traditional research frameworks may include participatory methods, but participatory action research often draws on more experimental and creative methods, and these enable research participants to have greater control over the process (Blazek and Hranová 2012). Participatory action research explicitly seeks to facilitate social change by enabling participants to "empower themselves through the construction of their own knowledge, in a process of action and reflection" (Gaventa and Cornwall 2008, p. 179; see also Plush 2012; Waite and Conn 2012). Exciting and novel participatory projects in education research, for example, are designed to maximize children's agency in the research process (Ansell 2009). Many of these include practices such as school food gardens which encourage learning about growing, harvesting, and cooking food as part of children's day-to-day learning in schools (Green 2014). Importantly, children are also connected to differing socio-spatial practices from food production at

the international scale to local places where food is grown (Waters 2008; Gibbs et al. 2013). These sorts of projects therefore question the perceived localism of children's geographies, instead urging that researchers "accept the challenge of tackling the macro-scale, structure-based geographies of childhood as shaped by broad-brush political-economic and social-cultural transformations" (Philo 2000, p. 253).

Nonetheless there are inherent difficulties in researching with children in these larger frameworks because of the sometimes limited capacity children have to articulate their ideas (Cunningham et al. 2003). Studies that seek to better understand the ways in which policies and practices impact on children's lives need also to consider that such governmental frameworks are devised beyond children's usual access and influence and even awareness (Holloway and Valentine 2000). And, as with research generally, there are issues around consent, privacy, confidentiality, and unequal power relations (Mauthner 1997).

Creative approaches within methodological frameworks make possible new ways to consider the everyday, the arena in which researchers have usually framed children as being both socialized and contained. Everyday life has gained significance in our understanding of the world from an adult perspective, but in terms of children, as Stuart Aitken (2001b, p. 123) points out, "the places and practices of children's everyday life are rarely considered a dynamic context for understanding social and material transformations." The mundane habits, practices, and experiences of daily life often go unnoticed, even though recent arguments in social and cultural theory propose that such things matter profoundly (Horton and Kraftl 2006a; see also Lorimer 2008). Pink (2004) has suggested that by turning to the senses, we can expand our understanding of everyday life beyond the conventional parameters of analysis. As many researchers have noted, we experience the world through the body, for "our body determines – or, rather, is – our encounter with the world" (Horton and Kraftl 2006a, p. 77). We also need to recognize that our bodily encounters in and with the world are "not simply perceptual, but always involve emotional, cognitive and imaginative engagement; they are always relational" (Ansell 2009, p. 200).

Visual methods such as photography, drawing, and video are popular tools in participatory research. Contemporary (western) children have strong visual literacy skills and can readily understand and use video-based methodologies (Fleer 2008) and these fit well in terms of child-focused research paradigms. Some geographers have argued that participatory video can challenge "conventional relationships of power" (Kendon 2003, p. 143) and therefore offers important ways for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups to be able to present differing viewpoints, and this potential has been important to the ideas used in participatory action research (Pain 2004). However, others have pointed out that critical reflection is required when using such methods. Video footage is not simply a capturing of experience; rather, as Helen Lomax and Neil Casey (1998 online) note, the camera "has a uniquely distorting effect on the researched phenomenon." Researchers therefore do have an influence on the material collected, even when using technology that enables greater choice and agency for the participant, and the impact of these social

relations and interactions need to be carefully examined (Cutter-Mackenzie et al. 2013). Moreover, visual methods tend to focus attention – of both children and researchers – on the proximate and local material environment, leaving relations with unobserved places unexplored (Ansell and van Blerk 2005).

Recent geographical research has turned to the experiential and the performative to try and capture the messiness and complexity of daily life. Thinking about the “messy, fleshy” (Katz 2001, p. 711) embodied aspects of social existence is an important reminder that experience is a multisensory engagement (Ansell 2009; Rodaway 1994) that our everyday lives encompass more than just the visual and cognitive realms (Thrift 2008). As Nicole Ansell (2009, p. 200) explains, “embodied encounters, then, are not simply perceptual, but always involve emotional, cognitive and imaginative engagement; they are always relational.” A geographical consideration of sound offers another dimension to thinking on our embodied encounters with the world. As argued elsewhere, “paying attention to how sound prompts highly visceral experiences. . . offers possible insights into how sounds are worked, reworked or silenced in everyday lives in meaningful ways” (Duffy and Waitt 2013, p. 468).

Scholars working across a broad spectrum of disciplines have argued sound is not merely a background to our lives. We experience sound around, in and through our bodies, thus reminding us how place and people are very much intertwined (Duffy and Waitt 2011; Kahn 1999; Wood et al. 2007). Wood et al. (2007) offer a range of tools to help work with the personal, ephemeral, emotional, and sensual experiences of taking part in music and sound. They explore auto-ethnographical approaches that provide an important starting point to collecting a “lived experience” of sounds including video recording and “participant-sensing” note-taking. They work with a conception of music that emphasizes its being and doing, that is, its nonrepresentational, creative, and fleeting qualities (Smith 2000). This approach considers embodied subjectivity as an ongoing, fluid, emotive, affectual, and *sonic* experience. The knowledge derived from such experience is comprised of not only what is heard but also innate and personal responses to listening. It is through practices of listening and its associated emotional and bodily responses that there is the possibility of understanding how affect operates (Waitt and Duffy 2010). Sounds mediate the relations of the self and (human and nonhuman) others through the body. It is not simply that sound represents subjectivity and identity (be that individual, community, or place identity) and thus is also representative of notions of connection and belonging, as some researchers have suggested. Rather, it is that subjectivities are constituted within the very unfolding of the sonic event (Duffy et al. 2011; Waitt and Duffy 2010). Individuals are continually managing (and often not consciously doing so) their emotions and affective relations in response to their position within particular social circumstances. Hence, emotions and affects are inevitably specific to social situations and individual embodied histories.

A focus on listening offers the means to consider the noncognitive processes of place-making and our relationships to others. This is the significance of sound and listening, for we respond through our unspeakable connections to the world – the bodily, emotional, and affectual – and, as some have argued, the very reason why

we engage in sonic practices. Hence, this approach requires the individual to attend to his/her bodily affects, of knowing place not cognitively but experientially, and through this approach we can gain access to how we individually and collectively constitute places. Therefore a focus on sound and listening offers important ways to reconsider what participatory methods can provide in terms of children's place-making. The limits of language proficiency, as Blazek and Hranová (2012) point out, can hinder better understanding of children's experiences and practices. In ways that are similar to participatory video, sound recording can challenge "conventional relationships of power" (Kindon 2003, p. 143). Children can choose what is recorded, and this not only gives voice to those with often limited agency (Prout and James 1990) but enables the creation and communication of knowledge that does not necessarily rely on language yet provides richer accounts of children's lives as well as their involvement in the production of knowledge.

5 Images of Home

This final section explores the insights gained by participatory research, specifically through the use of sound recordings and their examination through the theoretical lenses of emotion and affect. The focus is a case study of Melbourne's southeastern growth corridor. Funded by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation or VicHealth (Australia), the material and analysis presented in this section arise from a sound-based Community Cultural Development research project called "Images of Home." The aim of the project was to offer children aged between 10 and 12 the opportunity to explore meanings of "home" in the rapidly changing environment of Melbourne's peri-urban fringe. In developing the project the underlying argument was that when people are asked to be attentive to the sounds of their daily lives, very diverse personal, emotional, and affective sets of social relationships can be uncovered and that these are underpinned by values attached to both lived and imagined notions of home.

The township of Officer, situated about 50 km southeast of Melbourne, has one of Australia's fastest growing populations. Nestled between the southeast edges of Melbourne's suburban edge in Berwick and the satellite city of Pakenham, Officer was once a solidly rural space. Yet, Officer's rural environment is quickly being leveled and coated in asphalt and housing slabs. Rapid population growth is already evident; in 2009 the population numbered 1000; in 2011 this had risen to around 1700 residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011) and is estimated to expand to 45,000 by 2030. These changes are particularly significant for young people and children. The population of young people is expected to more than double in the next decade, but as a local government report suggests, there is an urgent need for improved infrastructure and initiatives that will recognize and assist young people in feeling "connected to their community through a sense of belonging and wellbeing" (Cardinia Shire Council's *Youth Policy and Strategy* 2007).

The methodological framework used in this project is not dissimilar to the child-centered approaches discussed above. However, the project is located within the

two differing geographies of emotion and affect, and this is a deliberate choice in order to capture the cognitive and noncognitive relations occurring in and with place. As JD Dewsbury (2010, p. 324) points out, methodologies that draw on performative, nonrepresentational, and affect-based frameworks are more than a choice of method and “much more about questioning how we are going to configure the world, and how we question in practice to what extent we are able to configure different worlds.” That is, Dewsbury is reminding us that every methodological choice we make has an implication for the management of meaning that we are making. Hence, this project asks participants to capture of sounds and rework them into a collaboratively created soundscape as a means to uncover the emotional *and* affective processes of their place-making.

5.1 Emotional Geographies

The first part of the project required the children to nominate and come to an agreement on three parts of the township of Officer that were significant to them in some way and where they would collect sounds. This part of the project deliberately focused on emotional relations in three ways. First, the discussion and choice of locations allowed the participants to nominate places in Officer of personal significance to them as individuals and as a group, with the freedom to suggest places to which they may have a positive or negative connection. Second, in discussing their interest in certain places, the participants gained a sense that they have different emotional connections to different parts of the township. This in turn led to recognition that the place of Officer is in fact made up of multiple spaces, and the children started to recognize that the spaces of Officer allow them several different emotional connections simultaneously. Finally, as the group of participants discuss possible recording spaces, they begin to recognize that friends and classmates may replicate their feelings toward certain places or have differing emotional connections.

The collection of sound data was simple (Duffy and Waitt 2011; Merlino and Duffy 2011). The children visited the nominated places in Officer and were asked to sit quietly in small groups and listen to what sounds could be heard. They were then given digital recorders and asked to make a total of three recordings each of between 30 and 60 s in length. The following day, the researchers met with each individual child, listened to the recordings, and asked each child about the choice of sound. Semi-structured interview prompts were available, but the aim was to allow the child to talk freely about the sound and its associations. This approach draws on that of photo-elicitation (Clark-Ibáñez 2004), where the participant is asked to take his/her own photos that are then used as interview stimuli. This inductive research approach brings the focus to what is important to the participant. In addition, it was hoped that recording in-the-moment sound bytes offered a way to gain insight into the children’s perceptions and feelings in response to the places visited. While the children made their sound recordings, the researchers recorded their observations,

noting where and how the recordings were made in each of the locations, as well as the emotions generated.

In the follow-up discussions, it was clear that the children collected sounds and talked about them mostly in terms of how the spaces visited functioned. For example, the local oval is where the football and netball teams practice and play competitively and the children wanted to capture the sounds of these team events, including the cheers and excitement of barracking for one's own team, the sound of the football and netball being bounced or kicked, and, for one group of boys, singing the football club's theme song. Children also collected sounds of nature, perhaps not surprising given the rural context of this space (albeit one that is undergoing rapid urbanization). Yet, what was surprising for the children was their excitement at the variety of environmental sounds that they noted. The process of listening carefully prior to making recordings meant the children engaged with these places in new ways, and this enabled them to engage differently with the space. Moreover the everydayness of these sounds was a revelation to the children. In the case of the oval and its surrounds, children observed that these spaces were not only teeming with sounds but also teeming with life that they had never noticed. While the engagement with these sounds of nature changed the children's perception of this space, it also changed the way in which the space was experienced and emotionally expressed. For example, one child recorded the sound of crunching leaves, explaining, "I did it because when you, like, walk on [the dry leaves], it cracks, and it really sounds like you're in the bush even though, like, you're nearly on the freeway." She expanded on this by drawing together the immediate physical experience with the memory experience of walking in the bush, noting the positive emotional responses she connected to these sounds; "it sounds really good, it's sort of relaxing." Given her usual experiences of the oval represented by the sonic agitation of sports and human intention, this child recognized the possibility of a calmer and more relaxed sense of self within that space after she had experienced these possibilities through a careful listening.

An unexpected turn of events for the researchers was the attempts by some participants to (re)create what "should" be in such a space of "nature." Rather than capture the sounds that they were hearing around them, some children constructed some of the hidden sounds behind those of their everyday experiences. For example, one child, after recognizing the amount of bird sounds at the oval, attempted to imitate and capture the sound of a bird pulling leaves off a tree. His additions to the environmental sounds of the oval are significant. Like most of the participants, he recognized the sonic differences between his usual football-related experiences of the oval and the nature sounds that he was now hearing. In response to this observation, this child added sounds based on his imaginings of the environment, and he constructed those sounds he perceived could or should be present but could not be immediately heard. Yet, even though these sounds were audible only to him, the additions were critical in the transformation of his experience of the place.

This behavior is significant in understanding what is at play in this project. The sound recordings and comments of the participants have shown the changes in perceptions that occur when one actively engages in listening to a space. Many of

the sounds captured were not in themselves new to the children but were new to their experiences of the oval. However, as the example presented demonstrates, there is a substantial difference between *hearing* and *listening* within an environment. Drawing on the ideas of Jean-Luc Nancy (2007), “to hear” is to make sense or understand a situation, both logically and figuratively. Hearing therefore aids in our contextualization of the spatial and aural experience and of ourselves. In contrast, “to listen is to be straining toward the possible meaning, and consequently one that is *not immediately accessible*” (Nancy 2007, p. 6, emphasis added); hence, by creating new sounds the participants are constructing new meanings within the space of the oval and exploring possibilities that were not immediately accessible. Listening therefore is to engage in the potentialities of a space, an engagement requiring several connections – aural, emotional, affective, and temporal – between the self and the environment. In this sense, not only do new interpretations and transformations emerge for the space but also possibilities for new meanings and connections to place appear for the participants. As a consequence of these processes, there emerge new possibilities for a sense of belonging and a sense of home.

In the analysis of this data, certain emotions are articulated and activated, and one such example is found in the sounds recorded of banging chairs collected by a number of the children. In our follow-up conversations, many used the words “annoying” to describe how this sound made them feel, even though this was a sound they chose to recreate about this space. As one participant explained, “that was the chairs getting banged. . . and it’s really annoying because every time you stand up the seat bangs, when, like if you sit down and stand up the chair falls up and makes a noise. . . a lot of people do it.” Yet, on closer questioning there was more to this annoyance than simply the noise (as loud as it was). Another child who also recorded this sound connected it to specific situations and members of the school, explaining, “I recorded the chairs all banging together because they’re really annoying when we’re at house athletics and cross country because we’ll be sitting on them then the preps’ll [sic] come along and sit on them and then they get off, so they bang together, and it’s really annoying and it’s just this really loud banging noise and I absolutely hate it! [laughs].” In thinking about this example, what we find is that this particular space at the oval has attached to it certain emotional registers – of annoyance and of knowing/remembering how others act in this space – and the children enter this space already attuned to these emotions because of prior experience and knowledge. Yet, in recreating that sound, the children took on an emotion connected to the oval space, translated into the feeling of annoyance, and then sought to increase its affective impact – the velocity and sound of the banging chairs piling up and far exceeding the more usual range of sound of a sports day – so turning its affective impact into something to be played with and even ridiculed. This incorporation of affect is important and will be taken up below, for it demonstrates how the children did not simply record sounds as a reflection of the space but sought to capture the ways in which the space has an affective capacity and they wanted to communicate that capacity. Before turning to this, it is important to recognize that the sound dairies did not simply capture the emotions attached to the individual but also captured the broader social

implications of these children's emotional networks. In one follow-up interview, a child talked about why she recorded the sound of her friends cheering, saying, "I like the sound of people cheering like at a football game because it makes us sort of feel good, because it makes me feel good that people appreciate Officer." The experience of cheering and the positive atmosphere it generates – and this is one already associated with supporting the football club – lead this child to feel a sense that "people appreciate this place." Such a statement reveals much about these children's thoughts on how nonresidents perceive the township.

5.2 Geographies of Affect

The next part of the project, with its focus on affect, offered an important means for the children to express and transmit these various emotional and affective states. This involved an exploration as to how affect constitutes place and subjectivity and also how others – those who were not directly involved in the collection of sounds or even know much about the location in which these were collected – may attend to the children's sound collection and associated meanings. In working this through, McCormack's notion of thinking space is significant, suggesting that we consider a way that facilitates "co-intensive sensing, in affective-dynamic terms, of the creative processuality of something in the world forcing us to think" (2008, p. 3). This idea of encounter is important, for as McCormack explains in this approach "research materials are not so much discovered as co-generated" (McCormack 2008, p. 5). As a means to engage others, the second part of this project was the creation of a sound art piece. After the full collection of sounds, pairs of participants worked with a sound artist to create, or recreate, sound fragments. The children were encouraged to engage creatively with the recorded material, drawing on these sound fragments and their own ideas as to how these should be woven together. The final shaping of the sound piece was done by the sound designer, who developed these different sound snippets into a final piece of approximately 15 min. Two sound exhibitions were held, using a quadraphonic installation with speakers positioned at the four corners of the listening space, as well as channels positioned above a central seating area. This setup was chosen to give a more enveloping sense of space to the listener and to recreate the spatial cues of the environment as observed by the children and the sound artist. Movement across space of the recorded sounds was also portrayed, such as running sounds from one speaker to another or the movement of a swing from one direction to another.

In the creation of this sound piece, what can be heard in these reimaginings is not only a mixture of the participants' narratives but also a sense of being *in* the space in ways that are affective. This is because we hear the response of the children of being in these places and also how they wished to represent these experiences. This process therefore did not just replicate or reproduce what exists in a particular location, it also led to the creation of different kinds of space, ones in which the children were not passive subjects but active, affective, embodied creators. Therefore, when we listen to the sound art piece, we are invited into the *atmosphere* of the

children's everyday places (Anderson 2009). This is not simply an audio replication but a way that demonstrates how these spaces and the children interacted; how they felt at that particular time and whether or not they were aware of that feeling.

When we listen to such a recording a number of things occur. One important thing is that the listener becomes an "I," a subject (re)located *within* these sounds, and this creation of an "I" is achieved through a number of elements. First, the listener is given a position within this sonic world as sounds move around his/her listening body; for example, the individual listening hears the introduction of footsteps and scuffing through gravel and leaves, and sounds move past the listener, from one speaker to another as well as sounds moving overhead. Second, the listener himself/herself is moving within this sonic world. One example is the sense that the listener appears to overhear the conversations of children in the playground or in a classroom, but the words are not absolutely clear and the listening "I" appears to move quickly through these different spaces. This all gives the listener the perception of a bodily form through the foregrounding, backgrounding, and middle grounding of these different human and nonhuman sounds. Finally, there are the affective elements of the piece. Some of the sounds very clearly signal an emotion, for example, that of joy through laughter. There is also a visceral element to this, for later in the sound piece a group of girls laughing seem to whiz around the listener; there are no words but as the central listener we get caught up within this movement.

Returning to the tools that a focus on sound recording can provide, there are also affective atmospheres set up through the tones and rhythm of the different sonic elements of the sound art piece. The listening body seems to move through the space at a fairly regular tempo, an unhurried walking pace, but the encounters with human and nonhuman elements have different faster or slower paced rhythms. There are also encounters with different pitches, and these have an impact on the listening body, particularly the lower pitches of cars and trains that have visceral affects in that such sounds are felt in the chest, for example. These different sonic elements set up affective atmospheres (Anderson 2006), such as the sound of the swing heard close to the beginning of the piece, moving slowly back and forth, which is heard through minor tonal relations offering perhaps a more melancholic feel occurring as it does with the "unhurried walking pace." This melancholy is revisited later when we hear echoing talk that conjures up (perhaps) memories of other times and places.

The sonic gestures captured by the children and reworked into a sound art piece is more than an archiving of this place. The work of the children and the sound artist brings about a double articulation of *affective* places (drawing on Massey 1994), a space in which the children negotiate, on a number of levels, their identification with and sense of belonging to this place, and how this affects them. These examples reflect the different scales of social connection or sociability among the participants. Some of the children connect to place in a very immediate and personal way. They captured sounds that were very specific to the space or to their own engagement with it. Other children connected sounds and their affective register to broader categories of social engagement. They experienced not just a

one-to-one connection between self and space but a connection between self and the multiple habitations of space. In other words they recognized the social construction of place and its role in making meaning. Teresa Brennan's (2004) work on affect is significant to understanding how the children engaged in this project; it is not what participants can *tell* us about their sound collections that is important, for as Brennan tells us, feelings are sensations that "have found the right words" (p. 5). Rather the children's attention to their bodily affects and movement, of capturing their everyday spaces through the interactions, soundings, and movements in space, leads to a knowing of this place not cognitively but viscerally that they then can "pass onto" us through the sound art piece.

6 Conclusion

With the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child and its ratification in 1989 by most UN member states, there is better recognition of the need to include children in various issues occurring at national, state, and local levels (Cunningham et al. 2003). Psychological well-being is more likely to be gained when there is some capacity to contribute to important aspects of daily life (Cunningham et al. 2003; Spencer and Woolley 2000). Yet, the importance of including children and young people is more than in the immediate benefits of well-being and feeling connected, as important as this is. The involvement of children in design and planning provides opportunities for them to learn about active and responsible citizenship (Chawla 2002; Cunningham et al. 2003) and facilitates competencies in areas of communication and debate (Chawla and Heft 2002). However, attending to children's place-making activities is significant in that this can offer fuller understanding of what everyday life entails. As Harker (2005, p. 60) argues:

rather than knowing 'their' world, we can instead know something about this betweenness that we both share. What occurs between adults and children is inevitably inflected by unequal relations of power, but it is, irreducibly, a shared space. The ethical task then becomes, how do we create and live in such spaces.

Scholars working in the field of children's geographies have sought to address the complex ways in which young people's subjectivities are constituted, and the ways in which spatial practices serve to reinscribe certain ideas about childhood. The focus on the local arises out of two ideas about childhood and children's lives: first, that children have often been constructed as embedded within intimate spaces closely attached to home range spaces (Ansell 2009; Philo 2000) and, second, empirical studies have tended to focus on the daily lives of children with little emphasis on the impact of wider processes, discourses, and institutions in and through which everyday life is constituted. Yet, many scholars have also pointed to the ways in which children do not exist as entities separate to the processes and practices of everyday life. Rather they can be considered as "existing as children now and adults not-yet-become"

(Evans 2010, p. 34; Harker 2005), which may then better capture the ways in which we inhabit and constitute place in various different ways.

Recent theoretical and empirical “turns” in geography offer novel ways to engage children and to gain access to these various ways in which places are made and given meaning. The project discussed in this chapter focused on the relationships between sound, affect, and emotion as a means to apprehend the bodily and noncognitive processes that shape our worlds. Scholars working across a broad spectrum of disciplines have argued sound is not merely a background to our lives; instead we experience sound around, in, and through our bodies, thus reminding us how place and people are very much intertwined (Duffy and Waitt 2011; Kahn 1999; Wood et al. 2007). Smith has argued that the significance of these sonic processes is that they can “bring spaces, peoples, places “into form”” (Smith 2000, p. 621). Sounds mediate the relations of the self and (human and nonhuman) others through the body. Hence, it is not simply that sound represents subjectivity and identity (be that individual, community, or place identity), but that subjectivities and places are constituted within the very unfolding of a sonic event (Duffy et al. 2011; Waitt and Duffy 2010). Listening offers the means to consider the noncognitive processes of place-making and our relationships to others. This is the significance of sound in general and practices of listening in particular, for we respond through our unspeakable connections to the world – the bodily, emotional, and affectual – modes of being that perhaps may offer children a greater means of agency. Glimpses of such agency are found in the examples of the children’s recordings in the township of Officer. The children did not simply record sounds. Rather, the sounds were represented in the creation of the sound art piece so that the listener would be affected. Therefore, more than simply “giving voice” to an otherwise silenced group, the sound art piece mediates our unspeakable connections to the world – the bodily, emotional, and affectual – modes of being that perhaps may offer children a greater means of agency. As Stuart Aitken (2001a, p. 180) proposes, “giving young people space is more than giving them room to play, it is giving them the opportunity for unchallenged and critical reflection on experiences.” Furthermore these activities facilitate “the active exploration of individual and social imaginaries, built up in the spaces of everyday life” (Aitken 2001a, p. 176). By researching *through* the body, geographers reaffirm how we are entangled with and in creations of place. Attention to the responses we have to sound allows us access to the geographies of emotion and affect that then help reveal intimate and personal sets of relationships to the human and nonhuman world. These relationships are underpinned by imagined, emotive, and lived notions of a place that are nonetheless shaped by broader-scale processes and practices. Indeed, “children are not only a valuable source of community information but also, in a way, one of the most important client groups” as “they have interesting perspectives of the world in which they live and much to contribute to the political processes that shape the urban and rural environment” (Cunningham et al. 2003, p. 204). We need, then, to recognize that an expanded sense of children’s perspectives must be integral to studies of the everyday and how we might consider planning and design in the future.

7 Cross-References

- ▶ [Can School Gardens Deepen Children's Connection to Nature?](#)
- ▶ [Children and Young People in Changing Urban Environments in the Majority World](#)
- ▶ [Engaging Young People in Climate Change and Sustainability Trails: Local Geographies for Global Insights](#)
- ▶ [New Spaces, Blurred Boundaries, and Embodied Performances on Facebook](#)
- ▶ [Posthumanist Approaches to Theorizing Children's Human-Nature Relations](#)
- ▶ [Reimagining Home: Visualizing the Multiple Meanings of Place](#)
- ▶ [Rural Youth: Mobilities, Marginalities, and Negotiations](#)

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The Bedroom: A Missing Space within Geographies of Children and Young People

19

Jamie Adcock

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Abstract

For the most part, bedrooms have escaped the attention of those concerned with exploring the geographies of children and young people. Reflecting the scarcity of work on children's and young people's domestic geographies more generally, geographical research on bedrooms is all but nonexistent. Divided into four analytical sections, this chapter problematizes the absence of the bedroom within geographies of children and young people and critically evaluates the lack of subdisciplinary research on the space. After a discussion of the significance of the bedroom within the lives of children and young people, the chapter reflects upon the domestication of childhood, the close association of children with the home, and the paradox that research tends to focus upon children's and young people's relationships with public spaces rather than private spaces. Next, it considers the difficulties of conducting research on and within the domestic sphere; it argues that these difficulties, a propensity for empirical work, and the preference for a direct engagement with children and young people have contributed to the dearth of research on both homes and bedrooms within the subdiscipline. The chapter

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subsequently reviews a range of bedroom-based work from outside geographies of children and young people. It concludes by suggesting that such work illustrates the potential for similar studies within geography and the possibility for collaborative research with other disciplines of the social sciences.

Keywords

Bedrooms • Home • Domestic space • Domestication • Bedroom culture

1 Introduction

From a Western perspective, children are generally expected to be provided with a space of their own within the home, even if individual circumstances cannot always allow for separate rooms (Madigan and Munro 1999). Owing to the concept of child individuality, the practicalities of domestic space, and the recognition that children (and adults) frequently require and desire some privacy, children's bedrooms are an essential and vital feature of the family home. For example, when domestic space is restricted or where financial means are limited, parents often forsake their own needs and comfort to ensure that their children are afforded a room of their own (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002).

The bedroom is a significant space of childhood and is "integral" within the lives of children and young people (Lincoln 2012, p. 2). Though it may be the subject of adult administration, it is generally the first, and often only, space that children and young people can call their own. A home within a home that they can lay claim to, it allows children and young people "to articulate and represent their social and cultural lives, their transitions, experiences, aspirations, and identities" (Lincoln 2014, p. 266). However, bedrooms have been overlooked by geographies of children and young people and are largely missing from geographical studies of childhood and adolescence. Although bedrooms do occasionally feature within research, they are rarely the primary focus of examination and tend to be lost, or absorbed, within broader studies, for example, on family and household dynamics (Sibley 1995), gender relations within domestic space (McNamee 1998), children's use of computers within the home (Holloway and Valentine 2001), children's domestic play (Hancock and Gillen 2007), and bedtime practices and routines (Horton and Krafl 2010). The bedroom has been explored in greater detail outside the subdiscipline, however, and has formed the basis for a number of anthropological, historical, media-, and cultural-based studies, though these also remain relatively few and far between.

This chapter considers why bedrooms are seldom the subject of research within geographies of children and young people. It argues that the deficit in bedroom-based scholarship reflects a lack of work within the subdiscipline on children's and young people's lives within the home and on their relationships with domestic space more generally, and that both are a consequence of the theoretical and methodological principles of the subdiscipline and of the complexities of doing research both on and within the home. Following a more detailed introduction to the bedroom and an

outline of its significance for children and young people, the chapter observes that studies within the subdiscipline most often gravitate toward exploring children's and young people's views and experiences of public spaces despite the attachment of children and childhood to concepts of home and family within culture and society. It further notes that studies within the subdiscipline are frequently of an empirical nature and that they tend to follow and practice research techniques which facilitate some sort of interaction, or engagement, with children and young people. The chapter subsequently reflects upon the practical and ethical difficulties of researchers gaining access to both homes and bedrooms and of undertaking research with children and young people within these spaces. To illustrate how others have approached the study of the bedroom and overcome or avoided such issues, the chapter also reviews much of the aforementioned work that originates from beyond geography. Highlighting the potential for comparable geographical studies, it describes how a range of research has explored bedrooms, within both the present day and historical contexts, using textual methods, participant-led methodologies, and ethnography.

2 The Bedroom

More than simply a room that houses a bed, or a space that provides only sleeping room, a child's bedroom is typically a "multifunctional" space, one which facilitates activities of play, recreation, and study while also accommodating a multitude of personal possessions and artifacts (Madigan and Munro 1999, p. 66). An important site for the expression of individual identity, the bedroom allows children to make their own mark on space and to develop, explore, and reinforce their sense of selves. Although the material culture of the space tends to reflect and point to the gender of an inhabiting child (Cieraad 2007), and rooms may be composed of themes, characters, and objects that form part of a common consumer culture or "popular culture fantasy" (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002, p. 113), bedrooms allow for a degree of personalization, provide a sense of ownership, and enable children to display, chronicle, and indulge in their interests and personalities (Lincoln 2012, 2014). For example, in addition to mass-market consumer items, one may find within a bedroom trophies, prizes, and awards, drawings and objects made at school or as part of a hobby, and informal collections of random things, such as shells and stones (Cieraad 2007).

As children mature, bedrooms become important platforms for the development and display of new and emerging identities, for rooms continually evolve to reflect their inhabitants' changing tastes and interests, both materially and in how they are used (Lincoln 2004; Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002). Indeed, bedrooms for younger children and those for adolescents and teenagers are usually visually distinct and serve different purposes. For instance, while the former often double as playrooms or toy-storage facilities and feature more-childish forms of decoration (Cieraad 2007; Stevenson and Prout 2013), the latter tend to develop into heavily guarded private spaces marked by a kind of transitional material culture, one characterized by

“an eclectic mix of childhood artifacts and teenage fantasies and aspirations” (Steele and Brown 1995, p. 552; Lincoln 2014; Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002). Within these more “grown-up” bedrooms, individuals may relax, or “chill out,” either alone or with friends, listen to music, watch television and engage with other media technologies, experiment with clothes and their personal appearances, or participate in more-illicit activities, such as smoking or the drinking of alcohol (Lincoln 2004, 2005, 2012; Livingstone 2007; Steele and Brown 1995). The often clandestine nature of these latter pursuits (Lincoln 2012) also confirms that while they offer children a degree of privacy and autonomy within the home, bedrooms are almost always subject to rules and regulations. Determined by parents and guardians, these may relate to the decoration, design, and layout of space, levels of cleanliness and tidiness, the activities or games that can take place within, the people or friends who can visit, and whether doors have to be left open or can be closed (see Sibley 1995). Further illustrating that the home ultimately remains the domain of the adult, bedrooms also have a disciplinary purpose, or “regulatory function,” for the order of “go to your room” is often used as a punishment for misbehavior and enables children to be segregated from the main living space (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002, p. 113).

3 The Domestication of Childhood

According to Horton et al. (2008, p. 339), geographies of children and young people is “a dense cataloguing of multifarious ways in which spatialities matter in [and] for children and young people’s everyday lives.” Indeed, the subdiscipline has attended to the spaces and institutions that affect and shape dominant concepts of childhood and youth, explored children’s and young people’s lived experiences of many different kinds of space, and studied the power relations embedded within children’s and young people’s occupation and use of space (Gagen 2004). Moreover, it has considered “the importance of place” within social constructions of childhood and youth and within the everyday experiences of children and young people at the global and local level, explored the ways in which “everyday spaces” determine and structure children’s and young people’s lives and identities, and examined how ideas about childhood and youth influence “spatial discourses” and “socio-spatial practices,” and vice versa (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2011, p. 13; also see Holloway and Valentine 2000a, pp. 9–18). However, while geographies of children and young people has emphasized the spatialized nature of childhood and youth and the significance of space within the lives of children and young people (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2011), it has tended to concentrate upon public as opposed to private, or domestic, space. This is problematic and rather paradoxical given that childhood has become more and more domesticated over the last two centuries (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b).

The domestication of childhood is “material” and “ideological”; not only are children today spending more of their time at home, but there is also a perception that they *ought* to be spending their time there (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, p. 15). Although some have suggested that childhood was domesticated from as early as the

Middle Ages, the contemporary practice of associating the home with childhood can largely be traced to the industrialization of the early nineteenth century (Cieraad 2013; James et al. 1998). With the public sphere of work designated as an exclusively male realm separate from the private sphere of the family, which came to be seen as the female domain, the home became a key “space of childhood” (James et al. 1998, p. 53, cited in Gagen 2004, p. 407) and “*the* proper place for children,” as well as for women (Gagen 2004, p. 407, original emphasis). The idea of home, or “the modern domestic ideal,” subsequently developed into one of family, care, and nurture (see Allan and Crow 1989), and though the idealized image of home is not always a reality for all (James et al. 1998; for example, see Jenks 1996), the space itself is still expected to offer children and young people a place of safety and comfort in which to grow and mature. Indeed, the home, as both a concept and an actual physical space, is a powerful influence that shapes dominant ideas about child-rearing and parenting (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b). For example, it is frequently defined as the best place of care for young children, and this is often reflected within the childcare arrangements of many working parents who seek to “reproduce home-style environments for their children” (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, p. 16, cited in Gagen 2004, p. 407; for a critical historiography and discussion of the domestication of childhood, see Cieraad 2013).

Understandings that children are both vulnerable and threatening within public space have also reinforced the idea that a child’s place is within the home (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b). In her work on geographies of children and young people, Valentine (1996a, b, 2004) highlights the ways in which public space is “produced” and defined as “adult space”; she suggests that a binary opposition based upon historical notions of children as either “innocent” or “evil” is at the root of their exclusion from public spaces (Gagen 2004; Valentine 2001). For example, the Dionysian image of childhood (Jenks 1996), a perspective directly linked to the pre-nineteenth-century perception of children as naturally sinful, animalistic, and badly behaved (Gagen 2004), has contributed to various discourses and concerns that children and young people within public space are “dangerous, unruly and potentially out of control” (Valentine 2001, p. 50). Valentine (1996a) notes that this is reflected within a number of adult-imposed restrictions which are designed to regulate the behavior of children within public spaces; these include the enforcement of curfews and, in Britain, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), the use of closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV), the policing of space with security guards and other such personnel, and the requirement that children be accompanied by adults in order to gain access to certain places (Skelton 2000). As Gagen (2004, p. 408) observes, children’s occupation of space has a profound effect upon how they are publicly perceived, and discourses about deviance and delinquency are generally associated with “children’s occupation of the wrong space.”

In contrast, the Apollonian view of childhood (Jenks 1996), an imagining that stems from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Valentine 2001), looks upon children as innocent “angels” and sees public space as potentially dangerous and hazardous for children and young people (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b). From this perspective, the discourse of “stranger-danger” and heightened anxiety of

abduction, violence, high levels of traffic, and the threat posed by “devil” children within public spaces, among other risks, have prompted many parents to restrict their children’s outdoor freedom, leading to an increase in supervised activities both inside and outside the home (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b; Valentine 2004). For example, the unsupervised play of children outside the home has decreased to such an extent that it was recently claimed that one-quarter of children aged from 8 to 10 years old in Britain have never played outdoors without adult supervision and that one-third of parents do not allow children aged between 8 and 15 years old to play outside alone (Asthana and Revill 2008, cited in den Besten 2011, p. 136).

4 Researching the Domestic Geographies of Children and Young People

For the most part, children’s geographers have neglected the study of children’s domestic geographies, and the examination of children’s lives within the home has been lost within a mass of work that concentrates upon children’s and young people’s relationships with public space. Nevertheless, the realization that children and young people spend much of their time within the home has started to stimulate a greater level of interest in their domestic lives (Nilsen and Rogers 2005). For example, a number of studies have focused upon cultures of parenting, parent–child relationships, and geographies of family life more generally (for instance, see Holt 2011a; Valentine 1997), although children’s and young people’s microgeographies of home are still relatively absent. This, and the lack of geographical work on children’s and young people’s domestic lives in general, is related to the private nature of the home and to the methodological difficulties of doing research both on and within domestic space (Cieraad 2013; Plowman and Stevenson 2013). More than this, however, it is also linked to researchers’ preference for a direct engagement with children, to the tendency for empirical studies within geographies of children and young people, and to the complexities associated with gaining access to a space which is, by definition, intended to protect children and young people from “strangers” and the “potentially dangerous outside world of unknown others” (Gregson 2007, p. 6; for example see Hood et al. 1996; Nilsen and Rogers 2005; Valentine 1999). As Horton (2001) highlights, this is a particular issue for male researchers, especially given contemporary fears about child abuse and pedophilia (Gagen 2004).

As has been widely discussed elsewhere, the development of geographies of children and young people into a thriving subfield of human geography has been influenced, in part, by its enthusiastic engagement with other social scientists within a line of work which identifies itself as “the new social studies of childhood” (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2011; see Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b). Though it is beyond the reach of this chapter to explore and consider the subfield’s establishment in any great detail (see Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2011), it is important to draw attention to the significance of the ideas generated and advanced within the new social studies of childhood, particularly with regard to how they have impacted

upon how children's geographers approach and undertake research. Indeed, the basic principles of the new social studies of childhood are twofold: the first maintains that childhood is socially constituted and that ideas about it are temporally specific, while the second recognizes that children are social actors "whose agency is important in the creation of their own life-worlds" (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, p. 5; Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2011). Fully embracing these ideas, children's geographers have increasingly prioritized the participation of children within the research process (Gagen 2004) and have fostered a range of "child-centred methodologies" that enable "children to construct accounts of their lives in their own terms" (Holloway and Valentine 2000a, p. 8). With an emphasis upon incorporating children's voices and experiences, researchers tend to prefer ethnographic and primary-based research methodologies which facilitate some sort of interaction, or relationship, with children and young people (Gagen 2004). However, as other researchers have testified, it is often difficult to maintain a "sustained interaction" with child subjects when undertaking research within the home (Gagen 2004, p. 413). Moreover, Holt (2011b, p. 3) suggests that the significance attached to agency has contributed to the lack of research on children and young people within "familial contexts" because some are anxious that such a focus could "subsume children within the family" and "reproduce the limitations of earlier research wherein children were viewed as merely familial 'objects' rather than active subjects."

Drawing upon their respective analyses of the extent of children's spatiality within a housing complex in Norway, Nilsen and Rogers (2005, p. 347, original emphases) "argue for the importance of situating research and talking *with* children *in* their homes." Outlining how they approached and went about their work within the domestic sphere, they stress that home-based research can "account for children's perspectives and broaden the picture of their everyday lives" (Nilsen and Rogers 2005, p. 347). Also recounting their experiences of studying children's home lives, Plowman and Stevenson (2013, p. 336) similarly maintain that carrying out research with families within domestic space "is a prerequisite for exploring the minutiae and rhythms of everyday life." However, as these and other researchers have highlighted, conducting research within the home, especially with children and young people, is a difficult enterprise often beset by methodological and ethical complexities.

With reference to his ethnographic work on domestic material culture and household consumption practices, Miller (2002, p. 239) observes that working within the home requires "a commitment to an intrusive form of fieldwork" (cited in Gregson 2007, p. 6). Indeed, the home, from a social and cultural perspective, is heavily bound up with notions of privacy, and what takes place within is theoretically supposed to remain "out of the sight, and outside the concerns of the public worlds that surround it" (Hood et al. 1996, p. 119). Gregson (2007, p. 6), for example, highlights that this is often reflected within the architectural and decorative features of "dwelling structures" in that many work to "forge clear boundaries between public and private, the familiar and the strange, self and other." Exploring the dwelling activities of several families in the north of England through ethnography and participant observation, and quoting the well-known English saying "the Englishman's home is his [sic] castle," she notes that houses are "often surrounded

by structures such as walls, fences and gates, and by the type of plant growth that has the capacity to grow tall and thick” (Gregson 2007, p. 6). In a similar vein, Gullestad (1989) argues that door stoops, front doors, locks, doorsteps, and doorbells not only constitute practical and symbolic boundaries between public and private worlds but that they also serve as protective barriers that separate the outside from the inside (cited in Nilsen and Rogers 2005, p. 351).

With this in mind, one can detect a hint of nervousness when Nilsen and Rogers (2005, p. 351) describe themselves at the front doors of their domestic research sites; about to enter, they ask, “How, as researchers, would we be received?” As Hood et al. (1996, p. 119) remark, “For researchers, who are also strangers, to enter the home and ask questions, however sympathetic, is an invasion, and a crossing of traditional boundaries.” Moreover, as they also note, participants might become suspicious and dubious of the motives behind home-based research, particularly that which involves consulting with children or that which focuses upon family issues, given that homes, parenting, and everyday domesticity are seen as being open to intervention by health and welfare officials and to judgment by peers and other so-called experts (Valentine 1999). For example, examining how children and parents perceive and cope with risk through interviews within the home, they report that a child participant became more and more wary of their questioning, and they speculate that he might have got the impression that they were “checking up on the family” (Hood et al. 1996, p. 126).

Besides issues associated with gaining access to homes and to children, negotiating with parental gatekeepers, obtaining their trust and approval, and ensuring that children and young people have independently consented to participate in research without parental or familial pressure (Nilsen and Rogers 2005; Plowman and Stevenson 2013; Valentine 1999), working within the domestic sphere is complicated by a researcher’s status as an outside visitor. As guests within someone else’s home, researchers are generally expected to conform to certain norms of hospitality and to behave in particular ways, though expectations and understandings of what is appropriate or inappropriate may differ by social and cultural context and between households and families (Nilsen and Rogers 2005). Some have explained the difficulty of having to navigate between their responsibilities as objective research professionals and their obligations as polite visitors and how being a guest has impacted upon the doing of research within homes. For example, acknowledging that homes are spatially divided into public and private zones, Nilsen and Rogers (2005, p. 353) describe having “mixed feelings” at being shown parents’ and siblings’ bedrooms by their child participants; though they were uneasy about “trespassing into these private intimate places,” they were also delighted to learn about the children’s relationships with these spaces while in situ (also see Plowman and Stevenson 2013). Furthermore, they highlight that they felt uncomfortable asking family members to leave living rooms and other household spaces when conducting interviews with the children, thus leading to potential issues of confidentiality. However, this also illustrates that researchers have to fit their fieldwork activities around family life and everyday domestic routines when working with children and young people within homes. For example, from her work with children

in deprived households, Sime (2008) observes that finding a time to visit homes which is convenient for children, parents, and researchers is not always simple. For instance, while a suitable time might be agreed by all parties in advance of a research visit, the course of family life rarely runs smoothly, and circumstances can often change quickly.

Methodological reflexivity and flexibility are therefore paramount when working with children and families within homes (Nilsen and Rogers 2005; Sime 2008). As Sime (2008, p. 76, original emphases) remarks, “Researchers need to be prepared to be flexible in terms of collecting data and ready to make ethical decisions *during* as well as *before* entering the field.” It is vital that researchers take into account the research context and that they respond to the demands and idiosyncrasies of everyday domestic life accordingly (Nilsen and Rogers 2005). This might involve adapting existing research methods to better suit domestic settings and situations (for instance, see Bushin 2007) or developing new techniques to avoid other issues. For example, interested in how children use and engage with technology within the home, and aware of the inconvenience that their presence might have on domestic family life, Plowman and Stevenson (2013) devised and implemented a novel data collection technique that made use of the picture-taking capability of mobile, or cellular, phones. Recognizing the potential for parental involvement within their research and that such an approach would expand the opportunity for observation when they were not present, they asked parents to take a photograph of their children with their phones at regular intervals and to forward this to them in a picture message with a brief explanation of where the children were and what they were doing; they then arranged the images and text messages into a storyboard, or “mobile phone diary,” which formed the basis for home-based interview discussions with the children and parents.

Reflecting upon the difficulties of conducting home-based research with children and families, Plowman and Stevenson (2013, p. 331) note that “it is not surprising that researchers seek ways of providing insights into children’s lives at home without needing to step over the threshold.” Indeed, Nilsen and Rogers (2005) observe that research on children’s domestic practices and experiences has often been carried out in such settings as schools or day-care centers rather than within the home itself (Christensen et al. 2000), that some base their research within their own homes and choose to work with their own children (Wood and Beck 1994), and that others ask adults about their childhood memories and recollections (Sibley 1995). Moreover, those concerned with children’s home lives within historical contexts have drawn upon the written autobiographical accounts of adults (Hamlett 2013) and crossed thresholds into homes of the past using textual and interpretative methods (Calvert 1992a).

5 Exploring the Bedrooms of Children and Young People

One of the most private and intimate spaces within the home, a child’s bedroom is perhaps the most problematic household space to study. Generally located away from the main living areas within Western homes, often, but not always, upstairs on another floor, and spatially separated from the more public spaces of living rooms,

kitchens, and other rooms which are potentially open to company and outside visitors, children's bedrooms, like bedrooms for parents and adults, and bathrooms, are personal spaces and, by definition, should be closed to public scrutiny. In addition, the perceived innocence and vulnerability of children and young people within contemporary culture and society and a collective concern to protect them from corrupting influences mean that their rooms also have a kind of defensive purpose. For example, bedrooms, in theory, are supposed to be safe places in which children and young people are insulated and isolated from the ills of the world. Further complicating matters is the fact that bedrooms of children and young people are sometimes even out of bounds to other family or household members; for instance, the use of "keep out" or "do not enter" signs on the outside of doors, particularly by older children, frequently serves as a warning to parents and siblings of personal territory and that they are not welcome within (Lincoln 2012).

For outside researchers who are often strangers, carrying out research within the bedrooms of children and young people is therefore both methodologically challenging and ethically sensitive, perhaps even more so than working with children and families within homes more generally. As Lincoln (2012, p. 66) observes, spending time within a child's bedroom "essentially conflict[s] with 'normal' behaviour within that space and from the outside could be perceived as rather unusual"; she reasons that bedrooms "tend to be inhabited by teenagers, adolescents, children or young adults, whereas 'grown ups' do not usually hang out there." Moreover, she points to the significance of a researcher's age and gender in terms of influencing the likelihood of gaining entry to bedrooms (see Horton 2001) and to the ethical issues of male and female researchers accessing rooms occupied by teenagers and older children of the opposite sex. As others have similarly argued with regard to conducting interviews with children and young people within their bedrooms, the personal safety and well-being of researchers and research participants should always be a top priority (Bushin 2007), and researchers should avoid placing themselves within situations where the nature of their research activities could be compromised or called into question (McDowell 2001).

The methodological, practical, and ethical difficulties of accessing and doing research within children's bedrooms and homes more generally have arguably contributed to the lack of work on the bedroom within geographies of children and young people. Beyond the subdiscipline, however, a small number of notable studies, mainly from within the fields of anthropology, cultural studies, and sociology, have concentrated upon the space. Perhaps also a reflection of the complexities of conducting bedroom-based research, many choose to explore and engage with bedrooms and their occupants without accessing rooms directly. Indeed, several studies approach and reflect upon bedrooms textually. For instance, with reference to psychoanalytic theory, Croft (2006) considers the relationship between bedrooms and adolescent subjectivity through representations of rooms within literary texts. Exploring the "décor differences between boys' and girls' bedrooms," Cieraad (2007) contrasts images of rooms depicted within home-decorating magazines and catalogs with photographs of real-life rooms extracted from another researcher's photographic study of children's bedrooms and examines the extent to which

promoted material gender markers are reflected in actuality. Similarly, Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) peruse photographs of a young girl's bedroom taken by her mother and argue that rooms are cultural texts that can be read for denotative and connotative meaning. Focusing upon the decorative decisions of the girl's mother and noting that she had purchased items and fashioned the room before the birth of her child, they suggest that children are effectively "born into popular culture" and that bedrooms are where they are first introduced to it (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002, p. 124).

Providing an overview of the different ways in which to research children's popular culture, Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) also describe how bedrooms can be studied by using photographs taken by children themselves. Drawing attention to the fact that children are expert witnesses with regard to their own lives and matters of childhood, they argue that involving children within research as "visual ethnographers" not only avoids issues of gaining access to rooms but also allows children to chronicle their lives themselves and to present their own perspectives in their own terms, thus affording researchers opportunities "to invoke an 'insider' decolonized view of childhood" (Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002, p. 80). In their study, for example, they asked a young boy to take pictures of his bedroom with a disposable camera and, in a subsequent interview, to tell them about the meaning and significance of the objects and things that he chose to depict. However, they also describe how a young girl was filmed showing other researchers around her bedroom in another unrelated project, thereby intimating that children could likewise use video cameras to provide guided tours, or autoethnographies, of their bedrooms (also see Bloustien 2003; Hancock and Gillen 2007).

Much of the scholarship on bedrooms within the social sciences concentrates upon the bedroom spaces of teenagers and older children rather than those of younger children. Many studies, particularly from within the sociology of youth, examine the import and role of bedrooms within the lives of adolescents and teenagers and, significantly, manage to gain access to rooms. A number of studies also draw upon and invoke the concept of "bedroom culture," an idea first articulated and developed by McRobbie and Garber (1976) in their seminal work on "girls and subcultures" (Lincoln 2014). Observing that girls were absent within much of the existing literature on youth subcultures and considering the reasons behind this "invisibility," they suggested that while boys' cultural pursuits took place on the street and in more-visible public arenas, girls' culture was based within the private sphere of the home and, more specifically, the bedroom (McRobbie and Garber 1976, p. 209; Lincoln 2004). They posited that the significance of the bedroom as a key site for female cultural activity reflected girls' social and cultural positioning within the home and that bedroom-based amusements could be accommodated around girls' domestic duties with ease (Lincoln 2014). They argued that bedrooms allowed girls to participate in teenage youth culture "without involving the riskier and more frowned-on path of hanging around the streets or cafes" and that the "culture of the bedroom" was based around such activities as experimenting with clothes and personal appearances, reading magazines, listening and dancing to music, and socializing with friends (McRobbie and Garber 1976, p. 213; Lincoln

2004). In her subsequent work, McRobbie (1991, p. 94), noting the importance of magazine and music consumption within girls' cultural lives, reasoned that bedroom culture operated through a series of "codes." She claimed that they were articulated by teenage magazines and learned through their reading and that they were constituted by elements of fantasy (Lincoln 2004). Through an analytical reading of *Jackie* magazine, she maintained that bedroom culture revolved around the idea of romantic bliss and that the constituent codes reflected and sought to cultivate a particular image of teenage femininity.

A number of relatively recent studies have questioned the concept of bedroom culture as defined by McRobbie and Garber (1976) and McRobbie (1991) separately, and many have revised, updated, and tested the relevance of the idea in light of contemporary society. Exploring the relationships that teenagers and young people have with their rooms and reflecting upon the bedroom-based practices and activities that underscore their identities and sense of selves, much work focuses upon the significance of the media and material culture within bedrooms and highlights that rooms are at the intersection of the public and the private (Lincoln 2014). Although many studies are girl-centric (Kearney 2007), thus reflecting McRobbie and Garber's (1976) earlier assertion that bedroom culture is exclusively female (Lincoln 2005), several also acknowledge that bedrooms are important spaces for both boys and girls. As Lincoln (2012, p. 31) observes, for example, "Was the bedroom not the domain of the teenage boy as well, albeit in different ways?" She argues that McRobbie and Garber (1976) repeated the mistake of their male colleagues in only "telling one side of the story" (Lincoln 2012, p. 31) and that boys should be included within studies of bedroom culture in order "to avoid falling into the subcultural tradition of marginalizing specific groups of people" (Lincoln 2004, p. 95). Even so, contemporary fears about the vulnerability of children and young people within public space and the restricting of their outdoor activities by parents have contributed to the increased significance of the bedroom as a space of leisure for both sexes. Livingstone (2007) suggests that the heightened perception of risk outdoors and the proliferation of electronic media within the bedroom, including computers, televisions, DVD players, stereos, and game consoles, have facilitated the development of a new bedroom culture in which adolescents and teenagers spend more time within their rooms than in previous generations. However, this has also fueled concerns about children's social isolation, the breakdown of communal family life, and the potentially dangerous nature and corrupting influence of technology within the bedroom if it is left unchecked and kept out of the sight of parents.

In their classic study of "teenage room culture," Brown et al. (1994) consider the importance of the media within the lives of adolescents. Observing that adolescence is characterized by the complex and ongoing working out of the self, they argue that the "bedroom is an important site for the everyday work of creating identities" and that "the mass media are central to this process" (Brown et al. 1994, p. 813). Through a series of room tours, in-depth interviews with adolescents within their bedrooms, and an analysis of daily journals kept by their teenage participants, they claim that the media is "a convenient, ubiquitous source of cultural options and standards" but that adolescents actively appropriate and rework media messages to form,

experiment with, and express their identities (Brown et al. 1994, pp. 824–825). Separately, and noting the prevalence of mediated objects and images within teenage bedrooms as well, Steele and Brown (1995, p. 572) report that adolescents make media preferences within their rooms, select which material to engage with, and “choose favorite characters and models to emulate and lust after.” Larson (1995) likewise explores the bedroom as a key site of adolescent identity construction and situated media use, though with a particular focus upon television viewing and music listening, while Lincoln (2005) considers how music is used within the teenage bedroom and examines the relationship between the space and adolescent musical activity by interviewing teenagers within their rooms. Kearney (2007), however, argues that studies most often theorize bedroom culture in relation to the consumption of media and fail to recognize that bedrooms are also productive spaces where young people are able to create their own media and cultural content. She reasons that the Internet and the increased availability of relatively affordable technology in recent years have driven “domestic cultural productivity” within bedrooms and facilitated the public distribution of self-made media (Kearney 2007, p. 127).

Though most studies of teenage bedroom culture focus upon media and cultural practices, several also highlight the centrality of materiality within bedrooms and the significance of material objects in terms of personalizing space and expressing identity (Lincoln 2014). Reflecting upon the material culture on display within bedrooms, some suggest that they often appear to be in a state of transition, or “in-betweenness” (Cieraad 2007; Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002). From their tours of adolescent rooms, for example, Brown et al. (1994) and Steele and Brown (1995) describe bedrooms in which childhood toys and artifacts are scattered among music cassettes, magazines, and posters of boy bands and male models, pictures of fast cars, celebrities, and beautiful women, and other objects representative of teenage fantasy and desire. Exploring bedrooms of adolescents and teenagers ethnographically, Lincoln (2014, p. 266) concludes that rooms are “constantly evolving and changing ‘material’ spaces” (also see Lincoln 2012). Drawing upon Lefebvrian concepts of social space, she likens bedrooms to “containers of meaning” and claims that they show signs of “residual trails” which can reveal aspects of the life histories and biographies of room inhabitants and former occupants (Lincoln 2014, p. 266). She argues that teenagers and young people make “conscious decisions about which objects represent them at that current moment” and that this reflecting is followed either by the complete removal of childhood artifacts or by their careful incorporation into new areas and settings (Lincoln 2014, p. 277).

6 Exploring Bedroom Spaces of the Past

Beyond the examination of bedrooms within the present, a small number of historical studies, also outside geographies of children and young people, have focused upon bedroom spaces of the past. Most often concerned with the rooms of younger children, for example, preschool and preadolescent children, such work contributes to a broader body of historiographical scholarship which has long explored the

history of children and childhood (see Cunningham 1995; Hendrick 2008). Indeed, recognizing that childhood is very much a complex social and cultural construction and that the bedroom is a key site where ideas about children and childhood manifest, it tends to highlight the extent to which meanings and understandings of childhood fluctuate historically and how the lives and experiences of children change over time. Unable to gain access to rooms or to engage with occupants directly, and therefore reliant upon textual evidence and archival material, it generally reveals how underlying assumptions about children and the nature of childhood, as well as ideas about parenting and the rearing of children, have shaped and influenced children's rooms, for example, in terms of material culture, design, and function. However, owing to the nature of its sources and to the information available, it is usually very class specific and, in most cases, focuses upon rooms and spaces occupied by upper- and middle-class children.

Calvert's (1992a) treatise on the history of childhood within the United States is perhaps the most notable study of children's home lives within the past. Tracing changes in the definition of childhood and in child-rearing practice between the seventeenth and early twentieth century as reflected within material objects and children's clothing, Calvert (1992a, p. 15) describes "how youngsters were cared for, dressed, protected, trained, and amused" and considers "what daily life was like for [a] child based on accepted customs and conventions." From her findings, she argues elsewhere that the designating and material fashioning of space for the exclusive use of children within the home are relatively "recent innovations" and that, within the United States at least, children's bedrooms are "not much older than the American Civil War" (Calvert 1992b, p. 75). Drawing upon an analysis of contemporary texts, including child-rearing manuals, periodicals, letters, and diaries, she suggests that dedicated rooms for children within American upper- and middle-class homes were rare before the early nineteenth century but that they became increasingly common thereafter. She links the growth of children's rooms to a gradual, but wholesale, shift in attitudes toward children and childhood and charts how other changes and perceptions contributed to the development of the bedroom and its material culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

According to Calvert (1992b, p. 76), childhood before the nineteenth century in colonial America was largely seen as "a vulnerable, frustrating period of human inadequacy," and children were expected to "grow up quickly." Observing that they were required "to accommodate themselves as best they could to an adult world," she reports that children were, for the most part, given few, if any, toys and playthings and that the majority "slept wherever there was space – with parents, siblings, servants, guests; in full-sized beds or on pallets on the floor in often crowded rooms" (Calvert 1992b, p. 76). She argues that the "widespread use of specialized goods and rooms for children" can be traced to the first half of the nineteenth century when American society began to take greater interest and delight in the childish nature of young children (Calvert 1992b, p. 77). She notes that a new perception of children as innocent angels increasingly took hold and reasons that this contributed to the rise of the nursery within upper- and middle-class households, a bedroom-cum-playroom where the youngest children within a family "could remain

secure and sequestered from the dangers of the adult world,” where their innocence and childishness could be protected and preserved, before being moved into separate bedrooms at a later stage (Calvert 1992b, p. 81). However, she claims that subsequent concern in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century about child sexuality, brought about by the realization that children are “mischievous, curious, adventurous, and impulsive” rather than completely innocent, led to growing unease about rooming boys and girls together (Calvert 1992b, p. 83). She suggests that this contributed to the decline of the communal nursery in the early years of the twentieth century and advanced the development of a “new model” of housing children, one upon which children’s rooms are based today (Calvert 1992b, p. 89). As she observes, bedrooms were now to accommodate a single child or same-sex siblings throughout childhood and were expected to explicitly reflect the age and gender of their occupants through their decoration and material culture. Indeed, she highlights that the materiality of the bedroom was increasingly regarded as an important means through which to socialize, or mold, a child into an appropriate image of boyhood or girlhood and to instill certain desired traits of masculinity or femininity within an inhabitant (also see Cieraad 2007; Collins Cromley 1992; Leavitt 2002).

Hamlett’s (2013) examination of life within English upper- and middle-class nurseries in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century is perhaps the most noteworthy historical study of children’s bedroom spaces to have emerged in recent years. Drawing upon her wider research on middle-class domesticity in Victorian England (see Hamlett 2010), Hamlett (2013) considers how the upper- and middle-class custom of segregating young children within nurseries and delegating their care to nursemaids shaped family relationships and describes how the decoration and material culture of the nursery were considered particularly crucial for aiding the development of children’s characters and identities. Significantly, however, she explores the nursery “from the point of view of the children who used it” (Hamlett 2013, p. 248). Observing that children’s voices and perspectives are frequently missing from historical studies of childhood and that the “direct testimony of children is rare,” she peruses autobiographies of grown-up authors, which, she argues, “in the absence of a large number of children’s diaries, offer the most detailed representation of children’s thoughts and feelings about their surroundings” (Hamlett 2013, p. 248).

Though Hamlett (2013, p. 248) acknowledges that they “cannot be viewed as a simple representation of past experience,” the autobiographies within her study reveal much about the lives of actual children and provide important insights into everyday nursery life within individual households. She notes, for example, that the nursery generally distanced parents and children, often both spatially and emotionally, but that mothers and fathers sometimes favored one or two of their children by allowing special chosen ones privileged access to their private quarters; she highlights that such practice fostered a greater level of intimacy between parents and their selected favorites, but also, in some cases, jealousy and resentment from siblings who were overlooked. Moreover, she discovers that while “nurseries were often heavily disciplined material and spatial worlds,” children were “able to negotiate them, both physically and imaginatively” (Hamlett 2013, p. 246). She learns, for

instance, that the spatial position of the nursery within the home allowed some children to transgress social and class boundaries by associating with household staff without their parents' knowledge or approval. She also observes that the decoration of the nursery and material objects were used to introduce children to certain values and to promote particular kinds of behavior, for example, through the display of mottos and striking images, and that children were provided with gender-specific toys to cultivate gendered skills and identities (also see White 1984). However, she claims that children often avoided "adult censure and the imposition of discipline" by appropriating remote and unused household spaces, like attics and outbuildings, for private play beyond the gaze of adults and that they sometimes played with toys in ways which were unintended (Hamlett 2013, p. 258).

7 Conclusion

In many respects, it is quite surprising that geographies of children and young people have yet to subject the bedroom to any serious scrutiny. A significant space of childhood and of growing up, and one which all children and young people generally have access to, it requires and deserves a greater level of attention and recognition from the subdiscipline, particularly considering the recent reduction in children's and young people's spatial freedom and the domestication of childhood. The paucity of work on the bedroom reflects the dearth of research within the subdiscipline on children's and young people's domestic geographies and is likely related to the private nature of the space. Indeed, its neglect as both a site and subject of examination is perhaps understandable given the subdiscipline's tendency toward empirical research and preference for a direct engagement with children and young people. While the home is a particularly difficult space to access and explore in person, the bedrooms of children and young people pose even more of a challenge. For example, for outside researchers, to enter the private and intimate space of a bedroom has profound methodological and ethical implications and requires the carefully considered consent of parents and other gatekeeping authorities, as well as that of children and young people.

Despite appearances, however, and as several studies outside geographies of children and young people have illustrated, the bedroom is far from an impossible space to study. A few researchers, for instance, have explored bedrooms without actually setting foot within them. For example, in asking children and parents to photograph bedrooms and aspects of everyday domestic life themselves, studies such as those of Mitchell and Reid-Walsh (2002) and Plowman and Stevenson (2013) highlight the potential for bedroom research afforded by participant-led methodologies. As they demonstrate, the autoethnographic use of cameras, camcorders, and other technologies to document bedrooms and other private spaces and happenings not only avoids issues of researchers needing sustained access but also allows children, young people, and parents to share in the design and doing of research. In addition, one should not underestimate the value of texts and historical sources for examining bedrooms. Hamlett's (2013) study of nursery life in the

mid-nineteenth and early twentieth century, for instance, confirms that they not only record historically specific social and cultural ideas and concepts which impact upon the form and function of the bedroom but that they can also document children's and young people's views and lived experiences of the space, as well as their actions within. Moreover, the numerous studies that have focused upon teenage bedroom culture further illustrate the potential for bedroom-based scholarship within geography. These studies have a relatively long tradition of conducting research within bedrooms, with researchers situating themselves within the culture itself. It may therefore be possible for geographers to bring a consideration of spatiality to such research and to collaborate with those working on bedroom culture. This would not only foster greater cross-disciplinary ties and produce new knowledge, but it would also enable geographies of children and young people to widen its sphere of influence and to take its arguments and expertise out into the wider social science community, an undertaking which, as others have observed, it has long struggled with (see Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson 2011).

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Abstract

The domestic sphere is one of the first spaces in which young people engage with culture and is a key site within which they find the resources to explore their emerging sense of identity. As children grow up, these resources become more extensive and are sourced from a variety of contexts from within and outside of the domestic realm. This chapter explores the ways in which those resources are used by young people in the creation of a "bedroom culture" (McRobbie and Garber 1976) and the meaning of private spaces to young people, especially during their adolescent years. In exploring the role of the bedroom in the lives of

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young people, the chapter reviews a now growing body of literature that explores this (semi)private and personal space as a significant site of youth culture and identity. The chapter reviews the concept of a “bedroom culture” from its application to the teenage girl’s bedroom as an alternative cultural domain to street-based subcultures (McRobbie and Garber 1976) to more contemporary applications that apply to both young men and women’s uses of personal and private space in the home and beyond into virtual realms. In doing this, it will demonstrate how “bedroom culture” is situated within the wider context of youth culture and how bedrooms are used by young people as they find themselves working through and negotiating a series of boundaries and intersections (Livingstone 2005) in public, private, and virtual spheres.

Keywords

“Bedroom culture” • Private space • Youth culture • Teenagers • Identity • Media • Social media • Social network sites

1 Introduction

Many young people growing up in the western world occupy a bedroom in the family home. Whether shared or single occupancy, bedrooms are often one of the first spaces in the home that young people can call their own, have some form of control over, and decorate according to their own tastes and interests. Yet as a youth cultural space, the personal and private realm of the bedroom has remained largely underexplored in academia with studies of youth cultures focusing primarily on more public domains such as the street or school, while the (bedroom) door remains largely closed on domestic spaces of youth culture. Yet when one does open that bedroom door, a rich text is revealed, one that can tell us multiple stories about its young occupant. It can tell us stories about how the space is used as a canvas on which to state “this is me,” how the bedroom is a hub in which young people can be themselves, and how it is a haven away from life dominated by social media, social network sites, and the constant pressures of presenting “the self” in a variety of ways and across different domains.

The bedroom is a refuge and a space where a young person can “truly” be themselves. Given its significance in young people’s lives then, it seems odd that this private domain has not been given the academic attention of its public counterparts. However, there is now a growing body of literature that is exploring this domain as a significant youth cultural site. This body of work has emerged in relation to two underlying contexts. The first context is framed by perceived dangers of the streets and public spaces for young people exasperated by the mass media (particularly in the 1990s), which according to Livingstone (1999) and others signaled a

move of leisure activities back into the home and an investment (by parents) in media entertainment technologies within domestic space. The second is the rise of social network sites such as Facebook whose use as an identity space by young people in many ways mimics the ways they use their bedrooms (e.g., decorating their wall) (Hodkinson and Lincoln 2008; Lincoln and Robards 2014c). The ubiquity of such sites in the lives of young people is according to Lincoln making us rethink the meaning of public/private space to young people (2012). On the one hand, they are working through an environment of “context collapse” (Vitak 2012) where the boundaries between public and private are “flattened” resulting in a seamless flow of activity across different virtual and physical domains. On the other hand, young people are reinvesting in “traditional” youth cultural spaces such as their bedrooms as “authentic” and “real” spaces of identity (Lincoln 2012). This in turn makes us question what a bedroom actually is for a young person as it appears to be both a literal and figurative space in their lives.

This chapter reviews a body of literature that grapples with the complexities of young people’s bedrooms and the concept of “bedroom culture” in a variety of ways, to explore the meaning of this space to young people. The chapter begins with a discussion of the celebrated work of Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber (1976) who first coined the phrase “bedroom culture.” In their essay *Girls and Subcultures* McRobbie and Garber argue that the supposed absence of teenage girls in street-based subcultures could be accounted for by their occupation of an alternative sphere – that of the domestic. Teenage girls growing up in the 1970s, they argued, had “dual” leisure time that consisted of “being a teenage girl” (reading magazines, listening to music) on the one hand and “training up” to be wives and mothers through participation in domestic chores on the other. The ease and simplicity of “bedroom culture” meant that girls could dip in and out of their cultural activities in accordance with their domestic responsibilities. While little else was written about “bedroom culture” at this time, discussions of it re-emerged in the 1990s against a backdrop of a number of economic and cultural shifts in the UK that signaled a move of leisure time from the streets to the home. This movement wasn’t just happening for teenage girls but boys too who were participating in home-based leisure activities that were primarily media related as parents bought media entertainment technologies that could be used in their children’s bedrooms (stereos, televisions, game consoles, PCs with internet access, and so on). These discussions reinforce the significance of the private domain for young people, especially those in their teens whose relationship with cultural products such as music changes during these years and such products are used as a resource through which to understand their emerging, changing selves. These discussions also highlight the meshing of the public and private sphere and how one influences the other challenging the notion that “bedroom culture” is private and isolated. Finally, the chapter explores contemporary bedroom culture in the lives of young men and women focusing on the work of Sian Lincoln (2004, 2005, 2012, 2013, 2014a, b) whose ethnographic work of young

people and their bedrooms in the North West of England in the UK reveals the multiple dimensions of the teenage bedroom as a physical, material, virtual, and metaphorical space that is used in dynamic and creative ways by young people and transcends multiple boundaries.

2 Girls' Zone: The Emergence of "Bedroom Culture"

For scholars interested in youth culture and particularly British youth culture, the term "bedroom culture" is synonymous with the work of Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber (1976). Their groundbreaking essay *Girls and Subcultures* that first appeared in Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson's seminal collection *Resistance Through Rituals* (1975) was an attempt to address the gender imbalance found in discussions of youth cultures and subcultures in Britain during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Alongside essays dominated by accounts of white, working-class males engaging in street-based subcultures, McRobbie and Garber asked the crucial question: if girls were seemingly not taking part in these visible subcultures, could it be that their youth cultural lives were being lived out elsewhere? (1976, p. 219). In exploring this question McRobbie and Garber argued that the ways in which girls and boys used public and private spheres were different and that this difference was essentially gendered. They argued that it was not simply a case of girls being absent from boys' subcultures but that girls had alternative, yet complementary, ways of interacting with each other to "form a distinct culture of their own" (1976, p. 219). For example, they suggested that one of the reasons for girls' absence on the streets was because they were spending much of their leisure time in the domestic realm. Young women, unlike their brothers, took up specific domestic responsibilities in the home and were expected to help their mothers with the running of the household; in their free time, girls were expected to do chores such as washing and cleaning, preparing meals and helping to look after younger siblings. In her later work McRobbie (1991) argues that such domestic responsibilities were not simply undertaken to help out mothers but were an essential part of a young girl's "training" for the adult life as a wife and a mother that awaited her. In this respect, their household responsibilities were an integral part of their leisure time and thus McRobbie and Garber (1976) and McRobbie (1991) argued that having a space in the home where they could retreat to outside of these responsibilities was crucial for the teenage girl and this space was the bedroom. It was a space that was easily accessible and could be entered into whenever the teenage girl had some "free" leisure time alongside her domestic role.

In addition to its accessibility, the bedroom was deemed a much "safer" space for the teenage girl in comparison to the public streets. The public realm was considered a dangerous place for her and certainly not a place where she should be seen "hanging around." This was because on the streets the teenage girl was "vulnerable" and the potential humiliation that could come from hanging around where young men were present could ultimately jeopardize her chances of finding a husband as no one – it was thought – would want to marry a girl with a reputation. As McRobbie (1991) argues,

Girls had to be careful not to get into trouble and excess loitering on street corners might be taken as a sexual invitation to the boys. . . girls who spent too much time on the street were assumed to be promiscuous (p. 5)

An additional buffer to girls' participation in street-based subcultures was the commitment required to be a fully signed up member of one. The responsibilities a teenage girl had within the domestic sphere arguably made it more of a challenge for her to participate in street-based subcultures to the extent that their male counterparts could. While the boys had more time to be present and visible on the streets, go out to associated clubs and bars in the evenings, or shop for clothes, records, and so on, girls had to fit their domestic responsibilities into their leisure time which suggests that they had a rather restricted access to subcultures. A bedroom then complemented the role of the teenage girl in the home and accommodated the varying levels of commitment she could give to a subculture, youth culture, and her leisure time. In this context McRobbie and Garber described "bedroom culture" as the cultures girls were more readily participating in, requiring very simply "a record player and permission to invite friends" (1976, p. 220).

Against a backdrop of a highly lucrative teenage market in the UK that was, by the 1970s, mass-producing goods such as magazines, music, and clothes for young people that were designed to have limited use value and "quick turnover potential" (McRobbie and Garber 1976, p. 220), teenage bedroom culture, facilitated by "teeny-bopper culture," was a culture defined by pop fandom that was, according to McRobbie and Garber, "almost totally packaged" (1976, p. 220), affordable and easily consumed by the young teenager, especially the teenage girl who had some pocket money to spend, but limited time to spend it. The teeny-bopper "package" consisted primarily of music and magazines associated with boy bands and pop idols of the day like the Bay City Rollers and David Cassidy and was an important cultural resource for teenage girls. Indeed, despite being a "highly manufactured a network," McRobbie and Garber note that girls' negotiating processes were still identifiable (1976, p. 220). For instance, girls obsessing about pop idols and reading pop magazines under the desk at school could be considered a form of rebellion and "a means of alienating the teacher" (pp. 220–221) and the very fact that girls bought their pop idols record (regardless of how good the record was) was an indication of their role as "active" consumers. Girls' engagement in teeny-bopper culture could also be considered an example of how girls actively navigated and negotiated the public domain. For example, teeny-bopper culture offered them an alternative avenue of self-exploration through which they could indulge in the fantasy worlds of love and romance but without instigating the threat of being "sexually labelled" that, as McRobbie (1991) notes, could come with participating in street-based cultures. Teeny-bopper culture was a culture primarily for girls and provided an alternative context for self-expression and cultural engagement for them within the context of the home.

As the discussion above highlights, the media proved an important resource for teenage girls in early accounts of bedroom culture. Teenage girls' magazines were considered particularly significant and in her later work McRobbie (1991) explored

how such texts could be explored as coded “maps of meaning” that presented a very specific type of femininity to the teenage girl. She argued that while, on the one hand, girls’ engagement with these texts could be read as rebellious and negotiated, the act of their engagement alone demonstrated their (unwitting) complicity in a life trajectory that ultimately meant being good wives and mothers. McRobbie was particularly interested in the best-selling teen magazine *Jackie*, a favorite with many teenage girls during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. In her analysis, McRobbie concluded that *Jackie* had four codes operating within it: the code of fashion and beauty, the code of personal life, and the code of pop music all held together under the “umbrella” code of romance. Week on week *Jackie* provided content that a teenage girl could use to explore her emerging adult self, while providing advice on how she could make the best of herself to ensure her end goal of finding a husband was successfully achieved. Advice and tips ranged from what makeup to wear on a first date to seasonally appropriate clothing, all provided within the context of how this adornment would be viewed by a potential suitor. Similarly, pop music, also popular with teenage girls, was framed within these ideologies of femininity and romance. Teeny-bopper culture that informed bedroom culture was, by its very nature, about the good-looking pop idol or boy band and while teenage girls bought the latest record of their favorite pop stars, this action was secondary to their pinup status. In their bedrooms, girls could put posters of their idols up on their walls, using them as a resource through which they could access the fantasy worlds of love and romance that was created around their idols. These fantasy worlds allowed the teenage girl to “experience” the world of love and romance without the threat of personal humiliation that may have come from a “real” encounter on the streets. Through the pages of *Jackie*, it didn’t matter if she got it wrong: *Jackie* was a resource that could guide her to get it right, to be ready for when the encounter happens in real life. The teenage girls’ bedroom provided the ideal context for this tuition. In her bedroom the teenage girl could be alone and could dip into bedroom culture whenever she had some free time. The bedroom as a private space provided a retreat away from family and from domestic responsibilities and was a space in which a young girl could be an ordinary teenager engaging in youth culture, even if it was for short bursts of time and among her other commitments. Given the centrality of romance and the pursuit of a husband to this culture, privacy was paramount as much bedroom culture activity was meant for the teenage girl to indulge in alone.

3 Media Zone: The Re-emergence of Bedroom Culture in the 1990s

Despite the significance of McRobbie and Garber’s essay that brought the important dimensions of gender and private space to the fore in youth cultural studies and the fact that the essay is still regularly cited in discussions around girl cultures and youth cultures in the domestic domain, very little had been written specifically about bedroom culture since its publication and until the 1990s. Scholars doing work on the domestic domain have suggested that this sphere has remained underexplored for

a variety of reasons, including the methodological and ethical challenges involved in gaining access to the domestic and private domains (Dickinson et al. 2001; see also chapter by Adcock, ► Chap. 19, “The Bedroom: A Missing Space within Geographies of Children and Young People” in this volume) particularly in the context of “risk” as discussed below, and the fact that ultimately the domestic realm is private and that fieldwork in people’s home is a breach of this privacy (Baker 2004).

However, a renewed interest in the domestic sphere as significant in the lives of young people emerged in the 1990s in relation to a number of cultural and economic shifts (Lincoln 2013). Valentine and McKendrick (1997), for example, argue that during that period negative representations of “risky” public spaces became particularly dominant in the mass media and thus public places like streets and parks were deemed unsafe spaces for young people to occupy. In accordance with this, Livingstone and Bovill (1999) reported in their study *Young People, New Media* that fears surrounding the safety of public places were experienced by parents as well as young people themselves who subsequently spent money on entertainment technologies such as televisions, game consoles, and PCs to ensure their children could be entertained within the “safer” space of the home where a parental eye could be kept on them. In addition, these technologies were becoming more affordable as their related markets became more competitive. In this respect, parents were “buying up” domestic entertainment technology that could be used in a young person’s bedroom. According to Livingstone and Bovill (1999), this impacted on the ways in which “bedroom culture” could be experienced by young people, to the point at which the teenage bedroom became a multimedia bedroom. The introduction of media technology into private spaces then substantially increased the cultural resources available to young people who could engage with media content such as music, films, and television in private and in ways that were different to the more communal forms of entertainment to be found elsewhere in the home.

Given this context the relationship between young people and private space has become a focal point in a number of contemporary bedroom culture studies. In the following sections, the chapter reviews some of the key studies that consider this relationship and outlines new conceptualizations of bedroom culture for a highly mediated youth cultural context. While a number of these studies retain the focus on young women (e.g., Harris 2001; James 2001; Baker 2004; Kearney 2007) explorations of bedroom culture have also been undertaken with young men (see Larson 1995; Steele and Brown 1995; Lincoln 2004, 2005, 2012, 2013; Hodgkinson and Lincoln 2008) broadening the scope of the discussion beyond bedrooms as purely spaces for girls (Lincoln 2013). This is important because, as opposed to McRobbie and Garber’s discussion that clearly separated boy and girl cultures into the public and private domain, the shift of youth cultural activities from the streets back into the home and the development of entertainment and communication technologies have altered this public/private binary to a substantial extent. The boundaries of each have become significantly blurred, with some scholars going as far as to argue that they have “collapsed” (boyd 2007; Vitak 2012), which means that young people today, both male and female, are able to move through public, private, and virtual environments with great ease and more often than not simultaneously.

Two papers that appeared in the same issue of the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* in 1995 are important in reigniting discussions around the significance of private space to young people and the often unique ways with which they engage with different media in this context. Reed Larson's paper *Secrets in the bedroom: Adolescents' private use of media* and Jeanne Steele and Jane Brown's paper *Adolescent room culture: studying media in the context of everyday life* set out to explore the creative and active ways in which young people use media as part of their cultural lives and why private spaces take on a new significance for young people's use of them as they move into their teenage years.

Larson argues that because adolescence is a period in which young people can experience much change, are becoming more independent, and are beginning to question adult authority, private spaces like bedrooms become significant as spaces to which they can retreat. In these spaces, they are able to get away from the stresses of everyday life, can take time out away from the family, friends, and peers. For many young people private spaces are one of the first spaces they can call their own and in which they can be themselves. Crucially for Larson, the media plays a central role in the management and the authentication of teen identities in private spaces. He argues "it is in their solitary bedroom lives where media has some of its most significant functions. . ." (1995, p. 536). In the bedroom, the media function as a resource for the exploration of self-identity, one that is considered a more "authentic personal self" (1995, p. 536) than the one lived out in other, more public realms. For Larson, young people's identities are drawn from the media and specifically from music. In private spaces young people can experiment with different music styles and genres and can display their tastes, whether deemed "cool" by their peers or not. Music also functions as an important resource in private space as through music, young people can work through different feelings, emotions, and memories (Anderson 2004, 2006), many of which may be more intense than ever before. In this respect, Larson argues that as teenagers begin to relate differently to music, private space also becomes more meaningful to them and the experiences of one enhance the other.

Jeanne Steele and Jane Brown's paper *Adolescent room culture: studying media in the context of everyday life* (1995) similarly considered the ways in which the media were used as resources by young people in the construction and exploration of their identities and social worlds. Importantly, in their work, Steele and Brown emphasized how young people's engagement with media is by no means static but is ongoing and changes according to their everyday experiences inside and outside the home (1995, p. 557). In accordance with Larson (1995), Steele and Brown identified private spaces such as bedrooms as crucial spaces within which young people engage with the media using them as resources through which to explore and understand their own selves. As a way of understanding the continuous evolution of teenage private space, Steele and Brown proposed that young people engage in a process of "selection," "interaction," and "application" when using the media (1995, p. 558). By this they meant that young people select media texts, media content, and media technology from an ever-growing range of resources often in quite spontaneous ways; that they interact and engage with media in context-specific ways (e.g.,

depending on the different moods that young people are) but also use the media in “concrete ways” (1995, p. 559) to make sense of their everyday lives to the extent that particular patterns of media use become embedded into their everyday lives.

What Larson and Steel and Brown’s studies tell us about bedroom culture in the 1990s was that while it was certainly a commercial culture that fed on the consumption practices of young people, it was not the “almost completely packaged” version it had been for teenage girls in the 1970s (McRobbie and Garber 1976, p. 220). Young people in these accounts have much greater agency and crucially are making their personal and private space meaningful to them and a representation of their emerging, changing identities. Importantly, while young people’s identities are not static, neither are their bedrooms, and Larson and Steele and Brown demonstrate how young people can be creative and resourceful with the cultural tools available to them (especially music, film, and literature) which help them understand and explore their own sense of self as it evolves. Indeed, the meaning of a song, for example, can change and can have different impact and tap into different emotions in different contexts. For Larson and Steele and Brown one of the most significant contexts within which the representation of the “authentic self” can take place is the teenage bedroom.

4 Media Zone 2.0: “Bedroom Culture” in the 2000s

As noted above, while the concept of bedroom culture has been recognized as significant to youth cultural studies, it has remained relatively underexplored in comparison to youth cultural studies in public domains. One scholar who has produced a significant body of work on youth culture, private space, and teenage bedroom culture in the lives of both young women and men is Sian Lincoln. The rest of this chapter is dedicated to a review of Lincoln’s work, which considers the teenage bedroom as a key site of identity for young people. Her work, which draws on extensive ethnographic research methods, reveals the complexities of contemporary bedroom culture that no longer exists entirely within the realms of the private sphere of the home as it did for McRobbie and Garber (1976) but within often complex situations and contexts across different spheres. Lincoln’s work considers the various dimensions of private space from the meaning of the objects found in young people’s bedrooms to the translation of bedroom culture beyond the physical into virtual realms such as social network sites and other social media environments. Across these explorations Lincoln presents the concept of “zoning” as a framework with which one can make sense of the complexities of private space in youth culture.

4.1 Bedrooms as “Zones”

Lincoln’s chapter “Teenage Girls’ ‘Bedroom Culture’: Codes Versus Zones” (2004) was one of her first pieces on contemporary teenage bedroom culture. In that chapter Lincoln sets out to update McRobbie and Garber’s concept of bedroom culture and

to reconsider McRobbie's application of the code as a framework through which to understand how teenage girls use private space as a site of youth culture. Her discussion of contemporary bedroom culture is situated in the context of debates around post-subcultures that were emerging at the time (Thornton 1995; Bennett 1999; Muggleton 1997, 2000; Bennett and Kahn-Harris 2004). The post-subcultures debate primarily explored and critiqued the usefulness of the traditional concept of "subculture" as was defined by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in the 1970s (Hall and Jefferson 1975; Hebdige 1979) for understanding contemporary youth cultures. Post-subculture scholars argued that young people's engagement in contemporary youth cultures are more fluid, free floating, even "neo-tribal" (Bennett 1999) because young people associate with a variety of youth cultures across a range of contexts rather than belonging exclusively to one as was the case in traditional subcultural studies.

In this context, Lincoln proposes that the cultural activities that young people take part in in private spaces are similarly fluid in nature, with young people accessing cultural resources from a variety of contexts within the particular space of their bedroom. However, Lincoln argues that this fluid engagement in activities takes place alongside more routine uses of the teenage bedroom such as sleeping or doing homework and the bedroom is often laid out in accordance with those activities. In this respect, Lincoln conceptualizes "zoning" as

A physical and visible arrangement of furniture, technical equipment, beauty products, school books, in fact any item that is "contained" (Lefebvre 1991, p. 83) within bedroom space. It is oriented by the social activities that take place within the space, therefore it may not be fixed in physical or cognitive activities; zones can over-lap and integrate. The zone can also become a mediated and fluid construction, enhanced through technologies such as the TV or the sound system, the mobile phone and the internet; therefore the space of the bedroom is a fluid and dynamic cultural domain. (Lincoln 2004, p. 97)

Drawing on a case study of four teenage girls, taken from a wider ethnographic study on youth culture and private spaces, and assessing the applicability of McRobbie's codes (1991) to contemporary teenage bedroom culture, Lincoln examines how zoning works in bedrooms and how different zones are "folded" and "unfolded" by young people in various contexts. For example, she updates McRobbie's code of fashion and beauty referring to it as a "fashion and beauty/going out zone" (p. 104). Lincoln recognizes that the more traditional elements of McRobbie's code of fashion and beauty exist in contemporary girls' bedrooms and that girls' engagement in such rituals are highly visible in girls' rooms (e.g., beauty products on a dressing table). However, as Lincoln notes, the end goal of this "beautification" is not just romance, as the girls in her study were actively participating in public-based youth cultures that were necessarily informing how the space was used. In this respect, the bedroom was also a social space for girls to get ready for a night in, while also being a space that they returned to after a night out. This public-private interaction was further enhanced through the use of mobile phones where messages and photographs about the night would be exchanged with friends who engaged in a "virtual bedroom culture" outside of the physical space. Lincoln

concludes the chapter arguing that “zoning” is an important conceptual tool for understanding contemporary bedroom culture because it captures young people’s interactions within and uses of private space as they happen. Further, it captures the ways in which bedroom culture is mediated and thus lived out beyond the physical realms of domestic space.

4.2 Music

Building upon this discussion, and focusing on the significance of media in contemporary bedroom culture, Lincoln’s article *Feeling the Noise: Teenagers, Bedrooms and Music* (2005) considers how a young person’s use of “zones,” created through music, can transform their bedroom from a mundane, ordinary space to one that is culturally or socially dynamic. The chapter considers the integration of media into contemporary teenage “bedroom culture” and develops the concept of “zoning” further, concentrating particularly upon the interplay between public and private spheres as mediated through music. In the chapter, “age” is focused upon as an important “referent of experience” (DeNora 2000, p. 67) and Lincoln considers the ways in which young people’s uses of private spaces are influenced by their age and their growing up experiences as well as their access to cultural experiences in the public domain.

Taking her cues from McRobbie and Garber, Lincoln argues that music remains important in contemporary teenage bedroom culture but that its use by both young women and men is not restricted to the worlds of the pop idol, romance, and fantasy (although, as Lincoln notes, this notion was still applicable to some of her younger female participants who used music as a marker of aspirations in the public sphere [p. 408]), nor is its use short term. Rather, music (and by this she includes the recorded songs, listening technologies, associated posters, and other paraphernalia) helps a young person to document and mark out their identities within their private domains. In this respect, music is used as a cultural resource in bedrooms, but it is also used by a young person as a way of staking their claim over a bedroom and to communicate their emerging identities, their growing up, and their independence. Lincoln argues then that music is a resource with which young people can proclaim ownership over their personal space. For example, a song playing in bedrooms is chosen by the young occupant according to their current musical tastes and interests but also their mood. It is used as a way of creating a particular atmosphere in the bedroom (Lincoln 2004) and to mark out a young person’s “own space.” However, if turned up loud it can annoy parents or siblings who hear nothing but the thumping sound of the bass in the living room downstairs or, further, the noise can seep out into the streets and be heard by anyone outside.

Lincoln notes that the structuring of space though music is often done by young people in quite a spontaneous way and often music is listened to in the bedroom depending on how the occupant is feeling, what activities they are undertaking, what they are going to be doing later in the day, and so on (Lincoln 2004, 2005). She concludes the discussion by considering how “new” technologies such as the mobile

phone and the Internet are channels through which young people's access to different cultural and social zones is further extended, the interplay between public and private becomes even more complex, and music consumption and production begin to overlap. Lincoln gives the example of a particular participant (Ryan) who played and listened to a lot of music in his bedroom and who used the Internet to facilitate his interests. This included looking for new music, reading about old music, and compiling CDs for his friends. His multiple engagements with music were facilitated by the Internet and demonstrate how production and consumption begin to intertwine in this space. In this respect, the bedroom became a portal for Ryan in which the "zoning" of different musical contexts and activities could take place and different spheres be opened and closed accordingly.

Lincoln's monograph *Youth Culture and Private Space* (2012) is currently one of the few comprehensive studies of young people's uses of private spaces such as bedrooms. The study, which draws on extensive ethnographic research with around 50 young people between the ages of 12 and 22 years from the North-West of England in the UK, sets out to explore the role and significance of private space in the lives of young people and, more broadly, to highlight the importance of the private domain in the wider context of youth cultural studies that has traditionally focused on the public domain. In doing this, Lincoln brings space to the fore as a concept through which to explore contemporary youth cultures. This is important, she argues, because young people are living out their cultural lives across multiple spaces and spheres and are moving between these spaces all the time. What complicates this movement, however, is the notion that adolescence is primarily associated with young people "not fitting in" and being in a state of "in-between." In *Youth Culture and Private Space* Lincoln explores how young people manage their movements between different spaces alongside their experiences of growing up, and the significance of the private realm to these experiences in which the complexities of teenage life can be worked through.

4.3 Content and Aesthetics

For Lincoln these boundaries exist on both micro and macro levels for young people. For example, the bedrooms studied in Lincoln's research existed primarily in the family home or in university halls of residence, and therefore do not exist in isolation; the uses of these spaces are inherently linked to the context of the domestic within which they exist. This can sometimes be quite complicated. For instance, a small number of Lincoln's participants were children of divorced parents which meant that these young people had a bedroom in each parent's home. Lisa, aged 18, for example, had this arrangement but her experiences of "bedroom culture" in each of her parents' houses was quite different. Despite living there on various occasions, Lisa said that in her mother's house she always felt as if she were staying in the "guest room." Her mother had also always been quite restrictive over the ways in which Lisa could decorate her room (including restricting what posters she could put up and sometimes asking her to take posters down) and thus Lisa did not feel she

had ownership over that particular space. In her father's house, on the other hand, Lisa was allowed free reign over the space to the point that Lisa said that even though she had moved out of her father's house to go to university, it looked as if she had never moved out. Lincoln considers the complexities of this and similar scenarios (e.g., she considers how important material possessions had become to Lisa in light of her parents' divorce and how her bedroom was the ultimate space in which she was able to hang on to memories of her parents being together) and suggests that young people's uses of their private space are unique and subject to a range of influences. At the same time, bedrooms are a place to preserve identities, particularly pertinent if family life is unstable.

The influence of parents over a young person's bedroom's content and aesthetics is a theme that is further explored in Lincoln's monograph. While by and large Lincoln argues that young people do have significant control over their own personal space, both practically and symbolically (Hodkinson and Lincoln 2008 discuss this in more detail), parents still have a say over how it is decorated (because often they are paying for it) and used, for example, who can and cannot enter in the bedroom. But there are other "micro" level influences too, the most important of which is siblings. A number of Lincoln's participants were either sharing or had experience of sharing a bedroom with brothers and sisters and in such formations Lincoln demonstrates how young people actively pursued claiming and making a space their own. This claiming was done in a number of ways, for example, through a very obvious placing of possessions to create "walls" or boundaries that separate two halves of a room. These halves were then decorated according to the occupants' tastes and interests and were often referred to in discussions with Lincoln as markers of maturity and growing up in comparison to the content of a younger sibling's "side" of a room. Claiming space was also achieved through media consumption, for example, older siblings taking charge of the sound system and playing their music as a way to communicate to a younger sibling to keep out. Music too could seep out of the bedroom into other rooms in the house or even the street if a window was open, as was also discussed in Lincoln (2005).

4.4 Materiality

Despite these internal contexts and potential restrictions on bedroom use, Lincoln demonstrates that young people actively engage in "bedroom culture" and that the content and materiality of that space is highly significant as a representation of a young person's emerging identity. Possessions in bedrooms make the space unique and personal and, as Lincoln suggests, her participants were able to "tell the story" of their space through reference to particular items and objects, and their meaning and significance in that space. Lincoln argues that "age" and transitional periods play a particularly important role in determining the materiality of bedroom space and what items can be found there as a representation of identity. For instance, young people often move around or "renovate" their bedrooms when they become a certain age. Lincoln gives the example of James who on turning 16 years old made major

changes to his room in terms of its color and content, painting over the yellow walls with dark blue paint and replacing “childish” posters with ones of favorite bands or artists, putting up photographs of nights out with friends, cinema and gig tickets and beer bottle tops onto his walls as signifiers of times out with his friends in the public sphere that he was beginning to enjoy as he got older. Other participants would “take over” an older sibling’s bedroom when they moved out of home seeing this as an opportunity to decorate the room in a more “grown up” style and representing their new status as the oldest sibling in the household. Through an exploration of materiality in bedrooms, Lincoln shows how such a space is constantly evolving and changing and how “layers” of identity are being formed in the space; an idea she explores in her paper *“I’ve Stamped my Personality all over it”: The Meaning of Objects in Teenage Bedroom Space* in which she argues that bedrooms can be understood as “palimpsests” (2014a). In engaging with this term Lincoln considers the ways in which objects like childhood possessions or objects left in rooms by other occupants are given a new meaning as they are integrated into more “mature” spaces or spaces that have previously been occupied by other people and how childhood objects are moved around or out of a bedroom as the occupant gets older (see also Horton 2010).

4.5 Public/Private Mapping

An analysis of material possessions in bedrooms also highlights that a young person’s use of his or her bedroom by no means exists in isolation but is inextricably linked to other spaces in the public and the private sphere. This is captured by Lincoln in her discussions around “age” and bedroom use and she argues that as young people become more curious about the public domain and as they become more independent and able to go to bars, clubs, the cinema, and so on with friends, their uses of their bedrooms do change as the room moves from being a prime space to hang out with friends to one that is “moved through,” perhaps with them, on the way to other spheres that are becoming more meaningful as part of their emerging identities. However, and as discussed in Lincoln (2004), private domains such as bedrooms can still be significant in the context of that kind of public engagement: for example, functioning as spaces in which to get ready for a night out and to chill out in afterward with the atmosphere in the space being adjusted accordingly to reflect those activities. In exploring this public/private interplay further, Lincoln revealed that some of her female participants were using material objects and items to “map” public contexts onto private domains. For example, a number of her female participants who shopped at fashion stores such as Topshop (A British fashion retailer established in 1964) and Urban Outfitters (A US clothing retailer established in 1970) were actually recreating the aesthetics of those stores back home in their bedrooms. Lincoln (2014b) explores this in more detail arguing that this is in many ways the “ultimate” mapping of public onto private and is a practice that resonates with McRobbie’s (1991) notion of “coding” “bedroom culture” as a map of meaning for teenage girls.

The mapping of the public onto the private in bedrooms is not solely achieved through cultural practices in physical space. As Lincoln (2005) argues above and as Larson (1995) and Steele and Brown (1995) have also argued, the media is a key resource through which young people are making sense of their own personal space. In developing this argument further, Lincoln considers the role of the media in bedroom culture, both historically and in contemporary times using the concept of “zoning” introduced in her earlier work (2004) to explore the ways in which a young person’s bedroom is a “container of meaning” filled with material objects as well as a portal of communication that opens up “zones” outside of the physical confinements of the bedroom. “Zoning in action” is explored in three ways by Lincoln. First, and building upon Lincoln (2005), she considers how media are used to “transform” bedrooms from seemingly mundane spaces to those that are more meaningful and dynamic as well as how music and other media are used as markers of identity by participants. Many of her participants considered it important to have access to music and in some cases a range of music technologies to maximize opportunities for the best listening experience as appropriate to the setting. This would often depend on what Lincoln refers to as background and foreground zones, which represent the second way in which she explores “zoning in action.” Watching television or listening to music is not always done actively but can be “zoned” in and out depending on what is going on in the space at the time. For example, the radio may be on in a bedroom and the occupant’s favorite song might come on leading them to turn up the volume and listen more intently. Young people use music or television as background noise or wallpaper as Lincoln (2005) refers to it because the buzz of it in the background makes the space feel like theirs and feel familiar. The occupant may be engaging in other activities that are foregrounded over music or television, yet its presence is a part of their “bedroom culture.” Music can be foregrounded again in contexts where it facilitates the activities in bedrooms, for example, when a group of friends come over for the evening or when getting ready for a night out.

4.6 Beyond Bedrooms

The ability of young people to “zone” even further is demonstrated through Lincoln’s third example of “zoning in action” that considers the use of portable listening devices such as iPods that when used in bedrooms provide the ultimate example of the role of media in “bedroom culture” and the portability of “bedroom culture” beyond the physical space of a room. Drawing on the example of James, aged 16, and his friends, Lincoln examines how, on the one hand, young people’s uses of different “zones” in public, private, and virtual realms seem quite complex and subject to a number of negotiations, while, on the other hand, their uses are also often spontaneous and “of the moment,” facilitating “bedroom culture” as it happens. James and his friends would often spend time together in one of their bedrooms signaling that these spaces were no longer associated with childhood play but with adult “living” and socializing. When congregating together James and his friends would invariably play music. They did this through hooking up an iPod, which each

of them had bought with them as a matter of course, to the main stereo system to listen through “good” speakers or they would each plug in to their iPods, but just with one headphone in so that they can still speak to each other. The boys would then put their iPods on “random” and pass them between each other listening out for songs that they liked. If they liked particular tracks, they would then download them onto their own iPods or listen to other songs by the same artist. Lincoln unpacks this scenario to demonstrate the number of “zones” that are in operation here: the bedroom is the “main” music zone; zones within zones are then created through the boys’ iPods with each of their own personal music zones being opened and closed as they are passed around between them. The zones can get more intense if the boys turn the volume up in tracks they like, or interrupted if they are also using texting, checking Facebook, Twitter, and so on. What this demonstrates is that media zones specifically are not static and the mobility of them has been intensified by the development of mobile technologies. Such zones are also further complicated through the development of social media, and specifically social network sites, a context that Lincoln explores in the closing chapter of her book. The notion of a “virtual bedroom” is the last issue discussed in this review as it considers how young people’s representations of identity are extended beyond the private space of the bedroom into the semiprivate spaces such as social network sites that have become ubiquitous in the lives of many young people, especially in the Western world.

The bedroom has proven to be a useful spatial metaphor for understanding how young people use social media and more specifically social network sites as an extension of their personal and private space (see also Hodkinson and Lincoln 2008; Pearson 2009; Robards 2010) and Lincoln builds on these discussions to consider the interplay of bedrooms and the social network sites on which young people are displaying their selves and performing identity. One of Lincoln’s key findings is that in light of the vast uptake of social network sites by young people to the extent that it has become one of the main tools of communication with friends and peers, even family, the “traditional” bedroom has taken on a new significance for young people. On social network sites, young people are under constant pressure to update their profiles, post new photos, comment on others, tag pictures, and so on that many feel this presentation of identity is not the “authentic” one but one that is constructed to keep up with other users. Instead, a number of Lincoln’s participants referred to their bedrooms as the place in which they could really be themselves and in which they could present their “authentic” selves that was not subject to the pressures associated with online arenas. In this respect, Lincoln argues that while youth cultural studies has focused ever-increasingly on “mediated” youth cultures, it should not ignore more traditional physical spaces such as bedrooms. This argument seems to resonate with recent media reports that young people are now experiencing “Facebook fatigue” and are in fact withdrawing from the site because they no longer feel stimulated by this form of communication, which can be quite stifling. If this is the case and young people are in fact starting to move back into more traditional spheres of youth culture, then there is still much work to be done around private spaces such as bedrooms. This is true in a broader context too, especially in the UK where in an age of austerity, young people are living in the family home for longer

periods and moving back into it after a period of absence (for instance, going to university), contexts that Lincoln also considers.

5 Conclusion

This chapter reviews a growing body of literature that examines the role of private spaces such as the bedroom in the lives of young people and the concept of a “bedroom culture” in both historical and contemporary contexts. The review has taken a broadly chronological approach from the 1970s to the present to consider how “bedroom culture” has evolved from the exclusive “girl zone” that Angela McRobbie and Jenny Garber present in the 1970s to the multifaceted, multimedia identity space of the 2000s that is outlined by Sian Lincoln. What the literature across these decades does demonstrate is that having a private space to call one’s own is important for young people and it is during those often turbulent teenage years when having privacy becomes paramount.

There are several themes that emerge and run through this literature. Firstly, private spaces are considered important identity spaces particularly through the teenage years when a young person is experiencing much change. The bedroom is a place to retreat to and is a place where a young person can explore their identities and document it through the physical space of the bedroom as it unfolds. Secondly, this literature reveals that private space is by no means static space, but bedrooms are evolving and changing all the time – things are added to it and taken away, other people move in and out of the space, a young person engages in a range of different activities, all of which contribute to an ever-changing environment. Thirdly, media plays a key role in the construction of bedroom culture; from magazines to music to social media, bedrooms are inherently media spaces and thus the content accessed via the media is integral to the ways in which bedroom culture is experienced. Importantly, bedroom culture scholars demonstrate the unique ways in which teenagers use media in their private space as a resource to help them work through their sense of self, their identity, feelings, emotions, and so on. Fourthly, this body of work reveals that “bedroom culture” is a complex culture that is experienced by young people in many different ways. Scholars such as Lincoln (2004, 2005, 2012) have presented conceptual frameworks such as “zoning” as a way to make sense of it. Finally, this body of work demonstrates the importance of paying attention to “space” as a key concept in understanding youth cultural practices. Young people are moving through many different spaces all the time as they live out their cultural and social lives and thus the public, private, and virtual spheres through which they move cannot be disconnected.

What does this tell us about the importance of space as a concept through which to understand contemporary youth cultures? In his book *The Production of Space* Henri Lefebvre (1991) argues that spaces can be understood as “containers of meaning” with meaning resulting not only from the material content of those spaces but from people’s interactions within them too. In the context of the teenage bedroom, “bedroom culture” is produced through the continual movement of people and objects within that space and the space is made meaningful to its young occupant through often quite deliberate

choices about what that space looks like, what is in it, how it “feels,” and the atmosphere created – it is a space that is worked upon to be a container of a young person’s (current) identity. However, this identity is not static and thus bedroom space is constantly evolving and changing to maintain its meaningfulness to its young occupant signaling what Lefebvre refers to as the “social labour” (1991, p. 77) involved in this maintenance (e.g., through moving things in and out of the bedroom, buying new things). In addition to this, the teenage bedroom as a “container of meaning” exists within the micro context of the parental home as well as wider public contexts – a number of which are “networked” (boyd 2007) through the social web. In this respect while young people may be navigating the uncertainties associated with their teenage selves, they are also navigating numerous complex spatial contexts which means that their individual youth cultural “maps” are changing all the time.

There has been a shift in youth cultural studies recently toward explorations of youth culture as “mediated” cultures (Bennett and Robards 2014), particularly online and in the context of social network sites. While indeed these discussions are imperative to our understanding of contemporary youth culture, it can be argued that physical private spaces like bedrooms still remain underexplored. As Lincoln’s data revealed, young people who are living out much of their lives through social media are now looking back inside their bedrooms and considering them to be sites of “authentic” identity and a refuge from a highly mediated environment in which they are under pressure to update their profiles all the time, for example, on social network sites. If this is the case, and bedrooms continue to be important sites for young people’s identity formation, researchers should continue to explore the many facets of “bedroom culture” and its role in young lives.

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Abstract

The focus of this chapter is how young people craft their identities in digital spaces in ways that embody their offline identities. Digital spaces are created through interrelations-between (Massey 2005). While sites such as Facebook may appear to be a place and space in their own right, Facebook can also be understood as a multiplicity of spaces-between created through interrelations (Massey 2005). On Facebook, young people present and perform their identities to multiple audiences, including online “Friends” (where “Friends” indicate

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digitally mediated online connections), offline “friends” (materially-based offline “friends”; see Boyd and Ellison 2007), family, employers, and extended social networks of acquaintances. Many of these audience members will have expectations of the young person’s performance based on offline interactions (Boyd 2008; Goffman 1959). With both online and offline interrelational spaces, young people negotiate blurred public/private boundaries, multiple performative spaces, blended audiences, and relationships anchored by offline connections (Blanch et al. 2014; Boyd 2008; Marwick and Boyd 2010; Zhao et al. 2008).

This chapter explores the way a group of young women negotiated the tensions created by merged educational and social spaces when Facebook was used for formal educational purposes. These young women were senior students at an urban high school in New Zealand. During group and individual interviews, these students described how they adapted their online identity presentations to multiple audiences. For these young women, Facebook was not a separate place/space. Instead, Facebook was a continuation of materially-located spaces and interrelations-between.

Keywords

Digital spaces • Online • Identity • Embodied performances • Facebook • Education • Blurred boundaries • New Zealand • Social media

1 Introduction

This chapter explores identity work in digital and material spaces. The examples in this chapter illustrate the way young people reflect and embody their offline identities in their digital profiles. These examples are drawn from a qualitative study that explored the formal educational use of a public Facebook page by a senior high school teacher and nine students in New Zealand (see Blanch et al. 2014). The students who utilized the class’ Facebook page negotiated multiple performative spaces and audiences as they constructed their online and offline identities.

As digital technologies have increasingly pervaded everyday life, society struggles with shifting concepts of the digital-physical “interface.” Terminology such as “cyberspace” or “virtual space” continues to discursively construct digital, or online, spaces as separate and distinct from materially based, offline spaces. However, this chapter argues that the construction of an online/offline dichotomy is problematic. In doing so, this chapter contributes to a growing body of literature contesting the notion of disconnected online and offline spaces.

This chapter begins by considering understandings of online/offline spaces in research with young people and social media, before outlining the conceptualization of online, digitally-mediated spaces. The method of data collection is summarized, followed by a discussion of Facebook and the added tensions that nuances of

public/private spaces add to online identity performance. Using qualitative research data as illustration, the way these young women constructed digitally-mediated identities through identifier choices and performative interactions is discussed. The chapter then explores the way the formal educational use of the class' Facebook page affected these young women's performative interactions on the class' page, as well as on their social profiles, before offering some concluding thoughts.

2 Re-spatializing the Internet

Online spaces are often conceptualized as disembodied spaces, separate from "everyday reality," where the mind is freed from the limitations of the physical body (Sunden 2003). Questioning the discourse of the "cyberkid" identity, Valentine and Holloway (2002) suggest that online practices are connected to offline identities even when the online seems a disconnected space. They conclude that online and offline identity construction is a reciprocal relationship, stating, "the real and the virtual are mutually constituted" (Valentine and Holloway 2002, p. 316). Similarly, Sunden (2003) argues that Internet users "type oneself into being" and create a digital identity upon which they may project their offline embodiment (Sunden 2003, p. 3). Yet, even while challenging the discursive boundaries between online and offline spaces, language such as "real," "virtual," and "projecting" reinforces the perception that online and offline continue to be distinct spaces.

Research exploring young people's use of technologies has led to a teasing out of conceptualizations of online and offline spaces. Rather than a "world apart," online spaces can be viewed as spaces of practices (Leander and McKim 2003). For instance, fantasy gameplay spaces contribute to the construction of online as a "virtual world." In exploring young people's use of the gaming site, "RuneScape," Crowe and Bradford (2006) conclude that there is a porous boundary between virtual and real worlds. They note that virtual space is influenced by material practices, with virtual social spaces providing young people with "imagined communities" as alternatives to increasingly limited material play spaces (Crowe and Bradford 2006, p. 343). Young people using online spaces become socialized (Robertson 2009), using digital technologies to manage relationships with peers (Livingstone and Bober 2004), in ways that enhance relationships in both online and offline spaces (Carter 2005; Livingstone and Bober 2004; Madge et al. 2009).

Over time, the Internet has been re-spatialized. Bounded online and offline worlds have been reconceptualized as fluid online and offline spaces. At the same time, the use of digital social media is blurring boundaries between public and private spaces. Social networking sites provide public spaces for young people to interact (Boyd 2014). Yet technology use lets young people bring "public" spaces into the "private" space of the bedroom (Lincoln 2012). Young people willingly

mingle these spaces and navigate notions of place and space in doing so. Similarly, young people themselves have blurred boundaries as they utilize social networking sites for informal educational purposes (Greenhow and Robelia 2009; Madge et al. 2009; Selwyn 2009). With a shift toward formal educational use of social networking sites, tensions arise over public/private distinctions and challenge perceptions about the digital presence of young people.

In digitally-mediated societies, many people have some kind of digital presence, even if not actively interacting online. Many public records are stored as digital copies across multiple geographically-located devices. Even individuals, who choose not to personally interact on social media, may unwittingly have a digital presence if their social connections post information online. Susan (all names used are codenames), a non-Facebook user in this study, acknowledged her presence on Facebook: “I think there’s quite a lot [of information about me on Facebook]. There’s a lot of photos and stuff like that.” Nevertheless, having a digital presence because information is stored in digital form should not be confused with the interrelations-between of *digitally-mediated* spaces. Digitally-mediated spaces are based in material spaces, but this does not mean that all spaces are digitally-mediated.

2.1 Digitally-Mediated Spaces

Digital spaces are anchored in the materially-based infrastructure of hardware, service providers, and material users. This infrastructure offers opportunities to explore public communities and spaces that, potentially, are not geographically bounded. Similarly, mobile technologies allow digital spaces to be constantly accessible, suggesting the possibility that digital spaces are “hybrid” spaces (de Freitas 2010). However, this concept is dualistic and overly simplistic (de Freitas 2010) and reinforces notions of digital spaces as distinct from material spaces. Such an approach fails to acknowledge that digital, or online, spaces exist because groups of people gather, interact, and create spaces between (Massey 2005).

Space is interrelational. As interrelations between individuals vary, so do spaces; therefore, no two spaces can be the same. In other words, online communities create digitally-mediated public spaces through ever-shifting interrelations (Massey 2005) that ensure online or digitally-mediated spaces, like offline spaces, are always in a “state of becoming” (de Freitas 2010, p. 631). This chapter recognizes that the terms “online” and “offline” are discursively constructed and intuitive. Therefore, like Leander and McKim (2003), this chapter continues to use “online” to refer to interactions that are digitally-mediated via Internet use and “offline” for interactions that do not require the digital mediation of Internet access. Online/offline therefore refers to the mode of interrelational transmission that facilitates the spaces-between.

The Internet and social media provide opportunities to forge new spaces of interrelations (Massey 2005) regardless of geographic locale. As young people have increasingly populated digital spaces, educators have followed. As well as educationally designed software, such as Moodle, to provide online resources,

educators increasingly promote social networking sites, such as Facebook, as learning environments. Facebook is a bounded “place,” an Internet locality, but one that is experienced from multiple localities, through multiple interrelations, giving rise to multiple Facebook spaces. Facebook users, and the resulting interrelations-between, are the creators of Facebook spaces. Facebook, therefore, can be understood as a “meeting place” created through “articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings” (Massey 1991, p. 28). Using Facebook formally for educational purposes extends the classroom beyond the school’s geographical borders and causes tensions for students who must negotiate identity performances to multiple audiences in multiple interrelational spaces. The formal educational use of Facebook challenges discourses of risk with discourses of opportunity, challenges perceived boundaries of offline/online spaces, and further blurs boundaries between public and private spaces.

3 Method

This chapter draws upon a small qualitative study of nine students at an urban, single-sex high school in New Zealand (Blanch et al. 2014). The study aimed to explore how students negotiated identity presentations on Facebook, when Facebook was used formally for educational purposes. These young women were part of a senior class in which the teacher used a public Facebook page for curriculum subject discussions. The Facebook page was accessible to multiple classes across different year levels and was still used by ex-students of the subject and school. The participating students were in their final year at high school and were aged between 17 and 19 years old. Six of the nine students attended an initial, semi-structured group interview, aimed at eliciting the students’ perceptions and experiences of using Facebook and other social networking sites. Following this group discussion, the participants’ interactions on the class’ Facebook page were observed over 4 months, and screenshots were collected for analysis. The page observations allowed a glimpse into the Facebook spaces that these young women inhabited. Along with the data from the group interview, the patterns of interaction observed on the Facebook page informed the subsequent individual interviews.

The individual interviews focused on the ways these young women used Facebook and how the class’ Facebook page affected their interactions. Of particular interest was the way these young women self-reported their own understandings of reading and performing identity online. The examples in this chapter illustrate the ways these young women shaped their identity performances on Facebook.

4 What Is Facebook?

Facebook is a social networking site with over 1.3 billion active monthly users globally (as of December, 2014). Membership is available for anyone aged over 13 years. Facebook users create “public” profiles, be-friend others to create

extended networks, and share information on their profile pages. Depending on personal security and privacy settings, information shared by Facebook users may be publically available, completely private, available to the Friends' network, or available to an extended network of "Friends of Friends." As well as individual spaces, Facebook also offers community spaces in the form of public "Pages," in which all postings are publically available, or "Groups" which may utilize varied privacy settings.

4.1 Public/Private Nuances

On social media, the definition of "public" and "private" is a complex and nuanced concept. Young people embrace social networking sites, such as Facebook, as spaces to interact with peers with limited adult surveillance (Boyd 2008, 2014; Lenhart and Madden 2007; Livingstone 2008). For individuals, there are two aspects to Facebook – the compulsorily public, or "privately public," profile and the extended, "or publically private," profile (Lange 2007). The compulsorily public profile consists of a limited profile design providing opportunities for showing and expressing identity. Identifiers such as name, representative imagery for profile and cover photos, and indications of gender are made public and searchable for even non-Facebook members to observe, should they know the name used. Notably, Facebook requires the use of "real" names and declines those considered "fake," although, unless Facebook challenges the name, no proof is required as to the veracity of the name used.

The extended profile offers further opportunity for identity work. Facebook members can show indicators of taste and interest. They can display popularity and friendship through be-Friending and de-Friending others and through textual cues of status updates, comments, and "Likes." They choose what information to reveal or not reveal, but the ability to control privacy settings offers an illusion of "private" space and of interrelations-between with a known audience. As young people share information on Facebook, they do so to an imagined audience of their "private" networks of Friends (Boyd 2014). In doing so, young people define an imagined context for their interactions (Boyd 2014). Young people's perceptions of their audience shape their perceptions of interactions as public or private. Yet Facebook is public and searchable. If individual privacy settings have not been utilized, profiles and postings may be publically available to an unknown, or unimagined, audience.

The demarcation between public and private blurs on social networking sites. The "publically private" and "privately public" aspects of social networking sites, such as Facebook, mean that public and private are better conceptualized as a continuum rather than distinct spheres (Ford 2011; Lange 2007; Waskul 1996). Facebook is publically private, in that many identity markers are shared with a "limited" private group of Friends, and privately public, in that profiles share a small number of identifiers with a wider, uncontrolled public audience. Conversely,

although school classrooms appear to be public, the ability to control and limit the audience ensures that they are relatively private (Nairn 1997).

Using Facebook for formal educational purposes challenges notions of the “private” home space and the “public” “not-home” space and dismantles “temporal and geographical barriers that separate home and work roles” (Ellison 1999, p. 347). The result is a middle region between the front-stage of public identity performance and the more private back-stage identity performances (Goffman 1959, 1967). Each “stage” becomes a performative space, created by interrelations between performer and audience. For students and teachers using Facebook educationally, the front-stage performances of the school and classroom become integrated with online front-stage performances to Friends, as well as with the back-stages of the home. Each stage, or performance space, is discursively constructed, and multiple stages offer multiple possible identity performances for individuals to take up and/or resist.

5 Performing and Embodying Identity Online

For young people, online identities are often contingent upon, or direct representations of, their offline identities (Valentine and Holloway 2002). In constructing profiles for these sites, young people make choices on what information to disclose in completing, or not completing, data fields that provide identity cues such as gender, age, and preferences (Livingstone 2008). At the same time, young people must negotiate site constructions and affordances (Hammond 2010), discourses of risk over information disclosure (Davies and Lee 2008; Timm and Duven 2008), as well as their own understandings and perceptions of audience and public/private spaces. Each choice reflects a decision to present a particular online identity that audience members read as indicative of a biographical narrative. Digital identity construction is therefore a series of performative acts, the meaning of which is negotiated between the performer and the audience.

The continuing discursive construction of online spaces as distinct and “virtual” makes it necessary to restate the embodied nature of the digital presence. Moreover, the apparent disconnection between the material body and the digital presence suggests that there are opportunities for manipulation of the digital identity. Yet embodied material identities cannot be cast aside so readily. The digital identity expresses embodied characteristics of the offline identity, such as the habitus and cultural capital of the individual (Valentine and Holloway 2002). Habitus is the “unconscious framework” of practice (Holt 2008, p. 233). It is the subconscious manners and “ways of being” ingrained in the individual. Habitus shapes the textual activities and interactions that inform and create the digital embodiment (Merchant 2006). Acknowledging the embodied nature of digital identities therefore recognizes the way habitus and capital “leak through” in identity performances, regardless of the mode of interrelational transmission facilitating the spaces-between.

5.1 The Influence of Discourses of Risk

As noted earlier, Facebook makes some profile information, such as name, profile, and cover imagery, compulsorily public. Facebook also regularly updates account settings for profiles. During the study, these settings could default to “public” without warning. For the young women in this study, this was often at odds with their desire to maintain some privacy and control of their Facebook profiles. Maxine expressed her frustration with Facebook’s default open security settings: “[Facebook] generally want you to have no privacy. That’s what kind of annoys me. They want everybody to be open, but they don’t understand that sometimes it’s really unsafe.”

The literature often links the provision of personal identifiers to increased risks of victimization, which fuels parental fears around use of social networking sites by young people. Some young people have been shown to reveal personal identifying material such as address and phone contact details, which further strengthens discourses of incompetence, and the positioning of young people as in need of parental mediation when online (see, e.g., De Souza and Dick 2008; Mesch 2009). Some university-age students also disclose address and contact details, despite a stated awareness of potential audience (Fogel and Nehmad 2008; Hinduja and Patchin 2008; Peluchette and Karl 2008). However, Danah Boyd (2008, 2014) argues that young people carefully consider the information they release in order to control access to information (see also Lenhart and Madden 2007; Livingstone 2008). Many young people choose to provide false details on profiles as a way of avoiding parental scrutiny (Boyd 2008).

The young women in this study restricted the information that was publically available on their Facebook profiles. Mostly, this consisted of publically sharing the minimum information allowed (name, gender, profile, and cover photos). However, Anna and Mary located themselves geographically, seemingly linking their digital and physical identities publically. For Mary, identifying her local town was an acceptable risk, although she limited other available information because, “I don’t want randoms stalking me.” Mary’s use of the word “stalking” was emotive, invoking imagery of unwanted surveillance and threat. She was clearly affected by discourses of risk and “stranger danger,” which left her unwilling to reveal too many identifying details. Nonetheless, by providing her geographical location, Mary represented herself through contextual cues, which may have served to encourage a sense of community and belongingness with Friends on her network who were living nearby (Boyd and Heer 2006). Anna, on the other hand, provided misinformation in her location details: “[it’s] just the city that I’m from. I don’t put, like, right where I’m living right now.” Anna both subverted, and reconstructed, discourses of risk. She protected her current location, while providing enough information for those that knew her in offline spaces to distinguish her profile on Facebook. In doing so, Anna linked her digital embodiment to her physical in a way that transcends temporal and spatial limitations.

For these students, the desire to maintain control of their digital identities was a consistent theme throughout the interviews. They recognized that information

disclosure on Facebook, and other online sites, could have offline consequences. None of the participants reported falsifying all details on their Facebook profiles. However, Jane divulged that she used a partial name on Facebook because she feared identity theft:

I put my name up, but not my full name. Mainly because I'm real scared that somebody will steal my identity or something, and, um, I put like my information, but not like where I live or my address and stuff like that.

Jane's concerns about identity theft reflected her taking-up of societal discourses of risk and information security. By using an amended, or partial, name, Jane subverted Facebook's imperatives to use a "real identity" and made her profile more difficult to locate unless she, or someone in her network, shared her Facebook identifier. Using a partial name allowed Jane to limit her potential audience. She exhibited agency in attempting to protect her online information and offline identity.

5.2 Showing Identity Through Imagery

As a way of "showing, not telling," gender and identity cues (Hum et al. 2011, p. 1829), the choice of images these young women used to represent their user profile was a core identity marker (Boyd and Heer 2006; Greenhow and Robelia 2009; Mallan 2009). The profile picture accompanies all posts and comments and is the most prominent image representation of identity on Facebook. Profile and cover photo images are publically exhibited and can be viewed by any Facebook member. The profile and cover imagery provides the only opportunity to personalize Facebook's generic profile pages. Most personal photos are not usually produced for publication and thus general public view (Mendelson and Papacharissi 2010). However, profile and cover imagery on Facebook is chosen for public exposure to an uncontrolled variety of audiences.

The accuracy of image representation is important to social networking site users. In a study into self-presentation of MySpace users, over 75 % of users displayed a biographical photo, as compared to the approximately 60 % who listed their actual name (Boyle and Johnson 2010). Another study found that avatars constructed by 18–24-year-olds tended to be self-representative of the participants' offline identities: dressed in similar fashions and colors, accompanied by "self-relevant props," and inhabiting environments resembling the participant's offline environment (Vasalou and Joinson 2009, p. 518). Younger social networking site users were equally concerned about the impressions that their avatars provided about them (Morrison 2010). Teenage girls placed great importance upon first impressions and were concerned that their avatars were accurate. Morrison concludes that the "autobiographical avatar is a deliberate attempt to represent and *re-embod*y the real-world body in cyberspace" (Morrison 2010, p. 149).

All the young women in the study were aware that Facebook profile and cover photos were compulsorily public. They all chose to use photographs to re-present themselves on Facebook, rather than avatars or other representative imagery. Kelly reflected changing identity representations by regularly changing profile photographs to share nostalgic moments and strengthen her community and network ties. For Kelly, it appeared important to share temporally located moments as they occurred:

I was changing it like every day after formal; just because I had so many that I wanted to be there. But usually I'll just change it like, if I went out to dinner for a friend's birthday and they took some pictures there. So I'll just change it whenever something pings up and if not I'll probably just default back to a nice [photo] of me.

By sharing photographs from the school formal, Kelly could strengthen ties with her Friends who were also present at the event, which provides a permanent nostalgic point of shared memories and reinforces a sense of belonging (Neustaedter and Fedorovskaya 2009). Kelly located herself in both place (the formal) and space, by making visible the interrelations between herself and her friends.

Kelly disclosed how important photographic choice was when representing identity online:

You want to pick like nice pictures, like you wouldn't pick ugly pictures of yourself. That's just not how the online world works. You have to pick nice photos and stuff and if you change [your profile photo] and a whole bunch of people like it you're kind of like 'Oh yay! People like this photo' or whatever. . . . It's not like it's you. I guess it's not you. It's more like a reflection of you, or just like a part of you, but it's not necessarily all of you I guess, just because you have to be more guarded online. You have to be more careful.

Kelly restated discourses of risk that appear to permeate every decision about online identity representation. Although Kelly's reference to "the online world" reflects the notion of a distinct place/space, she recognized the importance of her audience in validating her identity representation. Kelly acknowledged that the audience discursively constructs what is expected on Facebook, that "nice" photos be shown. Audience feedback can indicate whether the chosen image reflects the audiences' perception of the performed identity (Zhao et al. 2008). As Kelly noted, photographs are a momentary reflection of a temporal identity. What is not seen is what led up to the taking of the photo, the context of the location, the decisions behind the posting of that image, the "tweaking" of the image, or the notions of friendship that underpin the process. To be the subject of the photo may require the invisible "other" who may hold the camera and then post, share, and "tag" the image with identifiers in their Facebook photo albums. Having photos uploaded and tagged can therefore be an indicator of popularity as part of the friendship group and a validation of performed identity. By Liking and commenting on shared photos, Friends provide further validation of the embodied identity re-presented.

Photos provide ways of showing not only the embodied identity but also aspects of the social identity. Friends endorse identity performances by being present as

co-subjects in photographs and provide textual cues as to the social status of the individual. The inclusion of friends encourages readings of the profile owner's identity as social and allows the profile owner to position herself with, and against, her friend's performance (Walther et al. 2008). Group photographs allow individuals to provide identity cues, while hiding in plain sight as part of a group, known only to those who are aware of their physical embodiment. Jessica, for instance, chose to provide indicators of her interests and tastes by using a photo of her sports team as her public cover photo. The team photo reinforced her "sporty girl" identity to her Friends and strengthened ties of belongingness to her team. Yet, for "strangers," the team photo hid Jessica from immediate identification. Similarly, Jane used a photo providing contextual identity cues. She chose a photo her friend had taken of her taking part in a cultural activity "because it's me." Jane felt the photo reflected her self-conception, "out there, and all like into my culture and stuff, so that's pretty much what my photos are." Jane used visual cues to reinforce her positioning as extroverted and a "capable performer" and to present a digital identity that reflected her material identity. By using a photo taken by a friend, Jane negotiated and co-constructed a representation to a mixed audience that included contacts anchored through offline interrelational spaces in her life (Zhao et al. 2008).

5.3 Controlling Image Representation

For this group of young women, all images representing them online were important. While they could control their public profile and cover photos, they had less control over the images their Friends uploaded. These young women required their friends to be complicit in their desired construction of personal images and digital identities. They relied on their Friends to upload the majority of their online photos and "tag" photos to link to their profiles. However, all wanted to avoid having "bad" photos associated with their digital identities. "Bad" photos constituted images the girls were not comfortable sharing and that they felt did not represent how they wished to be seen. Mary, for instance, had a posed profile photo of herself and a friend pulling faces but was reluctant to allow Friends to link similar images that were not posed and that she could not control. When asked what she'd forbid, she explained: "like just bad pictures in general (laughs). . . . and ones where you've got funny expressions on when you're not doing it on purpose." Jessica further explained that "bad" photos fell into two categories, those that could remain on Facebook but were not "tagged" and those that were bad enough to request removal:

. . . most of the time if you just don't like it [the photo], because it's ugly of you or something like that, you can untag it and it only stays on their page. But if it's something that you really don't want anyone to see, like it can't even be on Facebook then yeah, you can ask them 'can you take that photo off, it's disgusting' or, well, I've never really had anyone that hasn't taken it off. . . . I just untag anything I don't like.

Untagging, or breaking the link to their profile, was a common response to “bad” photos posted by others. These young women were comfortable taking control of their online image representation. They dissociated their profile pages from self-identified mismatches of identity in order to control their potential audience for those performances.

For some, there were repercussions from attempting to control image representations. When Maxine asked a friend to remove a photo from Facebook, it impacted upon their relationship:

I did [ask] one friend like ‘please please can you [remove that photo]’ and then like the next week she was really quiet and you could tell she was really bothered that she had to go out of her way to delete photos – which kind of just annoys me even more because technically you’re uploading a photo of me so I have the right to say to take it down. But that doesn’t happen in Friendworld you know, it’s a lot different. . . . I realized that if I continued to ask people to delete pictures it would just actually affect my friendships in real life . . . so now, I just untag myself and I ignore that that picture’s even online. . . . but it does bother me that other people can see it.

Maxine felt powerless when trying to control her Facebook image representation. Although she could break the link to her profile (by untagging), she could not avoid the image still being available for others to see. Maxine’s use of the term “Friendworld” encompasses the interrelations-between, the unspoken rules, and the discourses of friendship on Facebook. Asking a Facebook Friend to remove a photo is a public statement of disagreement with that Friend’s representation of your identity. For Maxine, the intertwining of digital and material spaces was made clear when her actions in digital spaces affected her offline relationships.

Any interaction on Facebook invites commentary from Friends. Kelly was aware that by using Facebook she invited attention and feedback on her identity performances:

If you post on Facebook directly to someone’s wall then you’re eliciting a response from them. . . . Because you are being yourself to a certain extent, the community is mirroring your social interactions in real life and if those are strong then it will be on Facebook as well.

Notably, Kelly’s reading of Facebook echoed the notion of distinct online and offline spaces. Yet Kelly also acknowledged the digital embodiment of the material user. She recognized the interrelations-between that are both materially-based and digitally-mediated. For Kelly, Facebook was a distinct interrelational space that reflected offline interrelational spaces. By inviting commentary from Friends, she gained validation of her performed identities, as well as indications of popularity both online and offline.

5.4 The Role of the Audience

Online identity work moves beyond the profile presentation to include interactions with the Friends’ network. Performative presentations of identity include “be-Friending”

new connections, posting and tagging photos, commenting on others' posts, providing status updates, and Liking pages, comments, or statuses (Boyd 2008, 2014; Manago et al. 2008; Marwick and Boyd 2010; Walther et al. 2008). Updates are viewed as "Facebook-mediated" stories with the initial participant as the central performer (Davies 2012). Friends are drawn in as co-performers and co-construct events by responding to the initial performance with comments, additional information, and photos. Friends act as script editors, editing and rewriting the individual actor's performance to ensure it is an "authentic" and acceptable (to them) representation of the socially known identity (Mallan and Giardina 2009). Positive responses to performed actions reinforce the displayed identity, whereas negative responses can prompt negative self-evaluations (Manago et al. 2008). Even one-way interactions of comparing themselves to another user's idealized profile identity may impact negatively upon an individual (Manago et al. 2008). By engaging with the individual's performance of identity, members of the Friends' network help construct the initial user's identity, while they simultaneously construct their own. The network of Friends polices socially constructed expectations of behavior and presentation. The result is a negotiated "truth," or accepted performance, which is not fully within the individual's control (Mallan and Giardina 2009).

All of these young women were aware that their audience may construe their online behaviors negatively. They criticized attention-seeking behaviors, such as melodramatic posts or excessive Friending, as ignoring concepts of "acceptable" public and private behaviors. For these young women, discourses of acceptable online behaviors were shaped by cybersafety programs in their earlier school years and by messages from their parents, their Teachers, and their peers. Mary and Kelly both reported that they moderated their posting behaviors to avoid negative readings of their identities by their Facebook audience. Mary was concerned about being perceived as attention-seeking, so she rarely posted status updates, "because I don't want to be one of those annoying people who always posts statuses, or like, just ones that no one cares about or anything." Similarly, Kelly admitted she used to post frequently, but now "I only post statuses if I've got something actually meaningful to say, just because [laughs] like, it gets obnoxious." Both Mary and Kelly were concerned that their behaviors could be construed as excessive and breaching the unspoken "community guidelines" of Facebook. Kelly offered an example of behaviors she found annoying on Facebook:

I've seen bad fights on Facebook . . . and I was thinking, 'do you not understand everyone can see this? I don't even know you that well and I can read everything about what's happening right now'. And it's like, 'moderate yourself a little bit'.

Kelly was aware that there were discourses of acceptable public behavior. She recognized that individuals control aspects of identity presentation through their interactions and behaviors and that the imagined audience may not reflect the actual audience viewing interactions.

When posting, social networking site users often reimagine and target an audience that has similar perspectives, attitudes, and interests to them (Kendall 2007; Marwick

and Boyd 2010). However, spaces collapse on social networking sites. The same profile may have to address blended audiences, as education, work, social, family, and friend networks merge (Kendall 2007). While a performance may be aimed at a particular audience at a particular time, there is a wider potential audience, especially if postings are made public (Brooks-Young 2010).

Jane had an imagined audience in mind for her Facebook posts. She recognized the potential for an unwanted audience observing her posts, and this influenced the content and medium of her performances. Jane posted frequently to Facebook, primarily to keep her extended family informed and involved in her life, as she explained: "I'll post status updates to let my [extended] family know what we're doing, and . . . just like opinions on politics . . . just like everyday topics really that you talk about outside of social networking." Jane acknowledged the way interrelations shift between materially and digitally-mediated spaces. Her status posts emphasized the importance of sharing as a way of staying connected with extended family. Through her posts, Jane positioned herself as an informant on the everyday happenings of her immediate family, a move that challenges discourses of childhood and the positioning of young people as less knowledgeable and less powerful. Furthermore, her topics, such as political discussions, encourage a reading of Jane as politically aware and mature, which supported her positioning as a young adult in her relationships.

Nonetheless, Jane explained that there were some topics she would not post to her Friends' network, because "some people don't need to know." Instead, she used direct personal communication, such as Facebook chat and messaging features, to discuss personal topics. Jane felt that personal messages were better than status updates for conversations with Friends, because "other people can see what you're talking about so then some people join in when they're not really wanted." For Jane and her Friends, Facebook features, such as messaging and chat, allowed them to keep conversations private and between members of a known audience.

6 The Class' Facebook Page and the Effect of Blended Audiences

The formal use of Facebook by the class created blended audiences for these young women. The page was publically available and could be read by anyone who found it on Facebook. On the class' Facebook page, these young women were potentially performing to blended audiences that may consist of online friends, offline friends, classmates, younger school students, ex-school students, parents, relatives, and the teacher, as well as an invisible and unknown audience of strangers who may have found the publically available page. Furthermore, the class' Facebook page identified the school, which inadvertently located students geographically. For the students posting and commenting on the page, the school's geo-location created overt links between their online and offline performances. These considerations affected the way the young women used the class' Facebook page.

Jane's use of the class' page reflected her confidence with her online identity performances. In class, Jane was a confident and capable student. She continued that identity performance in the digital spaces of the class' page and used the page frequently for formal educational purposes:

Just to see when assignments are due and then to ask her a question about it because everybody will want to know it, so you just post it instead of emailing her. And she'd just have to explain it to everybody again anyway.

Jane positioned her questions as acceptable within a learning community as the answers would serve to inform others. She assumed an imagined audience of classmates who would view her performance favorably. Jane's performance was also influenced by her awareness of a wider audience: "I just don't post anything immature or anything. . . [because it's] like being a role model because it's not just for our class, it's for all the [subject] students to ask things." Jane was mindful of younger students on the page and her role as senior student within the school. She was equally cognizant that she had Friends who saw her public offline performances, her online social performances, and her performances on the page: "everybody sees what I do." By linking her public front-stage performances, Jane performed her identity to audience members from multiple interrelational spaces. For Jane, this blended audience required constant and consistent identity work: "I act the same [on my personal page] because. . . some of them [classmates] do see it because I'm friends with them, so I kind have to keep up with it."

For some of the young women, the tensions caused by blended audiences affected their comfort with using the class' Facebook page. Several of the young women were surprised at the use of their "social space" for educational purposes, although most had decided there were benefits. Anna, for instance, had overcome her initial surprise: "At first I was like 'Oh! A school page', but now that it's got really common it's now 'oh a school page, that's actually really helpful'." Mary, on the other hand, disagreed with the use of Facebook by the class. Although Mary did follow the class' Facebook page, she had not actively participated as she felt there were better ways to use the Internet for educational purposes. Mary was clear that she found the presence of teachers in a "social" space difficult:

I think there could be better ways of using the internet for schoolwork rather than using Facebook. . . . I don't think Facebook is for schoolwork, it's more for socializing. . . . I haven't written anything on the page, or commented on anything. . . . I just kind of find it awkward with the teachers on the Facebook and stuff. I'd rather do it face-to-face than over Facebook . . . and I don't like want them to know what I get up to or anything.

Mary was uncomfortable with the blurring between home/private and school/public spaces represented by the class' Facebook page. She wished to maintain a boundary between teacher and pupils and separate her public front-stage performances. Mary stayed informed of page activity by Liking the page and utilizing notifications of activity. Yet, she also showed her disagreement at the formal educational use of Facebook by refusing to interact on the page.

Although Mary felt Facebook was more for socializing than schoolwork, others described the class' page as a community with social aspects. For instance, Tintin appreciated that ex-students often answered questions. She felt this would provide an opportunity for her cohort to stay connected with the teacher after they left school:

It's like a community. It's nice and when we leave we can still do stuff and still talk to Ms Jones. . . . It just has a nice feel. When people post they're all like, 'Hello. How's it going?' They're all friendly and everyone knows each other.

Despite this, Tintin still worked to maintain her public performance in front of her classmates. At times, she was embarrassed to ask questions publically in case her peers judged her:

I sometimes end up asking [Ms Jones] through private message, because it's just kind of weird [laughs] so yeah. . . . Like, if no one asks the question, they [the other students] *could* help me I guess, but then they'd probably just laugh at me because it's probably a silly question [laughs].

Whereas Jane, in the earlier excerpt, positioned herself as agentic in remedying the teachers' lack of clarity, Tintin appeared to view her lack of information as a personal failing and assumed other students would know more than she did. On the Facebook page, students' questions, and therefore their performance, remain permanently visible. By asking questions of the teacher privately, Tintin could maintain her identity performance as a "capable student" across the multiple spaces of the classroom and the Facebook page.

The teacher's presence as audience member also affected online performances. For instance, all of those who used the Facebook page reported being more careful with their language use on the class' page, as opposed to their posts on their personal profiles. Maxine acknowledged that the teacher's presence affected the way she posted:

I'm already conscious of the way I post on the page because I know Ms Jones is reading it and she's a teacher so I would never be like, 'oh this work is so crap' or anything like that, yeah. So I just normally just write the way I would talk to her.

Maxine adapted her language choices, and her performances, to maintain a desired identity reading as a student. As Maxine acknowledged, "sometimes you do talk, like you joke completely with your friends and *they* [original emphasis] know you're joking, but someone else might actually take it as serious." Maxine was aware of her audience and that there were multiple possible readings of her performances.

Like Maxine, Kelly recognized that different spaces and audiences required different front-stage identity performances:

That's just a reflection of like, life. Like I wouldn't talk to a teacher in the same way I would talk to friends, or like I wouldn't talk to people at my work the same way I talk to friends. . . .

It's not necessarily like a double standard, it's just following how it is in real life I guess. . . . There's a difference in the way you talk to a teacher and the way you talk to a friend so, you kind of just have to respect that difference and keep that line [laughs].

Kelly shaped her identity negotiations in response to the different audiences arising from her social use of Facebook and her use of the Facebook page for formal educational purposes. For her and the other young women, an awareness of potential audience and the associated social expectations influenced their identity performances. Their performative interactions on the class' Facebook page served to reinforce their offline identities. Rather than seeing their digital identities as separate, these young women recognized the embodiment of their digital identities and the intertwining of digital and material.

7 Conclusion

Discursive constructions often position online, or digitally-mediated, spaces as separate and distinct from offline place-based spaces and digital identities as distinct from material identities. This chapter conceptualizes spaces as interrelations-between to challenge these discursive constructions. Social networking sites, such as Facebook, involve digitally-mediated spaces and multiple relations-between. Facebook members interact, creating a multiplicity of spaces and multiple interrelations between performers and their audience members. For the young women in this study, the construction and performance of their digitally-mediated identities were intertwined with their offline identity performances. They linked their physical embodiment to their digital embodiment through various manipulations: through the judicious use of publically available profile and cover photos; through careful control of privately public photos available for viewing by their social network; and through selective performative interactions such as profile information disclosure and adapting their language in posts and comments. For these young women, digital performances were anchored in the material, with representations of their physical identities providing identity cues for their online identity performances.

As the examples in this chapter show, beyond the conscious choices these young women made, other factors influenced and shaped their digital identity construction. Digital identities are not distinct from the material embodiment. Choices over how, or even whether, to use digitally-mediated spaces, such as Facebook, are influenced by internalized societal discourses. These discourses shape the subconscious elements of the material embodiment, such as habitus, which "leak" into the digital identity. However, digital embodiment is more than the replication of physical embodiment in digital spaces. Digital embodiment is also shaped by the interrelations-between that inform the way the audience "reads" and reacts to the digital identity.

The formal use of Facebook as an educational space created tensions for these young women. The presence of their teacher and classmates as a formal educational

group created multiple anchored connections between their offline classroom identities, their Facebook “classroom” identities, and their social Facebook identities. Although many of the young women used Facebook socially and for informal educational purposes, the formal educational use of the Facebook page blurred boundaries between their school and social identities. Tensions arise when performers have anchored connections with audience members from offline spaces. As anchored connections, audience members can draw upon their knowledge of the performer’s embodied material identity to “fill in” the performer’s voice and mannerisms in online interactions. Anchored connections thus influence and co-construct online identity performance choices, ensuring that the digital identity is an authentic representation of the performer’s embodied offline identities. Online identities are digitally-mediated representations of materially-based identity performances.

This chapter has shown how the young women in this study acknowledged the embodied nature of their performances. These young women understood that their digital identities on Facebook were representations of their offline identities. Furthermore, they recognized the fluidity of interrelational spaces that were materially-based in classrooms, homes, sports teams, and workplaces and at times digitally-mediated through Facebook. For these young women, Facebook was not a separate place or space. Instead, Facebook was a digitally-mediated continuation of materially-located spaces and interrelations.

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Part V

Border Spaces

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Abstract

This chapter surveys three interconnected conceptual themes in the scholarly literature from the latter part of the twentieth century to the present concerned with the geographies of rural youth, namely, mobilities, marginalities, and negotiations (e.g., around gendered and sexual identities). Importantly, this literature demonstrates and engages with the diversity and heterogeneity of rural youth. As such it offers much needed attention to meaningful dialogue with young people, foregrounding their perspectives and views as opposed to the imposition of categories such as “socially excluded” rural youth. The picture that

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emerges on youth and marginalization in rural areas is far more complex than is suggested by binaries which position the city and the country in opposition and as spaces of advantage and disadvantage, respectively. Central to this understanding is an explication of the ways in which constructions of “youth” and “rural spaces and places” are entwined, contingent, and fundamentally political.

Keywords

Heterosexuality • Masculinity • Rural youth • Marginalities • Mobility • Negotiations

1 Introduction

Over the last decade of the twentieth century, rural geography has been influenced by the cultural turn, which focused scholarly attention on questions of difference and diversity as well as subjectivity and power. This, and attendant scholarly critiques that the discipline had excluded and omitted the voices and experiences of significant populations of rural people (e.g., Philo 2002), provided a significant impetus for new work to emerge on the subject of rural youth. Adding further resonance and vibrancy to the field has been the spatial turn in related disciplinary fields, such as education (Gulson and Symes 2007) and the sociology of youth (Farrugia et al. 2014). Mapping the geographies of rural youth is thus still a relatively recent endeavor. Understandably, a range of trajectories has been taken up in this scholarship. In this chapter we focus on three conceptual themes, that is, mobilities, marginalities, and negotiations. We do not suggest that these represent the totality of what has been addressed in relation to the spatialities of rural youth nor posit that any of these themes represent discrete areas. They necessarily overlap and, of course, incorporate a wide range of issues and concerns. Rather, we use them as an entry point to review the proliferating geographical knowledge on the intersections between rurality and youth.

Beyond being key themes in the literature on rural youth, the notions of mobilities, marginalities, and negotiations also speak to what “remains a strong area of interest for geographers,” that is, “the relationship between space and place” (Hubbard et al., 2004, p. 8). As organizing devices to explore scholarship on rural youth, they remind us that both places and spaces are complex, relational, and porous. As Massey (2005, p. 107) argues, space is a sphere of “dynamic simultaneity” which may be “disconnected by new arrivals” or other flows and movements of human and nonhuman entities. Furthermore, in its making and remaking, space is interpreted and experienced differently so that the meanings it is given (e.g., “rural community” or “rural school”) are subject to negotiation and resistance and the potential source of exclusions and inclusions. In summary, exploring the subject of rural youth through the lens of mobilities, marginalities, and negotiations invites us to recognize that spaces and places are not discrete, static, or neutral but entwined, contingent, and fundamentally political.

2 Mobilities

The mobility of rural youth is not a new phenomenon. In fact, as Milbourne and Kitchen (2014) note, it was remarked upon in some of the earliest studies of rural communities dating back to the mid-twentieth century and is undoubtedly a topic that has been widely taken up in recent scholarship. Understandably, a key concern in this work has been simply documenting the movement of youth away from rural areas to cities, with studies across Europe, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada noting that the majority of rural youth intend to leave their place of origin (e.g., Hektner 1995; Baeck 2004; Eacott and Sonn 2006; Bjarnason 2014). At the same time as identifying national trends of rural youth out-migration across Western nations, Argent and Walmsley (2008) make a case for more localized analysis. They use data from Australia to contend that rural youth out-migration is not spatially uniform, noting that some rural communities have experienced a much more significant exodus of youth than others. They also highlight that while the movement from rural towns to large capital cities is certainly evident, rural youth also move within their immediate region.

The type of methodological approach utilized by Argent and Walmsley (2008) is representative of much of the traditional work on rural youth migration, that is, large-scale demographic studies which detail quantitative shifts in population by age. Alongside this type of research, and also dominant in studies of rural youth migration, have been large-scale surveys used to identify the types of “push” and “pull” factors prompting mobility. Such work has been useful in providing a broad brush picture of the multiple and intersecting factors that may influence youth to move away from their rural communities. These include having a sibling who has migrated, perceptions about employment opportunities, degree of identification with the local area, and education (e.g., Drozdowski 2008; Thissen et al. 2010).

However, the above types of quantitative analysis, like demographic studies, have been somewhat limited. As Gibson and Argent (2008, p. 136) note in introducing a special issue of *Geographical Research* on the topic of rural youth mobility, “migration is an inherently complex spatial and social phenomenon” and thus only a “small proportion of that complexity” is captured in census data. As such, in more recent research on rural youth out-migration, scholars have sought to engage more innovative, qualitative methodologies to detail the biographies of migrants and the social, cultural, and political contexts of their migratory decisions and patterns. This has elicited new and rich knowledge about the subject of rural youth movement.

Illustrative of the work on rural youth mobilities which has afforded attention to the sociopolitical and sociocultural is an Australian study by Gabriel (2002) and Estonian research by Nugin (2014). In the former the author examined press coverage about rural out-migration in three daily Tasmanian newspapers over a 6-year period and identified two dominant, taken-for-granted public narratives. The first, promulgated largely by community leaders, is what Gabriel refers to as “keeping youth at home” which relies on a nostalgia for the past about the supposed superiority of rural life and a paternalism about what is best for youth. The second is

what Gabriel (2002, p. 211) terms the “desirable youth, undesirable others” discourse, which laments the loss of a particular population of youth (“the best and brightest”) while ignoring the youth who remain. In echoes of this research, Nugin (2014, p. 61) reports on interviews with youth workers in rural Estonia in which the leaving of rural areas was seen not as “moving away” but as “moving forward.” That is, mobility was viewed as a manifestation of self-expression and as a crucial and necessary step in self-realization. Out-migration was thus seen not only as inevitable but important by the rural youth workers who had adopted widely circulating and powerful discourses about individualization and choice biographies.

What is overlooked by the youth workers interviewed by Nugin (2014) is the complexity of choice and, moreover, the fact that rural young people have differential choices. In taking up this issue, rural youth scholars have not only added to the literature on out-migration but engaged in broader debates in the social sciences about the continued relevance of class as an analytical category and the potential homogenizing influence of social theories on postmodern identities. This is a theme examined by Jamieson (2000) in research in which she draws on interviews with 45 young people who had either remained in, or moved away from, the area of rural Britain known as “the Borders.” Framing Jamieson’s (2000, p. 203) discussion is Zygmunt Bauman’s notion of a postmodern world as one which celebrates individualism and consumption with an emphasis on mobility, movement, and choice. She explains that if Bauman’s understanding of contemporary life is accurate, one would expect to find a clear divide between the “detached late-modern migrants and traditional backwater stay-at-homes” but a more complicated picture emerges (Jamieson 2000, p. 203). For example, almost all who left retained strong ties to their rural place and its people. Indeed, some of those who left were more positive about the area than those who remained. Further, some who remained – and who had no plans to leave – expressed satisfaction with the status quo on account of the fact that they were surrounded by family and friends. Certainly some young people shared considerable dissatisfaction at continuing to live in “the Borders” but, as Jamieson (2000, p. 218) points out, this is not because of a “postmodern feeling of being out of it because of an inability to endlessly reconstruct the self through consumption” but because of the more conventional lack of classed capital, including restricted finances, resources, a lack of social networks, and a limited knowledge of post-schooling options.

The question of how the mobilities of rural youth are negatively or positively shaped by class has been given further impetus through work on gender such as that undertaken by Holt (2011) and Dufty-Jones et al. (2014). From this literature a more nuanced and fragmented picture of rural youth out-migration emerges via an analysis of social class and gender. A starting point for Holt’s (2011) study is the ongoing low level of rural Australian youth in university education. What she demonstrates, through a detailed 4-year study, is that mobility decisions related to tertiary study are made in the context of a particular identity, which itself is formulated through a complex dynamic of social, economic, and cultural capital over a long period. This is an identity configured by reference to “other” working-class young women who remain behind in their rural communities’ post-school.

That is, mobility for the young women in Holt's (2011) study is enabled through the conferral/adoption of a "smart girl" identity which promotes moving away (to university) as their expected destiny, if not duty. Embedded in this, as a result of their attendant "difference" from rural peers, is a widespread and generally supported belief that rural towns have nothing to offer them. In a similar respect, Dufty-Jones et al. (2014, p. 34) report that "she who remains behind" is the negative referent used by middle-class young women in Australia rationalizing a move from the country to the city after completing school. Importantly, while this referent was summoned by the young women interviewed by Dufty-Jones et al. (2014), no equivalent figure was nominated by the young men interviewed (but see below). Adding another dimension to this picture is work by Cairns (2013, 2014), which explores young women's plans about leaving rural communities within the broader web of social, political, and economic power relations. The tensions of wanting to engage with widely circulating discourses of successful middle-class femininity as defined through career, mobility and individualism, and closely felt ties and connections to place are chronicled as young rural women imagine their futures.

Conversely, Laoire (2002, 2005) takes as her focus young men, situating her exploration of out-migration within a larger contextual frame – that of agricultural restructuring. In this respect she demonstrates that the gendering of the "migration imperative" (Corbett 2005) in rural communities is as relevant to males as it is to females. Laoire (2002, 2005) asserts that rural restructuring has led to a decrease in the number of family farms and a consequent loss of community and support networks. In turn these have greatly circumscribed the everyday lives, opportunities, and experiences of young farming men. The young Irish farming male may inherit the farm but this is associated with a sense of duty and responsibility. It also requires "staying behind" when others, typically women and those with a higher education, are leaving rural areas in large numbers. Even the language of "staying behind," Laoire (2002, 2005) contends, connotes a sense of failure and exclusion. While careful not to posit any simplistic connection between high rates of suicide among rural young men and rural/agricultural change, she points out that as the foundational ground upon which male farmers have traditionally based their identities shifts, some may struggle to adjust. She also recognizes the continued masculine hegemony in rural areas but rightly questions the disparity between dominant constructions of masculinity and the high levels of suicide among rural young men.

What Laoire's (2002, 2005) work gestures toward is the complex negotiations by which rural youth give meaning to their lives and the ways in which such negotiations are complicated by social differences. While there is a long history of scholarship detailing the ways in which rural youth, as a group, are disadvantaged compared with their urban counterparts, this work has typically been policy focused. It has utilized variables such as rates of schooling completion, university enrollment, employment participation, and housing access to identify structural impediments in the lives of rural youth to establish their status as "excluded" (e.g., Pavis et al. 2000; Shucksmith 2004; Jentsch and Shucksmith 2004). While quantitative pictures of inequality remain important, the positioning of rural youth as a

homogenous and stable category labeled “other” has understandably been challenged. In the case of rural youth mobility, current research has identified complex gendered dimensions along with heterogeneity within gender groupings. Recent reflexive work around rural youth is thus underpinned by two key acknowledgments. First, there is the need to explore the diversity and heterogeneity of rural youth. Second there is a need to further engage in meaningful dialogue with young people and listen to their own perspectives and views rather than impose categories (such as “socially excluded” or “other”) upon them. The following section provides an overview of this literature.

3 Marginalities

At the turn of the last century, in an agenda-setting paper on children’s geographies, Matthews and Limb (1999, p. 82) noted that work in the field was increasingly concerned with “processes of exclusion, socio-spatial marginalization and boundary conflicts with adults.” They observed that this shift resulted from recognition of young people’s agency, the complexity of spatial inclusions and exclusions, and the messiness of identity formation. Indicative of the type of epistemological move identified by Matthews and Limb (1999), there is a nascent literature mapping how young people in rural areas traverse hegemonic norms and practices governing the use of rural space. In this research scholars have worked collaboratively with youth in order to understand adult domination of space in the rural context and the limitations and regulations placed on rural youth’s spatial practices and movements. Thus, the young people in rural New Zealand interviewed by Panelli (2002) lament the fact that there are few public spaces where they feel they belong and that it is adults who are empowered with legitimating how spaces may be used and by whom. In a similar respect, young people in rural Vermont explain to Dunkley and Panelli (2007) that in their rural communities they lack the space to engage in the highly valued social practice of interacting with friends. With no public indoor spaces available, the youth looks to the outdoors. However, to socialize they must contend with ongoing and dramatic changes in weather and have access to cars.

At the same time as they have explored the ways in which youth are often forced by adults to occupy the spatial peripheries in rural areas, scholars have emphasized how young people are not passive victims of adult power. These scholars have countered overly deterministic representations of rural youth as “the other” by exploring the creative and innovative ways in which they negotiate and often resist the lack of public space afforded them. This may be through creating “new” public spaces such as the use of private homes, cars, or petrol stations for socializing (Dunkley and Panelli 2007; Laegran 2002). Equally it may involve establishing temporary and moveable buildings such as the “keten” in rural Holland (Haartsen and Strijker 2010). While celebrating the ingenuity of youth and continuing to argue against simplistically conflating rural youth with marginalization, writers have also noted that the capacity for creative responses, such as the development of “new” spaces for socializing, will be mediated by social location. Dunkley and

Panelli (2007) address this theme through a gender lens, demonstrating how in rural Vermont parents afford males considerably more spatial latitude than they do females who are not only subjected to greater spatial restrictions but also greater spatial surveillance. With a lack of public space available to teens in the rural community, they create what Dunkley and Panelli (2007, p. 569) label a “fourth estate,” which is largely comprised of spaces temporarily appropriated from adults and/or mobile spaces such as cars. While young men face a lack of boundaries around mobility and, in fact, are problematically encouraged through this to adopt risk-taking behaviors, young women’s mobility is highly circumscribed. What emerges is a phenomenon described by Tucker and Matthews (2001) in a study of girls’ use of recreational space in rural Northamptonshire, where there are numerous spaces which are defined as “boys’ spaces,” such as recreational and playing fields, but there are no equivalent “girl places” (Tucker and Matthews 2001, p. 167).

Theoretically informed and nuanced youth-centered studies of marginalization and rural young people are encapsulated in Nairn et al.’s (2003, p. 9) aim to “destabilize dualisms” and further echoed in Leyshon’s (2008, p. 1) descriptor: “the betweenness of being a rural youth.” In both studies the authors add considerably to understandings of young people’s exclusion from rural communities by acknowledging young people’s multiple experiences of rural inclusion. Photographs taken by Nairn et al.’s (2003) participants show a range of places in which they feel welcome in their small rural town, such as food outlets, natural settings, public seats, and monuments. In parallel, Leyshon (2008) details his participants’ strong associations and identifications with the countryside which are voiced alongside other contradictory expressions of hostility and resentment toward rural living. Just as Nairn et al.’s (2003) study usefully speaks to broader debates in rural geography around the much debated subject of community, Leyshon’s (2008) research provides insights into the well-documented discussions of the rural idyll. He suggests that young people articulate a view of the countryside that is consistent with idealized notions of rural spaces as stable, decent and pure and, ultimately, the antithesis of urban spaces. This is, of course, itself exclusive and potentially marginalizing of particular people and groups. However, deploying an imagined rural space as distinctive and superior to urban spaces also offers opportunities for rural youth to experience belonging. In concluding, Leyshon (2008, p. 22) writes that “the rural youth in this study uneasily situated their identities between being included and excluded from their home place and beyond.”

Further complicating the already messy picture of rural youth and marginality is that rural youth may themselves marginalize others. For example, while the Vermont rural youth described by Dunkley and Panelli (2007) are geographically marginal participants in their community compared to adults, they are not a singular homogenous group. Rather, young people distinguish themselves from others through a range of class-based descriptors and, by virtue of these distinctions, create additional exclusive social geographies. Social difference and exclusions are produced and reproduced through the designation of social cliques such as “preppy jocks,” “rednecks,” “stoners,” or “scum” and the association of particular

socio-spatial practices with each (see also Dunkley 2004). Matthews and Tucker (2007, p. 104) provide further evidence of spatial and discursive boundary marking by rural youth, asserting that the girls of rural Northamptonshire they interviewed were part of a “complex social network of gang membership,” with each gang claiming particular spaces as its own. In other work Morris (2012) details the isolating of the classed figure of “rutter” by teenagers in rural Kentucky. This is a figure stigmatized by poverty and labeled as having a particular type of disparaged body (filthy, unkempt) and disposition (backward, insular). Rural youth use this archetype as a means to construct different and more legitimated identities.

The class-infused distinctions and divisions articulated by rural youth reverberate with those articulated by rural adults as demonstrated by Pini et al. (2010) and Leyshon and Bull (2011). In the former study, rural teachers differentiate between their teenage students using emotionally charged class descriptors. Youth from poor families with unemployed parents are disparaged as “dirty” and indolent. Other classifications divide youth from farming families and those whose parents work in mining, with the former labeled “real” country youth and characterized as industrious, decent, and communitarian, while the latter students are viewed as lazy, avaricious, and selfish. This characterization is directed at the children of mining workers as these students are perceived by teachers as having parents who are (too) well paid and thus, compared with their farming counterparts, not needing to strive or contribute through family labor. The emotional dimensions of rural exclusion are equally evident in the story of Ellen told by Leyshon and Bull (2011). Ellen’s sense of marginalization and the restrictions on her mobility are informed by the shame she has experienced at seeing her working-class father humiliated by his wealthy employer and by her embarrassment at the lack of a family car. What the authors label the “repressive social regimes of the village” are thus infused with affect and written deeply on the body (Leyshon and Bull 2011, p. 174).

The picture that is emerging on youth and marginalization in rural areas is far more complex than is suggested by binaries which position the city and the country in opposition and as spaces of advantage and disadvantage, respectively. Indeed, rural youth may not necessarily consider themselves disadvantaged, nor look to urban youth cultures as superior, nor perceive rural spaces and rural youth cultures as lacking. This is one of the key findings of research on rural youth undertaken by Lanås et al. (2012) in Northern Finland. The researchers begin their reflections by noting that the area is imagined nationally as one of social exclusion, devoid of progress and modernization. However, participants offered a counter-discourse about their communities, and in this case the researchers sought to hear what they were told, that is, participants challenged the positioning of their villages as “remote” and, by definition, challenged broader center-periphery constructions. In addition, they emphasized choice and agency in relation to staying in the villages and celebrated their villages as dynamic and changing rather than as dying. What Lanås et al. (2012, p. 395) offer then is a “counternarrative” not only about northern Finland but about the young people who live there (see also Norman and Power 2015).

What underpins the Finnish work by Lanås et al. (2012) is that ideas and imaginings of rurality are not static or singular. While some rural youth may

experience the rural space negatively, others see it as a “space of possibility” (Smith et al. 2002, p. 177). There are many “rurals” rather than a unitary and unchanging “rural” which can be neatly attached to the identity category of “youth” (Rye 2006). As the studies cited above demonstrate, the ways in which young people give meaning to rurality are complicated by a wide range of social locations such as class, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, and gender, which mediate the subject position of “rural young person” to create inclusions or exclusions. This requires recognition of the heterogeneity of the category “rural youth” and the discursive negotiations through which subjectivities related to rurality and youth are configured.

4 Negotiations

Over the past decades, a number of scholars have highlighted the need to attend to questions of difference and diversity in studies of rural youth (e.g., Matthews and Limb 1999; Panelli 2002). More recently, engagement with intersectional theory in human geography has given a renewed energy and urgency to these calls despite concerns being raised about the operationalization of intersectionality, such as how it can be approached methodologically and what differences should be given attention (Bryant and Pini 2011; Brown 2011). Alongside cataloging the anxieties wrought by an intersectional focus, human geographers have argued that the discipline has much to contribute to broader social science in its engagement with intersectionality. Primarily, as Valentine (2007) has so effectively demonstrated in an exploration of the fusions between class, gender, and disability, space is integral to intersectional theorizing, that is, identities are constructed differently in shifting and porous spatial contexts, while hegemonic spatial norms and patterns inform who does and does not belong in these spaces. Identifying these “spatial discourses” (Holloway and Valentine 2000, p. 779) and how they are negotiated by young people in the countryside in relation to gender, disability, race, ethnicity, and sexuality has been an important political project in much of the recent geographical work on rural youth. Exemplifying this trajectory is a study of the everyday space of the pub by Leyshon (2005). Through a detailed ethnographic approach, he uncovers the invisible but strongly guarded codes and norms that govern this spatial context, including who may drink, where they may drink, and how they may drink. Leyshon (2005, p. 166) writes that the rural pub is “no place for a girl,” but also marginalized in this space are youth who are nonlocals, young men who do not want to drink copious amounts, and young men who do not want to engage in obscenities.

The continuing adherence to the norms and values of hegemonic masculinity by youth in rural spaces is not just problematic for women; it is also problematic for men. In terms of the latter, studies such as that conducted by Alloway and Gilbert (2004) and Kenway et al. (2006) reveal that continuing to adopt orthodox scripts of masculinity may be detrimental to young men’s futures, particularly in the context of globalization and rural restructuring. Notably, both authors adopt “a progressive sense of place,” thereby opening up to scrutiny the interconnections between the local and the global (Holloway and Valentine 2000, p. 779). Alloway and Gilbert’s

(2004) interviews with young rural men reveal that a dominant storyline of being a “real country boy” is to be practical and eschew formal learning and the imagined restraints of the indoor classroom. The discourses of masculinity and rurality thus coalesce, producing particular futures for the rural young men that involve the rejection of a university. The young rural men’s denunciation of theory and education and their privileging of the body over the mind may be problematic in a rural (and broader) economy where opportunities for manual work are increasingly limited and often devalued. Indeed, Kenway et al.’s (2006) study *Masculinity Beyond the Metropolis* argues that a “melancholic masculinity” pervades the lives of the young men in rural areas who continue to construct their masculine subjectivities in conventional terms. They lack opportunities to perform traditional masculinity as well as opportunities to be rewarded for such a performance. At the same time, they are not resourced to take up the types of employment now more common in rural areas in the service and tourism sectors.

As some rural young men continue to adopt more traditional discourses of masculinity, others are resisting the norms that have regulated how masculinity is to be practiced in the rural setting and are creating new ways of being “young men.” These themes are at the center of research undertaken by Bye (2003, 2009) and Trell et al. (2012, 2013, 2014). Drawing on data from rural Norway, Bye (2003, 2009) finds considerable evidence of rural young men adopting conventional discourses of masculinity which emphasize their physicality, expertise with technology, competence in the natural environment, and having practical and manual skills. A recurring reference point is the “urban” young man. For example, while the rural young men view themselves as authentic hunters, patient, focused and skillful, they position the young city men who visit rural areas to hunt as incompetent, uncontrolled, and self-indulgent. In another study from Estonia, Trell et al. (2012, 2013, 2014) detail the hegemony of similar traditional ideas and notions of rural masculinity. Biannual boat trips along the rivers of Estonia are used by the youth to perform masculinity as they engage with and control the natural environment and endure rough and tough conditions. As they do so, rural Estonian youth differentiate themselves from city youth, as do Bye’s (2003, 2009) respondents. There are, however, interesting fissures in the discourses of rural masculinity taken up by youth from these different national contexts. To different degrees, there is a reshaping occurring in how rural masculinity is constructed by rural youth as it is inflected with discourses of femininity and urbanity. The type of paid work that the rural young men envisage undertaking, for example, is service work, while they also express a commitment to sharing household labor and convey a desire to be an involved and engaged father. Despite this, the respective authors emphasize that what is occurring is a slight chipping away of dominant versions of rural masculinity, thus leading them to conclude that masculinity is more resistant to change in rural than urban contexts.

Despite the interconnections between gender and sexuality, research on sexuality and rural youth has been much more limited than that on gender. This is echoed in the broader geographical literature on sexuality and youth. Indeed, in this wider field, it is rural work which has been prominent. Illustrative is Waitt and Gorman

Murray's (2011) detailed and sensitive rendering of the story of Harry, a 16-year-old, Anglo-Australian, working-class gay man. The authors explore Harry's narrative through the lens of meanings of home. Prior to turning 16, Harry lived in a remote mining town in Western Queensland with his father. He was "outed" by his peers at school and ridiculed, harassed, and bullied. At this point it is the virtual world which provides Harry with a sense of privacy and belonging as he explores his identity online. Seeking to "escape the shame, fear, torment, confusion and alienation experienced in the hetero-normative world of his hometown," Harry visits Sydney (Waite and Gorman-Murray 2011, p. 1392). The urban center has much to offer, but Harry experiences an increasing sense of alienation as he undertakes poorly paid service work and develops a drug habit. A desire to belong and to have a sense of home result in him moving to a regional city in North Queensland where he has a friendship circle and support. While Harry's story can be read in numerous ways, two issues are of particular interest for this chapter. The first is that of the continued and pervasive heteronormativity of rural areas and the painful implications this may have for gay rural youth. The second is the destabilizing of urban spaces as necessarily home for all gays and lesbians.

Adding significant scaffolding to Waite and Gorman-Murray's (2011) research is scholarship on heterosexuality and rural youth. In a study of young men enrolled in agricultural courses at an Australian university, Bryant (2006, p. 70) reports on the prominence and privileging of a "raw heterosexual masculinity." Male students engage in the public objectification of women and public boasting of heterosexual activities. Such displays of heterosexuality differ from that described by Little (2007), Little and Panelli (2007) and Kaberis and Koutsouris (2013) in work on young farming men and marriage. For the young farmers in these studies, heterosexuality is a necessary marker of masculinity and also critical to the future of their farming enterprise, but out-migration of women from rural areas and the diminishment of farming as a high-status occupation have reduced their chances of marriage. In their studies, Little (2007) and Little and Panelli (2007) identify the dominant discourses embedded in campaigns to find partners for young farming men in New Zealand and Australia. Of interest is how heterosexual masculinity represented in the campaigns is inextricably tied to marriage and reproduction and, more broadly, connected to traditional gendered ideas of nature and the natural world. Meanwhile, Kaberis and Koutsouris (2013) report that the young farming men they interviewed demonstrate little reflexivity about the structural and discursive shifts which have resulted in their bachelor status. Instead, they individualize and personalize their situation, describing themselves as "ineffective, weak and unlucky" (Kaberis and Koutsouris 2013, p. 87). Adding another dimension to scholarship on heterosexuality and farming men is a study of the everyday experiences of marriage for young Australian farming couples by Bryant and Pini (2011). With in-laws living in close proximity and sharing ownership of the farm (with their son(s)), young farming women's gendered and heterosexual futures are closely monitored. The young women's reproductive lives and even their future community involvement are mapped out by their husbands and in-laws in light of the needs and preeminence of the farm.

As stated, scholarly interest in uncovering the negotiations around the power relations embedded in the different subject positions of rural youth has in general extended very little beyond gender or sexuality. Racialized studies of rural youth are rare. This is of concern for a range of reasons including the “whiteness” of discourses of rurality as well as the presence of indigenous populations in rural areas. It is also troubling given that across Western nations new migrant populations are increasingly being engaged to meet labor market demands (Basok 2000; McDonald et al. 2012). In light of the scarcity of knowledge on the subject of how youth negotiate their racial identities in rural areas, a recent study by Torres and Wicks-Asbun (2014) is illuminating. The authors examine the issue through surveys and interviews with undocumented immigrant youth in high schools in rural North Carolina. Many of the students are academically capable and have high educational aspirations, but realizing their goals is difficult. Their family position renders them economically marginalized. This is aggravated because their undocumented status means that they are not able to access in-state tuition for college or university or any financial assistance. At the same time, they have to contend with anti-immigration sentiments being expressed at school, in their communities, and in wider society. It is not surprising to learn that the “liminal citizenship” (Torres and Wicks-Asbun 2014, p. 195) of these rural young people results in anxiety, frustration, sadness, and fear.

In geographies of rural youth research, gender is the analytic category which has generated the most literature, adding vibrant new knowledge to the discipline. In this scholarship, work has focused largely on young men. Therefore, how young femininities are constituted in the rural context and the potential reshaping of these in the context of post-feminism have yet to be subjected to detailed analysis (Pini et al. 2014). Beyond gender, other social differences among rural youth remain understudied by geographers. Thus, we still know little about how normative discourses of youth and rurality are negotiated when refracted through the prisms of race, disability, class, and sexuality. In light of these omissions, and in the context of arguments for more spatially informed work on intersectionality, we should remain mindful of Ludvig’s (2006, p. 247) provocative question to researchers concerned with difference: “*who defines when, where, which, and why particular differences are given recognition while others are not?*”

5 Future Directions

Examining rurality and youth does not necessarily mean focusing solely on youth who live outside cities. However, to date, little scholarship has explored the intersections between the constructions of the categories of “rurality” and “youth” beyond the boundaries of rural communities and/or beyond a focus on young people who live in the countryside. Largely overlooked has been the multiple ways in which the rural context has been configured as having a pedagogic role to play in the lives of youth. An early study from Wales on the subject by Gruffudd (1996) and more recent work by Mills (2014) has shown that the enrollment of

nature to teach youth has deep historical resonances. Yet, as Kyle (2014) and Bannister (2014) reveal in studies of camping by organizations such as the Boys' Brigade Camps and the Scouts, and as Kraftl (2014) demonstrates in work on alternative education spaces such as care farms, constructing the rural context as having pedagogic possibilities is similarly embedded in contemporary times. The imperative for subjecting this type of construction to critique is highlighted in a study of a remote Australian boot camp for at-risk youth undertaken by Pini and Mills (2014). In an analysis of a documentary about the boot camp, the authors detail the way rural life is mythologized in the texts as pure, gentle, and spiritual and therefore an appropriately therapeutic space. Equally, the authors point out this rural space may be rough, tough, and frightening, and therefore an appropriate disciplinary space in which techniques such as cutting off young people's electricity supply or housing youth in demountable shed-like accommodation may be enacted. Pini and Mills (2014) demonstrate that it is through the interpretive frame of dominant discourses of rurality that viewers are invited to see it as acceptable (or even commendable) that at-risk youth are sent to a distant and unfamiliar and isolated place with almost no resources, where they are to be overseen by staff with no training and subjected to a range of questionable disciplinary and therapeutic techniques.

As we continue to study rurality and youth, but broaden our lens, an obvious topic for exploration is how urban youth engage recreationally with rural places and spaces. In this regard research by King and Church (2013) on young urban mountain bike riders is instructive on a number of counts. Firstly, as they rightly reflect, the literature on rural youth has not been matched by interest in how urban (and rural) youth experience the countryside as a leisure space. Secondly, in addressing this lacuna, they adopt a mobile methodological approach (e.g., interviews while biking) which is innovative and highly effective in bringing to light the interrelationship between landscape and mountain biker and the embodied and emotional dimensions of this landscape. Thirdly, their findings complicate knowledge about youth and rurality. For the young mountain bikers, the rural, rather than the urban space, is critical to identity formation and lifestyle. The mountain bikers deliberately utilize rural spaces that others have overlooked, shaping them to their purposes and enjoying freedom from interference. Further, the young people demonstrate considerable knowledge about, and skill in relation to, nature and great complexity in how they give meaning to nature as mountain bikers, differentiating themselves from adults in expressing "an embodied but instrumental" relationship with the rural (King and Church 2013, p. 74).

In addition to the above, there are still many trajectories of knowledge which need to be taken up in relation to the three thematic fields of scholarship reviewed in this chapter: mobilities, marginalities, and negotiations. That is, particular groups of rural youth continue to remain absent in the literature. Notably absent from the literature on rural youth and intersectionality are narratives of the everyday experiences of people with a disability. Medical perspectives dominate the literature on rural youth with a disability. In this work, rural youth with a disability are rarely viewed as anything other than recipients of services so emphasis is on quantification

and identification of structural impediments to service delivery and access. As such the stories of young people with a disability living outside the city remain untold. At the same time, nascent work is revealing how poverty and homelessness, often historically decoupled from the rural context, define the lives of a significant number of youth living outside metropolitan spaces (MacTavish and Salamon 2006; Edwards et al. 2009). As Valentine et al. (2008) reveal in a study of drinking and rural youth, policy responses to social problems affecting rural youth need to recognize their specificity. Often, as the authors contend, moral panic about youth produces a homogenous policy subject.

6 Conclusion

There has been exciting growth in scholarship on rural youth since the latter part of the twentieth century. Across this body of work, there is increasing recognition that the lives of rural youth are marked by complexity, difference, and ambiguity just as there is a greater awareness that understanding what it means to be a young person in rural areas requires situating their biographies within broader social, cultural, political, and economic contexts. Encapsulating this shift is Donkersloot's (2012) conclusions to a study of gender and youth in rural Ireland in which she observes the need to "push past binary frameworks of male/female, center/periphery, dominant/discontented."

Reviewed work on youth mobility reveals a range of experiences informed by heterogeneous material and discursive conditions in turn challenging fundamental assumptions about what rural youth move "away" from and toward, who moves or stays (as problematic binary), and the ways in which mobility is embedded in, both enabling and restricting, specific youth identities and narratives. Relatedly, contemporary research has drawn much needed attention to processes of exclusion and inclusion not least around the ongoing coproduction of rural places and spaces. This work acknowledges the contingent and multiple nature of such constructions particularly around youth appropriations or reinventions of rural public and private spaces to meet their needs. Here too this work complicates dominant understandings and assignations of "marginalization" by attending to the role of youth agency and perceptions in challenging such categorizations and also in resisting and/or participating in mechanisms of social exclusion. Throughout this literature, the interrelated roles of, for example, class, gender, sexuality, and agency come to the fore in what are fundamentally messy intersections and coproductions of "youth" and "rurality/rural spaces."

In addressing these coproductions, a further challenge, which scholars have begun to address, is the need to acknowledge and advance young people's voices and views. Importantly, what has assisted more theoretically nuanced studies of rural youth is the fact that researchers are increasingly drawing on a broader repertoire of methodological tools (see Leyshon 2002; Nairn and Panelli 2009; Cairns 2013). Indeed, the field is today characterized not only by methodological breadth and innovation but by a commitment to equalizing the power differentials

between researchers and participants. In this respect geographers of rural youth have taken up Halfacree's (2004) call for "methodological dexterity" as a means to turn "neglect" into "engagement."

There is, however, much still to be done in terms of extending the scope and depth of the research reviewed here, embracing the many questions this body of work is raising, and by way of addressing ongoing absences such as, but not limited to those around, disability, homelessness, ethnicity, and sexuality. The double-barrelled task that faces rural geographers – of challenging and recalibrating adult-centric as well as urban-centric knowledge and of tracing and subverting the power relations implicit in such orientations – remains as urgent as ever.

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Abstract

A central focus in the work of children’s geographies has been an analysis of children and young people’s exclusion. This chapter reviews a number of these studies, classifying them into four broad approaches to exclusion. This typology illustrates a broadening of the focus and definition of “exclusion” and the introduction of related concepts such as inclusion and resistance. The second half of the chapter suggests we need to go further and take a more explicit focus on the in-between or liminal spaces between inclusion/exclusion of young people. Extending upon the original anthropological conceptualization, liminality is theorized as a concept that creates space for both political possibilities and hybrid identities for young people in “borderlands.” Experiences of “marginal” youth in a semirural town in New Zealand are used to illustrate the potential of liminality in understanding the blurred inclusionary and exclusionary border spaces of youth.

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1 Introduction

A central focus in the subdiscipline of children's geographies has been an analysis of children and young people's exclusion in society (Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004). Indeed, as Vanderbeck and Dunkley (2004) argue, the very development of children's geographies into a recognizable subfield "has in no small part been predicated on an exclusion of geographies i.e. the exclusion of young people's lives and experiences from the mainstream of human geography, mirroring the broader patterns of social relations which peripheralize young people's experiences and perspectives" (p. 178). In this chapter, a review of this research on youth exclusion within children's geographies is undertaken to consider what insights it gives into the nature, patterns, scale, mobility, and processes of children and young people in society. This analysis draws attention to the spatial, temporal, and social "border spaces" which young people occupy in society. As Aitken and Plows (2010, p. 327) suggest, young people are "always on, in, around, or going through a border of some kind." Such border experiences are frequently ones of exclusion, in which young people's status and spatial mobility are restricted and curtailed by social, economic, and political regulations and expectations. Young people carry borders with them, and those borders change over time and over space (Aitken and Plows 2010). Yet, as research shows, border living has also resulted in new forms of agency and social inclusion, demonstrating ways young people connect, belong, and make a difference at the same time as living on the edge (Bosco 2010).

The chapter begins with a review of research on youth exclusion with a particular focus on the work of children's geographers. A typology of four key approaches is developed, showing how approaches to youth exclusion have changed and expanded over time to bring in other concepts such as inclusion, liminality, and resistance, thus enriching our understandings. In the second half of the chapter, the concept of liminality is explored in greater depth, and consideration is given to the potential it holds for providing more nuanced and deeper understandings of the blended, in-between spaces of youth inclusion/exclusion. The chapter concludes with a case study of the experiences of young people from a failing school on the "wrong side of the tracks" in New Zealand as a way to illustrate the concepts of exclusion, inclusion, and liminality in greater depth and consider new spaces of possibility for border youth.

2 Studies of Young People, Space, and Exclusion

Geographers have long held an interest in the patterns and processes of exclusion in society, pointing out that space and place are central components of the processes of exclusion (Aitken 2001; Massey 1995; Sibley 1995; Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004).

Table 1 Four approaches to youth exclusion

Approach to exclusion	Description	Understanding of exclusion
Exclusion through regulation	Youth experience social and spatial exclusion, occupy different spatial zones, and/or have constrained access to public space due to regulations, policies and rules	Youth exclusion is largely a result of adult regulation, attitudes, and actions
Exclusion through stigma and discrimination	Youth exclusion is not only material but also symbolic – as a result of stigma, stereotypes, and discrimination often based on class, gender, race, sexuality, and disability	Exclusion has affective and symbolic dimensions that can also reinforce spatial divides. Moral and symbolic evaluations contribute to discriminatory and exclusionary practices
Youth resistance to exclusion	Young people resist adult impositions and carve out spaces for their existence	Young people do not respond to exclusionary practices and processes passively. Instead, young people show agency within their constrained environments
Exclusion is closely linked to inclusion	The processes and practices of inclusion also imply exclusionary actions and attitudes – boundary setting of how is/is not “one of us”	Exclusion and inclusion are interconnected, and one needs to be understood in the context of the other

A focus on “social exclusion” as a prominent feature of academic and social policy discourses in Western nations over the past decades has also reinforced interest in this concept (Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004). The flexibility of the term “exclusion” is perhaps one of its greatest appeals, as it can be used to describe the economy and labor market, but also broadly varying dimensions of social difference, including “race,” ethnicity, social class, gender, sexuality, and disability (Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004). The following section outlines four of the key ways that geographers of children and young people have researched and understood exclusion and to what effect. These four approaches are not intended to be distinct from each other – in fact, some of the research discussed features across more than one category. Instead, the intention of this typology is to demonstrate some of the key traditions in the study of youth exclusion and how they have changed and broadened over time, enhancing our understandings and definitions of exclusion (and related concepts). A table summarizing these four approaches follows this discussion (Table 1).

Exclusion through regulation: A key contribution that children’s geographers have made to studies of youth exclusion has been to show that young people occupy distinctive and frequently more restricted spaces in society compared to those of adults (Hil and Bessant 1999; Matthews et al. 1998; Skelton and Valentine 1998). Such research has confirmed that the mobility and experiences of young people are frequently confined to specific spatial arenas (Hall et al. 1999; Matthews et al. 1998). As such, young people inhabit “micro-geographies” (Matthews et al. 1998) or “micro-territories” (Harris and Wyn 2009) which are constrained spatially compared to those of adults. Research in this vein frequently portrays

urban environments as sites of alienation, contestation, contamination, and surveillance in the “no go adult zones of the fortress city,” creating “landscapes of powerlessness” and social marginality (Hil and Bessant 1999; Matthews et al. 1998; White 1996).

The above research reinforces how youth exclusion can be seen, at least in part, to be a result of adult regulation, processes, and practices, including laws, surveillance, and environmental planning. An extreme example of adult regulation of youth spatial mobility and access to public space is the use of age-based curfews (Collins and Kearns 2001; Manning et al. 2011; Skelton and Hamed 2011). For example, Collins and Kearns (2001) describe how a policy of age-based curfews of young people in two provincial towns in Aotearoa New Zealand – Te Kuiti and Paeroa – in the 1990s had the effect of significantly restricting young people’s movements during the evening, especially those under 18 years. Both these towns had enforced a juvenile nighttime curfew over a period of 2 years in response to what was seen as wave of juvenile crime. These curfews also reinforced racial stereotypes of certain youth who were “trouble” and needed curtailment – specifically by targeting Māori or Pacific Island young people. Similar patterns of regulation and restriction of young people’s mobility and actions were seen in age-related restrictions on young people’s access of public space at night in Singapore in 2006 (Skelton and Hamed 2011). In contrast to Western notions of curfew, these restrictions were described as “police checks,” and implemented on the premise of safety for teenagers and the promotion of greater parental responsibilities. Such policies can be seen as part of a wider raft of attempts aimed to enhance the control, regulation, and surveillance of young people (Manning et al. 2011).

Of significance in this approach to youth exclusion has been the examination of how adults’ attitudes, anxieties, and suspicions toward young people have influenced young people’s spatial constraints and exclusion. This confirms work by sociologists such as Cohen (1980) who describe the “moral panic” associated with youth and their use of public space (see also Hil and Bessant 1999; Lucas 1998). For example, Malone’s (2002) research in Australia describes the way that suspicion, intolerance, and moral censure limit the spatial worlds of young urban youth in Australia. In Aotearoa New Zealand, Panelli and colleagues (2002) similarly profile the negative way young people are constructed in media to be “trouble.” Their research showed how young people “hanging out” in public spaces was stigmatized with associations of drunkenness, lack of supervision, and disorder, suggesting that young people are out of place in public space, requiring adult supervision. Research in rural areas also confirms rural young people’s experiences of exclusion and disadvantage. For example, the “hidden geographies” of exclusion and disenfranchisement in Northampton reveal a “darker” rural, where not all young people experience unfettered access to the countryside nor acceptance by adults in country towns (Matthews et al. 2000b). These findings critique the degree to which “public space” is indeed open to all members of the public.

Exclusion through stigma and discrimination: A second body of research moves beyond spatial and material types of youth exclusion and draws attention to more

symbolic forms of exclusion, as a way to “connect the *real* (material geographies of place) with the *imagined* (symbolic geographies of space)” (Matthews et al. 2000a, p. 64). These forms of exclusion are far from imaginary – rather, they are much less visible and include more subtle forms of exclusion that are harder to see and measure, including emotional trauma experienced by groups which are considered abject or “out of place” in specific contexts (Sharkey and Shields 2008) or tainted with moral stigma as a result of class, gender, disability, or ethnicity (Holt 2004; Reay 2005; Reay and Lucey 2000; Skeggs 2004). Responses often include moral judgments and result in forms of discrimination, stigma, and stereotypes of children and young people who demonstrate “different” or “inferior” states to the dominant group. This research reveals that not only adults, but young people also conduct these types of exclusionary and discriminatory practices.

Research in this vein has explored how exclusionary practices and attitudes occur in response to aspects of class and moral “respectability” (Aitken 2001). Class-based identities are made and remade at the microlevel, in and through innumerable practices, serving to reproduce structural inequalities for children and young people and maintain levels of social exclusion (Reay 2005). Skeggs (2004) describes how through this process of class enactment, “entitlements and judgments of culture are put into effect and authorized” (p. 1009). For example, forms of discrimination relating to class in British schools constitute a “psychic landscape of class” through the feelings of ambivalence, inferiority and superiority, visceral aversions, recognition, abjection, and the markings of taste – which serve to reproduce and reinforce social class divisions (Reay 2005). Reay describes how children in her study did not necessarily mention class, but their talk was infused with class symbolism, class envy, and antagonism, through references to class-related images associated with places (such as certain neighborhoods which were regarded as “posh” or working class). Such discussions have powerful emotional consequences for children and young people – such as feelings of anxiety and discomfort. Moreover, discriminating perceptions and practices can also lead to restrictions on children and young people’s mobility, such as parental restrictions on children’s access to inner-city council estates in Britain which are known as “hotbeds of crime” and “full of problem families” (Reay and Lucey 2000; see also Wridt 2004 for a similar case in Harlem, New York).

A key attribute of symbolic exclusion is how difficult exclusionary practices are to observe, even if it is felt deeply by those who experience it. Holt (2004) illustrates this clearly in her examination of the experiences of children with mind-body differences within a mainstream classroom. In spite of the attempts toward inclusion of these children with special educational needs (SEN) in the school, exclusionary processes operated which served to isolate and exclude them. This occurred in the dividing up of children in ways that clearly marked them out as “different” – such as the formation of set groups of ability and the separation of SEN children to a separate table to work with an assistant. These practices, while small, have the effect of separating off groups of children and young people, undermining perceptions of their equality and their ability to participate on the same level as “full” citizens (Sharkey and Shields 2008).

A further significant aspect of symbolic exclusion relates to aspects of identity linked to race and ethnicity. Research in this area has identified that young people who are members of ethnic minority groups frequently experience forms of spatial and social exclusion (Cahill 2004; Hopkins 2004; Smith et al. 2002; Watt and Stenson 1998). For example, Watt and Stenson (1998) found that young people in South East England had markedly different patterns of spatial mobility according to perceived areas of “danger” associated with racialized perceptions of areas within “Thamestown.” For example, Asian young people in this town kept to the “Asian area” of town but avoided other areas where they feared racial abuse or attacks. In contrast, the Afro-Caribbean young people did not feel unsafe anywhere in the town, and felt they could go anywhere. In both groups, “knowing people” was a key way to avoid trouble and enhance feelings of safety when using public space.

Being viewed with suspicion and disrespect as a result of ethnic identity is another way young people’s participation in society can be restricted. For example, rural Māori young people from New Zealand described the abuse of their rights by schools, and police destroyed their trust in authorities and turned them off pursuing further opportunities to participate as citizens in their schools and communities (Smith et al. 2002). Exclusionary processes in these examples are difficult to measure but nonetheless lead to significant levels of discrimination as well as social and spatial marginalization of certain individuals and groups in society.

Youth resistance to exclusion: The final two approaches to youth exclusion research outlined in this chapter expand upon the first two by including additional, related concepts which add a new dimension to the study of youth exclusion. The third approach discussed here describes studies which have drawn attention to the way young people themselves respond to and resist exclusionary processes, impositions, and regulatory practices (Kallio and Häkli 2011b; Matthews 2003; Skelton and Hamed 2011; Smith 1998). Rather than depicting a rather passive portrayal of young people and exclusion, this approach highlights the agency of young people in defying adult-imposed constraints (Smith 1998) and their creativity in reshaping public space (Matthews 2003). While some forms of resistance to exclusion are public and obvious, such as youth street protests (Beals and Wood 2012; Tereshchenko 2010), others are more subtle, such as the occupation of a Kiikele Park in Oulu, Finland, by young people who had been locked out of this park, a favorite hangout, in the summer (Kallio and Häkli 2011b). Kallio and Häkli argue that the return of these young people to the park for weeks following the official closure of this park demonstrated their everyday embodied politics, in a form of everyday noncompliance, everyday “tactics” (de Certeau 1984), or, in their words, “voiceless politics.”

This research underscores the ways that young people “operate their own spatialisations” (Jones 2000, p. 37) in the places they live, work, and go to school. For example, in Skelton and Hamed’s (2011) research (referred to in the previous section), young people did not passively submit to the age-related restrictions to public space imposed on them by the police checks. Instead, they actively resisted these through tactics such as making themselves look more “adult” to avoid scrutiny or working to gain greater levels of trust from their parents in order to

enhance their access to public space at nighttime. Resistance can also take the form of actively reclaiming spaces, such as the young people in East Germany both prior and post reunification who made use of abandoned buildings and subverted other spaces in order to find freedom and solidarity away from the gaze of the state (Smith 1998). Research itself can act as a form of resistance against exclusion, such as Cahill's (2004) *Makes Me Mad* project with diverse young women from the Lower East Side neighborhood of New York. Exclusion is seen in this type of research as something which young people can resist and work against – albeit in often subtle and everyday ways. This broadens our understandings by presenting new, agentic, and more inclusive ways of framing youth exclusion.

Exclusion is closely linked to inclusion: One final approach applied within studies of youth exclusion makes the point that processes of exclusion are inextricably tied to processes of inclusion. It is clear that *both* exclusionary and inclusionary practices structure young people's lived experiences of places (Nairn et al. 2003; Vanderbeck and Dunkley 2004). However, research on youth exclusion in this vein takes this a step further and suggests that inclusion and exclusion are not mutually defining opposites, but have a much more complex interrelationship (Cameron 2006). Researchers within this tradition have pointed to the simultaneity of inclusion and exclusion, and rather than studying inclusion or exclusion in isolation, both need to be explored together. Massey (1998) argues this from the starting point of understanding space in terms of a complexity of interacting social relations. She suggests that "it is important to recognise that within that open complexity [of interacting social relations], both individuals and social groups are constantly engaged in efforts to territorialise, to claim spaces, to include some and exclude others from particular areas" (Massey 1998, p. 126). As the following three examples illustrate, the formation of inclusion frequently occurs in close juxtaposition with the formation of exclusion (Hopkins 2004; Morris-Roberts 2004; Wridt 2004).

Processes of friendship inclusion necessarily employ exclusionary processes. Morris-Roberts (2004) illustrates this point in her analysis of girls' friendships in an English high school. She describes how a group of "alternative" girls collectively created a sense of "distinction" in their style, dress, and music tastes that reinforced their sense of belonging and identification as a group. She argues that these were also actions of "dis-identification" which served to form exclusionary boundaries from other girls, notably the "townies," who they saw as slaves to high street fashion, popular chart music, and forms of femininity found in teenage girls' magazines. In contrast the "alternative" girls distinguished themselves from the towny image of heteronormativity, by wearing grunge, punk, goth, or eclectic fashion and listening to indie and heavy metal music. Their actions were spatially reinforced by their use of distinct territories (such as the park or the school wall), which also served to demarcate their distinctiveness as a group of friends from the others. Morris-Roberts argues that the processes of becoming an "insider" also involved the creation of those who were "outsiders."

Similar processes also occur at wider scales in society. Wridt's (2004) work on "block politics" in East Harlem, New York, illustrates similar processes of

inclusion/exclusion on a broader scale. She describes how the spatial unit of the “block” provided a sense of belonging, familiarity, and attachment, closely defining the identities of young people growing up there. This feeling of block attachment was validated and reinforced most acutely when young people enter other people’s blocks as this was when distinctions between those in the “in-group” and those in the “out-group” were suddenly apparent. Her research also highlighted the close interaction of inclusion/exclusion with social status, spatial signifiers, and racial identities, describing how young people’s identities were ascribed a certain status according to whether their block was considered “bad” or “tough.”

With another scale in mind, Hopkins (2004) details the close relationship between inclusion and exclusion for young Muslim men growing up in Scotland. The claims of these young men to Scottishness (their accents, education, and commitment to Scotland) were juggled in tension with the marginalization they experienced through lack of access to employment and everyday racism as a result of their skin color or beards. Inclusion for these young Muslim men was formed on the borders of exclusion, depending largely on the degree to which they displayed their Muslimness. These three research examples illustrate how processes of exclusion and inclusion can be a form of “normative boundary setting” (Cameron 2006, p. 401) or as a way of distinguishing what is perceived as normality and morality from difference and immorality (Cameron 2006).

So, what have these four approaches told us about young people, space, and exclusion? Table 1 provides a summary of these four key approaches to youth exclusion, once again bearing in mind productive overlaps between each approach.

This collective work has underscored that young people are subject to high levels of adult regulation in various forms that have the effect of curtailing or manipulating their experiences of space. It is apparent, however, that young people employ a variety of strategies and “tactics” (de Certeau 1984) to subvert and resist adult impositions, to carve out spaces of their own both within and beyond these constraints. These approaches have also drawn attention to a much wider definition of exclusion – including not only spatial exclusion but forms of social and psychological exclusion which often have a deeply affective component. Forms of exclusion therefore include discriminatory practices and processes which often result in stigmatization and marginalization of those who are viewed as “other,” reinforcing structural and identity-related divisions of gender, class, race, and disability. Importantly, this body of research has also drawn into sharp relief processes of inclusion. As Vanderbeck and Dunkley (2004) state, “this exclusion narrative, [...] is tempered with a recognition that exclusion is certainly not the only reality of young people’s experiences” (p. 179). As many authors have shown, exclusion is necessarily understood in relation to inclusionary practices.

This loose typology of approaches to the study of youth exclusion also shows how understandings and definitions of exclusion have changed and broadened, furthering insights into the multiple dimensions and scales of exclusion (and related concepts such as inclusion, resistance, and agency), as well as deepening understandings of the spatial outcomes of exclusionary practices. These studies within children’s geographies have also shed light on how exclusion is perceived,

experienced, and practiced by children and young people themselves. As hinted at in the final approach (exclusion is closely linked to inclusion), an emerging body of research attempts to examine more rigorously the interrelationship between inclusion and exclusion. Further research is needed which moves beyond the static binaries of either included/excluded in order to disrupt these dualisms (Nairn et al. 2003) and interrogates the middling, fuzzy border space of ambiguity positioned between these two positions more closely. In the following section, the idea of liminality is introduced as a starting point for a more explicit focus on the state of in-betweenness which young people experience. A case is made for the significance of “border” spaces, as ones which offer opportunities for both political possibility and hybrid identities.

3 Beyond Binaries: Liminal Border Spaces

The idea of liminality, literally meaning on the threshold, stems from Arnold van Gennep (1909) and Victor Turner’s (1967, 1969) anthropological research. Originally coined by van Gennep, the word “liminal” is derived from the Latin words *limen* (threshold) and *limes* (“boundary,” “frontier”) and was originally applied to describe the quality of transition of rites of passage (such as birth, puberty, marriage) (van Gennep 1909). In the 1960s, Victor Turner rediscovered the importance of liminality as a way to explain the phases of transition in which people are “betwixt and between all the recognized fixed points in space-time of structural classification” (Turner 1967, p. 97). This understanding opens up space for possible uses of the concept beyond that of social rites of passage. Thomassen (2009) suggests that liminality is therefore applicable to both time and space:

Liminal places can be specific thresholds; they can also be more extended areas, like ‘borderlands’ or, arguably, whole countries, placed in important in-between positions between larger civilizations. Liminality can also be applied to larger groups (cohorts or villages), or whole societies, or even civilizations. (Thomassen 2009, p. 16)

Thomassen (2009) lays out three dimensions of liminality which he states relate to *subjects* (individuals, groups, and whole societies), *temporality* (moments, periods, and epochs), and *spatiality* (specific places, such as thresholds, as well as areas, zones and regions, or countries). This broad conceptualization of liminality opens up new potential for the use of liminality within studies of youth and exclusion and helps to interrogate the idea of “border” living.

A small number of studies have applied the notion of liminality to highlight the space that young people occupy in society, “positioned on a boundary or threshold” (Weller 2006, p. 102) and therefore one of in-betweenness (Beals and Wood 2012; Bucholtz 2002; Kallio 2007; Luzzatto and Jacobson 2001; Skelton 2000, 2010; Weller 2006, 2007; Wood 2012). Liminality, in this sense, exposes how young people’s temporal stage in their life course (age) and status in society renders them neither completely “child” nor completely “adult,” in their ability to operate as

autonomous political agents or access the full entitlements of adult citizenship. This liminal space is characterized by uncertainty, in-betweenness, and ambiguity (Kallio 2007; Matthews 2003; Sibley 1995; Weller 2006), and as Skelton (2000) suggests, those in ambiguous positions are often marginalized in society.

These studies have broadly introduced the concept of liminality to youth studies; however, they have rarely considered how liminality might offer specific insights into the area of youth exclusion (cf. Skelton 2000). Liminality is related to exclusion in that it describes being in-between “separation” and “incorporation” (Balduk 2008). Liminality therefore presents an opportunity to interrogate the more ambiguous states of exclusion – such as a state that is “not completely” excluded, or a state at the intersection of inclusion/exclusion and one that requires further investigation at these very borders of coexistence. This concept also has the potential to highlight the material spaces of liminality that young people occupy and their temporal dimensions relating to age, moments, and generations (Andres and Wyn 2010). A focus on liminality therefore draws attention to the dynamic, unfolding, and often contradictory status of young people who are “betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial” (Turner 1967, p. 95).

4 Liminality, Progressive Space, and Young People’s Geographies of Exclusion

This section provides an outline of the possibilities offered by liminality as a concept to enhance studies and of young people’s geographies. At the outset, it is important to be clear that liminality is a concept not a theory, and deeper theorizing of this within youth studies is still needed. Theorizing liminality, for example, through Bourdieu’s notion of symbolic capital will add greater depth. An example of this is Skeggs’s (2004) work on class interests. She points out that Bourdieu’s concept of class has a considerable degree of ambiguity. Rather than a static state, the middle class is historically variable and has frontiers which continue to be produced and transformed through struggle:

It is in these intermediate zones of social space that the indeterminacy and the fuzziness of the relationships between practices and positions are the greatest, and that the room left open for symbolic strategies designed to jam the relationship is the largest. (Bourdieu 1987, p. 12 cited in Skeggs 2004, p. 5)

Skeggs concludes that analysis of class should therefore aim to capture the ambiguity produced through struggle and fuzzy boundaries, rather than fix it in place in order to measure what we know (Skeggs 2004, p. 5). While the word ambiguity does not equate to liminality, Skeggs nonetheless presents a much more nuanced and complex understanding of class-related spaces, which could well be described as liminal as opposed to fixed. A similar goal is intended through the application of liminality in the context of youth exclusion. While this chapter does not employ a specific theoretical lens with liminality, encouragement of doing so is implicit.

Broadly, there are three main contributions that a more explicit recognition of liminality could offer. First, a focus on liminality draws attention to uncertainty and ambiguity. This highlights the fluidity, the moments, or space that exist “betwixt and between all the recognised fixed points in space-time of structural classification” (Turner 1967, p. 97) rather than fixed points of certain and rigidity. Balduk (2008) suggests that liminal phases are therefore in between “separation” and “incorporation” and therefore are closely related to exclusion or at least seclusion. Liminality therefore is a particularly useful concept for exploring youth, as a reflection on their state of ambiguity in society – the not-quite-adult status, or their “incongruous, extraneous position ‘outside’ but within society” (Sharkey and Shields 2008, p. 252). Furthermore, following feminist and poststructural approaches, liminality offers an opportunity to deconstruct dichotomies and binaries that often see one state in opposition to another (such as rural/urban, male/female, public/private, and so on) (Nairn et al. 2003).

A second contribution of the concept of liminality in youth geographies is the potential it offers for a greater understanding of material space. While van Gennep (1909) and Turner (1967) applied the notion of liminality to rituals such as birth, puberty, and marriage, a great deal of potential remains to explore the spatiality of liminality more closely, by drawing attention to the material and symbolic geographies of space associated with spaces that can be seen to exist on a spatial frontier, border, or threshold (Thomassen 2009). In particular, it draws attention to spaces which could be considered marginal, excluded, on the borders of society, or beyond dominant patterns of practice. For example, Matthews (2003) describes “the street” liminal as such sites are simultaneously spaces of adult regulation, socialization, and control, yet also sites of youthful agency, subversion, and resistance (Matthews 2003). Similarly, Wood (2012) outlines how school playgrounds, classrooms, or toilets can also be analyzed as liminal spaces as they exist simultaneously as arenas of adult regulation, yet also of youth negotiation, subversion, and agency. Such sites could not be considered as entirely “adult” spaces, nor entirely “youth” spaces, but operate as something “in-between.”

Third, liminality provides potential to consider the complex states of in-betweenness and to read these as spaces of political possibility. This is in spite of Turner’s (1969) understanding of agency as a key dimension of liminality. He explains that the concept of liminality:

served not only to identify the importance of in-between periods, but also to understand the human reactions to liminal experiences: the way liminality shaped personality, the sudden foregrounding of agency, and the sometimes dramatic tying together of thought and experience. (p. 14)

Viewing the potential for agency within liminality offers a chance to advance the rather intractable debates about structure versus agency that lurch from one side to the other. Instead, an opportunity presents itself for a much greater analysis of the “middling position” (Farrugia 2012; Threadgold 2011) that most of these debates end with. Liminality focuses attention not on either structure or agency but the

fuzzy state of ambiguity that might sit in between these positions. In particular, it offers an opportunity to consider the intersection of young people's and adults' worlds, rather than seeing these as separate (Jeffrey 2011; Mannion 2007). It also encourages researchers to consider the agency of social actors present *within* such liminal spaces and statuses, as a state of in-betweenness that has political potential.

One example of such an approach is Skelton's (2010, p. 150) appeal to the possibility and multiplicity which could exist at the intersection (in the "I" space) between Politics/politics. Drawing a distinction between "Politics" and "politics," Skelton argues that the traditional focus on big "P" Politics has paid disproportionate attention to formal and public forms of participation, such as institutions and processes of the state, thus overlooking informal and personal "politics" (lowercase p), related to issues of identity, agency, and participation which are more commonly the domain of children and young people (Skelton 2010). She suggests that young people's legal-political in-betweenness, their liminality, enables them to occupy two Political/political spaces at the same time, thus producing "a melded and blended P/politics."

Furthering Skelton's attention to this interstitial space through empirical work with school-aged young people, Wood (2012) suggests that examining the ambiguous and contradictory nature of liminal spaces within schools, in between formal/informal and public/private arenas, provides fresh political possibility. Such spaces are highly regulated, yet also sites where young people negotiate adult rules and develop their own in ways that bind young people's and adult's political and social worlds together (Kallio and Häkli 2011a; Mannion 2007). Young people's very knowledge of liminal spaces and experiences of living within such blurred boundaries can enable new forms of politics to emerge within the blurred spaces, betwixt and between adults' and young people's worlds, in experiences of, for example, bullying or environmental waste (for examples, see Wood 2012).

Experiences of liminality therefore may not be entirely negative or powerless. As border dwellers, young people can recognize the powerlessness of others and also develop effective tactics that match the context in ways that adults cannot. This also reflects young people's own experience of hybridity and moving between child/youth and adult worlds with agility as "edge walkers" (Tupuola 2004). Tupuola (2004, drawing on Krebs 1999), in reference to diasporic Pacific Island youth in Australia and New Zealand, advances the idea of an edge walker as a minority youth who is resilient to cultural shifts and able to maintain continuity "wherever he or she goes, walking the edge between... cultures in the same persona" (Krebs 1999, p. 9). Rather than seeing the position of multiple identities as deficit, the concept of edge walkers infuses such identities with resilience and strength, showing the ability to juggle multiple social contexts and identities with agility. While this vision overlooks some of the very real difficulties facing minority youth, it highlights the potential agency of such young people within their marginalization. Liminality similarly speaks to a position of not only marginalization but also power, "derived from the margins that to some extent fosters anger and a sensibility that enables creativity and inventiveness" (Aitken 2004, p. 172).

5 Excluded Youth and Liminal Possibilities

So what could an application of liminality look like when examining a group of “excluded” young people? In the following, such an approach is taken with a group of semirural New Zealand young people, who were located on the “wrong side of the tracks” in a provincial town in New Zealand. They attended a school, “Koru” College (pseudonyms for all participants and the school have been used), which in recent years had diminished in number, forcing the Board of Trustees to make a decision to close the school with less than 220 students in 2008. This planned closure and merger with the “successful” school on the other side of the tracks (West Side High) had not gone ahead as West Side High had declined the offer to merge and there was a concerted effort by community members to keep the school afloat. My research in the school came about in 2013 with an invitation to develop a participatory PhotoVoice project as part of the school curriculum with the aim of “celebrating the strengths in the community” (Wood 2015).

A key motivation for the project was the nature of youth exclusion and marginalization in this town, closely associated with this “failing” school. Even though the school had regained students and was slowly growing 5 years on, it still suffered from “perception problems” and ongoing stigma which a local newspaper claimed was associated with the lower socioeconomic status and high Māori population of residents in the community directly surrounding the school. It was apparent that patterns of exclusion were spatially, socially, and historically inscribed within this town. The location of Koru College near to a large state housing block, developed in the 1960s, was one of the reasons for ongoing narratives of failure in the town. For example, commonly reported perceptions of the school at the time of its planned closure in 2008 were:

[Koru College] was built in the ‘wrong place’. [Koru College] is at the edge of town and on the unfavoured East side. [Koru College] has suffered from the socio-economic, racist and snobbish attitudes that have developed in [town] about the so called East/West divide; [Koru College] is the ‘appropriate’ school in [town] for difficult students and for Māori students. (School media archives, 2008)

The spatial perceptions were heightened by the presence of a school zone demarcation which ran through the center of this town, dividing the wealthier west side from Koru College on the east, excluding the young people from this side of town from enrolling. This, along with the place images associated with the state housing block, created an uneven “power geometry” within this town (Massey 1995), isolating one community from the “other,” reducing social interactions and tainting the excluded with stigma and forcing them to the periphery (Goffman 1963). These power geometries of exclusion were also sedimented through metaphorical and symbolic associations of place with moral judgments on the residents and their character. Teachers described how their (mainly Māori) students were often viewed with fear and suspicion in the town and faced significant barriers when accessing health and social care. One teacher, Anna, stated “our students have to be

doubly good to succeed,” explaining that they had to overcome initial prejudices of failure and then succeed to a degree that others would believe they were indeed capable. These examples highlight the continuing salience of race and class as a marker of social difference and otherness and the exclusionary processes which restricted these young people from full participation in this regional town.

However, in contrast to the rather spatially and historically deterministic pattern of “failure” associated with Koru College, young people did not have strong feelings of aversion to their school or their side of town. Instead, their experiences represented a tangled state of inclusion/exclusion. While only about one quarter of the participants lived in the much-reviled state housing block near Koru College, most were very familiar with it as they walked through the area regularly or had friends there. On our community walks through this block, young people would often call out to family and friends, or an “aunty” would poke her head out and ask what we were doing. This enhanced the young people’s sense of security and safety as they walked about the block as they were always “known” (Watt and Stenson 1998). For young people who did live there, it was not a site of contamination – it was just “where we live.” Many also spoke positively of the pride they had in their local *marae* (Māori for traditional meeting house) and the identity this gave them; and others described how Koru College contributed to their identity on East Side.

While the picture of an excluded school community had initially been painted at the outset of the project, these young people were not defined by exclusion. In fact, there were times they described with pride, but also agency, that they had chosen to be part of the East Side community. Joanne (age 13) described how she had chosen the school over the West Side High School as “my sister had such a bad time there that my Mum said there was no way I would go there.” This was even more apparent when during the year of research, West Side High removed its zone for the first time in 10 years allowing East Side young people to enroll (in response to its falling roll numbers reflecting rural population decline). Fears that this could further destabilize the low roll numbers at Koru College were short-lived; both students and staff laughed at the thought Koru College students were now wanted by West Side High: “We won’t be going there. They don’t understand us and how we do things the Koru College-way.”

6 Conclusion

This chapter began by reviewing research on youth exclusion, demonstrating how other related concepts, such as inclusion, resistance, and agency, have become a strong feature of children’s geography research. The typology of four approaches to youth exclusion provides a starting point for future research and has highlighted expanding and deepening understandings of youth exclusion in this field. In the second half of the chapter, a case has been made for more in-depth work around the in-between spaces at the intersection of inclusion/exclusion, with the concept of liminality highlighted as a key conceptual starting point.

The final example of young people's experiences at Koru College illustrated how and why this approach might be operationalized. Aspects of all four approaches to exclusion outlined earlier can be seen in this example, showing how these young people were spatially and socially (symbolically) excluded, yet also demonstrating resistance and agency, also at the intersection of experiences of inclusion. Moreover, the nature of their exclusion was characterized by symbolic forms of judgment and stigma in response to the inclusive and exclusive processes of social relationships that focused on "people like us." Applying the idea of liminality to this context revealed how young people were neither completely excluded nor completely included in this town. Instead, they occupied a hybrid space, finding belonging and attachment in their community while simultaneously recognizing that their experience as citizens was peripheral to the dominant groups in town. As border youth, they found affiliation through their Māori identity and sense of belonging in their school community yet also expressed a sense of alienation from the dominant players on the "other" side of town (Wood 2015).

Yet, within this liminal position, young people also had a sense of agency and power to some extent. When the West Side High School finally removed its school's geographic zone and allowed these young people in, they subverted expectations that they would be clamoring to attend by reasserting their sense of connection to the East Side and Koru College which did things "their way." The ambiguity of their position, produced through struggle and fuzzy boundaries (Skeggs 2004, p. 5), reveals a far more complex narrative than simply inclusion or exclusion. As young people living on the borders of this town, they were walking on the edge between juxtaposing narratives of failure and success, belonging and exclusion, sometimes finding strength, agency, and resilience in that liminality and sometimes finding exclusion.

In sum, liminality offers a conceptual lens through which to interrogate the ambiguities and complexities of youth exclusion. This chapter has outlined a rationale for the application of liminality as a lens for scholarship on the "border spaces" of youth. The challenge remains to find research tools, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks that can deepen this concept and in doing so provide further critical insights into understandings of youth exclusion.

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Abstract

Despite rising interest in border studies and childhood, geographies of children, childhood, and youth have always been concerned with borders. Whether the conceptual borders between adult and child or the contested terrain of borderlands between nations, territories, and institutions, the geographies of children's lives are fundamentally about the geographies of borders. These borders are not impermeable boundaries, for many are relationally produced spaces of contradiction, difference, and tension that give rise to new relations and actions, while at the same time they may violently exclude and limit others. This chapter reviews literature on children, youth, and borders, with a focus on the violence that borders impose on young people's lives. Using three examples pulled from

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each author's empirical studies, the chapter argues that a critical approach to children's rights to space can begin to account for the diversity of children's engagements with borders, which has the potential to aid in youthful reimagining of border spaces.

Keywords

Children and youth • Border violence • Ecuador • Geopolitical and economic borders • Mobility politics • Slovenia • Socio-spatial relations • US/Mexico border • Young people's rights

1 Introduction

Borders provide the socio-spatial context for the lives of children and youth. Borders can be symbolic, such as racialized and gendered boundaries that construct social imaginaries. Borders can also be material realities. For instance, militarized political borders and judicial impediments can restrict children and young people's physical movement. Borders are the selectively permeable brick and mortar that generates young people's environments, whether they are homes, schools, places of labor, or the symbolic spaces marking identities and belongings. Sometimes densely networked and structured and other times ill defined and ambiguous, borders exclude young people from certain mobilities and actions while enabling others (Sibley 1995; Creswell 2010). While ubiquitous, borders are also profound sources of violence that wreak havoc on young people's lives and relations. This chapter seeks to engage specifically with the impact of border violence on children and youth by examining the ways that violence is expressed spatially, on the bodies and in the constrained mobilities and presence of young people (Moosa-Mitha 2005). In this chapter, the terms "children" and "youth" are often used interchangeably, not because we do not recognize the profound socio-spatial differences between children and youth, but to correspond with existing literature that does not make these distinctions. When possible, we differentiate the experiences of youth and children, particularly in our empirical discussion.

In what follows, existing work on the geographies of children, youth, and borders is reviewed. The concept of structural violence is then used to analyze the impacts of borders on the bodies and futures of children and young people. Structural violence is a concept coined by Norwegian politician Johan Galtung (1969) and subsequently elaborated by anthropologist Paul Farmer as a concept "intended to inform the study of the social machinery of oppression" (Farmer 2004a, p. 307). Farmer defines structural violence as "suffering [that] is 'structured' by historically given, (and often economically driven) processes and forces that conspire – whether through routine, ritual, or, as is most commonly the case, the hard surface of life to constrain agency" (Farmer 2004b, p. 40). This chapter uses Farmer's definition of structural violence to aid in discussing the violent impacts of

borders on children and young people that often manifest in the disruption of potential futures and locally worn paths to maturation. Research with erased Slovenian youth, Ecuadorian migrants, and indigenous youth on the US/Mexico border are then discussed to argue for a children's rights discourse that recognizes mobilities in the ways they account for the spatiality of youth agency and practices.

As Spyrou and Christou (2016) highlight in their chapter, *Children, Youth and Border Spaces*, children and young people's border relationships remain relatively understudied, and their voices are often obscured in existing work. The chapter argues that a rights perspective can help foster youthful reimaginings of violent border spaces and account for the relative invisibility of young people's constitutive role in border relations (Spyrou and Christou 2016). As Harvey (2008) argues, the right to space is fundamentally also a right to create and recreate one's self. Rights discourses that recognize the rights of youth to reimagine borders make strides toward recognizing the materiality of young people's belongings and agency and their right to engage with difference. To spark this discussion, the chapter begins with a story of a Slovenian youth contending with structural violence after the breakdown of Yugoslavia created geopolitical and institutional borders that exiled him from his home country. In what follows, pseudonyms are used to protect the identities of all the young people discussed here, with the exception of Sam whose experiences of borders were made public through his activism.

2 The Violence of Erasure

Born to a Muslim father and a Christian mother, Samir (Sam) Kaltak lived through boyhood and his early teens in Slovenia when it was still part of Yugoslavia. In June 1991, at 18 years of age, Sam traveled to Croatia to visit his grandparents as he had done throughout his life. But this was June 1991 and the Balkan War was just about to begin. On this occasion, Sam was unable to get to his grandparents, who lived in a Catholic area that was, by this time, surrounded by Milošević's predominantly Serbian army; so he joined the ZNG RH (the Croatian Territorial Army) and started fighting. Two years later he had switched to the Bosnian army and was fighting against some of the worst that Milošević's troops could offer; within another 2 years he was skilled at living off the land and slipping through enemy lines. At the end of the conflict, Sam was unable to return to his home in Slovenia on a permanent basis because he had no official registration papers, and he had missed the deadline to apply for Slovenian citizenship. Sam got a temporary Bosnian passport, which indicated six zeros in place of his nationality (Fig. 1). He ended up as a refugee in London, where he has since made a life for himself. Sam famously and publically stated to a Slovenian border official that "Neither you nor your government will stop me coming home as far as I'm concerned. I'll come here as I please and who are you to decide whether I come home or not?" (related in interview with Aitken, March 17, 2014 and in a Pop TV (Slovenia) documentary a week later).



Fig. 1 Sam's Bosnian passport (issued in Ljubljana, Slovenia) shows his date of birth followed by six 0s indicating no place of birth or nationality (Photo: Aitken)

Sam is part of the *Izbrisani* (Erased) who lost their legal status and rights when Slovenia gained independence in 1991. The context of other *Izbrisani* is part of the empirical discussion below, but it is raised here to underscore the resilience and energy of young people against structural violence – in Sam's case the contexts of violence and war, loss of human rights, and severe privations – that often impose themselves on young people who cannot vote but use their bodies and mobilities not only to make statements but also to transform spaces. As a young man, Sam learned how to traverse the borders between enemy lines, and when food was scarce or movement dangerous, he learned how to keep his head low and live off the land. After the war he challenged Slovenian border guards on at least one occasion and negotiated the somewhat porous border between Croatia and Slovenia to return home for a short time. With six zeros on a temporary Bosnian passport indicating no place of birth or parents, he left the country to look for work, finally ending up in London where he secured refugee status. Over a relatively short period of time, Sam became adept at resisting and pushing back against political and bureaucratic impediments to his mobility and aspirations for home. Reworking borders is perhaps the most poignant transformation of space, and many young people are at the forefront of this endeavor.

3 Children, Youth, and Borders

Geographers' interest in the material and experiential impacts that borders have on children and young people's lives arguably stems from two different but overlapping research traditions. The first is research that takes a theoretical approach to borders and that is fundamentally concerned with how childhood is socially constructed through conceptual and material borders that shape children's access and opportunities across space (Holloway and Valentine 2000; Aitken 2001). This research branches from feminist traditions exploring how social

differences, such as age, race, gender, and class, are embedded and reproduced in young people's lives and act as symbolic borders implicated in children's experiences of belonging, exclusion, and identity politics (Aitken 2001; Thomas 2011). Much of this research explores the divisions between childhood and adulthood as bordered and liminal constructs and the act of growing up as itself a type of border crossing (Jeffrey and Dyson 2010). This research has revealed the everyday and ubiquitous role of borders in youth maturation and identity and has brought attention to the ways that young people are contested battlegrounds for forces invested in shaping futures and identities (Aitken and Plows 2010).

A second research tradition looks at children and youth's experiences navigating geopolitical and economic borders. Some geographers focus on the dimensions of living in and moving through borderlands where young people negotiate conflicting forces and tensions that shape their opportunities for access and participation in profound ways (Jeffrey and Dyson 2010; Aitken et al. 2011). Significant research examines how globalization, economic restructuring, and migration are bringing youth into contact with a range of borders that are transforming the geographies of childhood in different locales (Katz 2004; Swanson 2010a; Pratt 2012). Economic restructuring has transformed localized symbolic and geopolitical borders and given rise to new ones that limit the viable economic and social futures available to youth. These borders can be conceptualized as mechanisms of structural violence imposed by state and economic policies that disinvest in social reproduction and that wreak havoc on the lives of the socially vulnerable and particularly marginalized young people. This violence is reflected in the transformation of socio-spatial patterns of childhood as youths enter labor markets at younger ages forsaking school, while global restructuring renders local knowledge and pathways of maturation increasingly insufficient (Katz 2001, 2004; Jeffrey and Dyson 2010). Some young people become stuck in an extended or perpetual childhood where the resources necessary to successfully take on the relations and capacities associated with adulthood are no longer available (Ruddick 2003; Swanson 2010a; Jeffrey and Dyson 2010; Jeffrey 2010). This recreates a context for young people, which pushes them into problematically predefined roles while foreclosing upon the mobilities needed to create and imagine different futures.

The destabilization of socio-spatial relations in certain locales that historically characterized childhood and the successful transition into adulthood also act as powerful forces that push youth to increasingly navigate precarious border spaces, where they often confront symbolic, geopolitical, and physical borders (Swanson 2010a). Pratt (2012), for example, examines how state violence perpetuated by Canada's Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), in combination with larger global economic restructuring and Filipino education systems geared to export women as nurses and caregivers, has led to problems for Filipino youth when they migrate to join their LCP mothers in Canada. Their experiences not only involve negotiating changing patterns of migration and unfamiliar urban contexts but the crossing of age-based, racialized, and gendered norms and discourses that have positioned them as out of place in Canadian society. The restructuring of economic and social borders that characterize contemporary globalization and render traditional routes

of maturation no longer tenable in many parts of the world also push children out of place. Children's right to stay put is violated as they struggle to find alternative paths of maturation in spaces that lack material resources (Aitken 2012). Despite the uncertainty, disruption, and violence that accompany children's navigation of new mobilities and border spaces, opportunities and possibilities arise to take on new roles and cross symbolic borders, impacting identity and capacity in the process.

The range of research and approaches used to examine young people's encounters with borders, whether they are geopolitical, economic, institutional, and symbolic, nonetheless share common themes. Research has emphasized that borders can be violent and act as selective and limiting forces that reduce and enable certain possibilities for children and youth (Aitken et al. 2011). Border violence is reflected in reduced mobilities that limit children and young people's agency and capacity to participate in varied relationships. Borders, however, are not structures simply imposed upon youth; rather, they are reworked and transgressed as they are experienced and navigated. Research examining young people's border encounters also emphasizes the agency and creativity of youth (Aitken et al. 2011; Cristou and Spyrou 2012). As children and youth navigate the day-to-day workings of border spaces, they also find ways to challenge and rework the constraints imposed. Young people craft alternative pathways to cross borders and access closed spaces, or find ways to creatively utilize the resources available to them to make do in borderlands. Still, many children and youth are victimized by the layers of violence that become infused in border spaces.

Research that examines children's subjective experiences moving through, transgressing, and manipulating borders has deepened understandings of young people's complex border encounters – encounters that may be concurrently violent and liberating. For example, Helleiner (2007) argues that young people crossing the US-Canada border often reproduce dominant narratives of good citizenship, nationalism, and childhood: At the same time that children's agency is revealed, it both challenges and reinforces dominant constructions. The border acts as a filter for facilitating the mobility of certain expressions of youthfulness and child agency while excluding others deemed unchildlike and threatening. Christou and Spyrou's (2012) study of Greek Cypriot children's experiences crossing a contested border with Turkish Cyprus further exemplifies the tensions and contradictions that characterize children's border encounters. Christou and Spyrou examine Greek children's emotional experiences with place as they moved through a borderland contested since Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974. Young Greek Cypriots' border perspectives were influenced by conflicting discourses on the occupation, the nature of their inter-ethnic encounters, and the ritualized and material processes involved in crossing the border (Fig. 2).

These studies illuminate the need to understand the conflicted, emotive, and creative aspects of young people's engagements with borders that are often embedded in what Pratt calls the "spaces of ordinariness" and banal moments of youth expression (Pratt 2010, p. 343). The violence that borders impose on children and youth is not simply reflected in poor health statistics, poverty, and reduced



Fig. 2 Nicosia's "Green Line" separating Greek Cyprus from the Turkish occupied north (Photo: Aitken)

opportunities for those encountering them, but also in everyday family dramas, emotions, and alienation of young people's experience. As Pratt (2012) points out, focusing too heavily on the widespread and obvious impacts of state violence may obscure the seemingly banal, microscale, and everyday politics through which young people understand, make sense of, and rework borders. Violence is not only imposed on youth through the historic disadvantages and large-scale economic decisions and rationales theorized by Farmer but often manifests itself through "chains of violence" that characterize some children's and youth's daily lives (Auyero et al. 2014, p. 2). The erasure faced by Sam Kaltak is not only a very obvious form of state perpetrated structural violence, it precipitated chains of violence that forced, for example, the humiliation of six zeros on a temporary passport, difficulty finding a job and, later, the ignominy of the UK refugee process. It is in these moments that we readily see the tensions of youthful engagements with borders that often violently push young people into navigating new roles, mobilities, and precarious contexts that may require taking on "unchildlike" behaviors while simultaneously limiting children and youth's access to resources and the spaces needed to imagine and create different futures.

The spatiality of borders is constantly reproduced, moved, and migrated at the intersection of spatial relations that constitute borders. Tensions, conflict, and contradictions are heightened in border spaces as material structures are reinforced, foreclosed upon, creatively manipulated, and transgressed. As youth navigate the power-geometries embedded in their daily lives, they often create new hybridities and modes of cultural expression. Swanson (2010b) illustrates this in her discussion of the oppressive borders intersecting with Aboriginal Canadian youth's everyday lives and their use of social media to build alternative belongings. Social media

allow expressions of positive indigenous identities and create spaces for youth to build connections and networks of belonging that bridge multiple borders.

While border engagements often manifest as productive encounters, they are also very real and must be understood as potentially violent and brutal forces acting upon youth in profoundly disruptive ways – often in ways that leave emotional and psychological scars despite youth resilience and creativity. We argue that structural violence, a relatively neglected concept in children’s border scholarship, has the potential to deepen understandings of the relationship of children and youth to borders by bringing attention to the intersecting manifestations of violence implicated in children and youth’s border encounters. By focusing more on the geographies of border violence, studies of young people’s border encounters can uncover the myriad ways that borders disrupt mobilities and the everyday mobilities employed by youth to transgress and challenge the layers of imposed violence. Borders are fundamentally about creating material divisions, constraining certain movements deemed threatening or out of place, while ordering and enabling others (Martin 2010; Creswell 2010). The empirical examples of young people’s engagements with borders discussed below emphasize that the geographies of border encounters are wrapped up within what Creswell (2010, p. 19) calls a complex “politics of mobility.” These mobility politics are reflected in young people’s navigation within highly regulated border environments and the ways that youth engagement can disrupt this regulation (Helleiner 2007).

Recognizing the interplay between border violence and movement, border encounters can reveal episodes through which youth agency and political engagements become particularly transformative. For example, Bosco and his colleagues’ (2011) study of Hispanic children and women migrant’s involvement in a local advocacy group found that they employed a range of political strategies to propel change in their neighborhood, which transgressed categorical norms of citizenship and participation. Youth often took on unchildlike behaviors – caring for younger siblings, taking on wage labor, and serving as the cultural brokers for parents. Embedded in the spatiality of borders are spaces of uncertainty, precarity, and tension, through which creativity can arise and expressions of difference can emerge.

3.1 A Right to Space Is a Right to Reimagine Borders

The violence of borders expressed on young people’s bodies, identities, and futures can be better mediated through a rights discourse that recognizes the spatiality of children and youth’s engagements. Critical approaches to rights recognize the contingent nature of children’s border crossings in terms of their right to stay put or move as important concepts that can recognize the work youth do in reimagining borders. In terms of the current neoliberal context, the rights of children and young people to participate freely in society and move freely between differing societies and nations are ascertainable only within specific socio-historic and geographic contexts. One of the leading feminist proponents of children’s rights, Mehmooona

Moosa-Mitha (2005) focuses on two axes of recognition. Her first axis establishes the notion of the citizen as an active self, and the second defines the citizen self as a relational, dialogical self, who gains a sense of identity through relationships and dependencies with other people, places, and events. Aitken (2014) notes that geographers add a third axis to this difference-centered approach that recognizes a young person's multiple spatial relations. To the degree that Moosa-Mitha redefines children's rights relationally by examining if children are able to have a presence in the many interactions through which they participate, these relations must also recognize young people's presence through multiple spatial scales (Aitken 2014). By presence, Moosa-Mitha means the degree to which the "voice, contribution and agency of the child is acknowledged" (2005, p. 381). Not to recognize the presence of a political subject is itself a form of violence that limits young people's opportunity to be heard and is one of the primary ways that borders negatively impact children and youth's lives. Presence, as Aitken (2014) points out, acknowledges the self not only as relational and dialogical but also as spatial.

An axis of multiple spatial relations suggests that it is problematic to consider children's rights outside of issues of global consumption, production, and reproduction because, as noted by Katz (2004), in a connected world of flexible capital and instantaneous market adjustments, local places are increasingly important for understanding the contexts of children and youth's well-being. Of course, young people are not simply agents upon which the structure of capital is etched and upon whom rights are delimited as unviable. Children and youth not only pave the way for different futures through the influences of these changing objects, they also bring something of themselves into cultural life as they actively participate in the day-to-day workings of places. Establishing the spatial rights of children and youth may be about difference rather than inclusion within a bordered existence, and positioning young people as relational citizen-selves has the potential to upset seemingly clear bordered spaces. Young people's needs also vary from place to place and their needs for space vary from person to person. So, too, rights should encompass this spatial variability and personal flexibility. The important point is that young people are afforded the right to make and remake bordered spaces and themselves in an ongoing dialectical process (Aitken 2014).

4 Children's Border Encounters

What follows are discussions of young people who have been deeply impacted by borders and are examples gleaned from the disparate work of the authors. These examples are not chosen because they are illustrative, which they are, but because they are ordinary experiences for young people faced with the structural violence of border spaces. Slovenia, Ecuador, and the US/Mexico border spaces provide the geographic contexts of these young people's lives and from which emanate different layers of border violence and youthful agency.

4.1 Slovenia's Bordered and Erased Youth

The struggles of *Izbrisani* (“Erased”) children and youth in Slovenia from the early 1990s to the present day suggests one of the worst human rights abuses in contemporary Europe. Local scholars and activists argue that the *Izbrisani* represents a unique case of structural violence processed through administrative bordering and presented in terms of ethnic and language discrimination and human rights violations (Zorn and Lipovec Čebren 2008; Jalušič and Dedić 2008; Kuhelj 2011). The bulk of Slovenia's erased population was ethnic minorities from Bosnia, Croatia, or Serbia, or they were Slovenian Roma. Many of the erased children were born in Slovenia, but the country's policy of granting citizenship through bloodlines (*jus sanguinis*) preempted the argument of citizenship and legal status through birth rights tied to the land (*jus soli*). A critical geographical perspective on these children's rights and (im)mobilities raises the issue of the ways people are tied to the Slovenian nation at the same time that it reinforces the notion of Slovenian space as fluid, produced, and political.

As of 2009, when the last official statistics were taken, 5,360 of the *Izbrisani* population was enumerated as under 18 years of age (Kogovšek et al. 2010, p. 133). These children and youth were made stateless in a vicious cycle where they had no rights in Slovenia and could not leave the country to collect necessary documentation from elsewhere for fear of being unable to return. Others, like Sam, were stuck outside of the country during the independence process and were barred from reentry. The spatial rights concerns here revolve around objectionable ideas of citizenship because they tie young people not only legally, but geographically, to an idea of statehood. For some, like Sam, the issue is to return to the country they consider home. For others, it is deprivation of legal rights within Slovenia's political boundaries, which serve to lock them in place. Following Pratt's (2012) ideas about fixities, mobilities, and families forced apart, concerns also revolve around the problematic emotional relations within families and communities where some members attain legal status and others are erased with an almost casual and seeming arbitrary violence. In many cases, cousins, and even siblings, were differentiated as either in the country illegitimately or legally based on the whim of an official.

The consequences for a family member losing legal status during the erasure process included not just loss of the possibility of becoming citizens but also the loss of health insurance, loss of employment, no possibility of purchasing an apartment at a noncommercial price, no possibility of schooling beyond the elementary/primary level, and no possibility of legally driving a car or getting married. Freedom of movement was curtailed by fear of deportation and daily exposure to the arbitrary conduct of police officers and bureaucrats. The consequences of erasure sometimes showed up as strictures and rebukes, as detentions and expulsions, or as denial of access to bureaucratic processes. These young people were caught up in state violence that had a systemic effect on their security, their emotional well-being, and their development (Aitken 2014, p. 149).



Fig. 3 Fužine, Ljubljana (Photo: Aitken)

Igor, an erased young person (whose story is published in Kogovšek et al. (2010, pp. 79–81) and retold in Aitken (2014, pp. 149–151)) who was 11 in 1992, relates an upbringing in Fužine, a working-class neighborhood with a large proportion of immigrants to the east of Ljubljana's center, under what he felt was constant police surveillance. Even at this young age, Igor understood the need to remain invisible to the authorities. He would find ways to return to and from elementary school that avoided passing by police cars. For 10 or 11 years, Igor refused invitations to travel to the Croatian and Bosnian coast because he did not have the papers that would enable him to return to his home in Fužine. But this was more than just about going to the coast with friends. When his grandfather died, he was unable to attend the funeral in Bosnia for fear of not being allowed home to Slovenia: "We were locked in this country" (Igor, excerpted from Kogovšek et al. 2010, p. 80) (Fig. 3).

Although it was difficult for many Slovenian children to understand the specific privations that erasure entailed, most understood at some level that they were being singled out. They also understood their context as quite serious and that Slovenian independence had created incongruously hard borders against which they did not know how to push. Some found other paths that led to delinquency and criminality. When he was 11 years of age, Igor waited eagerly for the postman to bring his citizenship papers because his sister got hers automatically when her mother applied. After months he realized that they were not coming, and he started to feel shame and resentment at school and also an unease when walking home past local policemen. In seventh grade he dropped out of school, "replac[ing] the classroom with the basketball ground in front of our apartment complex" (Igor, excerpted from Kogovšek et al. 2010, p. 79).

Like many erased youth in Slovenia, Igor was resilient and found other ways to survive. Igor is now in his 30s. His story was collected as part of an ongoing

ethnographic project at the Ljubljana Peace Institute (Kogovšek et al. 2010). In Spring 2014, at a time when the European Court was compelling Slovenia to award reparations to former erased youth, Igor could not be found. The trauma of growing up with insecurity and constant fear is incomprehensible and unimaginable for most people. This is why children's rights over/through space are so important. Young people are flexible in the face of change and resilient to violence to the degree that they do not readily show or even understand the emotional scars, until later. As children, they bounce back quickly. Sam survived, but at a cost; what happened to Igor is not known.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to speak to the reasons for the Slovenian erasure or to elaborate its continuing impact on families. It is nonetheless an insidious form of structural violence with wide ranging chains that eat deeply into the hearts, minds, and bodies of erased children. Even with the weight of the European Union's Court of Human Rights (see Aitken 2015) leaning on successive Slovenian governments to effect change, and even with laws passed to give *Izbrisani* a path to citizenship, ongoing chains of violence haunt the lives of those who grew up erased. This is why we need to look critically at rights-based approaches. We must recognize that as state violence goes beyond structures, the allocation of rights must also go beyond structures to embrace difference and alterity. Rights discourses must provide a clear path not only to freedom from oppression, tyranny, patriarchy, and so forth but also freedom to live openly, protest the government, get a job, and grow in healthy ways.

4.2 Ecuadorian Young People Traveling Across Borders

Carla, an indigenous girl from the rural Ecuadorian Andes, began working on the streets of Ecuador as a beggar and gum vendor when she was 12 years old. Unable to subsist from the land alone, she and her sisters migrated to the city on weekends and during the summer months to help support their family and pay for their schooling. Eventually, Carla and her sisters began to struggle in the city, as the municipal police cracked down on street vendors in an effort to improve the urban image and attract more tourists to the city. So, at the age of 18, Carla took matters into her own hands; she decided to migrate to New York City. Following the well-worn path of many other Latin American migrants (but a very new path for her indigenous community), Carla made her way up through the Americas on trucks, boats, trains, buses, and cars, not to mention the many kilometers she trekked on foot. The reasons for her journey are deeply entrenched in centuries of structural violence, which have resulted in highly inequitable conditions for indigenous peoples in the Americas. Along with the region's highest levels of poverty, indigenous peoples typically endure lower wages, higher unemployment, lower rates of schooling, higher illiteracy rates, higher school dropout rates, lower life expectancies, higher infant mortality rates, higher levels of child malnutrition, and lower access to important services such as drinking water, sewage, and sanitation

(Hall and Patrinos 2012). It is for all of these reasons that Carla felt that she had to leave her homeland in order to seek out better opportunities.

But at the US/Mexico border, Carla was met with yet another layer of violence, this time in the form of a militarized border zone, which forced her to forge a dangerous and illegal path into the USA. Since 1994, there has been an acceleration of US border militarization. Beginning with Operation Gatekeeper, the US government has invested billions of dollars in fortifying its 3,145-km border with Mexico. The Secure Fence Act of 2006 called for double-layer fencing along 1,126-km of the border to stop both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Across the entire border, the number of border patrol agents has surged to well over 18,000. Meanwhile, popular crossing areas are monitored by radio control towers, infrared video cameras, motion sensors, and, in some regions, drones. Under the proposed comprehensive immigration bill, the number of border patrol agents would increase by 20,000, which would be enough to place an agent along every 1,000 ft of the border (Younglai 2013). This makes for a very impenetrable border for the thousands of young migrants who travel through the Americas to seek out the American Dream. In 2014 alone, the US Border Patrol apprehended and detained more than 68,000 unaccompanied migrant youth who were trying to forge better futures in the USA (USCBP 2014). In the process of crossing the US/Mexico border, these young people also cross, often through violence, multiple identity borders in their effort to reimagine different futures.

Somehow, Carla made it through this militarized zone and found her way to New York City. Yet, there she lives much like the Erased in Slovenia. With no legal status in the USA, she cannot work legally, drive legally, open a bank account, and receive financial aid or health care. She has few rights in America and must live her life underground, rendering her more vulnerable to other layers of economic and often interpersonal expressions of violence. Currently, her best option is to work under the table in a slaughterhouse in Brooklyn, earning low wages in a risky and highly undesirable workplace. But with this money, Carla is reworking borders at home. Gradually, she saves enough money to help her sisters who have stayed behind. With the money she earns, her sisters can finish school, her parents can build a better house, and Carla can forge a new future as an immigrant in America.

Mobility has long been a key survival strategy for indigenous peoples living in the Americas. Yet, with colonialism, the mobility of indigenous peoples became fixed. The nation-state fragmented ancestral territories and community ties to distant places were cut. Indigenous peoples were pushed off key lands and relegated to a patchwork of reserves and remote territories. Lines were drawn to create distinct material and metaphorical borders in indigenous peoples' lives. Given the intense levels of structural violence that have shaped indigenous peoples' lives – from colonialism to imperialism to neoliberalism – they have had to navigate colonial, legal, national, state, ethnic, racial, and cultural boundaries for a long time now. In response to this violence, mobility remains a key survival strategy in many parts of the Americas – albeit one that has more recently become transnational. Rates of indigenous transnational migration are accelerating in the region, largely due to exacerbated conditions of racialized inequality and ongoing structural violence, leading to limited opportunities for young people (Stephens 2007;

Swanson 2013; Torres and Carrasco 2008; Fink 2003). Stephen (2007) frames indigenous border crossings as “transborder” rather than “transnational” because these crossings are always more than national. Instead, they cross multiple borders, both within nations and between them.

The legacy of colonialism has further created a romanticized ideal that fixes indigenous peoples in rural spaces, thus essentializing their connection to place (Radcliffe and Westwood 1996; Orlove 1993). In doing so, indigenous people become “incarcerated” or locked-in-place, effectively erasing their historical mobility and creating challenges for their opportunities to move outside the remnants of historic territory preserved in government trust lands (Watson 2010). Indigenous youth in the Americas who move from rural to urban environments often confront racialized borders that position them as out-of-place (Peters 2011; Swanson 2010a; Forte 2002). As indigenous youth navigate territories both on and off of reserves, they carry the othering narratives of indigenous authenticity with them. These narratives, shaped by centuries of colonial encounters, have been utilized to dispossess indigenous peoples of their land and to set them apart both conceptually and geographically from the spaces of cities, civilization, and modernity (Forte 2002; Peters 2011; Johnson 2013). Inherent in these stereotypes is the idea that to be a “real Indian [is to be] racially unmixed, culturally undiluted, geographically remote, and materially impoverished” (Forte 2002, p. 1).

In the current period of globalization and intense neoliberal reforms, indigenous youth throughout the Americas are using their mobility to rework borders. For instance, among the indigenous Otavaleños of Ecuador, the remittances from transnational migration have allowed for a complete transformation of the community, and migrants have been able to invest in land, business, and infrastructure in ways that the state has not (Meisch 2002). Some have entered into national politics and have garnered powerful political voices in the nation-state. In doing so, they are transgressing borders and redefining what it means to be an indigenous person in the Americas.

As Harvey (2008) argues, the right to space is fundamentally about a right to create and recreate oneself, a process that involves engagement with multiple borders. Indigenous youth struggling to rework indigenous identities across the Americas employ mobility as a key strategy for accessing difference and imagining alternative futures. Their movement across borders is a result of violence, and children and youth endure much violence throughout their journeys. But the right to move allows them to reshape identities and (hopefully) forge better futures. Approaches that recognize the rights of children and youth to rework borders also must acknowledge the materiality of young people’s agency and belongings as fundamental to young people’s survival and forging of difference in borderlands.

4.3 The US/Mexico Border Passes Over and Through Indigenous Youth

If we shift to the US/Mexico border, another story of indigenous mobility and borders plays out. The Kumeyaay people have inhabited the borderland region of

Southern California and Mexico since time immemorial. Southern California is also home to very diverse indigenous communities, including the Luiseño people whose ancestral territory is located just north of the Kumeyaay, and one of the largest urban indigenous communities in the county, which brings together people with indigenous ancestry from across the Americas. While this narrative focuses on the experience of one Kumeyaay woman, the context and processes discussed here are relevant to indigenous communities throughout the Southern California region, as well as many indigenous communities living in settler contexts.

Centuries of Spanish and US colonialism have dispossessed the Kumeyaay of the vast majority of their ancestral territory and led to the loss of indigenous cultural knowledge and resources. In 1848, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo established the US/Mexico border, cutting the ancestral territory of the Kumeyaay in half. Subsequently, the Kumeyaay territory was further restricted with the establishment of 5 reservations in Northern Mexico and 12 reservations in Southern California (Carrico 2008). The US/Mexico border is a violent imposition that eroded this indigenous community's ability to maintain connections to family and territory on opposite sides of the border. This has had profound impacts on indigenous youth and communities that are deemed out-of-place in the spaces that sustained them for thousands of years. As youth spend less time on the land, intergenerational relations and opportunities for the transfer of indigenous knowledge are diminished. Excluded from the spaces that historically maintained their subsistence, many Kumeyaay people have become stuck in cycles of poverty and live on isolated reserves where jobs and material resources are scarce.

The story of Debbie, a young Kumeyaay woman living on one of San Diego County's reservations, while raising her family and attending school, exemplifies some of the challenges that these borders impose. Living on one of the more isolated reservations, there are limited job opportunities available, and unlike some of the neighboring reserves, there are no profitable gaming/gambling operations. The closest grocery store is a half hour drive away, and food insecurity on her reservation is a major issue. Without a solid income or transportation, Debbie and her family have to rely on the commodity foods offered to them by the government based on their low income. In many cases tribal members with jobs do not qualify for subsidized food but remain too poor to provide enough food for their families.

Debbie is determined to get a degree in social work, but this is difficult since her reservation is also located far away from area colleges and universities, and transportation remains limited and expensive. Despite these obstacles, she has enrolled at a community college and is working toward her associate's degree. She plans to eventually transfer to a local 4-year university. Navigating school while supporting her four children is profoundly challenging. With limited family and no partner support to fall back on, she became the main provider for her children during their early youth and was forced to forego college. Debbie made many attempts to reconcile with her partner for the sake of her children and because her tribe emphasizes the value of staying married, but after struggling with domestic violence, she ended her relationship. She continues to raise her children within the isolation of her reservation. Her eldest daughter is in her teens and has had her

first child. Debbie is assisting with the baby, but her daughter and her partner were forced to drop out of high school to care for their son. They do not have a car or job and rely on Debbie for financial support. Debbie relies on subsidized transportation to attend classes and school but this service is only available during selective times and greatly limits her flexibility. Professors, often unfamiliar or unsympathetic to her unique circumstances, are less accommodating of her limited schedule.

Sometimes finishing her education seems like an impossible prospect to Debbie, and when times get particularly hard, she considers dropping out and finding whatever limited work is available to her. The end of semester can be particularly tough; as her student aid runs low, there is not enough money to support her family the way she would like. Still, Debbie remains committed to her degree, despite the borders that render her access to educational and economic opportunities difficult. A degree in social work would help Debbie work for her reservation to counsel youth who may be struggling with issues of addiction, education, and uncertain futures. She worries about the futures available to her own children growing up where drug use, depression, and poor health impact children heavily. Migrating from her reservation to one of San Diego's urban communities would make attending school easier but would also mean increased separation from her family and the tribal cultural institutions that she values. Debbie remains committed to living on the reservation, despite its isolation, as it offers her a connection to her ancestral territory, culture, and indigenous identity. She resents that success in her community often requires moving away from her reservation. She explains, "I personally don't want to leave my tribe, my home, my family, my culture just to 'make it' in society and the consensus among a lot of us is why should we have to?" (Debbie, February 2015). As Debbie's story exemplifies, acknowledging young people's right to space should not just entail a right to mobility but also a right to stay put.

Indigenous youth who do choose to move off the reservation to live, work, or attend school are sometimes seen as leaving behind their indigenous identity – an identity often characterized as immobile and rooted in ancestral territory (Forte 2002). Urban indigenous populations must negotiate othering narratives that essentialize expressions of indigeneity and conceive of their existence in urban space as inherently wrong. Likewise, indigenous youth confront borders to education, which marginalize indigenous knowledge and often frame indigenous youth as out-of-place in Western school settings (Ingen and Halas 2006). Tribes that run gaming operations may also confront what Spilde (1999) terms "Rich Indian Racism," where increasing wealth and power are seen as incompatible with authentic indigeneity. These material and symbolic borders are forces that overlap with the geopolitical border between the US and Mexico to lock Kumeyaay youth into the remote, fragmented, and economically marginal spaces of reserves, while locking them out of the urban spaces and cross-border mobilities required to maintain relations to territory and cross-border Kumeyaay communities.

While these borders impede on Kumeyaay youth's right to space, these youth do not take things passively. Kumeyaay youth find ways to challenge and transgress these borders, articulating new forms of indigeneity in the process.

Kumeyaay youth draw from a wide network of indigenous cultural, service, and rights organizations to access spaces and resources that enable them to connect and celebrate their indigenous identity whether on or off the reservation. These networks connect Kumeyaay youth to San Diego's diverse urban indigenous communities, helping to transgress territorial and identity borders. For example, the youth-driven indigenous social movement *Idle No More* has a regional chapter in San Diego that connects San Diego's indigenous youth to indigenous politics on a global scale, crossing geopolitical and symbolic borders to advocate for common issues, such as decolonization, resource protection, and self-determination.

Gaming is another phenomenon creating new opportunities and challenges for indigenous people, as it provides much needed revenue for investing in local infrastructure, education, cultural institutions, and stipends, which have transformed the power of many tribes within global economic and political systems (Contreras 2006). Within a decade, some tribes have moved out of the poverty that has trapped them for centuries, to become wealthy political and economic forces with strong political lobbies. Many of the Kumeyaay tribes with revenue from gaming now have financial resources to invest in their young people's higher education, develop health and cultural organizations that specifically target the needs of indigenous children and youth, and provide their tribal members with a range of economic opportunities. As indigenous youth access spaces and opportunities that they were formerly excluded from, they craft new modalities of indigeneity that are less rooted in specific spaces and more able to actively negotiate and assert agency in a global, mobile, and hybrid world (de la Cadena and Starn 2007; Forte 2002). Many of these young people now bring experience navigating social, political, and identity borders back to their community and are helping to find new ways to preserve traditions, protect tribal sovereignty, and support community development. Despite the increased resources and opportunities facilitated by gaming, these gains are uneven, and Kumeyaay communities in gaming and non-gaming tribes continue to contend with layered violence that is reflected in the poor health, poverty, violence, and low educational attainment that disproportionately affect their youth. Like Debbie, Kumeyaay youth are often faced with the difficult choice of staying on reservations with scarce opportunities or moving to cities where jobs and resources are more available, but where they become subject to other forms of layered violence that render their presence in the city as out of place.

These three examples of young people encountering borders on three separate continents illustrate both the layers of violence youth experience negotiating border spaces and the creativity and resilience youth employ as they struggle to find ways around and through them. The geopolitical borders separating youth from cross-border relations with families and homeland are implicated in the layers of violence that carry over into Carla's, Debbie's, Sam's, and Igor's everyday lives, exemplified in lost economic opportunities, domestic and interpersonal violence, and the psychological impacts of reduced self-esteem and uncertain belongings. This multilayered border violence is imposed through the constrained mobilities of Slovenian, Ecuadorian, and Native American youth who are excluded from spaces where

their agency could be recognized and extended. At the same time, the stories chronicled here maintain and express agency within border spaces. In some cases, these young people find ways to challenge and rework borders and access alternative spaces to build relations and identities that cross borders. In all three examples, mobility, whether that means the capacity to move or stay put in the face of tremendous pressure to move, is fundamental to youth agency and vital to their survival and success in the face of border violence.

5 Young People's Rights to Reimagine Borders

A right to space is one of the most taken-for-granted and yet least understood aspects of human rights discourses. It is also fundamental to creating opportunities for people to challenge the unequal structures and relations of power that comprise Farmer's (2004a, p. 307) "machinery of oppression." Young people are always moving in, through, and around some kind of border and through that movement become subject to layered geographies of violence. Simultaneously, they are implicated in creating potentially transformative and emancipatory spaces. Children and youth navigating border spaces employ their own mobility to carve out alternative pathways to access spaces, people, ideas, and bodies that are closed to them. But at what cost? Border violence is multilayered, interconnected, and overlapping – young people who successfully find ways in and around border spaces are open to victimization by other layers and chains of violence (e.g., increasingly militarized border patrols, vigilantes, racism, sexual violence, unfair judicial processes). The powerful example of state-imposed violence that moved a border across the Kumeaya, erased thousands of Slovenian youth, and set many more Ecuadorian youth on the move ultimately trapped these young people in geopolitical limbo linked to a complex network of economic, institutional, and interpersonal violence to which they, at different times, fell victim or pushed through - often simultaneously.

It is not enough to assert youth agency and point to their persistence in finding ways to cross, rework, and remain resilient in the face of myriad borders. Recognizing that youth agency is inherently spatial and that youth have presence can mediate the chains of violence discussed here. As Moosa-Mitha (2005) argues, the effectiveness of children's agency is dependent on its presence or the degree to which the agency and contribution of children is acknowledged through the many relationships in which children participate. Asserting youth agency while ignoring that this agency is inherently spatial and shaped by the extent that youth participation and contributions are recognized renders young people potentially more vulnerable to border violence. When Aleksandar Todorović started his hunger strike and political protest that ended up in front of UNICEF headquarters in Ljubljana, it was primarily his representation of 5,360 erased children that got international attention. Prior to this the *Izbrisani* were hidden to the world and to each other. The hue-and-cry on behalf of these young people is that their basic rights are violated and that humanitarian breach is fundamentally spatial.

This breach stunts youth's presence by impeding the mobilities through which their relational agency is extended and heard.

When violence remains invisible, young people often remain more vulnerable. Recognition of youth presence involves attention to dynamics of violence that impose themselves on youth within a bordered landscape and the strategic mobilities youth employ to navigate them. Bringing visibility and presence to the spatiality of borders and agency may aid in mediating other forms of violence (e.g., interpersonal, cultural) permeating the geopolitical borders discussed here. Young people are always involved in reimagining the borders imposed on their everyday lives, but as Moosa-Mitha (2005) argues, youth agency is only as effective as its ability to be heard. Visibility of the border engagement of child migrants, indigenous youth, and erased Slovenian youth may help mediate other forms of violence infused in these border encounters and extend the presence of the already existing efforts of young people to rework borders as their experiences gain more acknowledgment. For Slovenian youth, visibility has helped pave the way for social mobilization that is beginning to hold the state accountable for its act of erasure. For indigenous youth, visibility of physical and symbolic border engagements can challenge the narratives of indigenous essentialism and acknowledge their efforts to foster new modalities of indigenous identity that increase their capacities to engage with multiple modernities and hybrid worlds.

This is not to say that visibility of young people's victimization by borders is always positive. In fact, in some instances visibility of border violence perpetrated against children and youth may render them more vulnerable. For example, the visibility of young migrants crossing the US/Mexico border has the potential to increase their victimization by those who fear rising numbers of immigrant alien "others" in the USA. Instead the authors argue for a categorical right, not for individual youth, but for children as a category, to have the spatiality of border encounters given visibility and presence as their collective experiences and contributions gain acknowledgment. Out of this visibility, border violence may be mediated, hopefully in ways that allow borders to be reworked and reimagined in productive and liberating ways.

6 Conclusions

This chapter reviewed, analyzed and synthesized existing literature on children, youth and borders by focusing on the violence that border encounters often impose on young people. The spatial implications of Moosa-Mitha's (2005) and Harvey's (2008) insights into rights and space particularly informed how youth agency and spatiality cannot be detached from one another when investigating how people of all ages navigate the violence of borders. Three empirical examples drawn from work with youth in Slovenia, Latin America, and along the U. S. /Mexico border informed discussions on the interconnected chains of violence characteristic of border spaces and the agency youth employed as they challenged, transgressed, and reworked the violent circumstances of different border encounters. This chapter

also demonstrated that the violence borders present to young people can be better mediated through a rights discourse that recognizes the ubiquitous spatiality of children and youth's engagements in and through any border reality. Research that makes visible the chains of violence entwined within border spaces, including how youth present successful but also at times unsuccessful challenges, in making and remaking borders is a central ethical imperative researchers on borders and children must confront if the capacities of young people to reimagine border spaces in material and difference-making ways are to be more fully explored, better understood, and actively and politically contributed to and transformed.

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Children and Youth at the Border: Agency, Identity, and Belonging 25

Spyros Spyrou and Miranda Christou

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Abstract

This chapter provides a critical review of existing scholarly work on children, youth, and border spaces by drawing out its emerging themes and preoccupations. More specifically, it deals with research that presents children's and young people's active engagement with borders and which reveals both the role of borders in children's everyday lives and the constitutive role of children in border spaces. The chapter brings together work from the fields of Childhood Studies, Children's Geographies, and Border Studies and argues for a more complex and nuanced consideration of the transformative potential of borders in children's and young people's lives. Through the use of three key themes – bordering, rebordering, and transbordering – the chapter explains why the intersection of these fields is fertile ground for research as it provides unique

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perspectives on concepts such as agency, resistance, identity, and belonging which are relevant both to borders and to children and young people.

Keywords

Children • Youth • Borders • Bordering • Rebordering • Transbordering • Border spaces • Border crossing • Agency

1 Introduction

In the summer of 2014, US newspapers reported that waves of unaccompanied minors from Central America had started to overflow holding facilities along the Mexico-USA border and to overwhelm border authorities who struggled to classify them: should these children be considered illegal immigrants, potential trafficking victims, refugees, or asylum seekers (Semple, *New York Times*, 2014)? Putting aside the causes of this phenomenon or the polarized debates at the political level, this was an incident that highlighted two major issues for social science research: first, the complicated and understudied relationship between young people and borders and second, the lack of children and youth voices in research related to border spaces.

At a time when globalizing forces of human mobility and communication have created the impression of a borderless world, we are facing an indisputable reality: there are more international borders today than ever before (Wilson and Donnan 1998, 2012). Therefore, this fascination with the idea of free transnational movement – which applies selectively to privileged populations with the “right” kind of passport – is constantly contradicted by the development of sophisticated technology for border surveillance in order to capture “illegal” crossings. Children and young people are increasingly becoming active agents in this paradoxical reality. As Spyrou and Christou (2014b, p. 2) have argued in their introduction to *Children and Borders*:

In the 21st century, borders continue to matter and they matter for many children whose lives are intricately entangled with all that borders, literally or metaphorically, stand for: nation, state, identity, community, citizenship, inclusion, belonging and security (and their approximate corollaries: foreignness, difference, threat, fear, exclusion, immigration, and anxiety). They also matter because children and childhood are intricately linked with the power struggles that accompany the processes that give rise to, maintain, and transform borders and their role in the world.

This chapter provides a critical review of existing scholarly work on children, youth, and border spaces by drawing out its emerging themes and preoccupations. In doing so, it brings together work from the fields of Childhood Studies, Children’s Geographies, and Border Studies in order to situate current debates on children’s and youth’s active engagement in and with border spaces. Through the use of three key themes – bordering, rebordering, and transbordering – the authors argue that the

intersection of these fields is fertile ground for research as it offers unique perspectives on concepts such as agency, resistance, identity, and belonging which are relevant both to borders and to children and young people. The chapter treats children and youth as a single category – and uses the terms almost interchangeably – not because it fails to recognize differences in their lived experience or social status but in order to highlight the neglect of “minors” or “underaged” people or younger members of society overall in the development of research agendas that deal with border spaces. Finally, the chapter uses the term “border spaces” to signify the space related to borders in a literal sense – that is, international borders that separate political entities. However, even though the research work presented here is related to international borders, it often oscillates between the literal and symbolic use of the term given that the metaphor of the border as cultural difference is a constitutive aspect of the material sense of the border.

2 Putting Children and Youth on the Map

That children and youth have not figured prominently in the ongoing debates about borders and border spaces should come as no surprise. It has only been recently – in the last three decades – that the area of Childhood Studies developed as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry which sought to highlight children’s active role in the social and cultural worlds in which their lives are embedded (see James and Prout 1990 for a discussion of the paradigmatic shift brought about by this field of study). The “discovery” of children’s agency by Childhood Studies scholars brought with it an intellectual desire for understanding wider social phenomena by accounting for, rather than dismissing, children’s and young people’s active engagement with the worlds surrounding them. This renewed interest in looking at children and young people as social actors brought with it an increased awareness and willingness to document children’s and young people’s engagements with the circumstances and conditions of their lives in time and space. By placing children in historical, social, and cultural context, Childhood Studies scholars, most notably geographers, also began to recognize the significance of accounting for children’s active engagements with borders and border spaces.

This recognition that children and young people are social actors with agency (James and Prout 1990) encouraged the development of research programs and studies which sought to elucidate the role of children and young people in relation to all kinds of social phenomena. Interest in children’s and young people’s engagements with space grew out of this work. This was in parallel with the more explicit concern of human geographers in what is today a flourishing subfield known as Children’s Geographies (see Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b, c; Jones 2008; McKendrick 2000) whose spatial concerns and orientation have, however, reached beyond geography into other disciplines. Numerous studies have documented how children’s and young people’s activities and practices shape and reshape spatial arrangements and relationships (see, e.g., Aitken 1994, 2001, 2008; Aitken

et al. 2008; Hammad 2011; Holloway and Valentine 2000a, b, c; Kraftl et al. 2012; Skelton and Valentine 1998) and reflect the need for “taking children in *all* places and spaces seriously” (Skelton 2009, p. 1432; emphasis in the original).

Along with these developments, the interdisciplinary field of Border Studies has also flourished in the past few decades as a result of increasing interest on the impact of borders at a time when debates about globalization argued for the irrelevance of the bordered nation-state. As Wilson and Donnan (2012, p. 2) explain:

Once principally the focus of geography, the study of territorial, geophysical, political and cultural borders today has become a primary, abiding and growing interest across the scholarly disciplines, and is related to changing scholarly approaches to such key research subjects and objects as the state, nation, sovereignty, citizenship, migration and the overarching forces and practices of globalization.

Although earlier work on borders was limited to the field of anthropology and nationalism, the current research field is represented by a variety of disciplines (geography, political science, sociology, history, law) that have come together to provide diverse perspectives on questions of border management, legality, security, and power. The recent publication of two comprehensive volumes on Border Studies (see Wastl-Walter 2012; Wilson and Donnan 2012) is a testament to the renaissance of Border Studies.

It was only recently, however, that more explicit and systematic attempts at bringing Childhood Studies and Border Studies closer together have materialized in published work on the subject. Two edited volumes stand out. The first, *Young People, Border Spaces and Revolutionary Imaginations* (2011, edited by Aitken, Bosco, Herman, and Swanson), was initially featured as a special issue in *Children's Geographies* (Vol. 8, Issue 4). The volume focuses primarily on the Mexico-USA border and is concerned with how borders of various sorts, both physical and metaphorical, shape children's and young people's identities in the multiple contexts of their lives such as the family, the school, and the marketplace (Aitken and Plows 2010, p. 327). The contributors to the volume are concerned with the revolutionary potential of children's and young people's engagements with border spaces and the resultant identity transformations.

The second volume by Spyrou and Christou (*Children and Borders*, 2014a) attempts to bring the work of Border Studies and Childhood Studies scholars closer together by highlighting parallel trajectories in the development of the two fields and their potential for informing one another. In their introduction to the volume, the editors identify space as a common concern of the two fields together with their interdisciplinary and ethnographic orientations (Spyrou and Christou 2014b, p. 18). Most chapters provide rich ethnographic accounts of children's and young people's engagements with borders and borderlands from a variety of geographical locations and cultural contexts. The authors highlight children's and young people's agency and their ability to make and remake borders and border spaces, but they also pinpoint the constraining power of borders on young people's mobility and potential.

Taken together, these two collections foreground children's and youth's participation in bordering processes and highlight their emerging identities from these engagements. They reflect an anthropological sensitivity to the everyday worlds and practices of children and youth and have a clear "emphasis on how borders are constructed, negotiated and viewed from 'below'" (Wilson and Donnan 2012, p. 8). The following section of this chapter will present a more detailed account of this literature, focusing specifically on the *active engagement* of children and youth with border spaces.

It is important to note, however, that there are numerous studies concerned with the impact of border crossing on children's and young people's lives: children who are adopted (e.g., Simon and Altstein 2000; Volkman 2005), deported (e.g., Brabeck and Xu 2010; Meir et al. 2012), displaced (e.g., Bhabha and Schmidt 2008; Christie 2002, 2003; Lorek et al. 2009), trafficked (e.g., Bhabha 2004; Bokhari 2008; Dottridge 2002; Pearce 2011; Rafferty 2007), or left behind by immigrant parents (e.g., Dreby 2010; Lahaie et al. 2009; Assmuth 2012). Most of these studies explore the consequences of border crossing for young people and even advocate passionately for children's rights and the need for immigration and asylum reform. However, these studies take the existence of the border for granted by assuming that the lines separating political entities are indisputable physical realities, treated as obstacles in children's and youth's lives. More importantly, this research does not always take children's and young people's perspectives into account or may resort to portraying children and young people as victims of their circumstances. This chapter attempts to bring to the forefront emerging research that reveals how borders – even physical, international borders – are socially constructed and mediated by children's and youth's active engagement with border spaces. Therefore, the work presented here explores the productive encounter of young people and borders in ways that reveal both the role of borders in children's everyday lives and the constitutive role of children in border spaces.

3 Bordering Children and Youth

Recent scholarship in Border Studies has challenged assumptions about the fixity and stability of borders, emphasizing instead their processual character: borders are fluid, dynamic, and changing as a result of human activity (Newman 2006; Wilson and Donnan 2012). Rather than being understood as simple lines that separate populations and inscribe national identities, borders are now viewed as spaces of negotiation, exchange, and creation that impact people's physical mobility and shape notions of belonging (Donnan and Wilson 1999, 2010; Rumford 2006; Newman 2006; Donnan 2010; Anderson and O'Dowd 1999). The word "border" is today as much a noun as it is also a verb (Diener and Hagen 2012); thus, debates in Border Studies have shifted to the process of "bordering": "the turn to 'bordering' starts from the assumption that any border [. . .] is a socio-spatially constructed and always dynamic configuration of social relations and networks" (van Houtum 2012, p. 406).

The use of the term “bordering” generates another plausible question: “Who borders?” (Rumford 2006, p. 159). As Rumford (2006, pp. 164–165) points out, “[b]orders can be created, shifted, and deconstructed by a range of actors” and “borderwork is no longer the exclusive preserve of the nation-state.” This chapter focuses on the “bordering” carried out by children and young people: it examines their ordinary and everyday encounters with borders and border spaces and accounts for their role in the maintenance, reproduction, and even contestation of borders. The material presented in this chapter has been categorized under three key terms – bordering, rebordering, and transbordering – that capture the different expressions of these bordering processes. The first category relates to *bordering* by children and youth as this is understood in its basic form: the processes that contribute to the construction and normalization of the border. In *rebordering*, the chapter focuses on how young people question and contest the existence of borders, whereas in *transbordering* attention is shifted to cases when the border is defied, trespassed, or transgressed.

3.1 Bordering

A starting point in understanding the process of bordering is the fact that borders are as much material, physical realities – walls, fences, and barbed wire but also rivers, lakes, and mountain ranges – as they are social constructions that need to be constantly validated and reaffirmed. As Newman (2006, pp. 172–173) argues: “Today, we are more interested in the way that borders are socially constructed (demarcated in the traditional jargon), managed (delimited) and impact our daily life practices in the newly created transition spaces and borderlands (frontier zones) which are in a constant state of flux.” This understanding of borders and their role in social life has contributed to a renewed interest in the concept of the borderland. The notion of the borderland “signals the spatiality of borders themselves” (Rumford 2006, pp. 161–162) and directs our attention to what happens in the areas surrounding the border. As Donnan (2010, p. 254) points out, “[b]orderlands must be understood as a special type of space” which in turn generate particular kinds of relations.

In reference to the literature on children, youth, and border spaces, *bordering* includes ordinary and everyday encounters in cases where the border is accepted by both sides and is not a site of violent conflict. As this section shows, children and young people who grow up and live in borderland regions engage in acts of bordering which, along with adult engagements, help construct, affirm, reproduce, and normalize the border and the spaces surrounding it. Though in most cases, as illustrated by the examples below, bordering involves acts of crossing, this may not always be the case. It is not crossing itself which gives rise to bordering. Rather, bordering refers to children’s and young people’s particular engagements which constitute the border as a result of living in a borderland; accounting for these engagements allows us to see, on the one hand, the role of children and young people in the formation, maintenance, and reproduction of borders in social life and, on the other hand, the impact of borders on their worlds and lives.

This constitutive role of children and young people in bordering their worlds is well illustrated by a number of studies which reflect children's and young people's daily and often routine encounters with borders and border spaces. Trần Thị Hà Lan and Huijismans (2014), for instance, provide an insightful account of the complexities of life in borderland areas through an ethnographic exploration of young, ethnic minority villagers in the remote Lao-Vietnamese borderland area known as Zomia. Their illicit trade activities in wood and wildlife across the border necessitate that they negotiate their understandings of state, nation, and ethnic belonging as they go about their daily lives. Young people's belonging in this peripheral region is intimately linked with their own development and maturation – passing from childhood to adulthood – which brings about their increased participation in transborder ethnic spaces.

This intimate link between identity and belonging on the one hand and borders, border crossings, and border spaces on the other is one which Marques da Silva (2014) also shows in her ethnographic work on young people's memories of growing up in a Portuguese community on the Portuguese-Spanish border, where crossing to the “other side” for shopping or entertainment is integral to one's sense of geographical identity. The community's remote location in relation to the Portuguese capital and its proximity to the border with Spain foster a particular sense of identity and belonging for young people, an identity which reflects the specific historical, political, and social realities of their lives. Though the border and their acts of crossing it are ordinary, everyday features of life, they simultaneously provide them with a meaningful web of relations beyond the limits of the state; their unique sense of identity is only meaningful from within this borderland perspective and as a result of their border-crossing experiences.

The constitutive role of border crossings in shaping childhood and childhood identities is well illustrated in Helleiner's (2007) account of the childhood border-crossing experiences of Canadian borderlanders. Helleiner (2007) shows how children who used to cross the Canada-USA border in the mid-1980s to early 1990s mainly for shopping actively participated in the border economy and contributed in their own way, as children, to the production and reproduction of their childhood identities. Encounters with border officials often reproduced dominant constructions of childhood but at the same time challenged them through the various expressions of their agency, for example, when children were asked to confirm their citizenship or their parents' identity. Moreover, as Helleiner shows, “The retrospective accounts of childhood border experiences demonstrate how the production of childhood intersected with a stratified border to reinforce forms of privilege and exclusion associated with class, citizenship, gender and racial/ethnic positionings” (Helleiner 2007, p. 445).

In a similar vein, Bejarano (2010) also illustrates this entangled relationship between citizenship, belonging, and identity by addressing the “border citizenship” of Mexican immigrant youth who cross from one borderland community in Mexico to another one in the USA to study in college. Their crossings are both literal crossings of borderlands as well as psychological and developmental crossings into adulthood. As these young people cross the physical border, they go through border

inspection points and experience surveillance, interrogations, and racism. They have similar experiences when they cross a variety of metaphorical borders they encounter in relation to their professors, other students, staff, and administrators at school. These experiences help them to develop strategies of transformative resistance that capitalize on their “border rootedness” and their status as “border citizens.” The youth’s constant and dynamic engagement with the border and the borderlands they inhabit both contribute to the social construction of the border as well as their own border identities.

Relaño Pastor (2007) complements and enhances this understanding of border/borderland identities which are rooted in the particular experiences of living in border regions and crossing borders on a regular basis by exploring the identities of *transfronterizo* students who regularly cross the Tijuana-San Diego border to attend private or public schools in San Diego. These students who are legal US citizens (either by birth or naturalization) and who might reside on either side of the border construct identities which are fluid as they cross borders regularly and come across a diversity of others and situations. During the process, they come to identify themselves with a Tijuanaense border-crossing identity (rejecting both a Mexican and a Mexican American identity), thus defying distinct and exclusive ethnic and cultural identifications; their bilingualism and biculturalism and more importantly their border-crossing experiences allow them to belong both “here” and “there.” Though, they do not openly resist or challenge the border, the transnational and transcultural identities they craft for themselves undermine the political power of the border (Relaño Pastor 2007, p. 274), contributing in their own way to both its reproduction and transformation.

Situating children’s and young people’s lives in the borderland contexts of their lives and upbringing helps de-reify stereotypical assumptions of life in the periphery. Hipfl et al. (2003) show, for example, that what it means for young people to live in a border region greatly depends on local socioeconomic conditions, most importantly, job opportunities. Drawing on research in border communities along the Eastern European border, the authors illustrate how young people’s views vary even in greatly marginalized and poor communities where there are strong emotional connections and powerful identity attachments suggesting that young people’s border identities are both complex and fluid. As Diener and Hagen (2012, p. 121) remind us, “Borders are products of the groups they bound, varying in impact and meaning according to individual circumstances.”

Borderlands, as Wilson and Donnan (2012, p. 17) argue, may also be seen “as spaces of struggle between inclusion and exclusion” so that a closer look at children’s and young people’s lives in borderlands may also open up the possibility for studying neglected dimensions of their lives such as their political activism and agency. Focusing on the Latino immigrant families who live along the Mexico-USA border, Bosco (2010) shows, for example, how the children of these families who are American citizens are able to facilitate the political participation of their adult family members who are often faced with serious constraints such as their legal status as undocumented residents or their poor English language skills.

Children's engagement is in this sense constitutive and potentially transformative of the border spaces they inhabit, in which they exercise their agency as political actors.

The liminality and ambiguity of borderlands (Donnan and Wilson 2010, p. 76) may also provide contradictory opportunities for engagement: it may breed uncertainty, ambiguity, and a sense of limitation and constraint, but, at the same time, it may also foster hope, desire, and a sense of optimism for the opportunities it offers. Children's and young people's multiply bordered worlds in such contexts bring to sharp relief the realization that borders, as transitional spaces, are active zones of diverse and divergent engagement. A number of studies highlight this contradictory character of borderland life. Ongay (2010), for instance, analyzes interviews with young people living in the border city of Tijuana in Mexico to point out that the study of youth culture can unveil the dichotomies and uncertainties of living in a border city at a time of globalizing forces that purport to dissolve national boundaries. Young people in Tijuana experience the "double life" of their border city, which is at once poor and "horrible" but also full of potential and opportunity. Some experience the *bordo*/border as imaginary because crossing it is easy; others feel that it provides a challenge for the maintenance of their Mexican identity, while most agree that crossing the border reminds them of the stark differences between Mexico and the USA. Such multiple and contradictory constructions of the border are also reflected in Mendoza Inzunza's and Fernández Huerta's (2010) work which analyzes essays by young people living in the Baja California area of Mexico. On the one hand, young people's essays reveal how "the other side" is seen as the land of opportunity and the act of crossing the border as an opportunity for cultural exchange, while, on the other hand, they show how crossing the border could be a dangerous endeavor that exposes someone to exploitation and violence.

Such imaginary constructions of the border and what lies beyond it, on the "other side," acquire a new significance when children and young people are able to cross a border and visit the place which had been, until then, simply raised in their imagination. As Ahponen (2011) shows, when a group of Finnish students crossed the border that separates Finland from Russia in the Karelia region on a 2-day excursion, they came to redefine their sense of "self" and "others" by reflecting on their own identities, situations, and lives: "To the students, the border between Finland and Russia came across as a border of sociocultural otherness" (Ahponen 2011, p. 156). However, neither direct experience of "others" from border crossings nor the ability to reflect on the character of borders as boundaries which keep people apart is sufficient to overcome their long-lasting persistence in people's minds. Strüver, for instance, shows how the children who watch a theater play about the Dutch-German border (an internal border of the EU which has officially disappeared) end up reproducing the border with their stereotypical and prejudicial interpretations of the play; though the children are able to reflect on the problematic character of borders, they are unable to overcome the borders' divisive and exclusionary characteristics (Strüver 2004, p. 642).

3.2 Rebordering

The contested nature of international borders and young people's engagement with the debates surrounding their legitimacy makes up the theme of *rebordering*. The term itself is more generally used to describe a shift from territorially based border control toward types of policing that aim at keeping out specific groups of "undesirables" (Andreas 2003). In this chapter, however, *rebordering* is used to denote children's and young people's active participation in challenging the presence of borders, questioning their legality or expressing the desire to redraw the borderline. This type of work can be placed within the larger context of Children's Geographies research that looks into children as political actors and examines the concept of young people's agency in relation to larger political problems (Kallio and Häkli 2011; Skelton 2013).

For example, a special issue in the journal *Area* in 2010 explored how children's and youth's mobilities highlight the complexity of issues such as nationality, migration, and asylum. Cahill (2010) presents a youth participatory action research project that emphasizes the need to listen to young people's migration experiences as these can be most eloquently expressed through interviews and art projects. The article by Crawley (2010) poses important questions related to the construction of "childhood" vis-à-vis the "asylum seeker." As the author argues, children's political engagement could be used against them as they may no longer be seen as vulnerable and in need of protection, thus, not seen as eligible for asylum. Although the articles do not directly address the question of how borders are understood and constructed by young people, the issue opens up important questions regarding the interplay between children and politics (see Hopkins and Alexander 2010; Vanderbeck 2008). Overall, this section that examines how children and youth contest or redraw international borders follows Ansell's (2009) call to "upscale" Children's Geographies and move beyond the local, not because the microscale is insignificant but because any transformation of children's lives includes listening to their voices on "big" issues (war, injustice) that are traditionally managed by adults.

Nowhere is this phenomenon more obvious as in the case of countries where borders are disputed, are recognized by one side but not the other, or exist as temporary demarcation lines. Palestinian children's experiences of the roadblocks and walls that separate Israel from the Palestinian occupied territories are a starting point in understanding how one of the most contested and highly visible borderlines in the world is understood by young people. In a study that directly examined the experience of Palestinian children and families, Akesson (2014) used interviews, mapmaking techniques, and GPS-tracked walks with the participants to analyze how they responded to the border practices of occupation (checkpoints and roadblocks) that produce a "matrix of control." The chapter shows how children's everyday encounters with physical, material borders and processes of systematic and oppressive regulation generate invisible limitations in how they envision their future. However, the author argues that if practices of border control limit dreams and hopes, they are also the source of young people's political awareness. In their drawings, for example, children outlined the separation wall and articulated not

only its restricting power but also their own ability to challenge the occupation by staying on their land and continuing to claim their territory. Even though these children and families seem to be “arrested in place,” they are still able to negotiate borders and resist occupation through individual and collective mechanisms of resistance, otherwise known as *sumud*. *Sumud* designates both the struggle to navigate borders and overcome barriers and also Palestinians’ determination to resist by remaining in one’s land.

In a related project, Grinberg (2014) analyzed Israeli representations (a journal article and a film) of the “Children of the Junction”: Palestinian children from the West Bank and East Jerusalem who slip in between the border structures in order to peddle goods, clean windshields, or beg for money. The author argues that through their daily acts of crossing, the Children of the Junction are able to subvert the occupation’s attempts to enforce a complete separation of land and people. They are able to do so because of their status as children – they are not seen by Israelis as a security threat – yet by doing so, they also simultaneously reaffirm the reality and power of the border which, sooner or later, as they grow up, will become a lot more impenetrable. The author’s analysis also raises questions about children’s status as active economic agents for their families given that their subversive acts of crossing challenge well-established “realities”: the power of the border, the reality of the occupation, and also the boundary between childhood and adulthood which, from a Western point of view, establishes childhood as a time for carefree, cheerful, and innocent play.

In both cases, the border is constantly constructed through the enforcement of its selective porosity, but, at the same time, children and young people can redefine and challenge its arbitrary nature. Children’s crossings of the contested Green Line in Cyprus are another case of *rebordering* where the meaning of the “border” is differentially constructed by the two sides (Christou and Spyrou 2014). The island has been divided since 1974 as an aftermath of the Turkish invasion, but the buffer zone running from west to east is seen as a temporary cease-fire line by Greek Cypriots and an international border by Turkish Cypriots. In their research, Christou and Spyrou explore children’s understandings of the border in their family trips to “the other side.” Their chapter illustrates the centrality of borders to children’s lives in situations of conflict and territorially contested areas. The “border” becomes a constitutive element of children’s sense of belonging and crucial to their understandings and definitions of “self” and “others.” For the two groups of children, the “border” marks the past, the present, and the future in diverse ways, a point well reflected in children’s accounts of their place-making practices during their visits to the other side. But, and despite its centrality in children’s identities, in the end, the “border” remains ambiguous, engendering feelings of constraint and injustice as well as feelings of comfort, safety, and security.

In another part of the world where borders have also been a highly contested issue, McKnight and Leonard (2014) use the concept of “bordering in transition” to illustrate how young people in Belfast – a city transitioning from violence to peace – move in space and negotiate the existence of borders. This is an interesting case of

rebordering given that walls and fences are in the process of being eliminated, but, as the authors point out, other symbolic borders are erected. The chapter argues that young people's multilayered subjectivities are reflected in the often contradictory subject positions which they hold drawing on notions of sharing and normalization as well as separation and exclusion. Like youth in other divided communities, young people in Belfast negotiate past and present in their border constructions reflecting the complex interplay between continuity and change; the borders they produce or challenge are part of their ongoing struggles for negotiating a sense of belonging.

Miklavcic (2008) also presents an interesting case of what could be termed as "symbolic rebordering" by youth in the city of Trieste at the Italian-Slovenian border. Taking as illustrative examples, on the one hand, a soccer match between Italy and Slovenia and, on the other, the graffiti on the city's walls, Miklavcic shows how Trieste's contested history (with Italians and Slovenians having oppositional understandings of the past) is reignited and used by young people to construct their imagined communities. A banner carried by Slovenian fans during the soccer match becomes a means of reenacting memories of conflict from the past and contesting the very border on which the city is built and which was demarcated several decades earlier after WWII. Similarly, the graffiti on the city's walls becomes a symbolic means of contesting the presence of others in the city and especially of the Slovenian minority and recent immigrants. In short, Miklavcic's (2008, p. 441) work shows how the meaning of a putatively fixed in space international border is neither given nor static but is constantly shifting because it "is embodied in everyday practices and discourses of the border people" and especially the young.

Finally, there is limited research documenting young people's involvement in the *No Borders* movement. Burrige (2010), for example, has focused on the youth-led calls for abolition of borders and immigration control and critically analyzed a *No Borders* camp that took place in 2007 along the Mexico-USA border. The author argues that these movements exemplify how young people strive to create alternative spaces and discourses of solidarity that go beyond preestablished frameworks of debating issues of citizenship and human rights. Ironically, the article also shows that despite the clear objective toward abolishing borders, the movement split in two along the border and presented tensions with regard to linguistic and class differences, thus ultimately contributing toward re-inscribing power inequalities and borders.

3.3 Transbordering

Transbordering – the third type of process used in this article to describe children's and young people's engagements with borders and border spaces – differs from the other two in that it pinpoints more permanent or longer-term crossing of borders with significant impact on children's and young people's life trajectories, well-being, and identities. Though both *bordering* and *rebordering* may entail crossings

of various sorts and though the stakes may also be high as a result of those processes, in *transbordering* there is a more obvious transformation brought about by the very act of crossing one or more borders in search of a new home and life. This transformation may be reflected in children's and young people's status and identities but also in the social lives of borders which are transformed into particular zones of engagement as a result of children's and young people's crossings.

Transbordering (as compared to the much more frequently used concepts of *transnationalism* and *diaspora*) is not a term that is frequently encountered in either *Children's Geographies* or *Migration* literatures. This chapter argues, however, that it is a term which captures both theoretically and empirically, in a more nuanced manner, the complex experiences of individuals and groups who are called upon to cross not only state borders but also multiple other borders such as cultural, ethnic, social, class, and psychological ones which they confront in their search for a better or more meaningful life. As Irazabal (2014, p. 5) suggests, the term pinpoints the dynamic processes of resistance, adaptation, and negotiation that transbordering subjects engage in when they come across diverse borders and assume multiple positions and identities; in comparison to *transnationalism*, the term *transbordering* then "better alludes to the ongoing transversal, transactional, translational, and at times, transgressive aspects of contemporary behaviors and imaginaries that are incited, enabled, and regulated by the changing logics of states, societies, and capitalism/anticapitalism tensions at different scales at, below, and above the nation-state" (Irazabal 2005; quoted in Irazabal 2014, p. 4). Transbordering highlights the processes of border crossing, resistance, and negotiation which results from an active engagement with both physical and metaphorical borders. The new imaginaries incited by contemporary cross-border mobilities cannot be easily accounted for by traditional accounts of relations between diasporic communities, host societies, and homelands. Transbordering may, as a result, provide potentially more productive understandings of the dynamic and ongoing experiences of migrants, asylum seekers, and others than the perspectives offered by a Diaspora Studies model.

Children and young people may cross borders for different reasons and purposes: for travel and entertainment, to escape harsh economic conditions of life at home, or to run away from violence and oppression. When they cross borders in search of a better life, they are often also motivated by a desire to reinvent their lives (Yuval-Davis and Stetzler 2002, p. 340). As a result of their border crossings, their notions of belonging and citizenship are remade (Diener and Hagen 2012, pp. 82–83). The borders they cross at one level might be physical ones but, at another level, they might also be symbolic or metaphorical. Children's and young people's border crossings may, in such cases, constitute rites of passage, whereby they leave behind "the culturally defined and ordered states of mind and body, if only temporarily" to acquire a new identity (Donnan and Wilson 2010, p. 76).

Much of the relevant literature on children's and young people's *transbordering* explores how the crossing of borders impacts children's and young people's identities and shapes their sense of belonging. But, far from seeing children and

young people as being at the mercy of border restrictions, scholars who work in this line of work explore children's and young people's active and agentic engagement with borders and border spaces. These dynamic processes of engagement with borders are well illustrated by Ensor (2014) who provides a critical account of a South Sudanese refugee gang youth in Cairo, Egypt, to show how these young people position themselves in relation to, and cross, multiple physical, institutional, and imaginary borders and boundaries that they come across in their daily lives. To understand the urban refugee experience of these youth gang members, Ensor argues that we need to pay closer attention to how they relate to these multiple borders of geography and self and to how they come to develop fluid notions of identity and belonging out of the harsh conditions of displacement and social exclusion.

Transbordering, in the context of this work, clearly involves complex processes of identity negotiation and transformation. It is children's engagement with border processes which illustrates not only the transformative power of the border-crossing experience but also the range and limits of their agency. As Jiménez Sedano (2014) shows in her study of children of immigrant parents from the Dominican Republic who live in Spain and who periodically travel back to the Dominican Republic to visit their extended families, the search for an authentic Dominican identity back in the homeland is challenged by the children's own extended families who see in them difference rather than similarity. The very act of crossing international borders to visit the Dominican Republic also entails for these children a transformation in ethnic identity and belonging and reflects the challenges of negotiating diverse experiences and senses of belonging.

In her own work, Swanson (2010) also elaborates on this dynamic engagement of young people with internal or symbolic borders which nevertheless have real and significant consequences on their lives. As she shows, even though indigenous North Americans enjoy a special status and can cross freely the border between Canada and the USA, they nevertheless come across a variety of internal borders – based on gender, race, and ethnicity – which limit their opportunity and prosperity. Despite the constraining power of these internal borders, young indigenous people find ways (e.g., through the use of new media technologies) to rework borders and to “build bridges between communities” (Swanson 2010, p. 429), a theme which is also picked up by Perez (2010) who explores transbordering at a mental level. Perez (2010) shows how the children who participated in a pen pal program between a suburban community in San Diego and a rural artisan community in Oaxaca managed, despite the obstacles posed by parents and administrators, to engage across differences with those who live on “the other side,” to appreciate their cultural identities, and to, partly, overcome in this way the fear of the “others” which serves as a mental border alongside the physical one.

In this recent work, we also find more nuanced, theoretical accounts of the multiple contexts of children's and young people's encounters with borders and how they shed light on the complex and necessarily relational character of their engagements. Thus, Aitken et al. (2014) provide a critical theoretical discussion of unaccompanied minors from South America who cross over from Mexico to the

USA in order to illustrate how young people's lives are embedded in a complex web of global forces which shape their well-being and incite their movement. These young people's border crossings are motivated by the harsh conditions they face at home (structural poverty and state violence among others) as well as the larger global inequalities which impact and constrain their lives in multiple ways. Their *transbordering* entails crossing a variety of relational borders, both physical and symbolic, including among others those between childhood and adulthood, family and community, or nation and globe. Their sense of self emerges out of a desire to become "others" as they are called upon to relate to the multiple borders they come across. What is significant about this work is that it recognizes the constitutive role of children's and young people's border crossing in re-situating boundaries and transforming not only the young people themselves but culture and space as well (see also Aitken 2010; see also Buil and Siegel 2014 for an interesting example of Afghan unaccompanied minors).

The very presence of physical borders and their ability to distinguish "us" from "them" and "haves" from "have nots" creates this desire for "becoming others" by leaving behind one's home and a familiar world in search of a better life. As Diener and Hagen (2012, p. 121) observe, "Rather than simple demarcations of places, borders are manifestations of power in a world marked by significant spatial differences in wealth, rights, mobility, and standards of living." Thus, "For some, the crossing of the border is an option, while for others it is an existential issue" (Newman 2006, p. 178). In that sense, *transbordering* entails different stakes. The marked inequalities manifested through borders often propel movement across them transforming along the way not only those who cross but the very places which they traverse. Children's and young people's illegal crossings constitute a major part of the scholarly concern with *transbordering* especially because the act of illegally crossing international borders shapes children's and young people's identities, life trajectories, and well-being in significant ways. The often harsh realities of children's and young people's struggles with borders highlight their ability to negotiate and resist them while also acknowledging the limits of their agency.

Basu's (2014) account of Bangladeshi children's illegal border crossings to India and of their subsequent arrest illustrates how the very act of crossing transforms them into criminals. Basu's work also illustrates well how childhood and borders come to constitute one another in the ambiguous and contradictory discursive terrain of the Indian legal system. While, on the one hand, the Bangladeshi children who cross the border illegally are seen as "threat," they are also, simultaneously, viewed as being "at risk" and in need of protection. The resulting anxiety of the Indian state over the status of these children reflects the ongoing battles over childhood, rights, and citizenship.

The process of *transbordering* is, in many cases, an inherently, unstable one, especially when children and young people find themselves crossing borders illegally. Their border crossings are not permanent and their precarious living attests to the ever-present dynamics of this process. As Huijsmans and Baker (2012) show in the context of young undocumented migrants doing domestic

work, the very fact of having crossed international borders and working illegally with the threat of being arrested and deported at any time ends up reproducing the border in the everyday lives of these young people.

What Rumford (2006, p. 160) refers to as “the new spatiality of politics” has shifted attention to mobilities and flows which are no longer tied to territorial spaces as is the case, for instance, with virtual communities. A number of studies reflect this concern with crossing symbolic or metaphorical borders, sometimes (but not necessarily) crossing physical ones, as a means to empowering oneself and developing new senses of self and belonging. With the powerful presence and the opportunities for connectedness that the new media technologies afford, children’s and young people’s transbordering also takes on a new form which challenges prevailing meanings of borders, mobility, and belonging. Kim and Dorner (2014), for instance, show how Korean migrant youth in the USA traverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic/racial borders to construct multiple, hybrid identities. The young people’s online identity work which they engage in with dexterity shows how similarity and difference may provide new possibilities for engagement with borders and the reconfiguration of senses of belonging. As a whole, this literature provides productive insights into the processes by which children and young people relate to both physical and metaphorical borders and come to understand and negotiate their border crossings in light of the multiple complexities and challenges of their lives.

4 Conclusions

This chapter explored and presented an emerging area of research that deals with children’s and young people’s active engagement with border spaces. If globalization processes have rendered international borders more porous and at the same time more impenetrable, then this contradictory porosity becomes ever more obvious in the cases where children and youth are active agents in border crossing or maintenance. Whether young people are part of the border’s normalization – *bordering* – and whether they challenge and contest borders – *rebordering* – or attempt to transgress them physically and symbolically – *transbordering* – this chapter has argued that children’s and young people’s perspectives can provide novel insights both for the field of Childhood Studies and the field of Border Studies.

Furthermore, by bringing children and youth into the complicated map of border negotiation, this chapter has raised three basic questions regarding concepts that are central both for Childhood Studies and Border Studies. First, questions of agency and border crossing become more urgent when one considers that determining whether children’s and youth’s movements are voluntary or involuntary challenges ontological definitions of childhood and of human action in general. This is a central issue in Border Studies today, especially when examining migration, asylum seeking, and trafficking. Research exploring their agentic role in such processes (see Barker et al. 2009) reflects larger ideological assumptions about children’s and

young people's passivity or ability to resist the circumstances that surround them. If mobilities and age in childhood and youth are co-constitutive as Barker et al. (2009, p. 7) have argued, then a closer look at the intersection of children's and young people's engagement with borders and border spaces could provide insights into how mobilities and age have a mutually transformative relationship.

Second, children's and youth's border movements complicate notions of legality and security: what does it mean to label children and youth as "illegal" or "dangerous"? How do official age demarcations of childhood/youth and adulthood (i.e., when one is not a "minor" anymore) determine whether border crossing is illegal or threatening? Answers to these questions should explore the intersection between the construction of childhood and the construction of citizenship. To begin with, these are potentially controversial issues that have been somewhat evaded by scholars of Children's Geographies. As Vanderbeck (2008) argues, questions such as voting and drinking ages, the establishment of informed sexual consent in terms of age, or the determination of limits for compulsory education and media access – in short, all issues that force researchers to take a position on what is "good" for children and youth – will probably complicate further debates about children's agency. Furthermore, Crawley's (2010) insight that children who sound "political" or express political ideas may not be seen as children at all and lose the protective status of being granted asylum as vulnerable minors is a stark reminder of the instability and contextual dependence of constructs such as "youth" or "childhood." As Spyrou and Christou (2014, p. 20) have recently argued, the intersection of children and borders reminds us that children can and do challenge and defy borders in ways that are impossible for adults: "It is their status as children which primarily allows them to do so and this means that children's daily encounters with borders are a window into exploring how childhood is constructed and negotiated."

And third, children's perspectives on border crossing reveal that the interplay between crossing physical and symbolic borders challenges not only static definitions of identity but also problematic divisions between Politics (with a capital P) and politics (Skelton 2010). As Skelton (2010, p. 150) argues, "young people through their P/political engagements and actions can in fact perform, articulate and conceptualise a melded and blended *P/politics*; they go beyond the binary and create something potentially politically new." Thus, children and young people's active engagements with borders are a call for a reconsideration of the political in ways that also challenge the scale of Children's Geographies (Ansell 2009). Overall, this chapter has argued for a more complex and nuanced consideration of the transformative potential of borders in children's and young people's lives in the larger discursive and ideological contexts of borders' institutional power.

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Abstract

This chapter examines the autonomous migration of children, and young people under the age of 18 in two border cities, Tangier, in northern Morocco, and Tapachula, on the southern border of Mexico. The world's border regions are paradigmatic spaces and provide the basis for an analysis of the coordination of border regimes, the management of global mobility, and the dynamics of transnational capital. Unaccompanied child migrants are actors articulating new transnational mobility processes. The chapter begins with an analysis of both border regions. The border is regarded not only as a physical element but also as a process within countries, with its legal, procedural, technological, and ideological aspects all taken into account. The intersection between the European and North American migratory regimes and existing legal regimes for the protection of children turns unaccompanied child migrants into ambivalent legal subjects who are at once young people requiring protection and migrants to be controlled. Against the backdrop of this situation, the article examines the mobility processes of these subjects and the vulnerability they

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may experience. It also describes the actors who mobilize to control these subjects and those mobilizing to defend their rights. The article ends with a description of the work being done to defend the rights of child migrants by organizations in the two border cities (the Al Khaima Association in Tangier and the Fray Matías de Córdova Human Rights Centre in Tapachula) and the insights that these groups provide into the international paradigm for child protection through transnational social mediation. The work being done by the two organizations then leads to an examination of how to incorporate mobility into the protection paradigm promoted within the framework of international law and human rights.

Keywords

Border regions • Transnational migration field • Transnational social mediation • Mobility processes

1 Introduction

I left Ghana and it took me something like two months to get to Libya. I went across Burkina Faso and Nigeria. After that, I lived in Libya for about a year. Finally I decided to go to Morocco and I made it to Casablanca. The police arrested me and I spent a whole day under arrest. They deported me to the Algerian border, but I made it back to Casablanca with the help of some friends. The only way to stay under the radar was to go into hiding. I hid in a house for three months. I only went out onto the street three days. I had to move around Morocco like I was invisible; it was the only way to protect myself. After that, I crossed the sea and came to Spain. I'll never forget how frightened I was. Eric, 17. (Alkhaima et al. 2010)

Alicia walked across the border near Rumorosa [a crossing point on the Tecate border in Baja California, Mexico, that is particularly dry and rocky]. She was with the whole group when *la Migra* [a Spanish slang term for the Border Patrol] spotted them. She told me, "I was unlucky, but my mom and dad are going to keep helping me so I can join them. They're in Los Angeles. I grew up with my grandma in Michoacán." I met Alicia in 2007 in the place that the DIF [the Mexican National System for Integral Family Development] has on the San Ysidro border crossing in Tijuana to receive unaccompanied minors. She had been deported after spending twenty-four hours in a detention center in San Diego. She was 15 and very self-assured and concluded, saying: "This time, they didn't fingerprint me, it's the second time I've done it and I'm going to keep trying." (Jiménez and Vacchiano 2011)

The report *Niñez Detenida* [Arrested Childhood] (Ceriani 2012) analyzes the situation of young migrants on the border between Mexico and Guatemala. In 2012, the experts working on the report had already observed an increase in the number of Central American children at this border, above all young people from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador fleeing violence and poverty. Some had come to work in the fields, as street sellers or in domestic service, and went back every year for Christmas. Others crossed Chiapas to be reunified with one or both of their parents in the USA. Two years later, in June 2014, President Obama spoke of a "humanitarian crisis" when the presence of these children at the borders began to receive media attention. Approximately 33,000 Central American young people had been

detained at the US border, and the press covered the situation of collapse in the detention centers, especially in the state of Texas where military installations had to be outfitted to handle the overflow. Some of these children had passed through Tapachula. There they found the *Modelo Siglo XXI* Migrant Holding Center, from which Central American young people detained throughout Mexico are deported to their country. In May 2013, during a visit to the center in Quetzaltenango (Guatemala) to which Guatemalan children are deported from Tapachula, the center workers said that many of the children came from neighboring villages and that they would go back to Tapachula immediately after being deported. The children would then stay there, caught up in a border network that seems to mix control and protection, but where the primary emphasis is on control.

These stories narrate the tales of young people moving across borders. One of the conceptual keys to this chapter is the autonomous migration of children, the subject of study of a chapter in another volume (Jiménez-Alvarez 2015). Autonomous migration is looked at in the context of the border regions of the world (Ribas-Mateos 2011; Cornelius et al. 2004), and the observation and analysis of borders is another key concept. Additionally, borders are analyzed as dynamic processes within countries and not as static barriers in order to examine the ways in which children are controlled and classified (Ribas-Mateos and Laiz 2014). One of the central questions here is the infringement of children's rights. Some of the stories about the young boys and girls that illustrate this chapter occur in Tangier or Tapachula. As with so many other cities in the world where stories like these can be found, Tangier and Tapachula are border cities, one located in southern Mexico in the state of Chiapas and the other in Morocco on the Strait of Gibraltar, the gateway to the Mediterranean Sea. The two cities have several characteristics in common but also differ in some key ways. In any case, this chapter does not set out to compare the cities but rather to understand them as settings (Sassen 1991) for child mobility, both for the children who can call these border regions home and for young people merely passing through them. These border cities are nodes along the world's migratory routes. Tangier and Tapachula serve as two portals to understand the autonomous migration of children between borders, the infringement of their rights, and the active defense carried out on their behalf by some human rights organizations.

Eric and Alicia are representatives of adolescent mobilities (Ribas-Mateos and Laiz 2014). They are children moving separately from their families in an act of autonomous migration (Jiménez-Alvarez 2015). Children have been actors throughout the history of migration (Suárez-Orozco 2003; Salazar 2005), and while child migration is usually analyzed in relation to the migration of families and adults (Orellana et al. 2001), this chapter focuses on the autonomous migration of children, that is, migration that is undertaken on their initiative, in which the family may be present to some degree, but can also be completely absent. This chapter analyzes the autonomous migration of minors as a resemantization of infant-child circulation in the context of postmodernity (Jiménez-Álvarez and Vacchiano 2012; Jacquemin 2009). The concept of child circulation is a very

broad one (Meillasoux 1977; L'Allemand 1993). It can refer to domestic or international migration processes, but also to other child mobility practices, like work or education opportunities, circulation between families, and adoption or fosterage. This chapter views child migration as one of many forms of child circulation, as do other chapters in this book (Jiménez-Álvarez 2015). This chapter takes a closer look at the migration processes of young boys and girls migrating autonomously at two different border regions in the world. Borders in the chapter are not only considered geographical limits but also processes of segregation and classification inside countries that determine access to rights.

Several authors have analyzed the presence of children in border contexts (Spyrou 2014) and different forms of mobility in the contexts of work, war, structural violence, migration, and daily life around a border. Other authors have investigated the meaning of independent migration (Hashim 2006; Whitehead and Hashim 2005; Orellana et al. 2001), placing special emphasis on agency (Huijsmans 2011; Orgocka 2012). This chapter specifically discusses autonomous migration (Suárez-Navaz 2006; Jiménez 2011) in border regions and in the borders that exist within countries.

Autonomous migration is analyzed here by looking at the decisions made by children in the context of the circumstances in which they find themselves and their own resources and distinct objectives. There are three fundamental elements in the construction of this form of migratory autonomy: a particular set of circumstances, resources that come into play in a transnational context, and the children's own objectives. One of the main questions concerns the analysis of the border control of children and the infringement of children's rights. Eric crossing western Africa, Alicia crossing the border separating the north of Mexico from the USA, and the young Guatemalans moving between Quetzaltenango and Tapachula, at the border between Guatemala and Mexico, represent this autonomous migration and the forms of control present in these spaces. They are legally called "unaccompanied minors," the term for children who move around without their families. They can be found in many and varied situations. At times their families have been "left behind" (Jiménez-Álvarez 2015) in the child's country of origin, while some families already live in the countries the children are headed to, but where lawful family reunification is impossible due to legal difficulties.

The border regions of the world form paradigmatic spaces for the analysis of migration policies, global mobility governance, the dynamics of international capital, and the processes of transnational trafficking and violence. The Mediterranean and US-Mexico borders are often compared. On the one hand, the border dividing northern Mexico from the southern USA is regularly cited as a paradigm of control. On the other hand, the Mediterranean is often depicted as one of the most unequal border regions in the world (Ribas-Mateos 2011). Without question, certain processes in these border regions provide a unique understanding of global geostrategy and socioeconomic and political relations in the world system (Wallerstein 1998). A focused analysis on the borders and the mobility of people highlights certain processes that are similar in both regions. The first is the preeminence of border

fortification and control. The second is the way in which this logic of control is being externalized to countries such as Mexico and Morocco.

2 Mobility and Borders

This section describes the border processes that are deployed by governments/authorities, which construct children who migrate autonomously into “uncomfortable” subjects according to the logic of migration control. These border processes are compared from four perspectives (legal, executive, material, and ideological), focusing on two regions in the world and two particular border cities, Tangier and Tapachula, as spaces where the mobility of these children is particularly visible.

Tangier and Tapachula are two cities that represent border spaces. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, controlling the border has been prioritized over managing the mobility of people at the borders of the European Union and USA (Cornelius et al. 2004). These borders are not only physical. They are also processes that are implemented in the territories that apply mechanisms of classification to determine access to certain rights. These border processes can be analyzed from four perspectives: legislative, executive (policies), material (control technologies), and ideological (the legitimation of the creation of the categories that determine access to rights). This reading of borders as a dynamic process arose from the union of border theory and transnationalism (Basch et al. 1994; Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004, 2008; Portes 2005; Waldinger and David 2004), drawing specifically on the concept of a transnational migration field (Faist 2005; Goldring 1999; Pries 2008), understood as an analytical metaphor (Suárez 2007). This analytical metaphor makes it possible to analyze the capillarity of power and how its forms of governance control the different forms of mobility of people and capital. Frontiers, therefore, are not only physical but also legislative, executive, technological, and ideological.

Between October 2013 and May 2014, US Customs and Border Protection detained around 52,000 unaccompanied minors at the southern US border, especially in Texas. Nearly one third were Mexican children, who were automatically deported back to Mexico under general deportation agreements signed between the two states. Some organizations have drawn attention to the limitations of these agreements, which do not protect Mexican children (Catholic Relief Services 2009; Sin Fronteras 2010; Appleseed 2011). The rest were children from Central America, mainly Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, who, according to UNHCR, were possibly deserving of international protection or asylum as individuals fleeing various forms of violence, including *Mara* (gang) violence, intrafamily violence, and sexual or institutional violence (UNHCR 2014; Casa Alianza 2012; Ceriani 2012). These children could not be automatically deported before being brought before a judge since the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 stipulates that a judge must decide whether or not a child deserves protection.

The presence of unaccompanied minors was not something new in the USA (Chavez and Menjívar 2010), and neither was the call to attention from international organizations and experts regarding the infringement of children's rights (Bhabha and Schmidt (2006); Human Rights Watch (1997); Women's Refugee Commission 2009; Vera 2012). However, the arrival of these young people was extensively covered by the media, giving the impression that it was a new phenomenon. Different media outlets published photos of the detention facilities where the youngsters were waiting, accompanied by images of children crammed into small spaces sitting on mattresses tossed onto the floor, their faces filled with uncertainty. Additional space had to be found in military bases in California, Texas, and Oklahoma and economic resources mobilized to expedite court procedures. President Obama spoke of a humanitarian crisis and sent a clear message that all of the children would be deported despite warnings from different groups in the USA, Mexico, and Central America (American Immigration Council 2014a, b; USCRI 2014) that these were children deserving of protection. Above all, these young people highlighted the fact that the border between the USA and Mexico is a dynamic process where legal, political, technological, and ideological facets all come into play, as well as almost 2,000 miles of fortified physical border.

From a legal perspective, the border creates classifications where some children, like Mexican children (the largest group of unaccompanied minors to enter the USA), are deported expeditiously, while other others are not, at least automatically. The law operates like a classification mechanism that limits, for example, the right of Mexican young people to seek asylum. Moreover, the political border reveals how the application of these laws is always modulated by political decisions (Motomura 2014). The case of these young boys and girls generated a debate about President Obama's political leeway regarding the deportation of children and limitations to the application of the law. This debate also arose with respect to the application of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program introduced by Obama in August 2012, which suspends the deportations of young people under the age of 31 who entered the country irregularly before age 16, the so-called dreamers, because of the dream implicit in being able to live legally in the country and have a set of recognized fundamental rights. The border is also a network of material resources (fencing, radars, cameras) and personnel specializing in control, as the stories of these young people illustrate. Finally, the border's ideological facet legitimizes or delegitimizes access to protection available to these young boys and girls.

The young boys and girls who cross the Mediterranean border alone also talk about the fortified sea and land. The arrival of unaccompanied minors autonomously migrating to Europe is not a new or fleeting phenomenon (Jiménez 2015). During the so-called Arab Spring, the migration of unaccompanied minors crossing European borders also became visible. The number of migrants and refugees who move in south-south mobility processes outside the European Union or between southern and eastern Mediterranean countries is higher than the number of migrants and refugees trying to reach the European Union (Fargues and Fandrich 2012). According to UNHRC, in 2014 almost four million Syrian refugees reached Jordan,

Turkey, and Lebanon, while the number of Syrian refugees in Europe was below 200,000. The media covering Europe also spoke of an “avalanche,” and European Union policy was oriented toward strengthening migration control (European Commission 2011). Asylum policies were very limited. Europe continued to be a fortress (De Lucas 1996).

Young migrants who reach the European Union without their parents or a guardian can find themselves in a variety of situations. They are mainly boys, although there are some girls, who usually encounter more precarious situations. They come from different countries (primarily Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea, and Nigeria). They also have very different profiles and life stories, diverse in age though they are most commonly between 15 and 17 – and have different motivations. To make matters worse, there are no reliable statistics. Regarding children who seek asylum, according to the European Commission (2012), in 2011, 12,225 requests for asylum were received in the 27 member states of the European Union. Sweden and Germany received the highest number of asylum requests from young people in 2011, with Sweden receiving 2,655 and Germany 2,125. Most of these young boys and girls had come from Afghanistan or Iraq.

While not all the unaccompanied minors who reach the EU are eligible for asylum, they are deserving of protection in some countries like Italy and Spain, where they cannot be expelled, but must be accommodated in the same conditions as minor citizens. Children who are not fleeing a war – such as those from North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia) – are more problematic when it comes to receiving protection and being counted. According to the European Commission (2012), there is little data on the movement of these young boys and girls in the absence of a registration system in the European Union. In 2011, the different EU countries issued 4,406 residence permits to unaccompanied minors with this profile, i.e., they were ineligible for asylum. Italy and Spain granted the highest number of residence authorizations to this group in 2011, 2,278 and 819, respectively. Most of these young people were from Morocco. Taking them in is problematic due to the tension between their condition as minors to be protected – because they arrive alone – and migrants reaching the country irregularly, which makes them objects to be controlled.

The borders in the European Union are also more than mere physical barriers impeding access to the land, and its legal procedures reflect this fact. In the European Union, the legal facet of borders and regulations concerning unaccompanied minors trying to cross them reveal tensions between different laws in different member states. The factors at play in this tension include laws on aliens and child protection in each individual state, European Community law (e.g., the Return Directive), and international law focused on protecting human rights, epitomized by the Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by all the European countries (although some did so with reservations about migrant children). Because of the contradictions between judicial bodies – and especially between the laws that protect the rights of children and those that control migration – these children are susceptible to institutional abuse. The executive or political facet of the border question determines other aspects of how they are treated, two

examples being the 2009 Stockholm Program and the Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors. The latter program divides unaccompanied minors into different categories based on whether they are fleeing poverty, are seeking asylum, and/or are victims of abuse deserving of international protection. In the Mediterranean, children and young people also risk their lives trying to cross the sea and must confront fences, security systems, and biometric controls. Control technologies are, thus, the physical expression of the border, against which young people often only have their naked bodies (Agamben 1998). Unaccompanied minors migrating to Europe have also been described as the “most inconvenient minors,” which often exposes them to criminalization or victimization. The different terms used to describe them, such as “stinkers” and “little delinquents,” signal the construction of the “dangerous minor” whose right to receive protection is challenged. Moreover, the treatment meted out to them in some institutions consistently raises questions about their rights. This is the ideological border.

In this network, a second important process is the externalization of control to intermediate countries like Mexico in the case of the USA and the Maghreb and Turkey with the European Union. These intermediate countries have come to play the role of guardian in the domain of political interests. According to Pisarello and Aparicio (2006), externalizing the borders makes other countries responsible for migration control. They explain how externalization is structured around four main axes: (a) refusing entry to people, (b) reinforcing control in transit countries, (c) intercepting migrants before they arrive, and (d) readmission agreements.

As part of this process, Mexico and Morocco have developed legal borders, for example, their own laws on aliens. These laws act on three levels: they are used to control the migration of their own nationals (bearing in mind that a fundamental part of the economy of both Morocco and Mexico depends on migrant remittances); they have to control foreigners coming from neighboring countries (West and Central Africa or Central America) who are in transit; and they have to manage the reality that these countries have also become host countries. These laws often contradict the human rights regime of international law. In the case of unaccompanied minors, this tension is paradigmatic. While all of these countries are signatories of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, human rights organizations have observed that the rights of migrant children in transit are constantly infringed and violence and institutional abuse are rife. It is not only the legal border that has been externalized. In Mexico and Morocco, policies on migrant control are often placed above the protection of migrants' rights. There is also a myriad of externalized control technologies on their territory (fences, border police, deportation, and detention centers) and an ideological border that permits the systematic infringement of rights.

One final important factor in this consideration is that both Mexico and the Maghreb are regions that live off their economic and geostrategic interdependence with the neighboring countries they are called upon to control. Economic activity in both regions is expanding, and the logic of mobility there forms part of their prosperity, something reflected in different political agreements. West Africa has the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which has permitted

free movement among 15 countries since 1975 without a passport or visa (the sole requirement is an identity document). Since 2006, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua have been signatories of the Central America-4 (CA-4) Border Control Agreement, while the Central American Integration System (SICA) has streamlined regional integration processes.

3 **Tangier and Tapachula as Case Studies of Autonomous Child Migration**

The two cities of Tangier and Tapachula, then, are located in two different regions in the world engaged in processes of cross-border relocation. One of the material expressions of the logic of migration control and the relocation process can be seen in the deportation centers and holding centers for foreigners. At both borders, foreign unaccompanied minors are the group of migrants which provide the clearest example of the crystallization of the dynamics of control and the infringement of rights, despite being relatively unimportant in terms of numbers.

Tangier, which has been called the “gateway to Europe” (Ribas-Mateos 2005), is located on the westernmost corner of the Mediterranean region on the Strait of Gibraltar in the Tangier-Tetouan border zone. According to the *Recensement général de population de l'habitat* (2004) census, the region has a population of two and a half million, of whom one and a half million live in urban areas. Since the early 1970s, the region has been a reception area in the relocation of production in the Mediterranean, especially in the textile, automobile, and food-processing sectors. This relocation process has made Tangier the second largest industrial center in Morocco after Casablanca. With the construction of the strategically positioned Tanger-Med Port, the region's economy has been stimulated and the road and rail infrastructure improved. Since the mid-twentieth century, Tangier has been the destination for the rural exodus from the Rif and other points in the region. The process of the relocation of international capital and the need for workers in internationalized companies has sustained this rural exodus up to the present time.

The Tangier-Tetouan region is also the area that has traditionally sent Moroccan workers abroad, mainly to Spain, France, and Belgium (López García 1996). Because of its past status as an international city, Tangier has also received Europeans, with the largest community being Spaniards, followed by French and Italians. Finally, due to its geographic position on the Strait of Gibraltar, 56 miles from Ceuta (a Spanish enclave on African land), it is a crossroads and transit city, both for Moroccans and for people from West Africa, mainly Senegal, Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Tangier is one of numerous Moroccan cities involved in the European Union border relocation process. Studies from various associations (GADEM 2007; MSF 2010) have reported on the extremely difficult living conditions for migrants seeking asylum and taking refuge in Morocco. Tangier is a waiting point for migrants trying to cross the Strait, and the women and children caught up in trafficking networks there are particularly vulnerable (WWL 2008). According to

the investigation done by Al Khaima et al. (2010), unaccompanied minors and adolescents from West and Central Africa in Morocco can find themselves in various situations: as refugees or asylum seekers; as victims of trafficking networks; as young people beginning the journey accompanied by an adult, family member, or relative; and as children beginning the journey alone or accompanied by other young people. The difficulties experienced by Moroccan minors who are “potential migrants” are related to discretionary access to education, health, leisure activities, and documentation. Another adversity is violence, which is especially common among foreign girls and young women, and the violence that both Moroccan minors who want to migrate and foreign minors experience in border areas. The hypervisibility of Moroccan children in Europe contrasts with the invisibility of young sub-Saharan boys and girls in Morocco, who are excluded as beneficiaries of the legal advances being made in Morocco with regard to the protection of children. They are also excluded from the different projects being implemented in that country by foreign organizations for migrant children, which are largely aimed at returning them and preventing migration.

Tangier is also the hometown for the highest number of unaccompanied Moroccan minors in European protection systems in addition to being the crossing point for Moroccan youngsters from other parts of the country. Most of these children are boys between 11 and 17 years old with a history of truancy and academic failure, followed by early unstable and discouraging work experiences and few expectations for the future. Most young people migrate to “have a better life” and “earn a living.” For them, migration is a form of promotion. Girls usually migrate with the assistance of their families, while boys become visible in the ports (Vacchiano and Jiménez 2012), risking their lives in their attempt to cross the border, hiding in trucks carrying merchandise, under tourist buses or as stowaways in boats. Numerous articles in the Moroccan and, especially, international press have reported on this phenomenon. When studying this kind of migration, some journalists have identified irresponsible parents, while others merely see adventurous young people. However, these migrating children have their own circumstances, objectives, and resources (Jiménez 2015).

Tapachula is located in the state of Chiapas, Mexico, in the Soconusco region. The southern border of Mexico is made up of four states: Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, and Quintana Roo which form the border with Guatemala and Belize. Tapachula is the southeastern-most city in the Soconusco region. It has its own tradition of cross-border labor mobility (Ceriani 2012), with numerous Guatemalan laborers working in agriculture in the region. In the 1970s and 1980s, refugees from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador all settled there. The Central American migrants going to the USA cross this region on their way, although some end up staying there. This border dynamic also includes young boys, girls, and adolescents who are trying to make their way across the borders for various reasons. According to the latest study by the Fray Matías de Córdova Human Rights Centre (Ceriani 2012), these young migrants have three distinguishable profiles: Mexican children migrating alone to the USA, usually to reunite with a family member, often a parent, and two groups of Central American youngsters being held in the Modelo

Siglo XXI Migrant Holding Center (part of the National Institute for Migration) and the DIF shelter in Chiapas. The first contains children working in the city of Tapachula as street sellers, in domestic service or in agriculture, while the second is made up of children passing through Chiapas on their way to the USA, either in search of a family member or trying to escape from violent situations of different types.

Even without drawing detailed comparisons between the two cities, one difference between them is quite clear. Most Central American and Mexican children migrating to the USA are unaccompanied because their fathers and mothers migrated north years earlier. Their parents reached the USA and work there, but they have found it impossible to become regularized or find the legal channels that would allow them to reunite with their children. This is why migration reform in the USA is more necessary now than ever and explains why children have been arriving at the Mexico-US border for years. They were left behind. Migrating on their own is the alternative that they have constructed, paying an extremely high price in the process. Fears about taking control of this situation have only resulted in violence and the further infringement of their rights. In the Mediterranean, migration by unaccompanied minors combines migration for family reunification, migration to escape conflict, and migration as a form of promotion. In this region, in countries like Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, it is the families who are left behind by the unaccompanied migration of adolescents. Most young people migrating autonomously are not trying to reunite with their families in Europe. They are leading the way in their own mobility process, while their families stay behind in the home country. The migration of these children is a way of “contributing” to the family economy. Their reasons for migrating may include helping the family and saving their parents. They themselves begin this process of mobility, which is facilitated by the fact that they are children; in this case dependency is a resource that opens the door to child assistance systems in Europe (Jiménez-Alvarez 2015).

4 Inconvenient Mobility

It is possible to find stories about children and adolescents moving around without their parents or other adults throughout the history of human mobility. However, in the contemporary context, the migration of young people has caught the attention of researchers and human rights organizations for two reasons. The zeal for border control is increasing in the world. Young migrants are putting a strain on control systems because they are simultaneously young people requiring protection and migrants to be controlled. Border control is challenged by child protection, generating a wide range of institutional abuses. However, at the same time, since the mid-twentieth century, there has been a consensus about the construction of children as subjects with rights deserving of a specific type of protection because of their age. This consensus has produced international institutions and forms of governance focused on defending the best interests of children. The maps included



Fig. 1 Map of routes taken by minors in Morocco, some passing through Tangier (Ibn Sbihi and Jiménez-Álvarez)

here illustrate the routes taken by some of the children and adolescents illustrated ethnographically in this chapter (see Figs. 1 and 2).

Some authors have observed that these children and adolescents constitute a new migration agent (Suarez 2006) and have inaugurated “new ways to move.” This refers to the routes that some youngsters follow as they cross different borders and countries and are exposed to different forms of violence, extortion, and violation. It also refers to a new way to move related to the fact that migration creates a form of social transgression that challenges gender and generational relationships within the family. Furthermore, the mobility of children across Europe is related to institutional abuse and the infringement of rights. Many young people use



Fig. 2 Map of routes taken by some minors in Mexico, some passing through Tapachula (Ibn Sbih and Jiménez-Álvarez)

movement as a strategy or a way to escape from situations in which they are not protected. The situations in which children's rights are most often infringed in both border regions are (Alkhaïma et al. (2010); American Immigration Council (2014a, b); Appleseed (2011); Bhabha and Schmidt (2006); Catholic Relief Services (2009); Casa Alianza (2012); Ceriani, P. (Coord) (2012); Human Rights Watch (1997), Jiménez- Álvarez and Vacchiano (2011), (2012); Sin Fronteras (2010) Women's Refugee Commission (2009)):

- A lack of access to protective measures suitable to their age and needs
- Abuse from security forces
- Abuse and extortion from traffickers
- The lack of enforcement of the right to be heard in procedures affecting them
- Arbitrary detention without procedural guarantees
- A lack of translators and lack of understanding of the procedures affecting them
- The lack of legal defense (effective judicial protection)
- Schooling limitations (either they are not schooled because they are foreigners or they receive classes in temporary stay centers, but do not attend school)
- An inability to contact their families and lack of respect for the right to live together as a family
- Deportation without procedural guarantees
- Ineligibility to seek asylum
- The violation of their physical integrity and sexual abuse
- Abusive application of tests to determine age (they are minors, but since bone tests – which have a margin of error of 18 months – prevail, they are excluded

from protection systems, despite having documentation showing they are minors)

- Deficient consular services
- Victimization from labor or sex exploitation trafficking networks

This tension between rights and practice reveals how the rights of migrating children and adolescents are constantly being challenged for the sake of migration control, due to their dual status as minors to be protected and migrants to be controlled (Jiménez- Álvarez and Vacchiano 2011, 2012).

At the end of 2009, Terres de Hommes (2009) published a report on the situation in Spain, France, Belgium, and Switzerland for young migrants who had passed through some kind of protection service and ended up leaving it. The report observed that there are no statistics on the number of children who have disappeared from social services. Neither was it possible to discover the number whom social services never reached. This mobility was silenced in the interest of classifying these movements as “flights” or “escapes,” without considering how this behavior might be evidence of a gap between protection resources and young people’s need for or expectation of protection. One of the report’s conclusions emphasized a general laxness in the protection offered unaccompanied minors in the four countries studied. Without question, the fact that an indeterminate number of young people disappear after first making contact with the social services in different European countries is disturbing. Although the Terres de Hommes’ (2009) report is limited to the European context, other reports on Mexico and the USA also speak of young people disappearing from social services. The territorial aspect of protection systems becomes strained when confronted with the mobility strategies of migrating children and young people. The logic of child protection is linked to the institutions that offer it in a country. The question then arises: should a protection paradigm based on territorial jurisdiction be reformulated when considering active ways to protect migrant children and adolescents?

Transnational social mediation is a concept under construction that arose in the context of a networking project between various organizations in Spain and Morocco designed to defend the rights of young migrants beyond borders. The idea consists of constructing a transnational psychosocial-educational context linking families, the voluntary sector, public institutions, and young people. The main orientation is to accompany the migration process without criminalizing it, the children, or their families, to search for a frame of reference for young migrants, and to make the family, public institutions, and associations responsible for their role in the protection of children. The formulation of transnational social mediation is based on a set of prior three suppositions.

This first is a commitment to a conception of transnational migration. Perceptions about migration processes led by so-called unaccompanied minors are often hijacked by a territorially limited view of child protection systems which has given migrant children visibility and determined the type of intervention to be used with them (control, protection, deportation). The institutions that work with young people (public administrations, guardianship groups, volunteer associations) have

all focused on the part of the migration process that develops spatially in the specific territory where these institutions operate. Transnational social mediation argues for a holistic view of the migration process, a socio-educational intervention that incorporates the family (and not only for the purposes of repatriation or deportation), and the process of life, instead of dismantling the family into individuals according to some political construction. In this respect, the transnational perspective provides theoretical and methodological support for the intervention. The second is a commitment to an inclusive dimension of intervention with young migrants from the general perspective of protecting the rights of all young people, thus avoiding the perverse effect of converting interventions with migrant children into the promotion of migration per se. The third is that social mediation challenges actions designed to prevent the migration of children, most of which are applied as a way of dissuading migration, and is committed to understanding and accompanying migration processes from the perspective of the defense of rights.

Three elements are key in transnational social mediation: networking and creating transnational protection networks; working with young people and their families in synchronicity; and training professionals using a transnational perspective. One example of this transnational networking process is the Al Khaima Association, an organization created in Tangier in 2007 after a meeting between a group of people and organizations working on migration and child protection. Transnationalism inspired both the working and activism methods (Portes 2005) used to fight the expulsions of Moroccan children that took place between 2005 and 2008 from Spain to Morocco without procedural guarantees. The association's history actually began years earlier, when this group of people began to understand the complexity of the situations in which young migrants find themselves in Europe and the need for transnational mediation between different countries. Bridges had to be built. First, new users were coming into the institutional system to receive child migrants, challenging the profile of children requiring guardianship at that time. Moreover, professionals working in child protection did not understand the complexity of migration processes, while families of young migrants were equally uninformed about the situation in Europe.

The Al Khaima Association began to work beyond Mediterranean borders. After a meeting with the Fray Matías de Córdoba Human Rights Centre (CDH Fray Matías) in Tapachula, the associations embarked upon a joint project to defend the rights of unaccompanied child and adolescent migrants in an effective way. The CDH Fray Matías is a human rights association that has been working for more than 15 years to promote, disseminate, and defend the human rights of migrants, refugees, refuge seekers, and their families. In 2012, they focused their attention on the young migrants being detained in the Modelo Siglo XXI Migrant Holding Center and carried out an investigation that spotlighted the situation of these Central American children and the infringement of their rights. The meeting between the two organizations generated joint reflections on the processes affecting child migrants in Tangier and Tapachula. Both groups are currently working to defend rights from a transnational perspective and are committed to creating a child protection paradigm that incorporates mobility.

5 Conclusion

Three principal conclusions can be drawn from the examination of autonomous migration in this chapter. The first concerns how borders and border regions highlight the preeminence of a securitarian perspective over human rights, even when children are crossing them. Migrating children and adolescents who become visible at these borders undergo a process of stigmatization and criminalization because their migration strikes at the heart of global security questions. Borders are spaces where these minors are visible. Within the countries themselves, other tensions appear between the rights of migrating minors and the practices enforced by states, which are not always visible. Children and adolescents who move alone are witnesses to the ferocity and preeminence of securitarian logics.

The second conclusion focuses on mobility. Mobility becomes a strategy to deal with the state's institutional reception systems. The territoriality of protection systems is called into question by the mobility strategies of young migrants. The logic of protecting children becomes linked to the institutions that operate in a country. This chapter argues that it is necessary to reformulate national protection paradigms designed to protect migrating children and adolescents, along the lines of transnational social mediation. Children who migrate autonomously form a group which may be of little significance quantitatively, but who, from a qualitative point of view, provide the best opportunity to understand how the dynamics of control that infringe upon migrant rights – whether adults or children – crystallize.

The final conclusion regards violence. The commitment of those who defend the rights of migrants, both minors and adults, is fundamental if these violent situations are to be visibilized and a voice given to minors. Two defenders of minors presented in this chapter, the Al Khaima Association and the Fray Matías de Córdoba Human Rights Centre, provide an example of going beyond the politics of compassion to fight for the defense of human rights. Merely increasing awareness about the situations of violence experienced by these migrant minors is not sufficient; it is necessary to do so from a perspective of defending rights and respecting their dignity. Moreover, it is important not to victimize or criminalize migrant children when telling these stories, but rather to carefully analyze the structural causes of border violence. This chapter has presented an analysis of these structural causes in two border regions to understand the mobility of these children that so inconveniences migration control and to underscore the work to defend their rights being done by organizations that are helping to make their small voices heard.

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