

NYRIS 2026
Book of Abstracts

Young people's political participation

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Young people's political participation

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:22, Where: Lecture hall 8

"Filthy Fidesz Summer": Chanting, Affect and Political Participation

General

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Abstract text: Anti-government chanting—most prominently the slogan “*Filthy Fidesz!*”—became a recurring feature of Hungarian music festivals and concerts in the summer of 2025. This presentation examines how young people interpret and evaluate this practice, and to what extent they regard chanting as a meaningful form of political participation.

The presentation combines theoretical reflection with empirical analysis. Conceptually, it situates chanting at the intersection of protestivals and the festivalization of culture, arguing that contemporary music events increasingly function as spaces where political expression is embedded in collective, affective, and playful practices rather than organized protest. From this perspective, chanting operates less as instrumental participation and more as a carnivalesque form of political communication.

Empirically, the study draws on an exploratory mixed-methods design. A quantitative survey of university students in the social sciences (N = 249) examines encounters with anti-government chanting and its perceived meaning. This is complemented by four focus group discussions conducted in 2026 with young people who experienced chanting, allowing deeper insight into the discourses surrounding the phenomenon.

Findings show that chanting is most often framed as a form of tension release and collective anger rather than deliberate political action, while its political relevance is nevertheless widely acknowledged. Interpreted as a communicative action, chanting appears as a low-threshold form of participation that enables young people to express dissent without engaging in institutional politics. The paper argues that such chanting practices illustrate how political meaning in youth cultures is produced through carnivalized, affective forms that blur the boundaries between entertainment, protest, and participation.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:22 - 15:44, Where: Lecture hall 8

Political Participation on Instagram: A Cross-European Study of Youth Organisations' Practices

General

Lika da Cruz¹

Maria Bruselius-Jensen¹

¹ Aalborg University, Department of Culture and Communication, Denmark

Abstract text: Research on youth participation and social media predominantly examines individual practices often adopting a critical stance toward their impact. In contrast, policy studies increasingly recognize social media as integral to contemporary youth political practices. Carson and Vromen (2018) argue that online participation is unavoidable in studies of political agency, as it expands access to political communication and transforms political processes. Luhtakallio et al. (2024) further emphasize the political power of visual expression, suggesting that visuals may become a primary mode of political action. This presentation explores youth organisations' Instagram accounts as sites for political agency. Drawing on one year of posts from 12 European political youth organisations and qualitative analysis of 10 posts per account (120 total), a thematic crosscutting analysis engages with how these organisations perform and present themselves as political actors. Inspired by Ekman and Amnå (2012) three dominant formats through which youth organisations present themselves as political actors are identified: formal-, activist-, and empowerment-oriented. Organisations' use of the formats to express opinions and engage is explored. The role being young plays in political participation is discussed. Concludingly, it is argued that despite the variety in the forms of expression, youth organisations' social media platforms represent a broad advocacy for young people's legitimate rights and capacities. Thereby, the presentation opens for discussion of the potential role of social media platforms as a site for youth voice amid a rapidly changing world.

The study is a part of the European project SINCRONY funded under the grant agreement no. 101132459.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:44 - 16:06, Where: Lecture hall 8

South Asian Immigrant Youth Activism and Digital Platforms: A Study of New Transnational Narratives

General

Anindita Shome¹

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Abstract text: Migration from South Asian nation-states to host nations around the world has become a common phenomenon. South Asian immigrant youth subcultures are unique and varied, and they open up spaces of reconstruction of identities and alliances within and beyond communities. The South Asian immigrant youth spaces carry possibilities of support networks within a highly heterogeneous and diverse group of people. The paper argues that with stricter border regimes and narratives of exclusion in host lands, the youth immigrant and diasporic organisations and digital platforms offer liminal spaces of alliances, support systems, and diversity. The methodological framework of this paper follows the digital South Asian youth spaces through virtual ethnography and discourse analysis of selected online spaces occupied by South Asian diasporic organisations and individuals in the host lands. An intersectional methodology has been employed to deduce the racial, ethnic, age, and gender aspects of these identities and spaces. The paper argues that the South Asian immigrant youth in host nations, through their reconstruction of multiple identities, and through activism and digital platforms, are forming distinct transnational narratives and forming the future trajectories of their communities and nation-states, also reinforcing the need for increasing interconnectedness amongst nation-states. The paper is analysed within the theoretical framework of transnationalism and postcolonialism. This paper considers South Asian organisations such as *South Asian Youth Action* (SAYA) and *Desis Up and Rising* (DRUM), and selected individual online public posts of South Asian immigrant youth to analyse the immigrant youth spaces as spaces of inclusion and transnationalism.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:06 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 8

Perceived Potentials of Formal-, Activist-, and Empowerment-Oriented Youth Organisations

General

Maria Bruselius-Jensen¹

Lika Hansen da Cruz¹

¹ Aalborg University

Abstract text: Young people's political participation has long been a central concern in political sociology, often described as shifting from formal to more informal, everyday forms of involvement. Drawing on cross-European findings from the HORIZON project **SINCRONY**, this paper adds nuance by examining how socially disadvantaged young people perceive different organisational pathways into political life. The analysis is based on 22 focus groups with disadvantaged youth across Europe and an examination of Instagram posts from 12 political youth organisations.

The study identifies three dominant formats through which youth organisations present themselves as political actors: **formal**, **activist-oriented**, and **empowerment-oriented**. Using this categorisation, the paper explores how young people evaluate the political influence of these organisational formats and which they would be most likely to join.

Findings show that formal political youth organisations are viewed as the most influential, offering legitimacy and access to policymakers. However, young people perceive high participation thresholds and unequal access, limiting their inclusiveness. Activist-oriented organisations are considered less powerful in institutional terms but far more accessible as spaces for expressing political views and emotions—especially frustration and anger—through protest, particularly when youth feel ignored by political decision-makers. Empowerment-oriented organisations are seen as preparing young people for more formal political engagement by building skills, confidence, and experience. They are described as supportive communities that foster self-expression and bring young people together around shared concerns.

Overall, the paper contribute to nuancing understandings of contemporary youths' perceived potential for formal and informal political agency and the role of youth organisations.

Participatory methods and co-research

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Participatory methods and co-research

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:22, Where: Lecture hall 10

Photovoice; theoretical, methodological, and ethical dimensions

General

Siw Tønnessen¹

¹ University of South-Eastern Norway (USN)

Abstract text: I would like to present the research methodology **Photovoice**, a participatory method in which researchers generate data by inviting participants to take photographs that represent aspects of their lives they wish to share. I employed this methodology in my doctoral research, which explored what brings meaning to the everyday lives of individuals struggling with mental health challenges and/or substance use issues (Tønnessen et al., 2023).

Photovoice is particularly well-suited for collaborative research with children and youth, offering a powerful tool for amplifying their voices and perspectives.

In my presentation at NYRIS 2026, I aim to highlight *the theoretical, methodological, and ethical dimensions* of Photovoice as a research methodology. The method is grounded in three key theoretical foundations: Paulo Freire's pedagogy of liberation, feminist theory, and documentary photography. In my own work, I situate Photovoice within a social constructionist framework, which enables a dynamic and nuanced understanding of how knowledge is constructed in collaboration with participants.

Best regards from

Siw Tønnessen

Tønnessen, S., Ness, O. & Klevan, T. (2023). Co-exploring meaning in everyday life for people in mental health recovery: A photovoice study. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(4), 1070-1095.
<https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.5782>

When: 2026-10-20, 15:22 - 15:44, Where: Lecture hall 10

Balancing support and autonomy: studying participants' agency in co-research with young people

General

Tuula Nygård¹

Aira Huttunen¹, Noora Hirvonen¹

¹ University of Oulu

Abstract text: Although research into AI is flourishing, young people's views on its impacts are rarely included in public and scientific discussions. In the AIM project, we have worked *with* young people using co-research methods to examine how the use of AI reshapes their everyday information practices such as information-seeking, evaluation, and creation. Drawing on this methodological setting, this presentation focuses on how the sense of agency of both the young co-researchers and professional researchers is shaped as the co-research collaboration unfolds.

We invited twelve young people (aged 15–24) to participate in co-research to diversify and deepen scientific knowledge on AI-related topics from their perspectives using their chosen methods. Between November 2024 and May 2025, we arranged five co-research workshops to discuss and prepare different phases of the research process. In analyzing the sense of agency among co-researchers, we used interview data (n=5), and, in the case of professional researchers, video data recorded during workshops.

Post-project interviews revealed that participating in the scientific knowledge co-creation process strengthened the co-researchers' self-confidence and sense of agency. However, at times, new and unfamiliar tasks caused them stress and discomfort. Professional researchers, in turn, balanced between adequate support and preserving the autonomy of the co-researchers, which created tension in their sense of agency. The findings suggest that young people's participation in co-research can encourage them to bring their perspectives to the fore in discussions about scientific knowledge co-creation and to share information about AI with their peers.

Keywords: Agency, artificial intelligence, co-research, young people

When: 2026-10-20, 15:44 - 16:06, Where: Lecture hall 10

Co-researching barriers to democratic participation with queer youth

General

Meri Kulmala¹

Liinu Vento¹, Riikka Taavetti²

¹ University of Helsinki

² University of Turku

Abstract text: Democracy is about equal opportunities to participate and make a difference in society and in one's own life. Democracy thus creates conditions for people to practice everyday citizenship as a form of enactment of membership in one's society. Despite its pivotal role for democracy, participation has become exclusive. In particular, many minority groups face multi-layered barriers to democratic participation. This paper draws on a participatory study conducted with queer young people as co-researchers to co-generate knowledge about barriers to democratic participation and to co-design responses to the obstacle and inequalities identified. We have conducted group discussions using an inequality-dialogue format with queer youth and collaboratively analyzed the resulting data. In addition, young people participated in analyzing the quantitative data from the annual Youth Barometer, which measures the values and attitudes of young people in Finland. Some participants also carried out small-scale qualitative case studies on related topics of their own choosing. In our presentation, we critically reflect on the benefits and limitations of this approach, with particular attention to inclusion, participation, and the dynamics of power-sharing. The research has been designed and carried out in collaboration with an online youth centre for LGTBQ+ young people in Finland. It forms part of a broader study investigating participation inequalities experienced by various minoritized and marginalized groups in contemporary Finnish society.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:06 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 10

Using Discord with young LGBTQ+ co-researchers to facilitate participatory research

General

Cait Jobson¹

Young LGBTQ+ Co-researchers²

¹ Durham University

² N/A

Abstract text: With increasing focus on digital classrooms and even digital youth work, little literature discusses digital spaces for doing participatory action research (PAR) with young people and/or with marginalised groups often deemed “hard to reach”, particularly on sensitive topics such as domestic abuse. This presentation seeks to discuss how to and, perhaps more crucially, why PAR researchers should use digital spaces to facilitate participatory research projects and to ensure greater flexibility and inclusion of often-ignored groups, particularly young people. Using examples from a participatory project with 12 LGBTQ+ young co-researchers which explored domestic abuse help-seeking. This presentation highlights the utility of Discord, a social media platform, in facilitating both online (digital) and in-person (physical) spaces to co-design and implement a PAR project. As well as co-produce multiple outputs across digital and physical spheres, such as workshops, an academic poster, a social media campaign, an informative zine and a reflective toolkit for practitioners. This paper suggests that using digital spaces allows multiple forms of communication and flexible involvement; encourages shared ownership of the space and decision-making; and can support the cultivation of participatory values, aiming to re-examine power dynamics and create a sense of belonging. Through highlighting both strengths and limitations to using digital methods within a PAR project with young people, this paper has implications, not just for PAR researchers, but for all those who work with young people in participatory ways.

**Symposium. Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces,
'Close' Encounters and Power, Resistance and Methodologies**

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Symposium. Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces, 'Close' Encounters
and Power, Resistance and Methodologies

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:30, Where: Lecture hall 11

Close Encounters of a Conjunctural Kind: Youth Studies, Continuity and Change, Multidisciplinarity

3. Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces, 'Close' Encounters and Power, Resistance and Methodologies

Isaac Hoff¹

¹ University of Glasgow

Abstract text: This presentation would be a part of the panel, have emailed conference

organisers: *Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces, 'Close' Encounters and Power, Resistance and Methodologies*

This presentation traces the close encounter between youth studies and conjunctural analysis, particularly as it relates to the critical exploration of continuity and change within young lives. Drawing on illustrative examples from current youth studies work, and the conjunctural principles of radical specificity, methodological and conceptual openness, being between theory and analysis and it being a collective endeavour to show this close encounter play out. I conclude with a call for the close encounter to become a productive embrace as a means to enable a multidisciplinary, open and progressive youth studies.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:30 - 16:00, Where: Lecture hall 11

Governmentality through method in multidisciplinary youth research

3. Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces, 'Close' Encounters and Power, Resistance and Methodologies

Ana Isabel Nunes¹

¹ Nottingham Trent University

Abstract text: This presentation focuses on how we can understand youth studies methodologies as shaped by Foucauldian power relations, with research practices operating as forms of surveillance and governmentality that produce particular truths about youth. Drawing on Goffman, this paper further considers how young people perform and negotiate identities within research settings structured by adult authority. It argues that participatory and creative methods can challenge these dynamics by enhancing young people's agency in how they are observed and represented.

This abstract belongs to a proposed panel named: Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces, 'Close' Encounters and Power, Resistance and Methodologies (proposed with Frances Howard and Isaac Hoff)

When: 2026-10-20, 16:00 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 11

Leaving traces: a multidisciplinary approach to Youth Studies

3. Youth Studies and Multidisciplinarity: Thinking Through Traces, 'Close' Encounters and Power, Resistance and Methodologies

Frances Howard¹

¹ Nottingham Trent University, UK

Abstract text: Within Youth Studies, each discipline leaves traces which affect how knowledge on young people is created and the ways in which research with young people is conducted. This presentation engages with the metaphor of leaving traces to exemplify a multidisciplinary approach to Youth Studies. Two ways of thinking and being: Human Flourishing and the Ethics of Care; are explored. It is argued that if the core aim of the Youth Studies research community is working towards social justice, and improved conditions for young people, then it is important to leave our traces for future generations.

This paper is part of a special panel on multidisciplinarity (Hoff and Nunes).

Youth work, ethics and digital change

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Youth work, ethics and digital change

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:30, Where: Lecture hall 13

Future Technology Workshops for youth co-creation: Method recommendations

General

Malle Vogelsang¹

Stefan Rennick-Egglestone^{2,3}, Victor Valderaune⁴, Ingunn Anita Kulstad¹, Siv Anita Aasum⁵, Unn Kristin Vedal⁵, Helga Dis Isfold Sigurdardottir⁶, Cathrine Fredriksen Moe¹, Kristin Berre Ørjasæter¹

¹ Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences, Nord University, Norway

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⁴ Åfjord Municipality, Norway

⁵ Snåsa Municipality, Norway

⁶ Faculty of Social Sciences, Nord University, Norway

Abstract text: Youth mental health challenges have increased the need for support that is accessible, flexible and credible for young people. Digital interventions can widen access, but engagement depends on whether young people experience them as trustworthy and relevant. This paper speaks to NYRIS 2026's focus on methodologies and ethics by examining how Future Technology Workshops (FTWs), a critical-utopian participatory design approach, can be adapted to enable meaningful, power-sharing youth participation when sensitive topics are explored in mixed stakeholder settings.

Guided by a hermeneutic–phenomenological stance, we document and analyze an audit trail of facilitation choices and their consequences across four FTWs in Norwegian schools (54 pupils aged 15–17; 14 adult stakeholders; 7 facilitators). All workshops followed the critique, utopian and implementation phases. Across cases, we identify recurring methodological challenges related to facilitator authority and humility, group dynamics and voice, accessibility and participation barriers, and creating emotional security when working with vulnerability.

From these reflections we develop four methodological recommendations for youth researchers and facilitators: practicing humble facilitation, promoting radical reflection, designing for diversity, and ensuring emotional security. Rather than treating ethics as a separate, front-end step, we show how ethical work is embedded in concrete methodological decisions throughout the workshop process. The paper offers transferable guidance for adapting FTWs (and related participatory methods) in youth studies research and outlines priorities for future comparative work across institutional and cultural contexts.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:30 - 16:00, Where: Lecture hall 13

Towards a code for ethics of youth work in Hungary

General

Barnabás Gulyás¹

¹ ELTE University Faculty of Education and Psychology Institute of Research on Adult Education and Knowledge Management

Abstract text: Youth work has existed as a professional practice in various forms for decades in Hungary. Although the country underwent a democratic transition in the post-socialist period, policies regarding youth and youth work have remained underdeveloped. Since the early 1990s, youth work in Hungary has evolved into a professional practice that follows European policy developments; however, its provision largely depends on the capacities of civil society organizations and local municipalities.

The first quantitative survey focusing on youth workers (N = 330) was conducted in 2023-24, with a specific focus on the competences and professional motivations of youth work practitioners. In this research, the majority of respondents indicated that an ethical framework would be beneficial for enhancing the quality of youth work. Among other things, a code of ethics would enhance the internal legitimacy of the field by providing a stable foundation for addressing the ethical aspects of working with and for young people.

The Code of Ethics can also be viewed as a commitment to be upheld towards young people and society. The presentation will showcase a case study on the participatory process of developing a Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Hungary started in 2025. Conclusions will be drawn from multiple sources of data, including the draft texts themselves, as well as feedback and comments collected through various online tools used by practitioners to co-create the code.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:00 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 13

Digitalization of Finnish municipal youth work

General

Juha Leskinen^{1, 2}

¹ Tampere university, Faculty of social sciences/youth research, Finland

² The Finnish Youth Research Society, Finland

Abstract text: How pervasive are digitalisation and digital practices in municipal youth work in 2025, when today's young people grow up with digital platforms and communities constantly present? How do the digital practices of youth work and young people meet?

Digitalisation has been part of youth work for decades. Digital gaming and related devices have become almost as established in youth centres as the traditional pool table, and the first online youth space was created in the early 2000s through the Netari project. Online youth work is seen as a way to reach young people who spend a lot of time online or who, for various reasons, do not participate in more traditional forms of youth work, and it offers possibilities for improving accessibility and geographical equality.

A youth worker can be the trusted adult with whom it is easier to discuss online challenges and phenomena than with a guardian or teacher. Youth researcher Kiilakoski has suggested that instead of “bringing young people into the world”, education could focus on “wondering and learning together”, highlighting how young people can introduce new practices into youth work that can develop into new professional practices.

The Finnish Youth Research Network has surveyed changes and resources in municipal youth work in 2021, 2023 and 2025, each time including questions on online activities. I will analyse these datasets to examine differences between municipalities and reflect on the findings utilising practice architecture theory. In my presentation I will present these results.

LGBTQI+ Youth: Wellbeing, exclusion and future imaginaries

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

LGBTQI+ Youth: Wellbeing, exclusion and future imaginaries

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:22, Where: Lecture hall 16

LGBTQI+ Youth Wellbeing in Estonia: Stakeholder Perspectives and Young People's Experiences

General

Airi-Alina Allaste¹

Elisa Raichmann¹, Anna Ivanove¹

¹ Tallinn University

Abstract text: Research on wellbeing among vulnerable groups has traditionally focused on elevated mental health risks associated with minority stress. More recent approaches increasingly emphasise elements that foster wellbeing, resilience and agency. Within this scholarship, wellbeing is understood not merely as the ability to cope, but as a relational and structural condition shaped by rights, recognition and institutional support.

This paper examines how the wellbeing of LGBTQI+ youth is defined by key stakeholders and how it is understood and experienced by LGBTQI+ young people in Estonia, a country that has made rapid progress in the legislative recognition of LGBTQ+ rights but continues to face gaps in protection and non-discrimination. It explores what young people and stakeholders identify as the main barriers to and enablers of wellbeing, and how these relate to broader processes of inclusion, visibility and citizenship.

The empirical material draws on group discussions with representatives of LGBTQI+ organisations, activists, policymakers and politicians, alongside creative workshops conducted with LGBTQI+ youth. The data were collected within the framework of the project *LGBTI+ Youth Wellbeing Across Europe: Imagined Futures in Turbulent Times*.

Preliminary findings indicate that, when discussing LGBTQI+ youth wellbeing, the most important elements are safety, social and symbolic visibility, and the adaptation of institutions and infrastructures to better meet young people's specific needs. The paper argues that LGBTQI+ youth wellbeing could be understood as a matter of youth citizenship and democratic participation. The experiences of LGBTQI+ youth offer important insights into new solidarities, vulnerabilities and strategies of adaptation among young people.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:22 - 15:44, Where: Lecture hall 16

Mental wellbeing and received support at school among youth with cis and non-cis identities

General

Katrina Silfvast¹

Matilda Wrede-Jäntti¹

¹ University of Helsinki

Abstract text: The presentation examines how Finnish ninth graders (15–16-year-olds), across both cis and non-cis identities, experience their mental well-being and support given to them by school staff. Drawing on a large, nationally representative dataset, the analysis focuses on three interconnected dimensions of youth experience: perceived teacher interest in pupils' everyday lives, the pupils' own assessments of their mental well-being, and received support and help concerning their mood during the past 12 months from school staff (teachers, school nurses, physicians, psychologists, social workers). These data provide a rare opportunity to examine how diverse groups of pupils perceive signals of recognition and care given by institutional actors.

The presentation contributes to youth studies by foregrounding the methodological and ethical challenges of researching young people at scale while remaining attentive to heterogeneity in gendered and embodied experiences. It reflects how large survey data (N = 112 786) can illuminate relational dynamics—such as trust and perceived support—that are often examined through qualitative approaches. At the same time, it interrogates the limits of survey-based representations of youth well-being, particularly when capturing the experiences of non-cis respondents whose realities in many studies may be flattened by standardized gender categories. The presentation invites dialogue on how youth researchers can responsibly combine representativeness with nuance, and how methodological choices shape what becomes visible about young people's lives. The findings underscore the importance of attending to both structural patterns and lived interpretations, as well as diversity of youth experience when studying well-being and support in school contexts.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:44 - 16:06, Where: Lecture hall 16

Imagining a queer future? Dilemmas in research exploring young people's visions of the future

General

Lena Sotevik¹

¹ Department of Ethnology, History of Religions and Gender Studies, Stockholm university

Abstract text: Many young LGBTQI+ people across Europe are growing up in a period of profound turbulence and crises, for example, the pandemic, growing economic insecurity, and the rise of populist anti-LGBTQ+ / anti-gender political movements. The ongoing study *LGBTI+ youth well-being across Europe: Imagined futures in turbulent times* explores how young adults understand their lives and navigate their futures in an era of multiple forms of crisis and uncertainty.

Creative participatory methods are being used in this study to produce material about what LGBTQI+ youth think about their lives and imagined futures. In this presentation we would like to raise some methodological reflections on studying young people's visions of the future. This concerns how participants react to thinking and talking about the future, and what feelings this evokes. But it also concerns the tension between research wanting to take part in young people's perspectives while at the same time, when doing that, positioning them as subjects of the future. In relation to youth research, there are dilemmas here that we want to explore through the following questions: How do we emphasise the importance of young people's living conditions *here and now* when we study their visions of the future? What chronology and temporality do we expect young people to conform to when we ask them about their future? How do we hold space for dystopian futures in a time when we long for utopias?

When: 2026-10-20, 16:06 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 16

LGBTQI Students' Experiences of Anti-Gender Exclusion in Swedish and Danish Schools

General

Niels Ulrik Sørensen¹

Anne Görlich¹, Ylva Odenbring², Emma Sorbring³

¹ Aalborg University

² University of Gothenburg

³ University West

Abstract text: Gender and sexual minorities around the world are currently facing increased opposition from an anti-gender movement, which defends the social position of cisgender and heterosexual men and women (Butler, 2024). As a result, LGBTQI rights and equalities are questioned and challenged by norms and ideas that enforce binary and biological understandings of gender and sexuality (Nash & Browne 2021). A recurring argument among anti-gender movement advocates is that children and young people are exposed to gender ideological propaganda in schools, and the education system has been a crucial arena for the anti-gender movement's efforts and activities (Venegas 2022). Yet, we know little about how anti-gender norms and ideas impact the everyday lives of LGBTQI students at school. Based on qualitative interviews with 15-19-year-old LGBTQI students in Swedish and Danish schools, this paper therefore investigates how anti-gender norms and ideas impact exclusion processes of LGBTQI students in secondary schools in Sweden and Denmark, and how they are met and challenged by the LGBTQI students. The paper identifies three different forms of exclusion processes: 1) *Biologizing*, which challenge the ontological basis of LGBTQI students' gender identities by enforcing a biologizing understanding of gender. 2) *Dehumanizing*, which ridicule LGBTQI students' gender identities by comparing them to animals, physical objects, and fictional characters. 3) *Politicizing*, which relate LGBTQI students' gender identities to a larger political context, which is accused of dominating schools and society. The analytical results are discussed in relation to Judith Butler's notions of materialization, abjection and ungrievable bodies (1990, 1993, 2022).

Emotional wellbeing and care in young people's lives

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Emotional wellbeing and care in young people's lives

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:30, Where: Lecture hall 17

Hopeless stories, echoes of hope: Youth future imaginaries in anonymous mental health chats

General

Daniele Evelin Alves¹

¹ OsloMet — Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract text: Youth voices about the future are often filtered through surveys, interviews, or media framings. This paper draws on naturalistic, youth-led conversations from two anonymous online support services (snakkompsyken.no, snakkommobbing.no) to explore how hope, dreams and hopelessness are articulated in real time. From a database of ~44,000 chats (2017–2024), we identified 15 Oslo-based conversations from users aged 13–20+ using future-related keywords (future/hope/dream). Using thematic analysis, we developed a narrative typology mapped along two axes: "hope-hopelessness" and "internal reflection-external norms". Four ideal-type narratives emerged: (1) No dreams: paralysing hopelessness linked to mental health problems/illness, substance use, and thoughts of suicide; (2) Paralyzing doubt about life choices: fear of "wrong" educational or life decisions stalls action; (3) An authentic life: agency to pursue untraditional paths, creative goals and "real friends," while resisting family or cultural expectations; and (4) A successful life: normative aspirations for grades, status jobs, independent housing and romantic partnership. Across narratives, hopes cluster around belonging (trusted friends/partner), autonomy (moving out, living on one's own terms) and competence (education/work); barriers include performance pressure, social comparison, anxiety and stigma. Anonymity appears to enable unusually candid accounts and ambivalence. While self-recruited and non-representative, these chats offer a rare window into youth meaning-making as it unfolds, complementing surveys and media discourse. We discuss implications for service design (relational scaffolding, vocational pathways, legitimising trial-and-error) and for research using anonymous digital help-seeking as a source of youth voice in superdiverse urban contexts.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:30 - 16:00, Where: Lecture hall 17

Involuntary loneliness among adolescents and emerging adults: adolescents' and parents' perspective

General

Yulia Korzhina¹

Pia Nyman-Kurkiala¹, Jessica Hemberg¹

¹ Åbo Akademi University

Abstract text: There is increasing evidence that young people are particularly predisposed to experiencing loneliness. More qualitative investigations are needed to provide clearer understanding of what leads adolescents and emerging adults to perceive themselves as involuntary lonely. The aim was to develop a nuanced understanding of what can cause and what might mitigate experiences of involuntary loneliness among adolescents and emerging adults as seen from adolescents', emerging adults', and parents' perspectives. A qualitative approach and reflexive thematic analysis were used. A total of 11 participants (8 adolescents/emerging adults, 3 parents) participated in individual semi-structured interviews. Six main themes and fourteen subthemes emerged. The main themes were: Involuntary loneliness has a negative impact on adolescents' and emerging adults' well-being, Challenges within contemporary youth culture that cause loneliness, Life circumstances that hinder connections and cause involuntary loneliness, Intervention systems that counteract involuntary loneliness, Supportive systems that counteract involuntary loneliness, and System changes in policy and advocacy to counteract loneliness. Involuntary loneliness among young people is a complex problem requiring a variety of different approaches. Young people need support in finding and building deeper friendships that can facilitate profound connection and can counteract and alleviate involuntary loneliness, thus strengthening their well-being. The mechanisms underlying the link between social media use and involuntary loneliness should be further investigated. The stigma surrounding seeking help that young people might experience should be counteracted by increasing information about loneliness as a common problem and introducing individualistic approaches within healthcare that can help alleviate loneliness among young people.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:00 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 17

How school leadership promotes student welfare for children and adolescents to counteract bullying

General

Jessica Hemberg¹

Diana Hagman¹, Kia Ikonen², Pia Nyman-Kurkiala³, Yulia Korzhina¹

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Abstract text: Children and adolescents have the right to protection of their well-being, including physical, psychological, and social safety within schools. However, research shows that bullying remains prevalent and that prevention strategies are not always fully effective. This study examines the significance of school leadership in establishing a health-promoting student welfare system capable of preventing bullying. A qualitative exploratory design was adopted. Data were collected through five questionnaires with open-ended questions and one semi-structured interview, all involving student welfare leaders. The data were analysed using qualitative content analysis, resulting in five main categories: support for student welfare staff, strategies to promote a health-promoting school environment, identification of challenges and barriers, leadership and strategic planning, and parental and pupil engagement. The results indicate that leaders support student welfare staff in bullying prevention through individual supervision, professional development, and collaboration. Clear guidelines, regular meetings, and evidence-based methods are central measures for creating a safe and supportive school environment. Conversely, lack of time, limited resources, and organizational ambiguities are significant barriers. Structured approaches and cross-professional collaboration are crucial success factors. The study also highlights the importance of involving parents and pupils in bullying prevention to foster shared understanding and an inclusive school environment. Overall, leadership within student welfare services plays a central role in promoting a sustainable and safe school environment.

Sexual education and gender in schools

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Sexual education and gender in schools

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:22, Where: Lecture hall 18

Relationship discourses: In contemporary Swedish sex education teaching resources

General

Kalle Berggren¹

¹ Stockholm University, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Sweden

Abstract text: Young people in Sweden have received mandatory sexuality education since 1955. Since 2022, the subject area has had a new name: ‘Sexuality, consent and relationships’ (SCR). While youth sexuality has been studied for decades, and consent is currently a ‘hot topic’, less is known about young people’s romantic relationships today, and in particular about what teaching about relationships might mean in the context of SCR education.

This study explores how relationships and relationships education are discursively constructed in contemporary Swedish SCR teaching resources. The data consists of 6 books aimed at supporting teachers’ work with SCR education, published 2022-2025. The analysis seeks to answer how the teaching resources construct what it means to educate young people about relationships; what kind of relationships are represented; as well as what aspects of relationships are in focus.

A preliminary conclusion is that there is a potential to address the question of relationships in a more systematic and reflective way; including drawing more explicitly on contemporary research on intimate, romantic and/or sexual relationships.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:22 - 15:44, Where: Lecture hall 18

Young People Navigating Sexuality Education: Relational and Emotional Dimensions

General

Paula Humborg¹

¹ Uppsala University, Department of Education, Sweden

Abstract text: This presentation draws on an ongoing PhD-project, aiming to investigate how young people, in interaction, navigate and negotiate different perspectives on sexuality and romantic relationships in everyday school life, as well as the role of relationships and emotions in these interactions. Sexuality and relationships can be understood as both private and public phenomena and young people's sexuality is often framed as a controversial topic, shaped by adult perspectives on what constitutes responsible and risky sexuality. Schools are one of the societal actors with a mandate concerning young people's sexuality and relationships through sexuality education. Teaching is guided by curricular goals and content, which in classroom practice meet group dynamics and students' diverse backgrounds, experiences, opinions and emotions. Previous research shows that both teachers and students value sexuality education; however, teaching situations are characterized by several challenges. By conducting an ethnographic study in one class and following students in their everyday school activities, the data collection is guided by what is meaningful to young people themselves. Data will primarily be collected through video observations, allowing for analysis of emotions and how young people express and make sense of them when talking about sexuality and romantic relationships. Through this approach, the study contributes knowledge about how sexuality education relates to diverse young people's perspectives and how young people themselves relate to the perspectives conveyed in sexuality education. By focusing on the significance of relationships and emotions in young people's conversations, the study provides new insights into the challenges identified in previous research.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:44 - 16:06, Where: Lecture hall 18

ALLIES: Engaging Boys in Gender-Based Violence Research and Education

General

Abby Gilsenan¹

Vanita Sundaram¹

¹ Department of Education, University of York, United Kingdom.

Abstract text:

The pervasiveness of gender-related violence among school-aged children and young people in the UK is well-evidenced (Barter et al., 2009; Ofsted, 2021; WEC, 2023). It is also well-accepted that involving boys and men is a fundamental step towards tackling this form of violence (Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015). In the UK, the engagement of boys and young men in conversations around gender and violence against women and girls is now a core recommendation of both the Relationships and Sex Education statutory guidance (Department for Education, 2025), and the government Violence Against Women and Girls strategy (UK Government, 2025). While some research has begun to look at mechanisms for engaging younger men to reflect on harmful gender norms, what it means to be a man in the UK today, and harmful behaviours/practices (O'Rourke & Haslop, 2023), very little work has considered the specific methods of engaging school-aged boys in such discussions in either research or education contexts. For this reason, this group can be considered a seldom-heard group within the field of gender-based violence prevention. In this conference paper, we will discuss findings from a qualitative, pilot study comprising focus groups with young men and boys aged 11-18 in UK secondary schools. Through our findings, we will explore the barriers and facilitators for engaging this group in both gender-based violence research, and school-based gender equality interventions. Finally, we will offer methodological recommendations, co-produced with boys, for both researchers and educators wishing to create meaningful, thoughtful, and sustainable engagement with young men.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:06 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 18

Moving Bodies: Figurations of Gender within the setting of Sexuality Education in Secondary school

General

Karin Gunnarsson¹

¹ Stockholm University, Department of Education, Sweden

Abstract text: Contemporary research suggests that young people increasingly understand gender as fluid and relational, situating identities along a continuum rather than within fixed or binary categories (Bragg et al., 2018, p. 425). Still, sexism, as well as homophobia and transphobia, are significant markers enacted in everyday school practices—in hallways, classrooms, and textbooks—thus reproducing power formations in our educational institutions. Consequently, gender is marked by paradox, characterized by simultaneous movements of expansion and constraint, resistance and normalization, producing multiple trajectories.

Within this educational context, four colleagues and I conducted a practice-based research project on sexuality education in secondary schools. The project was carried out with a feminist posthumanist theoretical framework. As such, we joined a growing number of scholars in sexuality education who have employed the posthumanist framework to bring attention to vital aspects such as relationality, affectivity and bodies. By drawing on feminist posthumanism, the exploration addresses the indeterminacy of gender. This understanding is grounded in “an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and other, including the non-human” (Braidotti, 2016, p. 25).

Drawing from the project, this presentation explores how gender emerges as co-constituted figurations within sexuality education. Thus, it examines how gender materialises through pedagogical practices and how these practices unfold in contradictory ways. In this view, engaging with sexuality education implies attending to its uncertainty and fragility to create pedagogical spaces that matter to young people (Renold et.al., 2021).

Space and temporality

2026-10-20

15:00 - 16:30

Space and temporality

When: 2026-10-20, 15:00 - 15:22, Where: Lecture hall 19

Articulating Youth Independence in Mobility Across Urban Scales

9. Place, Space and Mobilities in Young People's Everyday Life

Adam Wronkowski¹

¹ Adam Mickiewicz University

Abstract text: In this paper, I address the critical debate on the role of independent mobility in shaping young people's spatial identity, agency, and everyday urban experiences. Based on qualitative research conducted among young people aged 15–19 in Poznań (a large city) and Chodzież (a small town) in Poland, I analyse how young people perceive and practise independent mobility in contrasting socio-spatial contexts. Combining group interviews (n = 35), travel diaries (n = 12), and in-depth interviews (n = 12), the study captured the affective, social, and spatial dimensions of everyday travel, including the negotiation of freedom in intergenerational relationships. I argue that independent mobility should be understood not only as a matter of access to transport, but as a multidimensional and negotiated practice through which young people participate in public space, realise their everyday claims on the city, and build affective relationships with places. Rather than treating independent mobility as a predetermined analytical category, the paper focuses on how young people understand independence in mobility, showing how they express it in everyday practices, stories, and emotional relationships with urban space. Combining perspectives from large and small urban environments, the article contributes to the theorisation of youth mobility through the lenses of equitable mobility, affective mobility, and situational knowledge, highlighting how structural constraints and opportunities shape teenagers' experiences and expectations.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:22 - 15:44, Where: Lecture hall 19

Making Home in Motion: Young People, Railway Space, and Relational Mobility in Delhi

General

Khushboo Jain¹

¹ Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

Abstract text: This paper explores how young people living and working in Delhi's railway spaces produce forms of home through everyday mobility. Drawing on long-term, longitudinal ethnographic research with young persons in contact with railways, it engages relational theories of space to examine how movement, work routines, and spatial negotiations shape urban belonging.

Rather than approaching the railway as a site of transience or displacement, the paper conceptualises it as a dynamic socio-spatial ecology structured by circulation, labour, governance, and infrastructural rhythms. Young people's daily practices aligned with train schedules, waste economies, food distribution circuits, and shifting territorial claims demonstrate that mobility is not simply movement across space but a socially meaningful practice through which dwelling becomes possible. Through repetition, embodied knowledge, and collective negotiation, the station is rendered habitable.

Methodologically, the paper reflects on conducting sustained ethnographic research in highly unequal and governed urban environments, where mobility shapes not only young people's lives but also the conditions of access, trust, and ethical responsibility in the field. Attending to inequalities of age, gender, class, and precarity, it foregrounds how mobility is differentially enabled and constrained while also functioning as a resource. Movement becomes both a survival strategy and a claim to presence.

By bringing youth geographies into dialogue with urban sociology, the paper contributes an empirically grounded account of how home emerges not from enclosure or permanence but from relational practices sustained within highly governed and unequal urban environments.

When: 2026-10-20, 15:44 - 16:06, Where: Lecture hall 19

Slowing down time: Why opioid use differs from other recreational types of drug use among youths

General

Jeanette Østergaard¹

Lasse Bang Baggesen¹

¹ The ROCKWOOL Foundation

Abstract text: Non-medical use of synthetic opioids is a growing global concern, yet little research explores young people's subjective experiences of opioid use in relation to everyday social practices and other illicit drugs. Existing studies tend to focus on risk, harm, and trajectories of escalation, leaving the temporal and experiential dimensions underexamined.

This paper investigates young people's non-prescription opioid use through a temporal lens. Based on qualitative analysis, we show that synthetic opioids produce a distinctive experience of slowing, suspending, or stopping time. This contrasts sharply with the accelerated, future-oriented temporalities associated with drugs such as cocaine or MDMA. Participants describe opioid use as legitimising a mode of "doing nothing," temporarily suspending expectations of productivity, progress, and self-optimization.

To understand the recent increase in synthetic opioid use among young people in Denmark (Østergaard et al. 2024), we draw on the concept of enduring time (Baritser 2017). Enduring time refers to a temporality structured by waiting and maintenance - time without a purpose or goal. We argue that recreational opioid use among young people allows them to experience time suspension, that is to inhabit a present that feels static rather than oriented towards development or change. Although occasionally shared, this suspended time is most often solitary, contrasting with the socially expansive temporalities of other drugs like cocaine.

The paper draws on 15 qualitative interviews with 18–25-year-olds recruited from a night-time economy survey (n = 1,986) across 13 Danish cities and reflects on methodological and ethical challenges in researching opioid use.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:06 - 16:30, Where: Lecture hall 19

Rhythmic dissonance between educational institutional and students' everyday rhythms

General

Helene Falkenberg¹

¹ University College Copenhagen, Department of Social Education, R&D.

Abstract text: This paper explores how accelerated educational pace, rapid modular shifts, overlapping tasks, and intensified digital communication are felt by students, and how study stress emerges through frictions between institutional and everyday temporalities. Positioned within youth studies, the paper foregrounds how students' educational experiences are shaped by institutional temporalities as well as by youth-specific conditions such as performance culture and emerging adulthood (Sørensen et. Al. 2024). Drawing on Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis (Lefebvre 2004), the paper conceptualizes study stress as rhythmic dissonance between linear institutional rhythms (timetables, deadlines etc.) and students' cyclical rhythms. Based on a four-year qualitative study at a Danish university college - combining classroom fieldwork with longitudinal interviews across three cohorts of students at The Social Education - the analysis identifies three interrelated processes (Falkenberg 2025): First, relational acceleration, where frequent regrouping disrupts social safety and belonging. Second, activity accumulation, in which parallel assignments, thematic days, and high-stakes decisions generate affective uncertainty. Third, technological micro-orchestration, where asynchronous LMS notifications introduce unpredictable temporal shifts. By foregrounding students' affective experiences of educational temporalities and situating them within youth-specific conditions, the paper contributes to youth studies by offering a rhythmanalytical lens on study stress as a relational, contextual, and temporal phenomenon.

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**Symposium. Transformative Youth Spaces: Participation, Counter-Hegemony
and Community**

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Symposium. Transformative Youth Spaces: Participation, Counter-Hegemony and Community

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 8

Alternative transformative youth work? - 25 years of Co-research with youth work practitioners

5. Transformative Youth Spaces: Participation, Counter-Hegemony and Community

Vibe Larsen^{1, 2}

Line Lerche Mørck^{1, 2}

¹ Vibe Larsen, University College Copenhagen, Department of Social Education, Denmark

² Line Lerche Mørck, Aarhus University, Danish School of Education, Denmark

Abstract text: In this paper, we critically – in joint ventures with social youth work co-researchers - reflect on social youth work: We explore alternative, transformative and counter-hegemonic aspects of youth work and how it makes a difference for the young people involved? We analyze how youth workers may handle dilemmas of distrust, alienation and stigmatization with(in) both alternative and established forms of social youth work. In this first phase of our practice research, we conduct ethnographic in-depth interviews with social youth workers. We will analyze interview data with social youth workers, who also shared and compared their present youth work to their own lived experiences of co-producing social youth work, when they were struggling from marginalized positions as young. We thereby explore the historical development of alternative youth work practices, of 30 years, and how possibilities of young people's co-productions of social youth work have changed over time. Together with co-researchers, we produce "prototypical cases" of (transformative) youth work, exploring how it may be an alternative to former ways and/or other hegemonic ways of conducting youth work (Mørck & Nissen, 2005). Theoretically, we explore the "transformative" and "alternative" aspects of practice, with praxis theories about hegemony, counter-hegemony, and (dis)alienation (Gramsci; Lefebvre; Lave). This framework enables us to articulate how youth work practices may expand social spaces for young people's different ways of participating and transforming, and foster counter-hegemonic forms of participation and belonging. Finally, we discuss ethical questions concerning possibilities and dilemmas of (re)presentation of youth work as alternative. Included in a symposium session.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 8

Social Justice and Counternarratives (symposium Vibe Larsen)

5. Transformative Youth Spaces: Participation, Counter-Hegemony and Community

Gry Tybjerg¹

Aisha Thorsen², Morten Kromann Nielsen³

¹ Aarhus University & UCL

² Aarhus University

³ UCL

Abstract text: Minoritized youth face significant challenges in education and social inclusion in marginalized residential urban areas shaped by structural inequality and discrimination. Research shows that leisure activities can play a crucial role in fostering meaningful communities and social inclusion. Studies on aesthetic forms of working with resistance demonstrate that lived experiences of marginalization can fuel creative artistic practices and social recognition of the involved. This highlights the methodological, pedagogical and political potential of art-based co-creation in youth research. In this presentation we discuss the methodological potential of giving voice to youth matters in an agenda of social justice in overcoming experiences of othering (Khawaja). The paper emerges from the research project *Youth Pedagogical Transformative Work – How Can Community-Building Contribute to Overcoming Ethnic Othering and Discrimination?* Drawing on the tradition of practice research (Holzkamp; Mørck) and arts-based youth research (Barone & Eisner), the project examines the potentials of aesthetic co-creation through songwriting and performance with minoritized youth in their leisure time. Our analysis is empirically based on dialogical processes from workshops where youth in their leisure time create songs sharing and performing experiences of injustice about e.g. feelings about Gaza and racism in two marginalized urban areas in Denmark. We analyze how aesthetic co-creative processes—where youth participants actively share and collaborate on counter-narratives—can address minoritized youth's complex experiences. By encountering discomfort in addressing social justice (Boler; Faye) among all participants – youth, social workers, researchers, stakeholders – we discuss potential and challenges in promoting critically transformative youth pedagogy and research.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 8

From Risk to Resource: Youth Participation, Structure as Care, and Counter-Hegemonic Youth Work

5. Transformative Youth Spaces: Participation, Counter-Hegemony and Community

Mimi Petersen¹

¹ University College Copenhagen

Abstract text: This paper presents findings from an ongoing research collaboration with *Youth Lab* [1], examining youth participation as a relational, ethical, and political process. The paper explores how marginalized youth are repositioned from being framed as “at risk” to becoming recognized as collective resources through counter-hegemonic youth work practices in boundary spaces. Drawing on ethnographic research and dialogical co-production with young participants, the study combines participant observation, interviews, participatory timelines, and recorded authoring seminars. The analysis focuses on micro-processes in which legitimacy, responsibility, and agency are negotiated and expanded through relational discipline, participation ethics, and co-creation. Attention is given to how organizational rules and structures—such as punctuality, responsibility, spatial arrangements, and parental involvement—operate as relational infrastructures of care rather than mechanisms of control. Drawing on theories of situated learning, the paper shows how such structures support young people’s movement from peripheral participation toward more central and legitimate positions.

Theoretically, the paper mobilizes concepts of liminal learning spaces and boundary communities to examine how Youth Lab operates across the boundaries of school, street, and civil society, creating temporary conditions for alternative forms of learning, recognition, and participation to emerge (Mørck, 2010; Stenner, 2017). By foregrounding young people’s perspectives and their involvement as co-authors, the paper contributes to ongoing NYRIS debates on youth participation, ethics, and co-produced knowledge.

[1] Youth Lab is a youth-led participation and learning initiative within RCYN (Resource Centre for Youth Networks), a practice-based organization in Copenhagen working at the intersection of youth work, civil society, and research.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 8

Boundary youth work (Symposium Vibe Larsen)

5. Transformative Youth Spaces: Participation, Counter-Hegemony and Community

Gry Tybjerg¹

Emilia Medenets²

¹ Aarhus University & UCL

² Aarhus University

Abstract text: This paper explores how boundary youth work can foster inclusive communities and shape the life and learning trajectories of youth in a Danish stigmatized urban residential area – an area identified as a ‘parallel society,’ targeted through national housing policies of demolition and rehousing. The analysis is informed by concepts of territorial stigmatization (Wacquant) alongside the concept of collective transformative agency (Stetsenko). Empirically, the paper draws on participant observations and interviews with two young people (age 20) within a mentor program co-developed to address a local issue: children’s limited participation in clubs and sports activities. The mentors, engaged in their local community, facilitate activities and build bridges to leisure opportunities for children – forming both a learning environment and a part-time job for the youth mentors. In the paper we ask: In what ways has the mentor program shaped the youth mentor’s lives beyond the program, regarding their self-understanding and their positions in other life contexts? Collaborating with the youth mentors as co-researchers through their youth life transitions over 1 ½ year, reveals their shifting positions and self-understandings across their life context by participating in making a difference, learning, and expanding future opportunities – combining economic incentives with community engagement and friendship. The mentor program is neither conventional leisure nor formal education, and new possible transitions and positions emerge through co-production and community engagement. The paper discusses how boundary youth work, grounded in community-building, can transcend experiences of societal marginalization and stigmatization, foster collective agency, and reshape life conditions and new life trajectories.

Youth linguistic practices

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Youth linguistic practices

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 10

YOUTH, LANGUAGE AND UTOPIA - Bridging youth political engagement Across Spheres

General

Biljana Stankovic¹

¹ Tampere University, Department of Social Sciences, Finland – Youth Researcher

Abstract text: Since the COVID-19 pandemic, youth political engagement across Europe has intensified amid rising political polarisation, social inequality, and declining trust in democratic institutions. Youth participation has taken diverse forms, including street protests, digital mobilisation, and activism within civil society and political party youth structures. Despite this expansion, youth engagement remains segmented across ideological, organisational, and discursive boundaries, limiting opportunities for dialogue and coalition-building.

This research investigates language as a constitutive political practice within youth activism in Finland, focusing on youth branches of political parties and youth engaged in NGOs. Drawing on critical sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, the study conceptualises language as performative and world-making, actively producing political subjectivities, collective identities, and imaginaries of the future.

The project is situated within a peacebuilding framework that approaches utopia as a dynamic political horizon articulated through discourse, affect, and collective narration. In dialogue with Hannah Arendt's theory of political presence, the research examines how youth "appear" as political actors through speech and action in protests, campaigns, and organisational practices.

Methodologically, the study combines Critical Discourse Analysis with a feminist oral history approach, based on semi-structured interviews with politically engaged youth across organisational contexts. The research culminates in the development of a comparative glossary of youth political language, mapping keywords, metaphors, and affective registers across ideological formations. By identifying both discursive boundaries and shared linguistic resources, the study contributes to youth studies, political sociology, and peace research by demonstrating how language can simultaneously reproduce division and enable possibilities for dialogue, solidarity, and peacebuilding.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 10

Antisemitism, humor and ambivalence in the everyday lives of Jewish youth

General

Henning Årman¹

¹ Stockholm University

Abstract text: In Sweden, anti-semitic jokes and jargon are a prevalent phenomenon in the everyday lives of Jewish youth (Katzin, 2021; Wagrell, 2022). The current paper focus on minority youths' experiences of navigating encounters with humour and jargon that draw on stereotypes of Jews and Jewishness. Using Billigs (2001, 2005) critical perspectives on humour, and building on theories on language that stress how discourse always attain meaning in social context (Duranti, 1997; Gal, 2006), the analysis emphasize the entanglements between humour, power, and social order. The analysis shows how humour is used as a conduit for anti-semitic commentary and we argue that the normativites surrounding humour and the social functions of humour practices create difficult dilemmas for minority youth as they encounter jokes and jargon that draw on persisting stereotypical images and tropes of Jews and Jewishness.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 10

Silence as a Form of Participation: Youth Involvement in Social Research during the War

General

Nadiia Pavlyk^{1, 2}

¹ Aarhus University, Department of Global Studies, Denmark

² Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, Department of Social Technologies, Ukraine

Abstract text: The research project *DaR:UA. Dialogues and Reading* takes place in four Ukrainian cities during the full-scale war and involves young people aged 14-18. The project examines the social and pedagogical effects of shared reading of books about the ongoing war, treating shared reading as a group practice through which young people engage with their own experiences and those of their peers.

During the preparatory phase of the study – including piloting research methods, ethical review, and recruitment – I repeatedly encountered silence and refusal to participate in the proposed activities. These “empty spaces” appeared systematically and challenged the assumption that participation necessarily requires verbal expression.

In this paper, I argue that youth silence and non-participation should not be treated as missing data or methodological failure. Instead, I conceptualize silence as a form of agency and ethical positioning in the context of war. This approach questions normative expectations of “voice,” openness, and transparency in youth research and critically examines the ethical demand placed on young people to make their experiences visible.

Drawing on a trauma-informed approach, the paper interprets silence and avoidance as expected and meaningful responses to prolonged insecurity (SAMHSA, 2016; Alessi & Kahn, 2023). From this perspective, silence marks ethical boundaries and signals limits to what researchers can document during wartime.

Based on reflexive analysis, the paper shows how attention to silence shifts research away from data extraction toward the ethics of research relationships and invites dialogue within youth studies on adapting research practices in contexts of the war and uncertainty.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 10

Pathways to/from Intervening: How Educational Staff Make sense of Responding to Youths' Hate-speech

General

Lisa Nordlund¹

Camilla Forsberg², Tomas Jungert¹, Robert Thornberg²

¹ Lund University, Department of Psychology, Sweden

² Linköping University, Department of Behavioural Sciences and Learning (IBL), Sweden

Abstract text: In this study, we explore how educational staff make sense of their responses to intervene against youths' hate-speech practices in Swedish upper-secondary schools. In doing so, we contribute to addressing a gap in the literature concerning hate speech in offline settings.

We adopt a pragmatist approach in order to combine the ontology of new materialism and posthumanism, with a humanist ethics and qualitative inquiry (Brinkmann, 2017). Utilising grounded theory techniques (Charmaz, 2014; Clarke, 2021), we conducted focus group interviews with educational staff at five Swedish upper secondary schools. The dataset comprises 11 focus groups with a total of 50 participants.

Preliminary findings point to a range of (social) processes that enable or prevent educational staff from intervening against hate speech in schools. These include linguistic processes that construct hate speech as harmless or dismiss responsibility with reference to distance or perceived insufficiency. Further, the staff's perspectives may be obscured by their own positionality or privilege, or by desensitisation and shifted norms. Regarding factors that could enable intervening, participants called for support from management, parents, politicians, and society at large. However, they also described a lack of such support, which in turn prevents interventions. Overall, this study highlights different pathways that can either enable or hinder educational staff from intervening in youths' hate-speech practices.

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Interviewing young people

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Interviewing young people

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 11

Asking about social class in interviews with young people – difficult but necessary

General

Sanna Aaltonen¹

¹ University of Turku

Abstract text: From previous research we know that class identities are fundamentally ambivalent and that social class is a problematic and, to some extent, even sensitive topic for interviews (e.g. Sayer 2005). In this presentation, I ask, in line with the British sociologist Beverley Skeggs (2003), how we can know about class and how we can talk about it. I approach the question from a methodological perspective and explore the process of knowledge production in interviews conducted with 16-20 years old young people who were students in upper secondary general and vocational schools. In these single and pair interviews (N=42) young people (N=53) were asked such questions as “Are there social classes in Finland?” and “Do you think you belong to a particular social class?”. Besides reflecting on the content of interviews I elaborate the interview situations with the help of field notes written after the interviews. In the presentation I will focus on the research interview as a specific interaction situation, social class and class relations as a topic of discussion, and young people as interpreters of their class position and social structures. The presentation draws upon data produced in a cross-disciplinary research project ‘LINSOC - Linguistic variation, social class and experiences on inequality in Eastern Finland’ (2023-2025).

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 11

What's the problem with asking? Critical reflections on interview in youth research

General

Lian Malai Madsen¹

¹ University of Copenhagen

Abstract text: Interviews in various forms are widespread in research across the social sciences and humanities as well as in public media. Hence, youth studies are often based on interviewing as a key method. Asking questions in a planned setting is considered an accessible way to gain insight into (areas of) young people's life. Interview as methodology and data source has, however, been problematized from different language and discourse focused disciplines. The classic linguistic anthropological discussion by Briggs (1986) called for attention to interviewing as a particular, culturally based communicative event that cannot be assumed to apply to all research settings. Others have problematized the tendency to overlook the interactional dimension of interviewing and thereby neglecting the interviewer's role as well as how research based on content analysis of interviews reproduces cognitivist psychological assumptions (Wilkinson, 2006; Potter & Hepburn, 2005).

This paper joins the critical discussions of interviews from a linguistics ethnographic perspective. Linguistic ethnography typically combines a range of different types of interviews (formal, informal, group, individual, media-focused etc.) with other kinds of data such as recorded everyday interaction and participant observation. The paper builds on examples from a research project with such a combined dataset (EDUCABLE). It looks into how young interviewees perform and position interactionally in interviews, illustrates how the insights from interviews vs observations about the same individuals are very different and discusses potential, more general, consequences of this for youth research.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 11

A person- and process-sensitive research design

General

Anette Bolin¹

Emma Sorbring¹

¹ Division of Social Work University West

Abstract text: As a discipline, Child and Youth Studies is characterized by (a) placing child agency in focus, and (b) use of innovative methods of data collection. In line with this tradition, we present a person- and process-sensitive (PPS) design that allows children and young people's voices to be heard, and that captures children's agency. PPS is a *flexible design* that involves the use of children's stories to provide insights into their experiences, and which can be adapted as the research process proceeds. Stories are told during interviews, which in turn can be flexibly calibrated with the unfolding narratives.

By interviewing children repeatedly, the "bigger story" is allowed to develop, and the interview becomes a context where children/young people are afforded a space of action within which to share and develop their experiences. As a responsive design, PPS accommodates the collection of material from sources not part of the original design, but which can valuably complement the child/young person's stories.

The PPS design aligns with the theory of epistemic injustice (Flicker, 2018) and the psychological work that Ovreide (2000) has conducted with children. The ambition is not only to generate a rich dataset, but also to enable the children/young people to leave the interview with an experience of meaningfulness. To achieve this, an important component of the PPS design is to formulate generative questions from which personal meaning can be constructed.

In the presentation, we describe how we work with the PPS design and provide examples from completed and ongoing projects.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 11

What Does Qualitative Longitudinal Research Give Back?

General

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Abstract text: This presentation reflects on an ongoing qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) project conducted in Finland (2018–2026), following 19 young adults (initial sample 40) positioned on the fringes of the labour market. Over seven years, the study has traced participants' transitions in education, employment, and everyday life, paying particular attention to uncertain trajectories. Rather than focusing solely on methodological and ethical challenges, this presentation turns to the project as a whole and asks: What has long-term participation in research meant for the young adults themselves? What does a longitudinal study give, and potentially take, from those who take part?

QLR offers sustained engagement, continuity, and recognition. Repeated encounters may provide participants with a structured space for reflection, narrative development, and temporal sense-making. Being followed over time can make life transitions visible not only to researchers but also to participants themselves. At the same time, long-term research relationships raise critical questions. Does repeated interviewing shape how participants understand their lives? Can the research process itself become normative, subtly guiding narratives, self-perceptions, or future imaginaries?

Drawing on empirical examples, we reflect on both the empowering and potentially constraining effects of longitudinal research participation. We consider how sustained research relationships may function as sites of recognition, reflexivity, and continuity in precarious life phases, while also examining the ethical ambivalences embedded in such engagements. By shifting the focus from data production to relational consequences, the presentation contributes to methodological debates in QLR and invites critical reflection on reciprocity, responsibility, and impact in long-term youth research.

Methodologies of temporality

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Methodologies of temporality

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 13

Retrospective Meaning-Making: Young People's Critical Events and Lived Realities

General

Kjersti Røsvik¹

¹ Universitetet i Sørøst-Norge

Abstract text: This paper presents a *critical events narrative approach* to explore how children and young people make sense of their everyday lives within institutional and societal structures. Grounded in narrative epistemology (Bruner, 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008), the approach understands experience as made meaningful through retrospective storytelling. Life does not present itself as a sequence of inherently significant moments; rather, events become “critical” when narrators later mark them as meaningful disruptions, recognitions, or turning points (Mertova & Webster, 2020; Polkinghorne, 1995). This conceptualisation positions critical events not as objective facts but as narrative constructions shaped through interpretive work by participants and researchers.

Drawing on two empirical studies—narrative interviews with young people with long-term child welfare services (CWS) involvement, and children's retrospective accounts of everyday life during the covid19 pandemic—the paper shows how critical events illuminate relational and institutional landscapes shaping young people's actions. In the CWS material, critical events condense experiences of stigma, exclusion from decision-making, or unexpected recognition by adults. In the covid19 narratives, critical events mark the moment ordinary routines fractured: first news of the virus, the first day of digital schooling, or a growing sense of isolation.

Across both studies, narrated critical events reveal structural conditions shaping young peoples lived realities—whether through institutional complexity, biopolitical regulation, or emotional burdens on children and families. The paper argues that a critical events narrative approach offers a valuable analytical lens for youth research, showing how identity, agency, and belonging are negotiated through storied ruptures that make everyday life intelligible.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 13

How is involving youth different? Beyond the Puff the Magic Dragon Problem

General

Jonathan Tritter¹

Ingunn Skjesol¹

¹ Nord University, Norway

Abstract text: Involving youth in the evaluation, development of services as well as in research is increasingly an imperative for researchers, policymakers and practitioners. Most existing approaches to involving youth rely on similar methods to those adopted with adults with limited acknowledgment of the differences between these populations. Drawing on our experience of youth involvement projects primarily relating to community development, in the UK and Norway we highlight some of the key differences. We go on to discuss the implications of these for both conceptualizing and implementing youth involvement.

A primary difference between involving youth and adults is that youth are, by definition, a transient population. Youth are defined by age and therefore long-term engagement is problematic. Young people are in the process of growing up and moving on to something and somewhere else. This creates challenges for both recruitment, training and retention. The focus on youth is often towards the future and away from the community where they grow up. This, we suggest, is the Puff the Magic Dragon problem.

“A dragon lives forever, but not so little boys
Painted wings and giant's rings make way for other toys”

(Peter, Paul and Mary, 1963)

An involvement process and the need for municipalities to undertake youth involvement is a continuous requirement. However, those who are involved go out of date and move on to other things. In this paper we consider this key tension and other distinctions from involving adults and propose both positive and negative consequences of these differences.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 13

Remembering Giftedness: Methodological Reflections on Interviewing Adults about Childhood Emotion

General

Buse Demirkan¹

¹ School of Geographical Sciences, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

Abstract text: This paper reflects on the methodological value of interviewing adults about their childhood experiences of giftedness. Within youth studies and children's geographies, retrospective approaches are often treated with caution, where memory and emotion are concerned. Childhood feelings are frequently assumed to fade over time or to become analytically unreliable. Drawing on my ongoing doctoral research, this paper questions these assumptions by showing how childhood experiences remain emotionally present in adulthood.

The paper is based on 19 retrospective life-story interviews with adults who were identified as "gifted" in childhood in England. Rather than treating memory as a flawed attempt to recover the past, the research approaches remembering as an interpretive and relational practice through which childhood is revisited and made sense of. Emotion is treated not as background context, but as analytic data, offering insight into how educational inequalities are felt, negotiated, and carried beyond schooling.

To illustrate this methodological contribution, the paper focuses on the theme of recognition and healing. Participants' accounts reveal how reflecting on childhood giftedness can enable a re-framing of educational experiences, often relocating feelings of pressure, failure, or exclusion from the self to the environments in which they occurred. This reflective process opens up space for emotional repair, highlighting the ethical potential of retrospective narrative approaches.

By foregrounding adult reflections on childhood, this paper contributes to methodological conversations in youth studies and children's geographies, showing that childhood can be studied through adulthood not as something lost to time, but as emotionally lived and spatially situated.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 13

Capturing imagined futures: methodological pluralism & methodological innovation in youth sociology

General

Evelyne Baillergeau¹

Marcelle Aardewerk¹

¹ University of Amsterdam

Abstract text: Young people have been socially expected to project themselves as agents in the future. However, while these future selves were previously largely shaped by societal institutions, including religion and family, the framing role of institutions for life plans has been challenged in many ways, leading (young) individuals to have increased responsibility to determine their identity, values and purpose. In times of polycrisis, potential futures seem more uncertain than before. How do young people navigate these tensions? Although (youth) sociologists have increasingly recognized the future as a social fact, researching emergent forms of meaning-making still seems not only challenging for quantitative sociology but also for the classical qualitative methods such as one-time interviewing and participant observation.

This paper addresses this puzzle by using a microsociological perspective, focused on the formation and development of future-oriented attitudes and inspired by Dewey and Schutz' interpretative sociology. This lead us to (a) consider that, in the current context, while potential futures have become pervasive and ubiquitous, there is a great deal of confusion in how we use words to depict future-oriented attitudes. Clarifying the vocabulary of potential futures helps situating agentic forms of future-oriented attitudes such as aspiring amidst other attitudes towards the future including anticipating, apprehending and hoping and to discuss how the power to act features across the respective attitudes towards the future (Baillergeau, 2024). Building on this clarification work, we discuss the potential of different ways to capture imagined futures, ranging from 'methodological pluralism' (Lamont & Swidler, 2014) to methodological innovation.

Transitions and future life paths of young people.

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Transitions and future life paths of young people.

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 16

Towards or against the pursued future? Critical incidents in years of emerging adulthood

General

Päivi Armila¹

Mari Käyhkö¹, Ville Pöysä¹

¹ University of Eastern Finland

Abstract text: Our presentation focuses on realization - or failure - of young people's hopes and plans during years of emerging adulthood. We present a longitudinal study of over ten years (2015-2025), during which the informants (n=13) reached the age of 25. Our understanding about the difficulties and successes faced by them accumulated continuously, as they were interviewed twice each year. In this analysis, we categorize life events incidents and social or spatial relationships that have helped them in proceeding towards desired conditions of early adulthood, as well as those having led to disappointments. Accounts concerning these were discussed within the last interviews where the informants' lives were scrutinized retrospectively. We have organized these accounts within a methodological tool CIM (Critical Incident Method) but also reflect them in the frame of events and relationships told to us during the course of the whole research. A lot of investigations have been done concerning young people's future visions and dreams, but examinations of what happens to those as lives progress are rare. In our data, the desired life conditions are almost trivial and quite common: stable working life positions, peaceful life with a partner, own houses and travelling possibilities. Despite the mundaneness of the wanted conditions they, however, are not always easy to reach, as many even traumatic and dramatic incidents can appear in life and make years of emerging adulthood hard to live through.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 16

The Life Paths of Finnish-Swedish Minority Youth – Similarities and Differences

General

Matilda Wrede-Jäntti¹

Sinikka Aapola-Kari^{1,2}

¹ University of Helsinki

² Finnish Youth Research Society

Abstract text: The *Youth in Time* project is a qualitative longitudinal study that has followed the lives of young people in Finland since 2015. Originally 28, an equal number of girls and boys, of the study's approximate 100 participants, were Swedish-speaking young Finns. They come from two regions: the capital area and a smaller coastal town.

Now, ten years later, the follow-up phase is complete. It is time to examine the participants' life paths and reflect on how belonging to a linguistic minority may have shaped their lives and choices. The Finnish-Swedish population is often described as economically secure and socially active, but does this perception hold for young people as well?

At the beginning of the study, we observed that many Swedish-speaking participants were especially active during their leisure time. They were engaged in several goal-oriented hobbies that enabled them to accumulate considerable social and cultural capital. However, this was not the case for all young people in the study.

For some, belonging to a linguistic minority created challenges—particularly when trying to find suitable study options in their own language near their hometown. At the same time, being Swedish-speaking also lowers the threshold to study abroad, especially in Sweden.

As young adults, the Finnish-Swedish participants in many ways find themselves in a situation similar to that of their Finnish-speaking peers, searching for their place in (working) life. However, they also need to navigate as Swedish-speaking individuals in the Finnish society.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 16

Future dreams and hesitations of young people in East Helsinki

General

Tarja Tolonen¹

¹ University of Helsinki

Abstract text: This presentation focuses on young people's dreams about the future, including their aspirations for education and career, as well as their thoughts on their social and material lives and lifestyles. This research is part of the project "Young People's Future Dreams and Transitions – Belonging to Communities and Society" (Kone Foundation). In our ethnographically inspired qualitative research in East Helsinki, we conducted interviews in schools, youth work settings, and other organizations. The data includes 34 interviews (with 46 participants) of 16-22-year-olds, primarily from racialized minorities and working-class families.

East Helsinki is a socio-economically diverse area; however, in public discourse, culture, and politics, it is often represented as a stigmatized place of disadvantage and seen as a potential breeding ground for youth crime. In addition, previous research states, that young people's visions for the future in these kinds of areas are bleak. This study, on the contrary, shows that young people have high hopes and ambitious dreams for their future careers, as well as other aspects of life, even they do recognize the potential risks and experience hesitation regarding their future dreams.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 16

Renegotiating belonging in youth transitions: Agency and identity among Roma young women

General

Fanni Maszlag PhD¹

¹ ELTE Faculty of Education and Psychology, Institute of Research on Adult Education and Knowledge Management

Abstract text: Youth transitions are increasingly shaped by structural inequalities that influence access to education, employment, and belonging. This paper examines how third-generation Roma young women in Hungary navigate these transitions and negotiate belonging across social contexts. Focusing on young women born in the 1990s, the study explores how ethnic identity is experienced, reshaped, and strategically mobilized during key youth transitions, particularly in education and entry into the labour market.

The paper draws on qualitative research conducted among three generations of Roma women in traditionally marginalized communities. The findings show that youth transitions involve not only structural mobility but also identity negotiation. As young women move into educational and professional institutions, they encounter expectations that require adaptation while maintaining a sense of continuity with their social and cultural background. Traditional identity markers become less visible, while cultural belonging is increasingly expressed through flexible, situational, and symbolic forms. Rather than experiencing identity loss, young women actively manage their belonging across institutional and social spaces. They develop strategies to navigate stigma, exclusion, and opportunity, selectively expressing or downplaying aspects of their identity depending on context. This reflects not assimilation, but a dynamic process of negotiating belonging under conditions of inequality.

The paper argues that youth transitions among marginalized young people must be understood not only as structural processes but also identity processes. By highlighting the agency of Roma young women, the study contributes to youth research debates on inequality, belonging, and youth transitions, showing how young people construct pathways into adulthood within constrained environments.

Intimate precarities

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Intimate precarities

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:15, Where: Lecture hall 17

Economics matters: framings of abuse and care among young adults

General

Linnéa Bruno¹

¹ Stockholm University

Abstract text:

This paper presents an ongoing study exploring the relationship between wider economic circumstances, economic abuse and intimate partner violence in young adults' intimate relationships. Economic abuse is a prevalent type of abuse in intimate relationships, yet it is often overlooked. It includes control, exploitation, sabotage, or neglect that harm the victim financially, and may include both criminal and legal acts. How do young adults frame and negotiate economic matters, economic abuse, care and bodily integrity in relation to criminalised types of intimate partner violence such as physical and sexual violence? Research focusing on economic abuse in the Nordic countries is scarce and is mainly based on qualitative interviews with middle-aged women who have experienced victimisation. Researchers have virtually not researched economic abuse from youth perspectives in the Nordic countries. The study is situated in the Swedish welfare state and adopts an intersectional framework. In addition to its empirical contribution, it is expected that the study will contribute to theoretical development of interdisciplinary violence studies as well as to critical youth studies.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:15 - 17:45, Where: Lecture hall 17

Compensated dating in Demark

General

Jeanett Bjønness¹

¹ Centre for alcohol and drug research, Aarhus University

Abstract text: In Denmark, institutions working with young people who engage in compensated dating/sugardating, increasingly frame as their main task to teach young people, especially young women, to take care of their own bodies and borders. The demand side, the so called ‘daddies’ are not in focus, including the fact that to buy sex from a person under 18 years, is illegal, and a sexual assault.

This paper presents some of the main findings from interviews with 130 young people (15-30 years, 2019-2025) engaging in sex for compensation in Denmark, many of them having their first experience at the age of 13-14 years. The respondents constitute a diverse group in terms of social background, motivation, ethnicity and gender identification, though with an overrepresentation of young people in vulnerable positions and LGBTQ+ people. These young people often describe an upbringing characterized by family instability, many school changes and bullying as the direct reason to begin to seek recognition and community outside of family and school, often initially with young men a few years older than themselves, and involving sex for shelter, drugs, money or recognition.

The paper discusses the young participants own narratives about ambivalent, though often transgressive, relations with older men in compensated dating, and their recommendations to politicians and the general public to focus more on how sexual diversity is taught in school, to discuss more restrictive laws regarding social media and dating platforms, includig age verification, and finally to listen more carefully to the voices of young people in general.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:45 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 17

Sexuality as risk – exploring the construction of risk when girls run away from residential care

General

Ann-Karina Henriksen¹

¹ Department of Social Work, Copenhagen University College

Abstract text: Youths running away from residential care is a well-documented phenomenon resulting in professional concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of the child. This presentation focuses on the construction of gendered risk among professionals trying to understand and handle situations of girls running away from care. Running away is not uncommon in foster and residential care. It becomes critical in the view of professionals due to a combination of risk factors such as young age, risk exposure, limited contact and long periods of going missing. Drawing on feminist theory, we show how concerns about running away merge with concerns about sexual abuse, while also tapping into discourses of female sexuality, promiscuity and the regulation of female bodies.

The presentation is based on findings from a qualitative study on why youth run away from residential care in Denmark and professional responses to prevent and handle these critical situations. The data consists of focus group discussions with care staff and youths from 8 residential institutions, semi-structured interviews with 18 youths who have experienced running away and focus groups discussions supplemented by individual interview with 10 case managers. The analysis combines perspectives from girls, care workers and case managers to provide a nuanced understanding of how the construction of sexuality as risk contributes to stigmatize girls and potentially exacerbate their positions of marginality.

Privilege and marginalization

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Privilege and marginalization

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 18

Open in Principle, Closed in Practice? Understanding Non-Participation in Public Youth Clubs

General

Mira Aaboen Sletten¹

Patrick Lie Andersen¹

¹ NOVA – Norwegian Social Research, OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract text: Publicly funded youth clubs hold a long-standing and distinctive role within Nordic youth work, functioning both as welfare services and as arenas for youth cultural expression. While approximately one in three Norwegian adolescents aged 13–15 attends a youth club, far less is known about the participation potential among non-users. This paper examines why many young people remain outside the youth club arena, drawing on recent survey data from nearly 15,000 lower secondary students in Oslo.

Existing research shows that youth clubs often attract adolescents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and minority groups, yet practitioners emphasize that clubs function best with heterogeneous membership. This raises important questions: In which segments of the youth population is the current potential for participation greatest? What are the most common reasons for non-participation, and do these vary across different groups of non-users? Is non-attendance primarily a matter of competing leisure priorities, or do some young people experience the club as a socially or symbolically closed space? While spatial openness is a guiding ideal in youth work, this may not align with how clubs are perceived externally.

To explore these issues, respondents in the Young in Oslo-survey were asked whether they wished to participate in a youth club in the future, followed by a range of proposed explanations for not attending. The study offers new insights into latent demand, perceived barriers and how adolescents conceptualize the accessibility of publicly funded leisure spaces.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 18

Classed meanings of higher education across generations

General

Ingunn Eriksen¹

Jon Rogstad¹

¹ NOVA, Oslo Metropolitan university

Abstract text: After the post-war period, higher education in Norway was primarily seen as a pathway to economic security and social status. For the later generations, this expanded to include broader ideals of personal development and autonomy. In this paper, we examine what today's middle- and upper-class parents and their 20-year-old children think that higher education is for.

We draw on interviews with participants from two of four sites from the qualitative longitudinal Inequality in youth-programme. The selection comprises young middle- and upper-class participants followed from age 12 to 20 (n=40) and their parents (n=16).

Our findings suggest that both middle- and upper-class parents frame education as a route to meaning and personal growth. They encourage their children to relax and explore, drawing on their own experience of privilege of wealth and institutional timing, and their sense that things will work out. Young people's understanding of the point of higher education, however, appears more classed. Middle-class youths see higher education as a necessary but risky pathway toward economic security. In contrast, upper-class young people express optimism and low anxiety about their possibilities of education and future security, supported by substantial family resources.

The parents' emphasis on meaning and growth reflects educational experiences shaped by earlier opportunity structures. The upper-class youths share this ease even in more austere times; their substantial resources may increase the likelihood of future security and success. In the middle class there is a generational gap between parents' and young people's orientation; the children cannot afford a similar ease.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 18

A Double Perspective on Marginalized Youth and Researchers' Participation in Everyday Practice

General

Charlotte Vange Løvstad^{1, 2, 3}

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² Silla Marie Mørch Sievers, smms@pha.dk, Associate professor, Ph.d., University College Absalon, Department of Social Work

³ Astrid Kidde Larsen Nørgaard, akn@via.dk, Associate professor, Ph.d., VIA University College, Research Center Pedagogy and Participation.

Abstract text: This presentation explores participation as a double perspective in an ongoing research project with marginalized youth, often categorized as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) (Kleif, 2021). We examine how young people's participation in the research and researchers' possibilities for participating in everyday practice mutually shape both empirical material and knowledge production.

Methodologically, the study draws on participant observation in social pedagogical institutions, following everyday practices and producing empirical material concerning participants lived social experiences (Hastrup, 2010). Theoretically, participation is conceptualized through a combination of Wenger's (2004) understanding of participation as meaning-making in communities of practice, Weick's (1995) notion of sense-making under conditions of uncertainty, and social pedagogy as a situated, relational practice oriented toward supporting change (Hämäläinen, 2012; Rothuizen & Harbo, 2017).

Through empirical vignettes, we illustrate movements by both young people and researchers within everyday practices and show how conditions for participation are continuously negotiated and transformed. We demonstrate that trust is crucial—not only as a situated relational practice enabling young people's participation and researchers' access to the field, but also as an institutional condition embedded in organizational relations with the surrounding environment.

Finally, participants' experiences emerge as situated and meaning-bearing, understood as processes of sense-making (Rendtorff, 2013; Weick, 1995). Meaningful participation arises within contextual practices grounded in values of equality, equal access to support, and the right to be oneself (Løvstad, 2025).

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 18

Beyond Being Heard: How Mattering Shapes Youth Co-Research Participation

General

Mona Sommer¹

Terese Wilhelmsen², Vibeke Krane¹, Erwan Stephane Beaudoin¹, Marie Lien Halvorsen¹, Simon Karlsen Pedersen¹, Sebastian Eugen Uppstrøm¹

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² University of South-Eastern Norway, Department of Educational Science, Faculty of Humanities, Sports and Educational Science, Norway

Abstract text: While youth involvement in research is growing, young people's own reflections on what makes their participation meaningful remain underexplored. Grounded in mattering theory (feeling valued and adding value) and empowerment perspectives, this study examines young co-researchers experiences of mattering within the youth panel in the collaborative project SOBRU - *Social Sustainability and Reduced Exclusion*, examining social inclusion of youth in NEET positions. Dialogical workshops and panel meetings revealed mattering through meaningful work and societal contribution, personal development and mastery, and experiences of community and belonging. Key enabling conditions included thoughtful facilitation, safe relational spaces, genuine influence on research processes, and opportunities for public dissemination. Mattering enriches empowerment frameworks by foregrounding relational and emotional dimensions alongside agency. The findings offer practical guidance for youth co-research, including financial compensation, flexible tax design, power-sharing, and strategies to ensure youth visibility throughout research phases.

Youth and professionals in institutional settings

2026-10-20

16:45 - 18:15

Youth and professionals in institutional settings

When: 2026-10-20, 16:45 - 17:07, Where: Lecture hall 19

Occupational well-being in youth work

General

Minna Rauas^{1, 2}

¹ Tampere University, / Faculty of Social Sciences / Finland

² The Finnish Youth Research Society / Finland

Abstract text: My forthcoming doctoral dissertation examines occupational well-being in youth work from a new perspective: the profession is seen not only as a category that connects workers, but also as an independent factor that impacts occupational well-being. The study is based on the premise that well-being at work is constructed not only at the individual and work community levels, but also through professional practices, historical structures, and the societal position of youth work.

The research is based on a constructionist approach, viewing occupational well-being in youth work as something that is built through the meanings and shared practices produced by professionals. The data consist of three focus group discussions (52 participants) and a nationwide survey (421 respondents).

The findings show that youth work has established professional practices that both support and weaken occupational well-being. A sense of meaningfulness, positive relationships with young people, and professional autonomy enhance well-being. However, occupational well-being is also affected by structural weaknesses and unclear work tasks.

Young people play an important role in occupational well-being: they motivate, bring joy, and give purpose to the work. At the same time, the growing well-being challenges faced by young people and societal expectations of integration increase the demands of the job.

The main conclusion of the research is that professional occupational well-being in youth work is an important perspective that has previously received too little attention.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:07 - 17:29, Where: Lecture hall 19

Collaborative Workspaces as Youthspaces in peripheralized Regions of the EU

General

Dimitris Manoukas^{1,2}

Nikos Gatsinos³

¹ Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Polytechnic of Milan, Milan, Italy

² Department of Communication, Media, and Culture, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece

³ Department of Geography and Regional Science, University of Graz, Graz, Austria

Abstract text: This article explores the roles of collaborative workspaces (CWS) in engaging the youth in peripheralized regions of the European Union. Adopting social constructivist approaches to both “peripheries” and to “youth,” we understand the former as socially, economically, and culturally produced places which are framed as powerless and left behind. Similarly, we understand the youth as a liminal life phase of transition toward autonomy, bridging childhood and adulthood, which should not be understood as either linear or uniform.

Peripheralized regions of the EU are associated with youth inactivity, which is connected to low-quality education services and structurally weak labour markets, among others. Against this backdrop, we focus on three heavily peripheralized EU regions (Extremadura, Western Greece, and Sicily). By applying qualitative methodologies (interviews, participant observation, focus groups), we look at collaborative workspaces (e.g. coworking spaces, creative hubs) as inviting spaces where youth is engaged in work, education, and social activities.

Our initial findings suggest that collaborative workspaces, especially community-led and -oriented ones, can function as infrastructures of engagement for the youth: the latter benefits from this engagement by attaining otherwise unattainable educational activities (e.g. arts workshops), by developing a sense of community through involvement in voluntary community work, and by finding employment opportunities (e.g. through events and/or networks). Based on the above, we also discuss potential roles of CWS in local policy frameworks and the role of the concept of “youth engagement” in relation to employability, the commons, and community involvement.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:29 - 17:51, Where: Lecture hall 19

Involving young people in record creation – from passive subjects to active agents?

General

Mette Larsen¹

¹ ISE/Department of Social Sciences and Business, Roskilde University

Abstract text: Although young people's experiences of being described by professionals are central to understanding their encounters with the welfare system, this area remains under-examined in Danish and Nordic research (Villumsen 2022). Formerly placed young people describe feeling powerless and unable to influence what adults wrote about them— experiences some compared to bullying (Larsen 2022).

Since the Children's Act came into force in January 2024, Danish municipalities have been required to strengthen children's participation in their own cases, including increasing attention to written casework. Professionals are thus experimenting with new documentation practices, such as writing directly to young people and involving them in producing texts about their lives. While these initiatives are generally viewed positively by professionals, little is known about how young people themselves experience them.

Drawing on findings from fieldwork at two youth homes and a crisis centre, this presentation examines how to gain insight into young people's perspectives on what is written about them, while also including the professionals who produce these texts—without compromising the relationships involved. Acknowledging that record creation is sensitive for both young people and professionals, the presentation explores the methodological and ethical considerations that arise in such research.

With a theoretical point of departure in positioning theory (Davies & Harré 1990), the study investigates how young people and professionals position one another when discussing concrete texts, and whether new documentation practices may be understood as processes of co-creation with the potential to foster more equitable and trust-based relationships between young people and professionals.

When: 2026-10-20, 17:51 - 18:15, Where: Lecture hall 19

Testimonial (In)justice in Young People's Expert-by-Experience Activities in Child Welfare Services

General

Tanja Koskinen¹

¹ University of Helsinki, Faculty of Social Sciences, Finland

Abstract text: In Finland, the participation of young people and the use of their experiential knowledge have been increasingly emphasized in child welfare. One form of participation available to young people is expert-by-experience (EBE) activities, which aim to integrate lived experience into service development, yet it remains unclear how this goal is realized in practice.

This paper presents preliminary findings from a study examining how young EBEs position themselves within child welfare EBE activities, and if and how testimonial (in)justice becomes visible through these positions. Nineteen young people with lived experience of child welfare took part in semi-structured interviews and group discussions, which were analyzed using positioning theory. The analysis identified two interlinked positions. In the *empowered peer position*, participants described shared experience as a transformative space where their narratives were validated and recognized by peers. This position fostered testimonial justice by granting credibility to young people's accounts and enabling them to reclaim agency over their experiences. In contrast, *the precarious labor market position* framed experiential knowledge as potential professional capital while simultaneously exposing the insecurity, selectivity, and competition surrounding who is invited to use their experience in EBE activities. Testimonial injustice surfaced when some young people's experiences or capacities were privileged over others, generating power tensions between young EBEs

These preliminary findings illustrate how EBE activities can simultaneously empower and marginalize young people. The study highlights the need to develop more equitable, secure, and inclusive structures for recognizing young people's experiential knowledge within child welfare and youth-centered participatory practices.

**Symposium. Exploring Youth Experiences of Racialization and Belonging:
Methodological, Ethical, and Theoretical Challenges**

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Symposium. Exploring Youth Experiences of Racialization and Belonging: Methodological, Ethical,
and Theoretical Challenges

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 8

How Youth Bystander Positions Are Produced in Racialized School Contexts?

2. Exploring Youth Experiences of Racialization and Belonging: Methodological, Ethical, and Theoretical Challenges

Mimi Petersen¹

¹ University College Copenhagen, Denmark

Abstract text: Abstract

How are young people's bystander positions produced through the interaction of peer norms, institutional practices, and racialized moral economies? This paper addresses this question by examining how lower-secondary pupils (ages 13–15) in two Danish school settings negotiate bystander positions when witnessing racial slurs, microaggressions, and discriminatory jokes in everyday school life. Rather than understanding bystanding as a fixed behavioral role or an individual moral failure, the paper conceptualizes bystander (in)action as a situated and relational practice shaped by peer norms, institutional cues, and racialized hierarchies of legitimacy.

Theoretically, the analysis brings classical bystander theory (Latané & Darley, 1970) into dialogue with situational accounts of passivity (Zimbardo, 2007), Philomena Essed's concept of everyday racism (1991), research on racial microaggressions (Sue, 2010), and sociological work on youth moral economies of loyalty and risk (Gini et al., 2015).

Empirically, the paper draws on qualitative interviews with pupils from an urban and a provincial Danish lower-secondary school. Across both contexts, three interrelated mechanisms emerge as central to the production of bystander positions: pupils' perceptions of teacher fairness and response efficacy; peer norms framing discriminatory remarks as "just joking"; and a pervasive stigma around "snitching" that constructs intervention as disloyalty. Together, these mechanisms constitute a racialized moral ecology in which silence often appears as the most socially viable option.

The paper reflects on how to research racialized harm with young people without reproducing vulnerability or imposing adult-centric framing. The paper contributes a youth-centred, mechanism-oriented account of how bystander positions are socially and institutionally produced.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 8

“It feels very uncomfortable” – Young people’s accounts of ethnic discrimination

2. Exploring Youth Experiences of Racialization and Belonging: Methodological, Ethical, and Theoretical Challenges

Üzeyir Tireli¹

¹ Københavns Professionshøjskole

Abstract text: Ethnic discrimination in Danish school and leisure settings remains underexamined in debates about the role of schools as social and cultural environments, despite recent Danish studies documenting significant consequences for students’ academic participation, sense of belonging, and wellbeing. This paper investigates the research question: *How do students in 7th and 8th grade, particularly those with minority ethnic backgrounds experience ethnic discrimination in everyday arenas, and what can school and professionals do in this regard?*

The paper draws on an ongoing qualitative study with data generated in spring 2025 at two public schools in Copenhagen and Region of Zealand. The broader data corpus includes semi-structured interviews, participant observations and student assignments. This abstract focuses on one delimited part of the data: student letters addressed to institutional actors (e.g. the Prime Minister, mayor, school leader), in which students describe experiences of racism through the narrative device of “a friend or acquaintance”. These letters are treated as situated experiential data that illuminate how students interpret, feel, and manage racialisation and discrimination in everyday life.

Preliminary analyses, informed by Critical Race Theory and research on racialisation in Danish school contexts, suggest that discrimination is often described as subtle, normalised, and emotionally burdensome. Students frequently position themselves as responsible for coping with such experiences, while simultaneously articulating clear expectations for institutional intervention, pedagogical support and adult responsibility. The paper contributes new empirical knowledge on student perspectives on racialisation, belonging, and exclusion in Danish school and urban spaces.

When: 2026-10-21, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 8

Social Dynamics among Youth in the Light of Racialization. Methodological Considerations

2. Exploring Youth Experiences of Racialization and Belonging: Methodological, Ethical, and Theoretical Challenges

Lene Kathrine Kofoed¹

Vibe Larsen²

¹ University College Absalon, Centre for School and Learning

² University College Copenhagen, Department of Social Education

Abstract text: This paper explores methodological ways of grasping racialization processes and how such processes shape dynamics of belonging and exclusion, and sentiments of loyalty and solidarity among youth.

Our ethnography revolves around the personal narratives of students from four classes, grade 7-8. The narratives were elicited through interviews and a range of complementary classroom-based activities designed to capture everyday social interaction and meaning-making processes: an individual assignment on ethnic and national identity in the interplay between belonging as politics and as affective structure (Yuval-Davis, 2006), and a group activity on privilege, inspired by norm-criticism (Jensen & Kofoed, 2023). Does this multimodal qualitative approach address social dynamics shaped by racialization?

In the presentation, we foreground methodological considerations, yet methodology cannot be separated from the ethical and theoretical dimensions of knowledge production. We will discuss a fundamental question about what forms of knowledge qualitative method enables, and an ethical pitfall: will our approach to racialization reproduce fixed positions and hierarchies, rather than disrupting them? A post migratory framework (Schramm et al, 2019) aims at disrupting taken-for-granted loyalties, shuffling categories and enabling new alliances. Can this approach further our understanding of how hierarchy and loyalty patterns affect social dynamics and the potential for solidarity and new alliances among the youth?

Jensen&Kofoed(2023). Multikulturel, interkulturel og normkritisk pædagogik i skolen. *Pædagogisk Håndbog*

Larsen et al(2026). *Litteraturreview af studier om 13-16-åriges erfaringer og oplevelser med diskrimination og racisme*. NUBU.

Schramm(2019). *Reframing Migration, Diversity and the Arts*. Routledge

Yuval-Davis(2006). Belonging and the politics of belonging. *Pattern of Prejudice*, 40(3)

Sustainability: Consumption, activism and climate crisis

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Sustainability: Consumption, activism and climate crisis

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:22, Where: Lecture hall 11

Engaging young voices: Insights from researching children's climate imaginaries in Iceland

General

Rannveig Ágústa Guðjónsdóttir¹

¹ University of Iceland/Faculty of Education and Diversity at the School of Education

Abstract text: While children and young people are routinely invoked in media and political debates as inheritors of the planet, we rarely hear directly from these young stakeholders about their lived experiences of a changing climate or their creative aspirations for the future of the planet and just transitions. This interdisciplinary project, co-designed with Brunel University and the University of Iceland, addresses this gap by foregrounding the voices of children and parents across diverse family types and geographical regions of Iceland. Theoretically, I adopt a relational approach to studying family dynamics, centring everyday practices and relationships to illuminate gendered and intergenerational inequalities and power dynamics within families. In this presentation, I will examine the opportunities and limitations of using participatory arts-based methods, specifically creative story-writing activities, to engage young people as active research participants rather than passive subjects. I will reflect on ethical considerations and discuss how these methods need to be carefully adapted for a wide range of developmental ages. Finally, I will consider what these methodological choices reveal about the possibilities and constraints of conducting child-centred, family-focused qualitative research on climate change.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:22 - 09:44, Where: Lecture hall 11

Weak and Strong Sustainability in Students' Perceptions of Sustainable Consumption

General

Niko Varjola¹

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² University of Turku, Faculty of Social Sciences, Economic Sociology, Finland

³ Hanken School of Economics, Department of Marketing, Finland

Abstract text: Sustainable consumption is widely seen as key to a sustainable future, yet its meaning remains contested, particularly in relation to weak (WS) and strong (SS) sustainability. Although adolescents are often positioned as central to sustainability transitions, it remains unclear how their views on sustainable consumption and sustainability align within the WS–SS framework. By drawing on two qualitative datasets, group interviews (n=28, aged 13-16) and student-written texts (n=114, aged 12-16), we found that students primarily defined sustainable consumption through recycling and environmentally friendly purchasing, reflecting a WS-oriented view. Simultaneously, many emphasized collective responsibility and expressed SS-oriented views on limiting resource use and reducing consumption. Responses also revealed two different kinds of hybrid positions. The weak hybrid position challenged SS-oriented practices in relation to meeting basic human needs and supported reducing consumption only until greener options are available. In contrast, the stronger hybrid position included a view in which greener substitution was framed as a step toward broader change, and while SS-oriented practices were viewed critically, they were still seen as necessary to build a more sustainable future. These findings suggest that sustainability orientation in adolescence may evolve through transitional stages rather than a direct shift from WS to SS. Thus, for sustainability education and policy to promote SS-oriented thinking among adolescents may require engaging with adolescents' existing hybrid positions rather than assuming a simple progression from WS to SS.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:44 - 10:06, Where: Lecture hall 11

Youth Environmental Mobilization in Political Institutions: Agenda seeding and backstage activism

General

Jonathan Josefsson¹

Frida Buhre²

¹ Linköping University

² Uppsala University

Abstract text: While children and youth in recent years have become the front figures of environmental action, and will be the most effected by environmental change, their participation in democratic decision-making on environmental governance is severely restricted because of age. Young people under the age of majority can in most countries neither vote, nor stand for office, and young adults are heavily underrepresented in parliaments and cabinets globally (Eichhorn & Bergh 2021; Stockemer & Sundstrom 2022). In addition, recent years have witnessed an harshened policing of public space, legal restrictions on civil society and a decrease of public funding for environmental projects and youth organisations (Gordon 2024; Nurse 2025). Still, young environmental activists mobilize into different democratic arenas to push for more forceful emission mitigation and protection of ecosystems. In this paper we build on semi structured interviews with 15 representatives of Swedish environmental youth organizations together with analysis of parliamentary records to examine what strategies and routes young environmental activists use to mobilize towards political institutions in Sweden. Focus is put on the ways in which structural and practical conditions (Buhre & Josefsson, 2025) affect how they approach political parties, the government and specialized agencies. The results indicate that, while the engagement in disruptive protests repertoires have declined, environmental youth organizations are navigating a new political landscape where bureaucratic agenda seeding, backstage activism and grass-root organizing appear to experience a revival.

Contemporary youth cultures

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Contemporary youth cultures

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:22, Where: Lecture hall 13

‘Jihad Girl Power’? Exploring ISIS-Affiliated Female Subcultures on Social Media

General

Karla Malm¹

¹ University of Helsinki

Abstract text: In this paper, I explore ISIS-affiliated subcultures on social media and propaganda targeted at Western female audiences. This subcultural phenomenon, which is sometimes referred to as ‘Jihad Girl Power’, peaked in 2014 and its immediate aftermath when ISIS proclaimed a ‘caliphate’ in the areas under its control and called all Muslims around the world to travel to its territories. According to ISIS, this was *hijrah* – a journey from a non-religious country to an Islamic one, regarded as a religious duty of every Muslim. This included women and underage girls, even if their parents forbade them to travel.

Although the majority of those who left from Western countries were men, the number of women and girls supporting ISIS was unprecedented. On average, the women who travelled to the area were younger than the men, and a larger proportion of them were minors.

‘Jihad Girl Power’ as a subcultural online phenomenon has evolved over time, but it still does exist and continues to offer something meaningful to its audiences – both for those who left at the time and for new generations. I analyze ISIS-related posts published on social media, methodologically employing the concept of counternarrative. In my research, I am interested in how a subculture that is seen as undesirable and even dangerous within adult-centred society attracts young people. Why may young women choose to support a widely condemned terrorist organisation known for its spectacular violence and patriarchal ideology? What does this subculture provide that the surrounding society clearly does not?

When: 2026-10-21, 09:22 - 09:44, Where: Lecture hall 13

Tractor Girls: Youth culture, girlhood and resistance in rural A-tractor cultures

General

Susanna Areschoug¹

Peter Hultgren²

¹ Department of Child and Youth Studies, Stockholm University

² Department of Social Work, Linnaeus University

Abstract text: In Sweden, A-/EPA-tractor culture has emerged as a rapidly growing and widely debated youth cultural phenomenon. Increased media attention has been driven by a rising number of traffic accidents involving tractors, as well as the controversial music genre known as EPA-dunk. Traditionally associated with young rural men, tractor culture has recently undergone notable shifts, as an increasing number of girls have begun driving A-tractors and engaging with the culture's practices, aesthetics, and forms of identification (Alemir et al., 2023). Over the past four years, the number of registered A-tractors driven by youth aged 15–18 has more than doubled (Trafikanalys, 2024), extending beyond rural areas into suburban regions and larger cities.

Despite its growing visibility and participation, Swedish tractor cultures remain relatively underexplored in academic research. The present study examines contemporary Swedish youth culture through a feminist lens, focusing on how intersectional girlhood is constructed within A-tractor cultures. Building on interviews with girls in rural A-/EPA-tractor contexts in the South of Sweden, this paper explores experiences of tractor driving and investigates how tractor subcultures shape, enable and constrain different forms of contemporary girlhood. It analyzes how tractor cultures are (re)formed through broad societal influences, including gender norms, classed rural–urban dynamics and youth resistance.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:44 - 10:06, Where: Lecture hall 13

Is This Real, or Just for Show? Discourses of Authenticity Among Hungarian Alternative Music Fans

General

Luca Turda¹

András Déri², Andrea Szabó³

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² Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Institute of Research on Adult Education and Knowledge Management

³ ELTE Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Political Science

Abstract text: Popular music can become an important arena for political expression among young people, particularly in contexts where formal channels of participation are perceived as limited or ineffective. Our presentation explores how authenticity is interpreted and debated within fan communities of Hungarian system-critical alternative music scenes, focusing on concerts and festivals as key sites of cultural and political meaning-making.

Based on qualitative research with young audiences (two focus groups, two pair interviews and two single interviews in the 2024 cycle of the research and four focus groups in 2026), we examine how fans evaluate artists' public and on-stage political expressions. Across cases, authenticity emerges as a central value, associated with perceived personal involvement, consistency between artistic identity and public action, and the willingness to assume symbolic or reputational risk. Within this framework, the presentation approaches performative activism as an everyday interpretive concept through which audiences assess the authenticity of political engagement.

Our findings indicate that critical discourses of authenticity - framing political gestures as strategic, market-driven, or insufficiently consequential - are particularly strong. At the same time, positive and ambivalent interpretations also appear, especially when political expressions are experienced as emotionally resonant or collectively empowering. These moments highlight how political meaning is produced not only discursively, but also through shared affect, atmosphere, and embodied participation.

In conclusion, we argue that certain concerts and festivals increasingly function as politically charged cultural spaces, where playful and collective forms of expression allow young audiences to experiment with belonging, dissent, and moral positioning through cultural participation.

When: 2026-10-21, 10:06 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 13

Identity and communality? Young people engaged in hip hop culture in the 21st century

General

Elina Westinen¹

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society, Helsinki, Finland

Abstract text: In this paper, I explore the construction of identity and communality in hip hop culture, as experienced by young people living in Finland. Based on extensive studies, we know much about the positive impacts of music on well-being (Fancourt & Finn 2019). In earlier research, music has proved to be an essential instrument for the identity construction of young people (Bennett, 2000), in particular; music has a significant role also in the everyday life of Finnish youth (Purhonen et al. 2014). While most hip hop research has thus far focused on the artist perspective, young fans' engagement with rap music and hip hop culture has remained in a rather marginal role both globally and locally (Androutsopoulos 2009; Sykäri et al. 2019).

The data consist of interviews we have conducted with young people (aged between 15 and 29) in different parts of Finland and photos and videos the young people have taken of their everyday life with hip hop.

This study is set in a context where rap music, the most prolific element of hip hop culture, has been demonized by various societal institutions, most notably the police and the media. The purpose of this paper is to delve into the positive aspects of this culture for young people, by prioritizing the voices and experiences of young people themselves.

Media and digital practices: Trust, affect and gender

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Media and digital practices: Trust, affect and gender

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 15

Platformization of intensive parenting – the double nature of relational trust

General

Victoria De Leon Born¹

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¹ University of Oslo, Department of Education, Norway

² OsloMet, Department of Early Childhood Education, Norway

Abstract text: The rise of digital platforms has reshaped family life, a process recently theorized as the platformisation of the family (Sefton-Green et al 2025), aiming to understand how family practices and ideals shape and are shaped by the ubiquity of digital technologies. This study investigates this dynamic by exploring how Norwegian teens and teen parents reflect on parents' use of digital location-tracking technologies (DLT) like SnapMap, Strava, View360 and FindMy- apps. Through their narratives, we investigate how DLT shape norms and ideals pertaining to young people's autonomy. Focusing on discourses of intensive parenting, as these pertain to dilemmas of parental involvement and young people's autonomy, we analyse in-depth individual interviews with 13 teenagers and pre-teens (12-17 years old) and 14 teen parents (see PlatFAMs digitalfamilies.eu). These interviews describe how young people and their parents evaluate parents' use and non-use of digital location tracking technologies on their teen- children.

Analyses show that both the use and non-use of DLT is intertwined with the articulation of trust as central to the youth-parent relationship: reciprocal trust is evoked to *counter* what are framed as invasive family practices of surveillance but was paradoxically also evoked by both youth and parents to justify radical data transparency between generations. Youth autonomy is still central to the youth-parent relationship, but as an ideal, its traditional connotations are challenged by the presence of DLT and is increasingly difficult to realise when DLT presents opportunities to keep parents constantly in the know.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 15

"15 seconds": Young people's viewpoints on science communication in the affective attention economy

General

Heta Mulari¹

¹ Tampere University, Criminology and Criminal Policy, Finland

Abstract text: During recent years, social media (especially TikTok) has become Finnish young people's most important platform for accessing news and informative content; moreover, 13–18-year-olds claim that short videos are their favourite way of consuming news (Sihvonen et al., 2025). Consequently, co-developing science communication and communicating research findings to young people on social media platforms is a complex and timely challenge. Relying on digital youth studies (Southerton & McLean, 2025) and science communication studies (Portman et al., 2025) and drawing from qualitative data from workshops and interviews with 13–17-year-olds, this presentation examines young people's perspectives on science communication on social media: platforms, short video formats, and audiovisual styles. Further, specific attention is paid on how to ethically communicate findings regarding sensitive research topics, such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the affective attention economy. The presentation draws from the research project ACElife, which studies the nature and consequences of ACEs broadly.

References

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Southerton, C., & McLean, J. (2025). "I feel like I get something else to think about": How do Australian young people see their relationship with TikTok? *Children's Geographies*, 23(5), 580–593.

When: 2026-10-21, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 15

Logging out of Equality: The construction of gender norms in online gaming

General

Karolin Moberg¹

Christer Hyggen¹

¹ NOVA, OsloMet

Abstract text: Norwegian adolescents grow up in a welfare state where gender equality is institutionalized as a foundational societal value (Ministry of Culture and Equality, 2024). Yet in the digital leisure spaces they frequent, the egalitarian ethos seems absent. Research indicates that online gaming communities often sustain aggressive, sexist, and exclusionary norms, shaping participation and identity in ways that disadvantage women and non-binary players (Vergel, La Parra-Casado, & Vives-Cases, 2024; Adefope & Bayraktar, 2025; Zhou & Peterson, 2025).

In this article we unpack this paradox by examining the mechanisms through which online gaming contexts challenge gender equality among Norwegian youths. Empirically we rely on interviews with 50 adolescents aged 15-23 years old, and one year of field work at a Norwegian gaming-center. Based on our analysis of two games - Counter Strike and Valorant, we argue that the institutionalization of gender equality in Norway, does not automatically translate to online spaces where commercial platforms set the rules, adult supervision is minimal, and competitive logics dominate. Our analysis indicates that these structural conditions —combined with national-cultural norms and global gaming cultures—create “semi-autonomous” arenas where gender equality is contested and, at times, actively undermined. Based on interview data, we show how technological structures, affordances and design choices in these two games seem to facilitate and scaffold various forms of sexual harassment against girls and non-binary players.

Negotiating sexual consent

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Negotiating sexual consent

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 18

“It was I guess consent..ish” – young men’s understanding of sex, rape and that in-between.

General

Hannah Helseth¹

¹ Norwegian center for violence and traumatic stress studies (NKVTS)

Abstract text: Despite broad agreement on the importance of sexual consent, research continues to show a high prevalence of sexual violations among young people. Consent has been a central concept in both criminal law reform and anti-rape campaigns, yet support for the consent norm becomes more ambivalent when examining how young people define consent, who they believe is responsible for obtaining it, and what they think consent looks or feels like in practice.

This paper draws on seven focus-group interviews with 26 young Norwegian men (aged 16–20) who discussed a short film depicting a problematic sexual encounter in which a young man ignores a young woman’s attempts to reject him. Through an in-depth discourse analysis, we explore how these young men make sense of sexual consent through heterosexual masculine tropes such as respectability and sexual prowess, as well as vulnerability and care. We show how their negotiations of masculinity shape their understandings of consent, responsibility, and violation in youth sexual culture.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 18

Youth Perspectives on Sexual Consent, Intoxication and Gendered Norms across Five Nordic Countries

General

Margit Anne Petersen¹

Geoffrey Hunt¹, Alexandra Bogren², Päivi Honkatukia³, Rikke Tokle⁴, Kari Stefansen⁴, Gyða Petursdóttir⁵

¹ Aarhus University

² Södertörn University

³ Tampere University

⁴ Oslo Metropolitan University

⁵ University of Iceland

Abstract text: Sexual violence and sexual consent have moved to the forefront of academic and public debate in the Nordic countries. Defined as a key dimension of legal and ethical conduct, and a core right within sexual citizenship research, consent emerges as a normative ideal for young people to adopt. In practice, however, consent is a more complex social matter than these debates suggest, shaped by diverging norms related to awkwardness, spontaneity, friendship, social status, desire, and fear. Despite growing research on consent, little is known about how young people manage consent in nightlife and party settings, particularly under intoxication. These settings play a dual role as arenas for youth leisure and “hot spots” of sexual violation. They represent an ideal-typical ambiguous social situation, in which alcohol adds additional layers of ethical and social complexity to perception and moral judgment.

This presentation addresses this gap by exploring how young people across all five Nordic countries understand, conceptualize, and practice intoxicated sexual consent in nightlife settings. Drawing on in-depth qualitative interviews with 300 young women and men across all five countries, we examine how young adults navigate: 1) verbal versus non-verbal communication; 2) levels of intoxication; and 3) gendered practices and perceptions of responsibility.

Our analysis focuses on gendered differences in how young adults talk about and experience intoxicated sexual consent, and on how these differences are situated within specific socio-cultural contexts. We further relate perspectives of intoxicated sexual consent to potential differences in drinking cultures and alcohol policies across the Nordic countries.

When: 2026-10-21, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 18

Narratives of Non-Desire: Young People's Sexual Compliance in Social Drinking Contexts

General

Kari Stefansen¹

Margit Anne Petersen², Rikke Tokle¹

¹ Oslo Metropolitan University

² Aarhus University

Abstract text: What characterizes the situations in which young people sometimes have sex without actually wanting to and which role does social drinking play for young people finding themselves in these situations? In this presentation, we draw on two interview studies among youth populations of 15-25-year-olds in Oslo and Copenhagen that focus on their social and sexual lives in relation to nightlife and party experiences. Through the analytical lens of 'sexual compliance' we explore the patterns in young peoples' narratives of their willingness to have sex for other reasons than sexual desire. Rather than only focusing on their explanations of why, we explore the 'kinds of wrong' they reflect on to understand the shared cultural ideals of what sex should - and should not - be like and which contextual factors contribute to creating barriers for acting according to one's own values and feelings. We identified four 'kinds of wrong': 1) having sex in the wrong setting 2) having sex with the wrong person, 3) having the wrong kind of sex and 4) having sex for the wrong reasons. These 'wrongs' are often overlapping and interconnected, but each contribute to a different aspect of non-desire that illuminates how alcohol and intoxication often pushes young peoples' sense of boundaries, blurs or postpones understanding of a (sexual) situation and its link to risks and interferes with making good decisions for oneself. Altogether these insights foster important discussions about what young people need to learn to protect themselves and each other against (sexual) harms.

Youth, sport and wellbeing

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Youth, sport and wellbeing

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 23

No harm, no foul? Physical violations in Norwegian youth sport

General

Gerd Marie Solstad¹

Kari Stefansen¹, Åse Strandbu²

¹ Oslo Metropolitan University

² Norwegian School of Sport Sciences

Abstract text: In this paper, we explore how violence transpires in youth sport contexts. We draw on data from a representative survey of youths in Norway (aged 16-19, n=7482) both to map the prevalence of physical violence in Norwegian youth sport and identify and label the types of physical violations youths experience in their sport. With a sport-sociological lens, sensitive to “the contextual morality” of sport culture(s), our analysis is attuned to the ways in which girls and boys make sense of the violation they experienced and what their accounts express about youth sport culture. Our results show that a total of 9,4 percent had experienced a physical violation in the past year, and that the prevalence is higher among boys (13,4 %) than girls (5 %). Most violations took place while participating in a sport contest and involved a youth on an opposing team as the offender. Based on short written descriptions of reported incidents, we identify and conceptualise four types of physical violations: *rough play*, *foul play*, *aggressive reaction* and *physical harassment* and analyse how youths interpret their legitimacy. We discuss how sport violence (of different types) relates to the youth sport ethos and youths’ attachment to sport and reflect on the analytical value of using “thin” qualitative data for analysis of youth sport cultures.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 23

Neurodivergent youth in motion – exploring autistic and ADHD stories of sport and movement

General

Eva Linghede¹

¹ The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences

Abstract text: Sport and movement contexts are not always inclusive spaces for young autists and ADHDers. Research also indicates that neurodivergent youth are less physically active than their neurotypical peers. However, we still know little about how young autists and ADHDers themselves experience different forms of physical activity. Only a few studies have consulted neurodivergent youth to identify their own views. As in much research on autism and ADHD, the medical paradigm—where neurodivergence is conceptualized as biologically derived functional deficits—continues to dominate. This perspective has been criticized for its lack of community authorship and for its negative messaging about autism and ADHD, which can adversely affect neurodivergent people's mental health.

A neurodiversity perspective, where autism and ADHD are viewed as variations in how brains function and where such differences are embraced, has recently been proposed as a potential alternative. This perspective emphasizes the importance of autists and ADHDers' own voices and involvement, as well as the need to question neurotypical norms.

In this paper, I present results from a project exploring how young autists and ADHDers in Sweden experience sport and movement through a neurodiversity lens. The empirical material consists of stories from 30 neurodivergent young people (aged 15–25), generated through digitally written narratives or interviews. I also reflect on methodological implications of working from a neurodiversity perspective. As Bertilsdotter Rosqvist et al. (2020) argue, this is “not just a matter of using certain theories in a particular data set, but doing research informed by a certain mindset”.

When: 2026-10-21, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 23

Doing, Being, Belonging: Leisure Activities and Youth Well-Being in Norway

General

Torvald Tangeland¹

Anders Bakken¹

¹ NOVA - OsloMet

Abstract text: Youth participation in organised leisure activities is widely regarded as an important arena for social integration, well-being, and the development of local belonging. Drawing on perspectives from *serious leisure*, *leisure career* theory, and youth leisure as *identity projects*, we conceptualise sustained activity involvement as a process through which young people build competencies, form social networks, and negotiate their sense of self and place. Using nationally representative data from the Norwegian Ungdata surveys, this study examines how leisure participation shapes adolescents' place attachment and perceived quality of life. A central guiding question is: How do different forms of organised leisure—particularly various types of sports—shape young people's experiences of belonging and well-being, and do team-based activities offer distinct collective dynamics compared to individual activities?

The analysis proceeds in two steps. First, we compare Norwegian youth who participate in organised activities with those who do not. Second, we investigate variation across activity types—organised sports, culture-oriented activities, youth clubs, and home-based leisure. Multivariate regression models controlling for gender and socioeconomic status are applied.

By examining how different leisure arenas may either reproduce or challenge dominant norms of inclusion and exclusion, the study explores whether these youth spaces enable adolescents to renegotiate community belonging on their own terms. We propose open hypotheses suggesting that different leisure contexts influence how young people experience belonging and evaluate their everyday life quality.

Research relations to youth

2026-10-21

09:00 - 10:30

Research relations to youth

When: 2026-10-21, 09:00 - 09:22, Where: Lecture hall 30

Between Participation and Stigma: Researching Youth Loneliness

General

Eeva Sinisalo-Juha¹

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Abstract text: Participatory Action Research (PAR) emphasizes collaboration and co-creation with research participants. Yet when the research topic is youth loneliness, researchers face a fundamental ethical-methodological dilemma: how to invite young people into research about social disconnection without defining or labeling them as "lonely"?

I explore practical questions in youth work context in Finland that illuminate broader methodological and ethical dimensions: What do we tell young people about our research aims when recruiting participants? How does our framing shape who participates and what knowledge emerges?

The participatory approach itself creates additional complexity. PAR involves young people as co-researchers, not merely subjects. This challenges us to reflect critically on power dynamics in defining research problems. Whose loneliness are we studying? Who decides what counts as loneliness? When does research become intervention—and should it?

The article examines how researchers navigate conflicting demands: respecting participatory principles while maintaining the goal of the research, protecting young people from stigmatizing labels, dealing with real experiences of isolation, and building trust. At the same time, acknowledging that a mutual understanding of research develops with the process and opens up new relevant perspectives of common interest that are not included in a common agreement on research. These tensions reveal deeper questions about power, the production of knowledge, and the boundaries between research and practice in the context of youth work.

This presentation invites dialogue about research practices that take seriously both participatory principles and the vulnerability of researching sensitive topics with young people.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:22 - 09:44, Where: Lecture hall 30

Methodological-Ethical Considerations in Multi-Perspective Longitudinal Research on Residential Care

General

Raphaela Kohout¹

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Abstract text: The placement of children and adolescents in residential care institutions represents a far-reaching measure of child and youth welfare with complex developmental, emotional, and social implications. In Austria, there remains a research gap regarding the arrangement and impact of different forms of residential child and youth care.

At the end of 2025, a quantitative, multi-perspective longitudinal study was initiated in Lower Austria to examine the developmental processes of children and adolescents during their placement in residential care institutions. The study integrates the perspectives of children and adolescents, their parents, and professional caregivers in order to capture the complexity, relational dynamics and developmental trajectories within the care process. To gain a deeper understanding of everyday practices within residential care, complementary qualitative methods adapted to the specific circumstances of the research field are being implemented. Following close coordination of the research design with experts from social-pedagogical and psychological institutions, a communicative validation process has been established in which findings are discussed and reflected upon with practitioners.

This contribution aims to present first exemplary findings and discuss the opportunities and challenges of a multi-perspective, participant-oriented research approach. Particular attention is paid to ethical considerations and the responsibilities of researchers working with vulnerable and potentially stigmatized children and adolescents in residential care. Furthermore, consideration is being given to whether the choice of certain methodological and theoretical approaches can actively counteract deficit-oriented representations and negative social images of children and adolescents in residential care, rather than reproducing them through research.

When: 2026-10-21, 09:44 - 10:06, Where: Lecture hall 30

Youth Research as an Epistemic Community

General

Päivi Honkatukia¹

Jenni Kallio¹, Susanna Ågren¹

¹ Tampere University

Abstract text: Youth research is a multidisciplinary field, embracing diverse scholarly approaches. While open and vibrant, the field is also epistemically fragmented. There is no shared framework defining how knowledge about youth is produced, recognised, valued, or mobilised. This lack of common ground limits the field's transformative potential at a time when global, social, and ecological upheavals demand new and robust responses.

This paper reflects on the possibility of youth research developing toward a more coherent *epistemic community* – one built on shared ethical and epistemological commitments to recognising young people as legitimate knowers. Drawing from feminist epistemology, particularly standpoint theory, the paper approaches young people's knowledge as marginalised knowledge. As such, it is often subject to *epistemic injustice*, leading to young people's views being overlooked, misunderstood, or depoliticised as unimportant. We understand these injustices as forms of *epistemic friction* and argue that in a research practice such friction should be regarded not only as a problem but as a potential site of renewal.

The argument is grounded in empirical insights from the *Under Pressure* research project, which examined the youth mental health crisis as a societal issue from young people's perspectives. Drawing on examples from our fieldwork, the paper illustrates how epistemic tensions between young people's situated perspectives and adult-centric knowledge became visible in the material. Highlighting this kind of epistemic friction – and taking young people's perspectives seriously – offers a pathway toward more intergenerationally just solutions to societal arrangements, which often place pressure on young people instead of enhancing their well-being.

When: 2026-10-21, 10:06 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 30

Entering into Dialogue with Young People? Reflections on Building the Research Relationship

General

Martta Rätty¹

Ville Pöysä¹, Kaisa Vehkalahti², Päivi Armila¹

¹ University of Eastern Finland, Department of Social Sciences, Finland

² University of Jyväskylä, Department of History and Ethnology, Finland

Abstract text: Starting a new research relationship and dialogue with young people is never a given: this stage involves many twists and surprises. Qualitative longitudinal research brings its own particular challenges, as it generally involves spending more time with young people and paying special attention to building trust. In this presentation, we reflect on the initial phase of research: how can meaningful dialogue with young people be achieved? How do we build a functional relationship of trust and gather rich, life-oriented data?

The presentation is based on the SURF project, launched in autumn 2025, which examines changes that have taken place in rural Finland in the 2000s from the perspectives of young people and social sustainability. The project combines two qualitative follow-up research datasets of two generations of young people living in rural areas: (1) a study initiated in 2015 (Youth in Time) focusing on young people from sparsely populated rural regions who are now young adults, and (2) a new follow-up study on today's young people and their families.

The presentation sheds light on the methodological and ethical questions related to initiating and maintaining the research relationship, viewed through insights generated in these two projects.

Young masculinities

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Young masculinities

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:22, Where: Lecture hall 8

Young Men's Masculinities during Polycrisis

General

Paula Pustulka¹

Agnieszka Kwiatkowska¹

¹ SWPS University

Abstract text: Responding to the complexity of fast-paced generational shifts compounded by unfolding realities of polycrisis, this paper explores transformations of masculinity narratives in the early 2020s from a generational perspective. Situated at the intersection of critical studies on men and masculinities and sociology of youth and generations, this paper follows Elliot (2020) in acknowledging that young men's positionalities produce generationally specific notions of continuity and change within the available masculinity repertoires. We explicitly focus on the interplay of age, generation and class/structural conditions in young masculinities (Nielson et al. 2023; Gater 2024), as the paper asks (1) How young men narrate their masculinities during polycrisis? and (2) How does intergenerational family transfer reinforce/challenge masculinity narratives?

The study originates from the 'ULTRAGEN: Becoming an adult in times of ultra uncertainty: an intergenerational theory of "shaky" transitions' project. The analysis takes advantage of a qualitative multiperspective longitudinal approach, wherein 16 dyads consisting of young men (ages 18-35) and their parents (8 mothers, 8 fathers) were interviewed over three waves of data collection, in parallel to changing macroconditions: the tailend of the pandemic (2021), full-scale Russian invasion in Ukraine (2022), and the heightened geopolitical (climate crises, AI rise) and political instability (parliamentary election) in Poland (2023). The findings reveal that young men's 'amalgamated masculinities' (Gater 2024) continuously shift and shake. What is more, they are embedded in intergenerational notions of hegemonic and protective masculinities, as well as the perceived necessity to recenter one's masculinity on caring, which appear to emerge from identity-making during polycrisis.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:22 - 11:44, Where: Lecture hall 8

‘Safe’ Masculinities- the performance of young masculinities in public space

10. Youth, Transitions and Social Justice- researching spaces of social action

Michael Whelan¹

Brian McShane²

¹ University of the West of England, Bristol, UK

² De Montfort University, Leicester

Abstract text: This paper presents the concept of safe masculinities to understand young men’s experiences of violence in urban public spaces, through ages eight to seventeen. Using data from two distinct ethnographic research projects, conducted in the same area of London, UK, across an eight-year period we explore the ways young men construct and perform masculinities towards feelings of safety, and how these performances are positioned by wider contextual factors. We consider the significance of belonging for young men in the contexts of place and space and how this relates to experiences of vulnerability and precarity, and the function of violence within their identity constructions and their relationships.

A central pursuit within the paper is drawing out what it meant for young men to be and feel safe (through an exploration of inclusive masculinities) in the urban public spaces they occupied, and to offer important insights for practitioners and policy makers seeking to address issues of violence, marginalisation and health. We highlight the ways in which particular performances of masculinity can be used to convey meaning and intent but, ultimately, also required young men to thread a line between these displays and exposure to incidents of serious physical violence to maintain their safety. We argue that foregrounding young men’s need to feel safety offers understanding of their experiences of violence as not simply being predatory and offers direction for the promotion of more inclusive masculinities.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:44 - 12:06, Where: Lecture hall 8

Man up! Open up? Teenage boys and social media influencers' representations of mental health

General

Anette Wickström¹

Judith Lind²

¹ Anette Wickström, Linköping University, Department of Thematic Studies, Sweden

² Judith Lind, Linköping University, Department of Thematic Studies, Sweden

Abstract text: Boys and young men who suffer from mental health problems are more inclined to turn to social media for support than to seek help from traditional healthcare providers. Previous research shows that they fear being ridiculed or perceived as vulnerable if they talk about mental health issues. On social media, they encounter content from influencers who share their strategies for feeling well and becoming successful. This is an unregulated sphere that reaches young people while also shaping norms related to health and well-being.

Our paper presents a project that aims to examine how representations of mental health and well-being are produced (by influencers) and interpreted (by teenage boys) in relation to different ideals of masculinity. Methodologically, we draw inspiration from Ethnography for the Internet and work through a multi-stage process in which the selection of influencers is based on recommendations from teenage boys who are later interviewed about the content.

Inspired by critical studies on men and masculinities, we examine gender-specific messages related to mental health as they are expressed among influencers in gym culture and the self-help industry. The results reveal conflicting cultural expectations such as emotional intimacy on the one hand and distancing from femininity and homosexuality on the other. Using Lauren Berlant's concept of "cruel optimism," we analyze how and which masculinities are articulated in the content, as well as the space they leave for boys and men to talk about poor mental health, failure, and vulnerability.

When: 2026-10-21, 12:06 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 8

Gentle touch masked as violence in pre-teen boys' relationships

General

Anne-Mari Väisänen¹

Eveliina Puutio¹, Iris Jokela¹, Maija Lanas¹

¹ University of Oulu

Abstract text: Research has shown that practices of touch, as well as the ways of talking about touch, are strongly gendered amongst children. Touch is used as a means of performing gender, and the forms of touch that are considered normal, possible, and acceptable differ across genders (Keränen & Ylitapio-Mäntylä 2024).

In this study, we examine what kinds of touch appears as appropriate and legitimate for young boys, and how these norms are also challenged and subverted. The data was produced through school ethnographic and arts-based methods in three Northern-Finnish primary schools together with approximately 100 pre-teens aged 10–13. Our analytical approach draws on diffractive analysis and thinking with theory (Jackson and Massey, 2023).

We investigate touch through four mundane examples: 1) gentle back massage performed with a pencil, 2) blindfolded identification game and 3) a “Winter War” play with victims and combat medics 4) friendly touch by fists between best friends.

Through these examples, we analyse what kinds of touch are deemed suitable for pre-teen boys and under what circumstances, how consent is negotiated, and how gentle touch is sometimes masked as violence.

By examining the role that violence plays in boys' relationships, and how these norms are both produced and contested, we can gain a deeper understanding of how violence may become normalized as part of masculinity and friendships. This will also contribute to identifying ways to support safer peer relationships among young people.

Creative spaces and practices

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Creative spaces and practices

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:22, Where: Lecture hall 11

How can we engage them? Methodological issues in researching young people in arts-based education

General

Zenia Simonella¹

Ilenya Camozzi¹

¹ University of Milano-Bicocca

Abstract text: One of the emerging approaches to studying young people is the participatory approach. Since it presupposes a more horizontal relationship between researchers and participants, it has been labeled ‘democratic’ due to its potential to address power asymmetries. Furthermore, within this approach, creative techniques have been introduced to provide also visual data to engage in a more effective way with young people’s experiences, emotions and representations. However, the relationship between “method and power” remains a key-concern. The participatory approach ideally guarantees a reduction in asymmetries, but in practice it is challenging to implement, particularly when research is carried out with minors in educational settings. Furthermore, the adoption of creative techniques generates both methodological and ethical issues because of the necessity to respect laws about privacy but also to consider ethical dilemmas and young people’s values. This paper presents the experience of the Italian sociological team working on the Horizon project “The Cultural Literacies’ Value in Europe”. The project aims to understand the role of art in educational settings in promoting inclusion. The target comprises young people (10-18) who experience disadvantages in multicultural contexts. Drawing on data collected in four both formal/informal educational settings in Milan — through traditional and creative techniques - we discuss the ethical and methodological issues we encountered. We show challenges, tensions and efforts involved in ensuring the engagement of young people without reproducing the traditional asymmetries between researchers and participants.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:22 - 11:44, Where: Lecture hall 11

Relational meaning-making in poetry written by youth in compulsory care

General

Azade Azad^{1, 2}

Anna Sigvardsson³, Johanna Carlsson⁴

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² Stockholm university, Department of Psychology, Sweden

³ Stockholm university, Department of Teaching and Learning, Sweden

⁴ University of Gothenburg, Department of Psychology, Sweden

Abstract text: This paper examines autobiographical poetry as relational meaning-making among youth placed in compulsory care in Sweden. The study draws on 195 poems published in *Unga berättar* (“Young People Tell”) between 2011–2020, a publicly available anthology series produced within the educational system of the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care. These voluntarily written poems reflect the youth’s own narratives of experiences and emotions. A thematic analysis was conducted, demonstrating that autobiographical poetry writing functioned as an arena for relational meaning-making related to the self, close others, and society. The self-relations portrayed concerned how the poetic “I” seeks to strengthen, preserve, or dismantle itself. Poetry was used to offer self-support, endure suffering, or articulate hopelessness and self-destructive trajectories. The close relationships depicted involved relational work directed toward family members, partners, friends, deceased loved ones and God. Here, poems functioned to care for relationships, carry oneself through memories of others, mourn losses, and process destructive or ambivalent bonds. Societal relationships in poems addressed the youths’ positioning in relation to compulsory care and society at large, holding society accountable for structural failures, articulating the endurance of institutional confinement, extending solidarity to other marginalized youth, and, in some cases, depicting trust-building relationships with care staff that temporarily bridged the gap between the individual and the institution. We argue that poetry writing and the study of poetry should be understood not merely as a creative practice, or a pedagogical activity, but as central relational work that merits greater attention in youth research and educational practice.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:44 - 12:06, Where: Lecture hall 11

Entangled vulnerabilities – a longitudinal study of marginalized young people’s engagement in art

General

Anne Mette Nielsen¹

Niels Ulrik Sørensen¹

¹ Centre of Youth Research, Aalborg University, Denmark

Abstract text: The Aspirants (*Aspiranterne*) is a project in a provincial city of Denmark that aims to rethink and reform the city’s existing welfare programs targeting young people age 18-29, who are one the edge of ordinary education and employment and struggle with different mental health issues and broader social challenges. In collaboration with professional artists and art and cultural institutions the project hosts a small group of young people who work together for six months to create music, visual art, performance, video and photo works, as well as events and PR tasks. The project also includes mentoring courses, therapeutical conversations and activities that focus on supporting the young people's everyday life and well-being, as well as their way forward.

In the study we have held up to four interviews with each of the young people from the first three groups between 2020 and 2025. With the inspiration from the theoretical lenses of Haraway (1997) and Derrida (1994) the paper will shed light on, what have been tied together in their lives in seemingly Gordian knots as well as the absences that are haunting their shaping of a future. It will also share how the young people’s participation untangles and activates new strings, that weave them into new and different life patterns over time. Finally, the paper discusses how qualitative longitudinal studies can offer a better understanding of the entangled and destabilizing vulnerabilities these young people face, as well as how current welfare systems cast a ‘light of darkness’ on their lives.

When: 2026-10-21, 12:06 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 11

Organizing Freedom: Institutional Logics and Affective Arrangements in Artistic Youth Spaces

General

Mart Willekens¹

Lieve Bradt¹, Susan Lagaert¹

¹ Ghent University

Abstract text: Artistic free spaces for young people are often celebrated as open, experimental, and non-institutional. Yet sustaining such spaces inevitably requires organization and governance, making institutional logics an unavoidable presence. Drawing on a comparative qualitative study of four artistic free spaces for youth in Flanders (Belgium), this presentation investigates how young people and youth practitioners actively mobilize institutional logics to shape and maintain these spaces. Building on institutional theory, we conceptualize institutional logics as comprising both cognitive dimensions and affective dimensions that guide practice (Friedland, 2017). We focussed on three dominant institutional logics: a *community logic* oriented toward mutual care and belonging; an *aesthetic logic* focused on artistic quality and creative standards; and a *public logic* aimed at democratic participation and contestation around the public good. Each logic mobilizes specific affective practices (Lüthy, 2024) that generate distinctive affective arrangements within particular socio-material settings (Slaby et al., 2019). On the one hand, the affective dimensions of these logics potentially reinforce each other and create opportunities for creating a free environment with room for subjectification and affective citizenship. On the other hand, navigating and combining multiple logics requires ongoing emotional regulation and performative competence from both youth and practitioners. This form of affective labour relies on embodied cultural capital and can produce exclusionary affective boundaries. By examining this tension in four concrete settings, this presentation contributes to youth studies by using an institutional logic perspective to study how affective and institutional arrangements shape youth practices within artistic free spaces for young people.

Symposium. Challenging Adultism: Youth–Adult Partnerships Shaping Mental Health, Policy, and Local Decision Making

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Symposium. Challenging Adultism: Youth–Adult Partnerships Shaping Mental Health, Policy, and Local Decision Making

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:30, Where: Lecture hall 13

Up to you(th) - an inquiry into everyday life

8. Challenging Adulthood: Youth–Adult Partnerships Shaping Mental Health, Policy, and Local Decision Making

Aagje Rottiers¹

Liesbeth Maene¹, **Hermelinde Hooft**¹

¹ De Ambrassade and Flemish Youth Council, Youth, Belgium

Abstract text: Up to you(th) was a participation project building up to the European, national and regional elections of 2024. The aim of the project was to inform first time voters on what the elections could mean for them and encourage them to go vote. The biggest experiment in this project, was that first time voters themselves would be at the helm of this trajectory. The project ran from March 2023 till July 2024, and encompassed many different tracks and outcomes. One of those tracks was an inquiry into everyday life, in which the volunteers of the project themselves were coached by the Flemish expertise centre for Children's rights to conduct a qualitative survey with children and youngsters in more than 42 organisations, including youth work with young people in socially vulnerable situations. They recorded more than 500 stories, based on the simple question: what is at play in your daily life? The inquiry was explorative in design and based on appreciative inquiry and narrative storytelling. This entire project taught us a lot about participation and the role of youth in discovering their own world and that of their peers. It also demonstrates the benefits and challenges of bringing the academic world, the policy world and the daily world of youngsters closer together in a way that empowers them. The findings served as the starting point of choosing our three priorities at the core of the policy work we do with our volunteers: climate, equal opportunities and the digital world.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:30 - 12:00, Where: Lecture hall 13

“To Be Heard—Not Just Listened To”: Advancing Youth-Adult Partnerships Through Participatory Methods

8. Challenging Adultism: Youth–Adult Partnerships Shaping Mental Health, Policy, and Local Decision Making

Lily Massaro¹

Bianca Farrow¹, Gretchen Brion-Meisels²

¹ Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, The Ecological Approaches to Learning (EASEL) Laboratory, United States

² Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Researching in Community, United States

Abstract text: This paper examines the onto-epistemological approach of youth participatory action research (YPAR) and parallel work with adult allies as a set of interconnected mechanisms for deepening adults’ understanding of youth wellbeing and fostering positive youth–adult relationships. Drawing on a three-year research-practice partnership in the Bronx, New York, we describe the key components and commitments of YPAR and the importance of concurrent, adult-focused development. In this partnership, we co-designed and facilitated YPAR projects with 6th–8th grade students and Communities of Practice (CoP) workshops with school-based staff. YPAR is an approach that allows those who will be most impacted by research to actively shape the work (Albright & Brion-Meisels, 2025). It positions young people as co-researchers, working with adults to investigate questions of relevance to their school communities. The CoP workshops provided structured spaces for adults to reflect on their beliefs, practices, and organizational conditions related to youth wellbeing and partnership. Using fieldnotes, focus groups with students and staff, and survey data, we demonstrate how implementing YPAR and CoPs in tandem allows adults to hear and access young people’s insights about wellbeing in ways that can create authentic relationships and organizational change. We argue that coupling YPAR with adult CoPs represents an underutilized approach to data collection and analysis on youth wellbeing and youth–adult partnership, while simultaneously supporting individual (youth and adult) growth and organizational change.

When: 2026-10-21, 12:00 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 13

Platform C: creating a culture(shift) in involving young people in local decision-making processes

8. Challenging Adultism: Youth–Adult Partnerships Shaping Mental Health, Policy, and Local Decision Making

Emily Mortier¹

Lieve Bradt¹

¹ Ghent University

Abstract text: Platform C is a research project (2022-2024–EU-CERV-CHILD-2021) in which various research and practice partners collaborated to create a culture(shift) in involving children and young people in local decision-making processes. In Flanders (and beyond), there are already many tools and strategies to achieve the policy participation of children and young people. However, these do not always lead to an effective and fair increase in youth participation. To this end, the focus of this project shifted to the culture in which a shared mindset has been acquired whereby the participation of children and young people is seen as meaningful, important and non-optional. Using participatory action research and an ecosystemic perspective (based on platform design), youth workers in three local contexts were asked to consider how such a culture might look like and what actions could contribute to progress. Actions undertaken with young people, youth workers, other professionals and politicians revealed three essential factors that proved to be crucial in achieving such a culture shift, namely taking local political realities into account, developing a vision on the involvement of children and young people, and establishing partnerships. Based on insights into the research design (including the involvement of the entire ecosystem surrounding children and youth and themselves), the factors that proved essential for a culture shift, and a number of reflective discussion points, we hope to inspire practice, research, and policy to focus not only on concrete participation practices but also on the culture in which youth participation can or does arise.

Educational contexts and participation

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Educational contexts and participation

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:22, Where: Lecture hall 15

The good cop: young people performing heroic police work in trustbuilding initiative

General

Rickard Jonsson

Anna G. Franzén

Abstract text: The relationship between youth and the police has been the subject of extensive research, much of which paints a troubling picture. A central theme in this body of work is the profound lack of trust that often defines police-youth interactions. This paper examines how trust-building between youth and the police is enacted and narrated within the Swedish initiative Person behind the uniform (Människan bakom uniformen, MBU). MBU targets young people, particularly in socially vulnerable areas, through a voluntary training led by uniformed professionals, including police officers. Drawing on data from a video ethnographic study of an MBU training in a medium-sized Swedish town, the paper investigates a role-play exercise in which young participants dress in police uniforms and take on the role of police officers. We analyse the collaborative construction of a narrative of heroic and effective police work. Particular attention is given to (a) the symbolic value of the uniform in the youth's performances of being the 'good police,' and (b) the use of reported speech in storytelling, and especially its role in shaping subjectivities and constructing authentic police work in interaction.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:22 - 11:44, Where: Lecture hall 15

School Transformation from Within: Students' and Teachers' Experiences of Co-Creation

General

Janina Beigel¹

¹ Janina Beigel, Heidelberg University, Educational Department

Abstract text: In times of accelerating societal transformation, schools are challenged to create learning environments that enable young people to participate meaningfully in shaping their learning and their shared futures. This paper investigates co-creative processes in secondary Deeper Learning (DL) settings and explores how these processes are enacted, supported and experienced in collaborative project work, foregrounding students' lived perspectives.

An exploratory multiple case study was conducted in three secondary schools (N = 63 students, aged 14–16 years; N = 9 teachers), focusing on the co-creative phases of interdisciplinary DL projects. Data were gathered through participant observations with audio recordings, enabling micro-analytic insights into students' collaboration and teacher guidance. These were triangulated with student group and teacher interviews and a qualitative pre-post survey to identify recurring experiential patterns across cases.

The analysis reconstructs how co-creative processes unfold in situ, paying particular attention to moments in which creative endeavours requires negotiation, shared decision-making, risk-taking and professional support. The findings indicate that co-creative learning differs markedly from routine classroom interaction. The analysis shows that co-creative work depends on transactive communication about ideas, as students build on, question and refine one another's contributions to shape shared outcomes. At the same time, adaptive and autonomy-supportive guidance proves crucial, particularly when teachers temporarily participate as co-creators while safeguarding students' responsibility for the process. These dynamics appear central to the development of creative agency and collective psychological ownership.

By centring students' perspectives, the paper offers insight into school transformation from within and specifies key conditions shaping co-creative learning.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:44 - 12:06, Where: Lecture hall 15

Sorting by Definition, Shaping by Design? Problem Representations in School Supplementary Programmes

General

Miriam Abildsnes¹

Mira Aaboen Sletten¹, Jon Rogstad¹

¹ OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo, Norway

Abstract text: Efforts to promote educational completion and prevent school dropout among young people are a central concern in contemporary youth policy, commonly framed as necessary responses to individual risk and disengagement. Such efforts generally build on implicit assumptions about the problem, its causes, and who is responsible for addressing it. With this as an analytic starting point, the paper examines how dropout in upper secondary school is understood within two Norwegian supplementary learning programmes for 15-year-olds: Flyt, a mixed-gender initiative, and Guttas Campus, targeting boys. Drawing on Bacchi's (2026) 'What is the Problem Represented to Be' (WPR), we analyse how the young participants are "constructed" and how practices within the two programs are shaped by the policy-defined problem of youth marginalisation and its prescribed solutions. The study draws on document analysis and interviews with staff and participating youth. Through this material, we trace how problem representations generate specific rationalities of action, and how these resonate with the lived experiences of those involved. Our findings reveal substantial variation in how actors relate to the underlying problem representations, pointing to concerns that diverge from issues the programmes are constructed to address. This raises the broader question of what unintended consequences this may have for the young participants, including which concerns are recognized. Furthermore, this poses a challenge in an investment-oriented logic, where funding depends on demonstrating measurable outcomes. The study therefore raises a broader question: what happens when young people's lived realities are translated into policy problems?

When: 2026-10-21, 12:06 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 15

Professional identity and institutional ambivalence among community coordination students in Hungary

General

Barnabás Gulyás¹

Fanni Maszlag¹

¹ ELTE University Faculty of Education and Psychology Institute of Research on Adult Education and Knowledge Management

Abstract text: Youth studies have long emphasized that young people's transitions and professional identities are shaped within institutional and structural conditions that both enable and constrain their futures (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Woodman & Wyn, 2015). Higher education plays a central role in this process by positioning students as future professionals expected to develop coherent identities and career paths. In the Hungarian post-socialist and increasingly centralized context, however, the field of cultural and community work is marked by unstable institutional frameworks, shifting roles, and uncertain career trajectories. The lack of a clear legal and institutional framework for youth work further limits career prospects.

This paper explores how community coordination students construct their professional identities and interpret their futures in this ambiguous field. A mixed-methods approach was applied, combining questionnaire data with focus group interviews. The survey examined students' motivations and expectations, while focus groups provided a space for collective reflection on experiences, uncertainties, and professional becoming. The findings indicate that professional identity formation is not a linear outcome of training but an ongoing process shaped by institutional ambiguity and structural uncertainty, integrating both personal and social dimensions (Nyman, 2019). Higher education emerges both as a site of professional legitimation and as a space where doubts and tensions are articulated. Students' narratives highlight a gap between the promise of professional formation and the perceived instability of the sector. By foregrounding students' perspectives, the paper contributes to discussions on institutional socialization, professional formation, and youth transitions in post-socialist contexts, emphasizing how young people actively negotiate uncertain futures.

Citizenship/politics

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Citizenship/politics

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:22, Where: Lecture hall 18

The Child-Friendly City Paradigm: A Road Paved in Gold or a Boulevard of Broken Dreams?

General

Sander Van Thomme¹

Sven De Visscher², Lieve Bradt¹

¹ Ghent University; Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy

² HOGENT - University of Applied Sciences and Arts; eCO-CITY

Abstract text: Contemporary youth policy is often framed through seemingly self-evident paradigms that present themselves as neutral and universal. Such dominant paradigms generally escape critical scrutiny, as they are grounded in claims of universal values and scientific evidence regarding good education and healthy development. In this presentation, we take the Child Friendly City (CFC) paradigm as a case. We will argue how this paradigm has become depoliticised, as underlying social, political and pedagogical questions, such as how the CFC can both enable and hinder young people's citizenship, are neglected. To rediscover these questions, we adopt a social-pedagogical and critical perspective that challenges the taken-for-granted assumptions about what is going on and what should be going on. Methodologically, we have engaged in a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the child friendly city policy discourse in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium). We will discuss the value of critical discourse analysis as a tool to examine how the language of dominant paradigms structures the possibilities of young people's citizenship. Next to that, drawing on a Gramscian perspective, we will discuss how the CFC paradigm can be perceived as a hegemonic formation that constructs particular (neoliberal, individualising...) notions of what constitutes a good society and a good citizen. Finally, our presentation will reflect on the ethical implications for youth research, questioning how scholarship may inadvertently reproduce the hegemonic constructions of young people it seeks to critique. In doing so, we contribute to ongoing dialogues on theory, methodology and ethics in youth studies.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:22 - 11:44, Where: Lecture hall 18

Minoritized public youth rebellion

General

Monika Grønli Rosten¹

Monica Five Aarset¹

¹ Oslo Metropolitan University, NOVA, Norway

Abstract text: In the Norwegian welfare state—grounded in gender equality, child-centred, democratic family relations, and personal autonomy—minoritised youth, especially young women, are often expected to rebel against values and norms associated with their families’ ethnic backgrounds. Do they embrace Norwegian ideals of gender equality? Do they rebel against parental authority and communal norms—and, if so, do they rebel in the “right” way? This expectation persists even though the Norwegian youth generation to which they belong is described as well-behaved, well-adjusted, and less prone to rebellion than previous cohorts. In this paper we present the stories of two young minoritized women turning their personal youth rebellion into public revolt. Both entered the Norwegian public sphere in the same period and at a young age. Their youth rebellions began as a strive for more personal autonomy, within the context of their family and in Norwegian society and evolved into larger social engagements. We examine how their coming-of-age in public and the varied responses their activism elicited illuminate Norwegian society’s ideals and expectations for youth rebellion on the path to becoming a “good” Norwegian citizen. By tracing how the strive for personal autonomy travels from the intimate to the public realm, we show the tensions between celebrated ideals of autonomy and equality and the persistent tendency to scrutinise and script young people's rebellion.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:44 - 12:06, Where: Lecture hall 18

Negotiating democracy, and crime: the meaning of youth in the early 20th century.

General

Bengt Sandin¹

Rebecka Andersen¹

¹ University of Linköping

Abstract text: Our contributions will address electoral reform and legislation about urban crime, shaped the understanding of youth fashioned by gender and class, with a focus on the political conflicts and the demographic transitions, urbanisation and industrialisation. In connection with the electoral reforms of 1907-1921, the voting age in Sweden was raised from 21 to 24 for the second chamber and the municipalities, and from 27 to 24 for the county councils and the first chamber. The voting age had been 21 since the 1866 reforms. Sweden's low voting age in the 19th century distinguished its development from the broader European reforms, which were characterised by a lowering of the voting age. The ambition of liberals and conservatives to limit the electorate and, at the same time, meet the demands for reform by raising the voting age, consequently excluding the young, unmarried and establishing criteria for political participation – a notion of youth that extended past the age of maturity at 21. The distinctions were motivated by the unruly and unreliable character of the young working-class cohorts in Swedish urban centres. At the same time, other significant age distinctions were established with similar motivations, i.e., the child welfare boards for delinquents below 15 years of age and a youth penitentiary system for young “criminals” up to the age of 18 (in some cases 21), while working-class children could be economically independent from 16 years of age. The presentation will question earlier research and introduce new empirical material and new theoretically interesting findings.

When: 2026-10-21, 12:06 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 18

The Making of an International Youth Regime in the Twentieth Century

General

Joel Löw¹

Jonathan Josefsson¹

¹ Linköping University

Abstract text: In the aftermath of World War II, there was a strong need to promote international cooperation and understanding among young people. Many youth organizations, inspired by anti-fascist and anti-colonial movements, were driven by democratic and socialist ideals and united by the goal of building a peaceful world and preventing future conflicts. However, although the new interactions and organisations of youth that emerged in the post war era in many respects were emblematic of ideological struggles and constituted a “battlefield” for Cold War politics, the forms of international cooperations that developed also worked across political conflicts and ideological divides. Building on historical analysis of the archives of World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and World Assembly of Youth (WAY), in this paper, we trace the origins and the world events that shaped the emergence of a new international youth regime in the latter part of the twentieth century. By demonstrating how new organisations, networks, bilateral relations, travelling and communication were employed to engage in international cooperation by and for children and youth, this study contributes to our understanding of young peoples as political actors in the history of international relations.

Sustainability: Food, knowledge, activism

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Sustainability: Food, knowledge, activism

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:22, Where: Lecture hall 29

The Planetary Garden Field Station – Multi-species co-research for sustainable future

General

Sofia Laine¹

¹ Research Professor, The Finnish Youth Research Society

Abstract text: The Planetary Garden Field Station is a sub-project of the Planetary Youth Research Programme at the Finnish Youth Research Society. Planetary youth research is my proposed framework for youth research in the context of sustainability transformation (Laine 2023). The original Planetary Garden concept, developed by the French architect Gilles Clément, emphasises the human responsibility to sustainably maintain and protect the Earth's ecosystems, valuing diversity and minimising ecological damage in food production. In addition, our Field Station promotes multi-species coexistence through eco-arts-integrated gardening, where diverse eco-emotions are collectively explored (Kingsbury 2025). This presentation explains how the Field Station combines the arts, somatics, activism, rewilding and research. It describes how we create youth-led sub-projects, grow organic food crops, and learn about sustainable living in a community-based way that also aims to restore a sense of place and belonging (Dixon-Declève et al. 2022). Well-being and a deepening relationship with nature are creatively intertwined through a variety of art-based methods, that apply both the process model of eco-anxiety (Pihkala 2022) and various creative ways to address ecological grief (Kingsbury 2025). Presentation shows how this kind of "ethnography of hope" is currently much needed.

Clément, Gilles (2023) "The Planetary Garden". In '*Garden Futures, Designing with Nature*'.

Dixson-Declève, S. et al. (2022). *Earth for All. A Survival Guide for Humanity*

Kingsbury, Christina (2025) Exploring the Effects of Arts-Integrated Gardening on Experiences of Ecological Grief <https://scholars.wlu.ca/etd/2732>

Laine, Sofia (2023) New Framework Proposal: Planetary Youth Research
<https://doi.org/10.1163/25895745-bja10027>

Pihkala, Panu (2022) The Process of Eco-Anxiety and Ecological Grief
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su142416628>

When: 2026-10-21, 11:22 - 11:44, Where: Lecture hall 29

Teenagers, youth and adults on sustainable food consumption. A qualitative comparative investigation

General

Carlo Genova¹

¹ University of Turin

Abstract text: In public discourse, youth are frequently framed as the “global conscience” of sustainability. However, the ways in which young people conceptualise and navigate the complexities of sustainable food consumption are differentiated, and social status seems to have relevant impact on these differences. The paper examines the social representations and attitudes toward sustainable food among 15-18-year-olds in Turin, Italy, on the basis of 48 qualitative interviews with students from three different educational tracks (vocational, technical, and lyceum), compared with those from a sample of young adults (19-34, n = 25) and adults (35-55, n = 25) in order to highlight generational specificities. The analysis focuses on three main dimensions: the conceptual boundaries of “sustainability”; the perceived role of youth in relation to adults; and the perceived drivers and barriers to sustainable food consumption. The analysis reveals a "stratified awareness" where educational tracks act as proxies for social status: lyceum students demonstrate a more structured vocabulary regarding environmental ethics, while vocational students often show significant gaps in technical knowledge. A "delegated agency" paradox emerges. Adolescents perceive themselves as more aware than previous generations, yet remain dependent on parental purchasing decisions. Furthermore, while adults conceptualize sustainability through systemic lenses, adolescents frequently conflate it with individual health or "fitness". Unlike adults, who identify "time" and "cost" as structural barriers, adolescents point to "habit" and "disinterest" as internal obstacles. These results challenge the monolithic framing of youth as a "global conscience", showing instead how sustainable consumption is a negotiated field shaped by socialization and household constraints.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:44 - 12:06, Where: Lecture hall 29

What if the bug was big and the people were small? Developing a model for multi-species thinking

General

Maaria Hartman¹

¹ University of Oulu, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Finland

Abstract text: This presentation reflects on a proof-of-concept project ELOTILA (“space for life” in English). The project aims to respond to the lack of agency in influencing the future experienced by young people, and based on previous research, emphasizes the importance of creating space in school context for different ways of knowing and cultures of knowledge production. In ELOTILA, people of different ages come together to share what matters to them about nature and other animals, to experiment and consider concrete ways to create a more respectful co-existence among living beings, and to explore how change could be made together as part of everyday thinking and activities. Working groups of students from two upper-secondary schools and researchers and artists from different fields have co-created the model during academic year 2025-2026. The ready-made ELOTILA model is developed from the perspective of structural and content feasibility to the form of multi-media material package, which is openly available online. This arts-based presentation focuses on the co-creation phase in schools, especially on the multi-layered interaction and different rhythms and characteristics of ELOTILA.

When: 2026-10-21, 12:06 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 29

Repression of young environmental activists and its affective dimension

General

Panu Pihkala^{1, 2}

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society

² University of Helsinki

Abstract text: Worldwide, environmental activists are targets of various repression measures. Criminalization is an important aspect of this, but the repertoire of repression (Rossdale et al. 2025) includes also police action, vilification, creative use of existing legislation, and, at worst, killings of activists. Young environmental activists have been impacted by this in a wide-ranging manner, and the impacts extend to beliefs about future, democracy, and justice. In this presentation, an overview is given of the topic, and data about young Finnish environmental activists is drawn from. A special theme is the affective dimension of all this. In addition to eco-emotions, young environmental activists are impacted by feelings about repression. Furthermore, in public discourses, there are various efforts to shape cultural politics of emotion about young environmental activism. The content of this oral presentation contributes to understandings of youth participation in societal matters, debates about the use of public space, and to discourses about criminalization of dissent in contemporary societies. Youth and young environmental activists are considered crucial for environmental ethics and politics, and knowledge about forces which impact them is essential in the quest for more sustainable societies.

Reference:

Rossdale, C., Berglund, O., Pantazis, C., Pessoa Cavalcanti, R., Franco Brotto, T., 2025. The global criminalisation and repression of climate and environmental protest – a repertoire of repression. Environmental Politics.

Ethics and handling "sensitive issues"

2026-10-21

11:00 - 12:30

Ethics and handling "sensitive issues"

When: 2026-10-21, 11:00 - 11:30, Where: Lecture hall 30

Meeting Youth Where They Are: Rethinking Partnership with Young Mothers

General

Kathleen Manion¹

Shelley Jones¹

¹ Royal Roads University

Abstract text: Co-creation between adults and youth produces powerful outcomes when participants are ready for partnership, but context and timing matter. As conference organizers note, "how we define, approach and give voice to youth matters, with critical consequences." We examine when alternative approaches become more ethical and effective using findings from a Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) project with young mothers aged 13-18 in Uganda. The project envisioned co-creating a residential educational project providing wraparound support for mothers and their babies while they gained parenting, employment, relational and life skills. Young mothers eagerly joined but initially lacked confidence to assert their ideas for co-creation.

Rather than imposing co-creation, our FPAR methodology honored participants' readiness and expertise about their own lives. We employed multiple engagement approaches, including interviews, focus groups, photovoice, dance, poetry, storytelling, developing a graphic novel, community speaking, alongside vocational, educational, socioemotional and conflict resolution training and mentoring. This allowed young mothers to build competence to gradually share their leadership skills. This enabled them to evolve from basic survival mode to becoming active participant-researchers. They now articulate experiences of pregnancy, motherhood, and the precarities that shaped their circumstances, informing policy on inclusive education, sexual and reproductive health, and gender-based violence.

Our findings challenge assumptions that co-creation is the best approach for youth-participation. Ethical youth engagement requires agility so researchers can adapt to what participants need rather than imposing predetermined partnership models. This holds relevance beyond the Nordic region, demonstrating how context-responsive methodologies can amplify youth voice while respecting their developmental journeys.

When: 2026-10-21, 11:30 - 12:00, Where: Lecture hall 30

Family, Feminism, and Fieldwork: Ethical Lessons from Mother-Daughter Research

General

Hannah Maitland¹

¹ York University, Centre for Feminist Research, Canada

Abstract text: This paper draws from a study where, in order to develop a contextual and intergenerational approach to girls' activism, I interviewed politically engaged girls and included their mothers in the process. From September 2021 to May 2022, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth Zoom interviews with eleven activist daughters (aged 11-20) and eight of their mothers and mother figures. I combined one-on-one and paired interviews with daughters and mothers to explore the kinds of political thinking and emotional landscapes that emerge when interviewing activist girls not only *about* how their mothers influence their politics, but *with* their mothers. This paper looks specifically at the ethical issues that emerged during the development and implementation of this research method and the lessons learned from conducting feminist research with children and their parents at the sensitive intersection of family relationships and political commitments. I draw on methodological critiques and ethical principles developed by the feminist field of girls' studies to explore questions of power dynamics between adults and children, privacy and safety when political beliefs differ, and informed consent/assent so girls can fully participate and be heard in research while participating alongside the adults who play a part in shaping their political perspectives. Drawing on both the broader literature in girls' and childhood studies on research ethics with children and adults, and the lessons from this study, I demonstrate how the paired interviewing format can amplify girls' political narratives but still comes with risks that can limit their participation.

When: 2026-10-21, 12:00 - 12:30, Where: Lecture hall 30

Bystander engagement as care work: Young people's responses to non-consensual intimate image sharing

General

Sofie Boye Kromann¹

Louise Yung Nielsen¹

¹ Roskilde University, Department of Communication and Arts

Abstract text: This study examines how young people navigate being bystanders to non-consensual sharing of intimate images (NCII), foregrounding the affective, relational, and gendered logics shaping their responses. Although bystander intervention is often promoted as a strategy for addressing digital harms, such intervention remains rare. Drawing on feminist theories of care, the analysis shows how bystander responses that may initially appear passive are structured by caring orientations, including shielding the exposed peer from stigma, protecting the offender, and safeguarding one's own social belonging within affectively charged peer contexts. It further demonstrates the pivotal role of gender, shaping who is recognized as a victim and which forms of care are considered appropriate or legitimate within peer groups.

The analysis is based on serial participatory workshops and follow-up interviews with Danish upper secondary students (17–19 years), conducted in collaboration with the counselling service SletDet (Save the Children Denmark). The iterative workshop format enabled participants to revisit discussed experiences and collectively reflect on the morally sensitive situations over time. This approach offers methodological insight into how shared, longitudinal research settings can produce evolving interpretations rather than single, fixed accounts, and may themselves function as sites of change.

The paper contributes to youth studies by discussing NCII as entangled with everyday practices of intimacy and belonging and by questioning the binary distinction between passive and active bystander engagement. It further considers how dialogical and longitudinal research formats may enable careful and empowering approaches to young people's lived experiences of sensitive situations.

Symposium. Qualitative longitudinal research methods in youth studies

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

Symposium. Qualitative longitudinal research methods in youth studies

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:07, Where: Lecture hall 8

Forming Life Paths Under Constraints: How Rural Youth Navigate Education and Early Working Life

6. Qualitative longitudinal research methods in youth studies

Maria Rönnlund¹

Aina Tollefsen¹

¹ Umeå University

Abstract text: The project *Youth in Transitions* investigates how young people in a rural, working-class-dominated region in northern Sweden navigate their pathways to adulthood. It employs longitudinal qualitative data to analyse key dimensions of the young people's life trajectories, including their educational pathways, mobility practices, and entries into the labour market (e.g., Rönnlund & Tollefsen 2023a,b; Rönnlund et al. 2025). The data has systematically been processed using the case-profile method (Thomson 2007). This has involved condensing interview data into cumulative case profiles for each individual participant. These profiles provide longitudinally structured accounts that capture both change and continuity over time, and summarise how individual transitions unfold across key biographical fields. The resulting case profiles form a comprehensive qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) dataset that allows for both within-case and cross-case analysis.

This paper synthesises the project's central findings with a specific focus on how the participants' career trajectories unfold in relation to their structural position. The guiding research question is: How do young people in this regional context enact, negotiate, and respond to the structural constraints shaping their educational and work-related transitions?

The paper contributes to broader discussions on the contradictory demands and expectations directed at contemporary youth regarding educational choice, early labour-market participation, and the wider transition to adulthood. A further contribution is of methodological art - it discusses the challenges involved in synthesising multiple sub-studies within a longitudinal project based on repeated interviews with young people over a ten-year period marked by significant life transitions.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:07 - 14:29, Where: Lecture hall 8

Relational research ethics in longitudinal qualitative research among youth from small communities

6. Qualitative longitudinal research methods in youth studies

Sinikka Aapola-Kari^{1, 2}

Päivi Armila³

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society

² Alli Paasikivi Foundation

³ University of Eastern Finland

Abstract text: NOTE: This presentation is for the FUNORE-panel, chaired by Kaisa Vehkalahti.

Our presentation scrutinizes ethics in qualitative longitudinal research with young people living in small rural communities. “Longitudinal” means a deep intervention into the research subjects’ lives. When the researcher becomes familiar with the research participants over the years, it is difficult to remain a neutral outsider in relation to their lives. Additionally, when the research focuses on youth, the sensitivities of emerging adulthood with its multiple transitions must be considered. Hence, longitudinal research sensitivities must not be scrutinized only in terms of normative research ethics, but also in terms of relational ethics based on regular encounters within research relationships. Normative research ethics can produce simplifying guidelines that do not consider people’s subjective experiences about the harm, benefits, and risks regarding research participation. Relational ethics, then, is based on sensitive touch in encounters. In our presentation, we focus on research based on regular interaction between the researcher and the informants. The contribution leans from the project Youth in Time (2015-2025), where we followed the same young people for ten years and noted how a longitudinal research set-up poses challenges which do not appear in set-ups where the research relations are short and the data do not accumulate over years. Proximity with youth of small communities where ‘everyone knows each other’ added to our ethical challenges.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:29 - 14:51, Where: Lecture hall 8

Interpreting time and temporalities in qualitative longitudinal youth research

6. Qualitative longitudinal research methods in youth studies

Kaisa Vehkalahti¹

¹ University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Abstract text: The concept of time is both central and multifaceted in qualitative longitudinal research. When the researcher and the participant meet repeatedly over an extended period, narratives of the self are constructed through a dialogue that engages with various temporalities: reflecting and interpreting past events retrospectively, considering current issues and challenges in the present, and orienting towards an anticipated future. Drawing on Fernand Braudel's classic notion of multilayered time (1949; 1958; see also Giddens 1984; Jordheim 2014; McLeod et al. 2025), this paper explores the different layers of time inherent in longitudinal analysis. It proposes that five distinct temporalities can be identified: (1) *Biographical time*, which refers to the personal life course narrative—the ongoing story that young people tell about themselves over time; (2) *Life stage time*, which encompasses the shared experiences of young people of the same age, including cultural expectations and institutional youth transitions; (3) *Historical time*, which concerns the broader cultural and societal changes affecting society as a whole; (4) *The time of continuity*, referring to those aspects that appear relatively unchanging yet are ever-present and provide a sense of stability in young people's lives; and (5) *The time of interpretation*, which denotes the immediate, 'here and now' moment when interpretations are actively constructed and narrated in research encounters.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:51 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 8

Cross-contextual temporal analysis in qualitative longitudinal research: A method

6. Qualitative longitudinal research methods in youth studies

Ingunn Eriksen¹

Kaisa Vehkalahti²

¹ NOVA, Oslo Metropolitan university

² University of Jyväskylä

Abstract text: We introduce the method of cross-contextual temporal analysis, a way of analysing vast qualitative longitudinal datasets by attending simultaneously to the synchronic scope of the material and to longitudinal change and continuity. The method is particularly well suited to cross-national comparative analyses based on qualitative data. It further advances the methodology of case analysis, which has become a popular approach to organising and analysing qualitative longitudinal data over the last two decades. We also reflect on the tendency in qualitative longitudinal research to privilege individual case histories at the expense of synchronic, contextual, and cross-sectional analysis.

The methodology is presented in detail through analyses from the project *The Future of Nordic Youth in Rural Regions: A Cross-national Qualitative Longitudinal Study in Four Nordic Countries* (Funore). This project has involved qualitative longitudinal data from 196 young people living in nine different geographical locations across four Nordic countries, collected over a ten-year period.

The methodology is based on the principles of first mapping and compressing, and then unpacking and elaborating: first reducing and structuring the qualitative data so that we could compare the key themes, and then elaborating on what we found meaningful, while simultaneously privileging both individual and community narratives.

Experiences of migration

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

Experiences of migration

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:07, Where: Lecture hall 10

How to study the experiences of second generation immigrants in Finland

General

Kirsten Nell¹

¹ Tampere University

Abstract text: This research focuses on the educational experiences of children of immigrants in Finland, a rapidly growing yet still understudied population. Existing studies indicate that, on average, children of immigrants tend to face more challenges during their schooling than their native-born Finnish peers, including lower academic performance, higher rates of bullying, and difficulties in transitioning into employment. Some findings even suggest that their labour-market outcomes resemble those of their parents more closely than those of their Finnish-born age cohort. These patterns raise important questions about how researchers conceptualise and study the experiences of this group.

As I begin to design my research, I am particularly interested in how best to approach and understand these experiences in ways that move beyond deficit-oriented narratives. Much prior work has focused on the framework of “migrant integration,” yet this lens may be insufficient for capturing the realities of second-generation youth, who are typically educated in Finnish or Swedish and often navigate social, cultural, and linguistic contexts distinct from those of their parents. Identity and belonging emerge repeatedly in the literature as central themes shaping how second-generation young people understand themselves, their educational trajectories, and their place within Finnish society.

This paper reflects on these methodological and conceptual questions, considering how research can more effectively account for the complexity of second-generation experiences. By examining themes of identity, belonging, and everyday negotiations of difference, the research aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how children of immigrants encounter and interpret the Finnish education system.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:07 - 14:29, Where: Lecture hall 10

Strategising capital in transitions to adulthood: Migrant intergenerational perspectives

General

Zuzanna Kapciak¹

Paula Pustulka¹, Justyna Bell²

¹ SWPS University

² Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract text: Using Bourdieu's theoretical framework, we examine migrant families as sites of capital accumulation, inheritance and conversion. We examine how economic, social, symbolic and cultural resources are intergenerationally (re)configured in life pathways of migrants.

The study is designed as a multiperspective qualitative research, which enables an analysis focused on intergenerational interdependencies of strategizing capital. More specifically, this paper is based on 35 qualitative interviews conducted with linked members of Polish migrant families in Germany, including the perspectives of both young adults and their parents. From the collected data, specific case studies were selected to provide holistic illustrations of capital flows.

The findings highlight that migration is often a barrier to capital accumulation, as parents struggle with transferring their cultural, symbolic and social capital, as well as struggle with building up their economic capital and position abroad. However, in an intergenerational setting, capital conversions are significant, as parents mobilize their cultural capital, as well as ethnic social capital, to foster specific educational and employment paths for their children. Our analysis reveals a distinct resource-based divergence in the possibility of intergenerational inheritance of capital by young adults with migration background. In families with extensive cultural capital resources, seamless accumulation and straightforward inheritance is enabled by transferability of capital across borders. Conversely, migrants with limited resources often 'start from scratch' in the new social field because of nontransferability of their capitals. Ultimately, study contributes to deeper understanding of how resources-based advantages are reproduced or challenged during the transition to adulthood in a transnational context.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:29 - 14:51, Where: Lecture hall 10

Postmigrant Futures: Rethinking Belonging With Racialized Young Adults In Times Of Rising Far-Right

General

Barış Yüksel¹

¹ Tampere University

Abstract text: This paper introduces theoretical and methodological reflections and observations drawn from interviews from my research project on the experiences of present and future belonging among racialized young adults in Finland and Germany amid times of rising anti-immigration sentiments. Examining migration research through a postmigrant lens challenges dominant narratives that separate migration from society. Drawing on postmigrant theory, my research argues for a paradigm shift: instead of framing migration as an external force disrupting a national order, we must recognize its socio-transformative potential which underlines the necessity to formulate (post)migrant futures.

I employ a two-tiered qualitative methodology, combining biographical-narrative interviews with sensual futuring techniques. The former allows participants to recount past and present experiences of belonging, the latter encourages them to imagine alternative, self-defined futures. Inspired by Critical Futures Studies, this approach highlights how dominant societal narratives constrain postmigrant imaginaries while enabling creative counter-narratives of hope and resistance. My paper calls for postmigrant futurism moving beyond descriptions of past and present realities to engage in shaping equitable futures by utilizing postmigrant imagination and advocating for the inclusion of postmigrant perspectives in societal self-understanding.

Observations from the interviews include examination on how participants contrast past and present experiences of fear and racial trauma due to the rising threat of far-right ideology and violence with affective alternative futures. I am particularly interested in fear as a restrictive element for everyday life as a form of double erasure and how future narratives pose a vital form of resistance for marginalized young people.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:51 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 10

Beyond Access: Temporal Trajectories of School Adaptation among Ukrainian Forced-Migrants in Poland

General

Olena Styslavaska-Doliwa¹

Paula Pustulka¹

¹ SWPS University, Social Sciences, Poland

Abstract text: Forced migration fractures the biographical timing of youth, turning schooling from a routine experience into a site where continuity, belonging, and future-oriented agency are renegotiated. Inspired by Sayer's insistence that social knowledge should be practically useful, this paper moves beyond the focus on "access" of forced migrant adolescents (FMAs) to public schooling, instead asking how theory and method shape what becomes knowable about their school lives, and how findings can be translated into tools for institutional support.

In a critical-realist register, the paper integrates Merton's strain framework to analyse coping under institutionally structured means, with Archer's morphogenetic approach to theorise adaptation as a temporally unfolding interplay of structural conditioning (placement, language provision, cultural assistance, assessment) and adolescents' reflexive agency. The overarching approach driven by Merton and Archer is complemented by paying due attention to emergent processual frameworks of embedding and anchoring (Grzymała-Kazłowska, Ryan 2022), popular in migration studies, and here applied to the context of young forced migrants' belonging.

The study draws on 20 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with adolescents (ages 13 to 16) from Ukraine who migrated to Poland after the Russian invasion. While not formally longitudinal, the data allows reconstruction of trajectories from "before the war" through "arrival" to "today", documenting experiences from February 2022 to December 2024. The analysis combines inductive thematic coding with temporal narrative approaches. The paper argues that misalignment between school responses and phase-specific needs of FMAs influences later disengagement, and proposes a framework for phase-attuned pedagogical and organisational interventions.

Navigating sexual harm

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

Navigating sexual harm

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:15, Where: Lecture hall 11

In their own words: how Norwegian youth describe and interpret Digital Sexual Harassment

General

Christer Hyggen¹

Gerd Marie Solstad¹, **Mette Løvgren**¹, Rikke Tokle¹

¹ NOVA - OsloMet

Abstract text: Young people spend a substantial part of their social lives in digital environments. Yet despite this reality, we still know too little about how sexual harassment is actually experienced, interpreted, and handled across the platforms they use every day. This study addresses this gap by analysing a large corpus of anonymized questions submitted by adolescents to ung.no, Norway's national online counselling service for youth. The platform provides a unique window into how young people articulate uncertainty and discomfort associated with sexual boundary violations in digital spaces.

Using AI-supported text and content analysis, we identify recurring themes in how youth describe digital sexual harassment, including unwanted sexual messages, pressure to share intimate images, non-consensual image distribution, and platform-specific risks tied to social media, messaging apps, and gaming environments. The analysis further examines emotional reactions such as shame, fear, and confusion, as well as how adolescents understand responsibility, blame, and the seriousness of their experiences.

By combining computational analysis with youth-centered perspectives, the study reveals how adolescents conceptualize and navigate digital sexual harassment in their own words, offering new insights for platform-sensitive prevention and support initiatives.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:15 - 14:45, Where: Lecture hall 11

Support stories: Young Women's Disclosure of Intimate Partner Sexual Violence

General

Clara Fahlstadius¹

Carolina Överlien^{2,3}, Hanna Linell¹

¹ Department of Social Work, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

² National Center for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

³ Norwegian Center for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS), Oslo, Norway

Abstract text: Recent studies have shown that social responses to young people's disclosure of sexual violence and intimate partner violence may affect their mental health and resilience. However, little is known about how such responses and support are perceived by young people. This study contributes to a growing field of research on young people's intimate partner sexual violence (YIPSV) by focusing on how young women perceive negative responses from their social networks when disclosing intimate partner sexual violence. Using a narrative approach, we conducted 10 in-depth interviews with young women aged 15–25 who had experienced YIPSV. The findings show that negative responses, lack of support, and lack of responsibility from adults in their social networks—including parents, school staff, and youth clinic professionals—were central in the young women's narratives of YIPSV and in their efforts to make sense of their experiences. Further, the young women described these responses as associated with feelings of loneliness, shame, guilt, and diminished trust in societal institutions, which can be understood in relation to the concept of social betrayal. The results contribute to a more nuanced understanding of young people's exposure to YIPSV, as well as their needs and resilience. The findings also stress the importance of understanding violence among young people as a social act, in which social networks play a central role in shaping how experiences are interpreted and processed. Social responses and support should therefore be a key concern for adults that figure in young people's everyday lives.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:45 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 11

Digital vigilance: Gendered safety work and sexual harm in youths' digital lives

General

Rikke Tokle¹

Gerd Marie Solstad¹

¹ OsloMet, NOVA

Abstract text: Research on sexual violence has shown how sexual risk perceptions and gendered double standards shape understandings of danger and responsibility, often placing a disproportionate burden of safety work on girls. This article extends this perspective to the digital domain by examining how experiences of digital sexual violations accumulate over time and inform youths' everyday safety practices. The article draws on 153 in-depth interviews with Norwegian youth aged 17–19. Youths' accounts move from early experimentation to later reflection and risk awareness. These narratives frame a range of digital sexual violations, including unsolicited images, pressure to share sexual content, circulation of private material, and covert recordings. The article's main contribution is the concept of digital vigilance. Digital vigilance captures how layered personal and vicarious experiences of digital sexual harm are carried forward and translated into ongoing safety work. This vigilance is articulated most clearly by girls as practices of monitoring, restriction and anticipation that shape how youth manage visibility, intimacy and participation in digital spaces. These practices are structured by gendered double standards: girls' digital sexual expression is more closely scrutinized and sanctioned, while responsibility for preventing harm is subtly shifted onto their conduct. We argue that the persistence, replicability and capacity of digital sexual violence to resurface make it a particularly potent form of gendered harm. The study further demonstrates that digital sexual violence affects far more youth than those directly victimized, as shared experiences and peer narratives accumulate and become embedded in youths' expectations and girls' safety strategies.

Youth work as profession and practice

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

Youth work as profession and practice

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:07, Where: Lecture hall 13

Five Profiles of Youth Work Orientations Among Youth in the Eastern Finland

General

Kari Saari¹

Jussi Ronkainen²

¹ South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, Youth Research and Development Unit
Juvenia, Finland

² South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Abstract text: Youth policies and politics have paid attention to young people living in rural areas in Nordic countries and European union during the last decades. However, there are still relatively limited number of academic research and knowledge available on youth work in rural environments in Finland.

This paper is based on the analysis of a survey about youth work services conducted in November 2025. The e-questionnaire was filled out by 2.548 young people in the Eastern Finland (14–25 years olds living in the regions of Southern Savonia, Northern Savonia and Northern Karelia). These three regions are characterized e.g. by an aging population and long distances. Survey was conducted as part of the knowledge production of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture's centre of expertise on regional information about youth work.

Cluster analysis of the data (n=2325) identified five profiles of youth work orientations across different activities and services of youth work in rural as well as urban environments: (1) *voluntarily passive and satisfied* (25%) , (2) *selectively active and satisfied* (24%), (3) *highly active and (critical but) highly satisfied* (18%), (4) *lightly active and lightly satisfied* (24%), and (5) *outsiders with no opinions* (9%). The results showed that the five profiles had also specific features in terms of socio-demographic characteristics as well as views on activities and services for young people in their living areas.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:07 - 14:29, Where: Lecture hall 13

'Freedom of Choice' in Understanding Accessibility in the Context of Youth Work

General

Anu Gretschel¹

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society

Abstract text: Voluntariness and open access have long been defining characteristics of youth work. Examining the theoretical background of concepts such as freedom of choice, positive and negative freedom, and agency offers a fresh perspective on voluntariness and accessibility in the context of youth work. This presentation focuses on two case studies: youth clubs and youth participation. The data consists of two sets of interviews conducted in different parts of Finland. The first set of interviews, realised between 2017 and 2019, involved around 20 individuals aged 18–29 reflecting retrospectively on their experiences of municipal youth work, particularly youth clubs, when they were aged 13–15. The second set of interviews, conducted in 2025–26, asked a similar number of participants, aged 13–29, about their experiences with youth clubs and youth participation. Both youth clubs and the development of youth participation opportunities are core processes in the organisation of youth work in Finnish municipalities, as set out in the Youth Act.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:29 - 14:51, Where: Lecture hall 13

The values, motivations, and theoretical underpinnings of youth work education

General

John Marion¹

Tim Corney¹, Brett Woods¹, Ciara Bradley², Hilary Tierney², Ilona Rannala³, Marko Kovačić⁴, Saoirse Reynolds Conlon², Mario Žuliček⁴, Kristi Jüristo³, Katrin Karu³, Dragan Atanasov⁵, Sofija Arnaudova⁵, Bojana Culum⁵

¹ Victoria University

² Maynooth University

³ Tallin University

⁴ University of Rijeka

⁵ SOJUZ ZA MLADINSKA RABOTA SKOPJE

Abstract text: Defining youth work and its activities has been a perennial challenge. The variety of expressions of youth work theory and practice across global challenges presents a challenge for developing consensus for the training of youth workers. This research is concerned with the question of ‘how trainee youth workers are educated and prepared for professional youth work practice with diverse young people’ and examines the international experiences of the education and training of youth workers across five countries: Estonia, Croatia, Macedonia, Ireland and Australia as part of the PD4D project, funded by Erasmus+. Youth work educators from a university in each country completed a survey about the content and values of their courses, and participated in interviews and discussions about their motivations, theoretical underpinnings, and practice. We found that across the five distinct national contexts, there is a broad agreement that youth work is social pedagogical process with social justice aims among youth work educators. However, the specific expression of these concepts differs depending on the national context, often for historical reasons. The values and biographies of youth work educators play a role in their conception of themselves as educators, as well as their motivations and practice. Educators also stressed the importance of youth work as its own distinct discipline, especially in the context of neoliberal pressures in higher education that seek to conflate it with other areas of study (counselling, social work, etc.).

When: 2026-10-21, 14:51 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 13

Responses of youth work to the needs of marginalized youth

General

Fanni Maszlag PhD¹

Barnabás Gulyás¹

¹ ELTE Faculty of Education and Psychology, Institute of Research on Adult Education and Knowledge Management

Abstract text: Youth work as a profession has a long tradition of viewing young people in terms of their potential, and it is traditionally grounded in a strengths-based approach that emphasizes supporting young people's agency and development. However, in Hungary, structural inequalities significantly shape the life chances of marginalized youth, particularly Roma young people, who continue to face cumulative disadvantages in education, employment, and social participation (Kertesi & Kézdi, 2011; Messing, 2017; European Commission, 2020).

Our presentation is based on qualitative interviews conducted with youth work practitioners in diverse professional settings, including government-funded institutions and nonprofit organizations. Participants represent varied professional backgrounds, educational trajectories, and organizational experiences. The analysis focuses on how practitioners interpret and respond to the needs of marginalized youth, and on how institutional environments shape their professional practices and intervention strategies.

These findings reveal significant differences in Hungary between state-funded and nonprofit youth work in terms of flexibility, professional autonomy, and responsiveness to the needs of marginalized youth. Practitioners working with Roma young people highlighted the persistent effects of structural inequalities—particularly educational segregation, limited access to resources, and intergenerational marginalization—which often constrain efforts to support young people's agency.

The results indicate that effective professional responses to the needs of marginalized youth require a multi-level, context-sensitive approach that takes into account institutional frameworks, professional autonomy, and the impact of structural inequalities. The study contributes to a better understanding of the possibilities and limitations of youth work in socially unequal contexts.

Youth-centred approaches to rights and participation

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

Youth-centred approaches to rights and participation

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:15, Where: Lecture hall 18

Children's Rights Research Risks Reinforcing Adult-Centric Narratives

General

Kirsty Fraser^{1,2}

Lisa Mauro-Bracken², **Maria Nyholm**³

¹ 1.PGR Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY), School of Education and Social Work University of Sussex, United Kingdom

² 2.School of Health & Wellbeing, University of Worcester, United Kingdom

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Abstract text: Although the UNCRC has been widely adopted across Europe, the practical realisation of children's rights in schools remains limited. Our scoping review mapped 25 empirical studies published between 2000 and 2023, revealing a widening gap between theoretical advocacy for children's rights and the lived realities of young people in educational settings. While scholarship frequently *talks the talk*, theorising participation, rights-based pedagogy, and agency, much of the existing research stops short of examining how children and young people actually experience their rights in everyday school life. Instead, children's voices are often referenced abstractly, mediated through adult interpretations, or framed within tokenistic participatory structures.

Through thematic analysis, we identified three recurring themes: school culture, children's agency, and rights-based pedagogy. Across these themes, a persistent pattern emerges: research tends to centre conceptual discussions of rights rather than engaging directly with young people's perspectives or observing the institutional conditions that shape their experiences. This reliance on theoretical narratives risks reinforcing an adult-centric perspective and obscures how power, pedagogy, and school structures mediate the enactment of rights.

To address this gap, we propose more research grounded in active, dialogic methodologies that create knowledge for positive change. Specifically, conducting focus groups with pedagogical experts in Sweden and the UK to explore how children's rights are being interpreted, negotiated, and implemented in diverse school cultures. This work aims to move beyond rhetorical commitment to rights by generating empirical insights into how young people encounter, understand, and experience their rights in practice.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:15 - 14:45, Where: Lecture hall 18

Bridging Children's Rights-Based and Transdisciplinary Research: Insights from a Study with Children

General

Sarah Zerika¹

¹ Centre for Children's Rights Studies, University of Geneva

Abstract text: This presentation examines how participatory research with children can be strengthened by explicitly articulating transdisciplinary research (TDR) with a children's rights-based approach (CRBA). Drawing on Zerika et al. (2026), the paper builds on a comparative synthesis of CRBA and TDR with children, highlighting both their differences and complementarities across key dimensions such as normative grounding, conceptions of children, ethics, participation, power relations, and research purpose. While CRBA provide a robust ethical and normative foundation grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its recognition of children as rights-holders and social actors (Lundy et al., 2011; Darbellay & Moody, 2023), TDR offers a methodological framework for engaging with complex societal challenges through reflexive collaboration and knowledge co-production between academic and non-academic actors (Darbellay, 2015).

Empirically, the contribution is illustrated through three Children's Research Advisory Groups (CRAGs; Smith et al., 2002; Moody et al., 2021) composed of 8–10 pupils aged 9–12, involved in a doctoral study on school climate in alternative schools in French-speaking Switzerland. The CRAGs were engaged through “pockets of participation” (Franks, 2011), including image-sorting activities to explore the concept of school climate, drawing their “dream school”, collective discussions based on peers' drawings, feedback on research conditions, and critical reflection on a questionnaire and the researcher's initial analysis. The presentation discusses methodological and ethical considerations emerging from this process – such as school constraints, variability in engagement, and “pockets of formation” – and reflects on how CRAGs can support children's rights-based participation in transdisciplinary research with children.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:45 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 18

Whose Wellbeing: Student Voice in School Wellbeing Work

General

Ida Andrea Nilsson¹

Noemi Katznelson¹

¹ Aalborg university

Abstract text:

Youth wellbeing in education is often framed as an individual condition or as something that can be managed through targeted interventions. In this paper, we instead approach wellbeing as a negotiated and situated phenomenon shaped through cultural discourses, institutional structures and everyday interactions. Drawing on practice theory (Kemmis et al., 2014), we ask how students', teachers' and school leaders' understandings of wellbeing shape what counts as a wellbeing problem and what kinds of solutions become possible.

The paper builds on material from a collaborative research project with 14 Danish upper secondary schools (Katznelson et al., 2025). The empirical material combines interviews with students, teachers and leaders, observations of everyday school life, and dialogue-based research circles with educators, supplemented by descriptive survey data. We analyse how wellbeing is articulated by students compared to staff and how these understandings translate into pedagogical and institutional practices.

Our analysis shows that while staff often link wellbeing to participation in school activities, classroom community and educational progression, students foreground the need for emotionally safe, close relations and strategies for coping with performance pressures and the risk of "falling behind". These mismatches can produce blind spots where student struggles are rendered as individual deficits, while students' own wellbeing efforts are not always recognised as meaningful practices.

The paper contributes to dialogues in youth studies by examining how "youth voice" is shaped and reshaped through adult-designed wellbeing interventions, and by discussing the consequences of definitional power in contemporary wellbeing agendas.

Symposium. Gender in Nordic youth relations

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

Symposium. Gender in Nordic youth relations

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:15, Where: Lecture hall 19

The non-performativity of gender awareness in school guidance

4. Gender in Nordic youth relations

Hanna Lonka¹

Anne-Mari Souto¹, Heidi Huilla¹

¹ University of Eastern Finland, Philosophical Faculty, Finland

Abstract text: My presentation is part of the *Gender in Nordic Youth Relations* working group, and it focuses on the third sub-study of my doctoral dissertation.

In Finland, gender segregation in educational fields and the labour market is exceptionally strong—both at the EU level and in comparison, with other Nordic countries. One of the key sites where young people reflect on their future pathways is school-based guidance, and a particularly significant turning point that shapes educational pathways in the Finnish system is the transition from lower secondary to upper secondary education. In recent years, specific attention has been directed toward strengthening guidance in lower secondary schools, and promoting gender equality has become one central aim, including efforts to challenge gendered structures and dismantle segregation in guidance practices. This study examines how the significance of gender—in the context of educational choices—is addressed in guidance, and identifies potential points for dismantling gendered structures, thereby strengthening gender awareness in guidance practices.

The data consists of ethnographic observation material collected from individual guidance sessions and guidance lessons, complemented by interviews with young people. The analysis employs Ahmed's concept of non-performativity as the theoretical framework and additionally draws on critical guidance research as well as gender and youth studies. Preliminary analysis indicates that gender is addressed only at the level of superficial references, which is insufficient for challenging gendered structures and expanding young people's horizon for action. Gender is present and meaningful in multiple ways, yet in these moments it remains unaddressed and unspoken.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:15 - 14:45, Where: Lecture hall 19

GUS girls' strategies in relation to the gendered idealized chooser

4. Gender in Nordic youth relations

Heli Pesonen¹

¹ University of Eastern Finland (UEF)

Abstract text: In this research, we examine GUS (Finnish general upper secondary education) girls' strategies (see e.g., Laaksonen, 2024; Tolonen & Aapola Kari, 2021) that illustrate how they navigate the gendered idealized chooser embedded in GUS schooling. In the current educational climate, GUS students are expected to be self-directed, to graduate quickly, and to transition smoothly into further studies (Tolonen & Aapola Kari, 2021; Timonen et al., 2016). Educational choices in Finland remain strongly gendered (Etelävuori, 2023; Kauhanen & Riukula, 2019), while GUS girls are simultaneously expected to be well-behaved, independent, responsible, and rational (Pesonen et al., 2025; Käyhkö, 2011). These expectations, together with broader societal conditions, shape the choices and future directions that young people—and in this study, GUS girls—perceive as possible for themselves (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997; Mäkelä & Kalalahti, 2020). Although often framed as individual decisions, youth studies show that educational choices are deeply social, tied to relationships and to socially produced and constrained resources (Tolonen, Vehkalahti & Aapola Kari, 2021). Girls' imagined futures are further shaped by a new, complex form of feminism characterised by tensions between freedom and achievement, and between influence and care (Suni, 2025). Our preliminary analysis shows that the girls adopt diverse strategies despite the pressures they encounter. These findings offer important insights for developing guidance counselling in GUS and underscore the need for practices that recognise the significance of gender in shaping students' reflections on their futures.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:45 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 19

Mundane exclusions – An analysis of materiality and norms in primary school girls' negotiations of belonging

4. Gender in Nordic youth relations

Eveliina Puutio

Anne-Mari Väisänen, Maija Lanas

Abstract text: In this study, we focus on mundane social exclusions within the relationships of primary school girls. Drawing on a feminist materialist lens and critical scholarship of childhood peer relations, our aim is to make visible how social exclusion is continuously produced in fleeting material moments of school life and how it entangles with the ideals of 'femininity' and being 'a good student'. We ask: How are girls' negotiations of exclusion produced in socio-material entanglements of gendered norms and everyday school life?

The data was produced through school ethnographic and arts-based methods in three Northern-Finnish primary schools together with 80 pre-teens aged 10–13. Our analytical approach draws on diffractive analysis and thinking-with theory.

The results indicate that within the relationships of schoolgirls, exclusion typically occurs within the boundaries of school rules and in ways that are difficult to intervene in. We identified five ways in which exclusion materializes: embedded in play, altering the rules of play, ostracizing, appealing to ignorance, and deviating from school's normative spatiotemporal pathways. Studying exclusion in schoolgirls' everyday situations is crucial, as exclusion occurring within the framework of school rules often remains at the margins of research, and the subtle forms of marginalization typical for girls' relationships tend to go unrecognized and unaddressed. Moreover, it is important to produce knowledge about the forms of relational agency that school norms and space-times co-constitute. A deeper understanding of how exclusion intertwines with social norms and material practices can support the ethicality and safety of children's peer relations.

(Un)familiar transitions

2026-10-21

13:45 - 15:15

(Un)familiar transitions

When: 2026-10-21, 13:45 - 14:15, Where: Lecture hall 24

Narratives of Care Leavers' Transition to Adulthood

General

Outi Hokkanen¹

¹ University of Lapland, Finland

Abstract text: Adolescence is a life stage characterized by formation and becoming, whereas adulthood can be seen as a state of arrival and completion (White & Wyn 2013, 1997). In postmodern societies, transitions to adulthood have become increasingly complex, unpredictable, and fragmented (Glynn 2021; Arnett 2000), which also transforms how this transitional period is recognized and experienced by young adults (Silva 2012). The narrative one constructs about oneself as an adult influences how transitions to adulthood are perceived and lived.

The aim of this presentation is to contribute to the discussion by examining care leavers' experiences (N=25) of transitions during emerging adulthood. The research data were collected in 2024 as part of the Jäkälä – Developing the Aftercare Services in Lapland project in Finland. The participants were between 18 and 30 years old and were either still receiving aftercare services or had received them at the time they transitioned to independent living from foster care. The data collection consisted of thematic interviews and was analyzed using narrative methods.

Care leavers' descriptions of themselves and their transitions to adulthood formed distinct narrative pathways to adulthood. In this presentation, I examine research findings on how transitions — and the self as an adult — is defined and experienced by young adults. These findings shed light on care leavers' future orientations and their transitions to independent living during emerging adulthood.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:15 - 14:45, Where: Lecture hall 24

Still at home: Young Adults, Economic Responsibilities, and Delayed Autonomy

General

Lars Crusefalk¹

¹ Department of Sociology, Stockholm University

Abstract text: Across the EU, an increasing number of young adults continue living with their parents. Although this has traditionally been less common in Sweden, the share of young people residing in the parental home has grown since 2014. At the same time, fewer than half of Swedish 19–24-year-olds contribute financially to the household, raising questions about responsibility, independence, and intergenerational relations.

While existing research outlines general patterns of co-residence and financial contribution, the underlying mechanisms remain insufficiently understood. Little is known about how young adults and parents negotiate financial responsibility, household roles, and expectations for the future within the Swedish context.

International studies indicate that migrant background may shape financial behaviour, with young people from immigrant families more likely to support their parents economically. Financial inequality within and between families is also likely to influence these dynamics: young adults in economically secure households may face limited pressure to contribute, whereas those in financially strained families may be expected to do so.

This project examines how financial responsibility and independence are negotiated between young adults and their parents in Swedish parental homes. Using qualitative group interviews with co-residing young adults and parents, it investigates how economic roles are constructed, distributed, and experienced, and how these processes are shaped by class, gender, and ethnic background.

The project aims to generate new knowledge about financial responsibility within families in a welfare society characterized by individualism, and to illuminate how these negotiations relate to broader societal norms surrounding the transition to adulthood.

When: 2026-10-21, 14:45 - 15:15, Where: Lecture hall 24

Mothers' invisible work in navigating the transitions of young people with learning disabilities

General

Anna-Maija Niemi^{1, 2}

Aarno Kauppila²

¹ University of Eastern Finland, School of Educational Sciences and Psychology

² University of Turku, Department of Education

Abstract text: Despite the disability policy goals, the service system delineates the life paths, educational opportunities, and possibilities for societal participation of young people with learning disabilities (Kauppila 2022; Eriksson & Saukkonen 2022; Mietola 2018). The transitions to adulthood of these young people are typically negotiated across social, health, work, and education services, making the transitions complex. Consequently, they are both non-normative transitions towards adulthood and multiple parallel system-level transitions (Smith & Dowse 2019). Moreover, there is a mismatch between the support needed to enable meaningful transitions and the limited educational and employment opportunities available (Pallisera et al. 2016), as well as tensions between given autonomy and provided support to overcome structural barriers (Pearson et al. 2020).

This presentation draws on an ongoing study examining transitions and belonging in the local communities of Swedish-speaking young people with learning disabilities in Finland. The study investigates how transitions after upper secondary education are planned and implemented, and what kind of belonging in the local communities they make possible. Focusing on interviews with close relatives—specifically mothers—we analyse the forms of *invisible work* (Daniels 1987; Grue 2023; Hatton 2017) they undertake in their efforts to secure “good enough” transitions and adulthood for their children. The analysis shows that mothers engage extensively in everyday bureaucracy, conduct voluntary expert-like work that often resembles activism, and carry significant emotional labour. This emotional labour includes navigating the tension between being a parent and acting as a trustee responsible for advocating and managing services on behalf of their children.

Youth in times of crisis, conflict and uncertainty

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Youth in times of crisis, conflict and uncertainty

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:22, Where: Lecture hall 10

Death in children's lives: Reimagining death literacy in childhood and youth

General

Anne-Sofie Nyström¹

Rakel Eklund²

¹ Uppsala University, Department of Education

² Uppsala university, Department of women's and children's health

Abstract text: Children and young people encounter death in everyday life, through family, peers, media, and health care. Opportunities for meaningful engagement with death-related topics are limited. The presentation draws on an article in which we reimagine *death literacy*—the knowledge and skills needed to navigate dying, death, and bereavement—through a child-centered, social constructionist lens. Existing frameworks are adult-oriented, emphasizing procedural and caregiving knowledge. We propose a critical literacy approach that recognizes adults' child/youth-relational capacities and children and young people as social agents who co-construct knowledge about death and dying in interaction with others. Then, rather than a fixed set of competencies, death literacy is instead viewed as a socially produced phenomenon shaped by language, cultural narratives, and everyday practices. We highlight how children and young people experience death in different social arenas, navigating routines, complex emotional and philosophical questions. By examining children's perspectives and experiences, especially end-of-life experiences, we call for inclusive, dialogical practices that support participation in death-related communication and knowledge production. Our contribution lies in broadening the understanding of childhood and youth as critical life phases for navigating death and dying, and advancing a child/youth-centered model of death literacy that foregrounds relational, cultural, and communicative dimensions. We show how adults' death literacy (e.g., caregivers, social workers and educators), conditions children's and young people's opportunities for participation, understanding, and well-being in end-of-life contexts. This reorientation expands death literacy from individual capacity to socially grounded resources in childhood, youth and adulthood, offering new directions for research, education, and practice.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:22 - 09:44, Where: Lecture hall 10

The Emergence of a Generation in Times of War: Jewish and Arab-Palestinian Young Adults in Israel

General

Roni Eyal-Lubling¹

Noa Lavie¹

¹ The Academic College of Tel-Aviv - Yaffo

Abstract text: Young adulthood is often positioned at the intersection of promise and precarity, a tension that becomes pronounced during periods of socio-political crisis. This paper examines how war shapes subjectivities and meaning-making among young adults (aged 18–35) in Israel following the October 7th massacre and the Israel-Gaza war.

Drawing on Mannheim's theory of generations, we conceptualise the emergence of a social generation as a dynamic and contested process formed through shared exposure to historical events, yet differentiated by social location and cultural narratives. Rather than presuming generational unity, we approach young adulthood as a heterogeneous category, attentive to how common events are interpreted and negotiated across social divides, potentially giving rise to distinct generational units.

The paper draws on a pilot study employing six focus groups with 42 young adults from diverse socio-demographic contexts, including Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, residents of central and peripheral regions, and multiple educational backgrounds. This design enables an exploration of the ways the current war is experienced as generationally formative within a deeply stratified and conflictual social landscape.

Preliminary findings suggest that the war is experienced as part of a cumulative sequence of crises, which has destabilised young adults' sense of predictability and future orientation. Narratives of heightened uncertainty and institutional distrust coexist with emergent forms of solidarity and civic engagement.

The paper contributes to Youth Studies by reanimating generational theory in a context of protracted conflict, challenging transition-focused paradigms, and reflecting on the methodological complexities of researching young adulthood in times of war.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:44 - 10:06, Where: Lecture hall 10

Navigating Uncertainty: Young Adults' Meaning-Making of Crisis Preparedness and National Defense

General

Emelie Wahlkrantz¹

¹ Swedish Defence University

Abstract text: Young people in Sweden come of age in a cultural landscape marked by rapid social transformations, heightened global insecurity, and expanding public debates on crisis preparedness and national defense. These conditions shape not only their everyday experiences but also the narratives through which they understand themselves and imagine their futures. This paper investigates how young adults interpret and navigate societal uncertainty, with particular attention to how discourses of defense and preparedness become woven into their broader projects of identity and self-making.

Drawing on in-depth interviews with young adults, this ongoing study explores how discourses of security intersect with cultural expectations of flexibility, individualization and continuous self-improvement. By situating participants' accounts within these wider cultural frameworks, the paper examines how crisis preparedness and societal risk acquire generationally specific meanings and how discursive norms shape young adults' imaginaries of competence, obligation, and desire in relation to defense.

Analytically, the paper highlights how young adults integrate ideas of risk and preparedness into broader projects of self-making, moral positioning and aspirations for adulthood. It also aims to address tensions between collective solidarity and individual autonomy. The paper advances youth studies by illustrating how young adults become positioned – and position themselves – as political subjects in a landscape of insecurity. Their narratives reveal emerging formations of citizenship in contemporary Sweden.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:06 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 10

Anxietscapes: A Socio Spatial Approach to Analyzing Young People's Lived Lives in Anxious Times

General

Hanne Warming¹

¹ Roskilde University, Department of Social Science and Business

Abstract text: In this presentation, I introduce the concept of *anxietscapes* as an analytical lens for examining how different forms of worry and concern become entangled in young people's lived lives. The notion of *scape* has been widely employed in the social sciences and humanities to explore phenomena that are unevenly distributed across space and manifest in diverse shapes and contexts (Brembeck & Barbro 2013: 800). Drawing inspiration from Brembeck and Barbro's (2013) development of the concept of *foodscapes*, and my and a colleague's (Warming & Alminde 2025) development of the concept of *divorcescapes*, I propose *anxietscapes* as a way to conceptualize the landscapes of spaces in which young people encounter, experience, and navigate various worries and perceived threats.

The analysis is grounded in a socio-spatial approach that understands place (e.g., a school setting or a social media platform) as a structurally framed social action situation "in which material and discursive relations are interwoven" (Simonsen 2001: 35; Lefebvre 1991). Accordingly, I define *anxietscapes* as interconnected and evolving structures that take shape as young people—through interactions with others—experience, manage, and negotiate situations marked by worry, uncertainty, or threat.

The presentation begins by outlining and elaborating the concept, including its onto-epistemological foundations. This is followed by an empirical analysis that applies the concept to young people's wellbeing and lived citizenship in anxious times, drawing on data from a research project on young people's green transition citizenship. Based on this analysis, I discuss the analytical potential and limitations of the concept of *anxietscapes*.

Possibilities and constraints in educational and institutional contexts

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Possibilities and constraints in educational and institutional contexts

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 11

Feminist and Queer Youth Clubs as Transformative Spaces: Challenging Norms Within and Beyond Schools

General

Bergljót Þrastardóttir¹

¹ University of Akureyri, Iceland

Abstract text: This paper presents findings from a qualitative study of feminist and queer clubs in Icelandic secondary schools. The study examines students' experiences of participation, the roles these clubs play within school culture, and the nature of institutional support during a period of a national and international backlash against gender and LGBTQ+ rights. It explores how these clubs can function as transformative spaces for feminists, LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming students, providing a platform for advocacy, education, safety and support.

Data were generated through online individual and group interviews with students who voluntarily participated in discussions about their clubs' activities, purposes and challenges. The interviews explored both formal initiatives (e.g., events, collaboration with teachers, educational activities) and informal practices (peer support and everyday forms of activism, e.g. on social media). The analysis focuses on how students perceive the clubs' influence within their schools and how they navigate support, resistance and visibility.

Preliminary findings suggest contextual differences between rural and urban secondary schools. Clubs in rural areas report more limited institutional support, while also emphasizing their importance as safe spaces for marginalized students (Sorgen & Rogers, 2021). Participants describe increased awareness of broader political backlash and its impact on their wellbeing, sense of safety and visibility in school. Social media plays a central role in awareness-raising and educational efforts, yet it simultaneously exposes students to increased scrutiny and vulnerability. The findings contribute insight into how youth-led feminist and queer initiatives operate within secondary education and how school contexts shape their possibilities and constraints.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 11

Imagining futures: Four young women navigating vocational education and mathematics

General

Matilda Hällback¹

Anne-Sofie Nyström¹

¹ Uppsala University, Department of Education, Sweden

Abstract text: This study, drawing on data from an ongoing PhD project, investigates how four young women in a vocational upper secondary program (Child and Recreation) in Sweden negotiate their educational trajectories, school engagement, and imagined futures, with a particular focus on mathematics. Research and policy discourse often portray vocational learners as having limited academic aspirations and constrained dispositions toward mathematics. Against this backdrop, the study examines how these students articulate ambitions that exceed the expectations commonly associated with vocational education and training (VET).

The analysis is built on Skovsmose's (2005) sociopolitical conception of *foregrounds*, which emphasizes how students' interpretations of their future possibilities shape their engagement with school mathematics. Through a qualitative design combining interviews and classroom observations, we explore the meanings the four young women give to mathematics in relation to their anticipated life paths.

Our findings show that mathematics is not perceived merely as a compulsory subject but is framed as a strategic and enabling resource for accessing higher education and broader life opportunities. The students' narratives reveal how they actively construct meaningful relationships with mathematics, drawing on personal aspirations, family expectations, and perceived societal demands. Their stories challenge dominant classed and gendered deficit discourses that position vocational students as unambitious or academically disengaged.

By foregrounding vocational students' future-oriented meaning-making, this study contributes to ongoing discussions on equity in mathematics education and VET. It highlights the need for research and policy to recognize vocational students' diverse aspirations and the strategic ways in which they engage with, for instance, mathematics.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 11

Not Everyone Is Built to Handle What I Handle: Collective Sensemaking in a Youth Programme

General

Miriam Abildsnes¹

¹ OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo, Norway

Abstract text: This paper examines how an interprofessional team in a dropout prevention programme navigates a critical decision about whether to exclude two participants. While research on interprofessional collaboration often emphasises institutional logics and structural conditions, less attention has been paid to how socio-emotional dynamics shape professional collaboration when working around young people in high-stakes situations. The study draws on situational sensemaking as an analytical lens, understood as actors' ongoing, situated process of actively defining and ordering experience into integrated, socially framed situations. The analysis is based on fieldwork and interviews from a dropout-prevention programme for fifteen-year-old boys at high risk of school dropout. As part of the programme, staff and participants live together for twelve days in a camp setting characterised by close proximity, emotional intensity, and physical and mental exhaustion. This context provides a unique opportunity to examine how an interprofessional team navigates three critical episodes, including a decision about whether to exclude two participants, and how socio-emotional dynamics become entangled in their collaborative sensemaking. The findings show that socio-emotional dynamics do not merely accompany sensemaking but actively structure it, producing tensions between ethical principles, institutional expectations, and the embodied experience of working closely around the young people in the programme. The study contributes to youth research by demonstrating how the emotional, relational, and ethical dimensions of collective sensemaking become particularly salient under conditions of exhaustion and heightened intensity in collaborative work concerning young people.

Multimodal and art-based methods

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Multimodal and art-based methods

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:22, Where: Lecture hall 13

Creative Youth Work as Method: Considerations for research with young people

General

Elinor Whittle¹

¹ Nottingham Trent University, School of Social Sciences, United Kingdom

Abstract text: This paper will propose “creative youth work as method”. This approach elaborates upon Batsleer and Duggan (2021) who advocate for “youth work as method”. Creative Arts Youth Work (CAYW) is an emancipatory practice which amalgamates arts education with youth work principles. Key tenets include relational learning, intercultural collaboration, and the development of youth voice (Beggan and Coburn, 2018). Creative youth settings function as vital “third spaces”, neither home nor school, for young people to explore their burgeoning identities and foster critical thinking (Briggs, 2025). Through CAYW community is built, alternatives are imagined and meaningful social change can be catalysed (Howard, 2024). How can we ensure that research with young people upholds this resistance?

I will examine how the inclusion of CAYW practice and creative methods enhance this methodology. I will then explore some of the pitfalls I encountered through its application. The creative youth work methodology was developed for a PhD project: a mixed method, creative ethnography in three youth settings in London and Bristol, United Kingdom, in collaboration with young people aged 12-19. Kill, adopting Berlant (2011), acknowledges the ‘cruel optimism of co-production’ (Kill, 2021). The strictures of the doctoral framework combined with the harsh realities of the austerity youth work sector tested my methodological framework; developing “creative youth work as method” both built barriers and found solutions. By positioning creative youth work as a methodology, the extent to which ethical youth work practice and principles of social justice are upheld through research with young people can be explored.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:22 - 09:44, Where: Lecture hall 13

Collaborative practice: participatory research and multi-media methodologies

General

Claire Levy^{1, 2}

¹ Bath Spa University, School of Art, Film and Media, UK

² Goldsmiths, University of London, School of Sociology, UK

Abstract text: Family Stories, Stroud Film Festival social media internship and Podcasting Toolkit are three participatory, collaborative multi-media projects working with children and young people. Building on the approaches explored during my PhD research project (a co-created interactive documentary, Rural Teen Diaries), each of these new funded projects examines how multimedia methodologies support collaborative and participatory research and create new ways to understand the experiences of young people and children.

These projects used innovative methods of production and knowledge creation whilst balancing the demands of client-led and industry-related criteria. Working with Great Ormond Street Hospital, London; a rural community film festival; and collaborating with a transdisciplinary team at Bath Spa University, each of the projects incorporated training for participants in using multi-media technologies as part of the research process, and was evaluated in terms of learning, effectiveness, and the new perspectives it enabled.

Participatory methods are a 'diverse set of techniques' (Gallagher, 2008, p. 138), used not only to listen to young people, but also to involve them in decisions about the research and the production of research data (Clark and Moss, 2001; Gallagher, 2008; Montreuil et al., 2021). These reflective aspects were captured using podcasting, voice memos, photography, video and writing, giving space for the different ways people respond to learning. This paper presents how this approach establishes how inclusive methods design and embracing 'failure' support knowledge production (Jankovich and Stevenson, 2021).

When: 2026-10-22, 09:44 - 10:06, Where: Lecture hall 13

Adopt Art: Towards Sensitive and Co-Creative Research with Internationally Adopted Young People

General

Irene Salvo Agoglia¹

¹ Department of Education, University of Barcelona, Spain

Abstract text: This presentation shares findings from AdoptArt (MSCA, Horizon Europe), a participatory research project exploring the transformative potential of collective artistic creation as a pathway to agency and emancipation for internationally adopted young people. The project engaged 40 young people aged 15–24, adopted from countries across Latin America, Asia and Africa, who participated in ten workshops held in different cities between 2024 and 2025.

The research understands international adoption as a lived experience shaped by adult-centred and racialised narratives, policies and practices, through which the identities and needs of adopted youth are often defined by institutional, familial or professional actors. AdoptArt works to disrupt these dynamics, foregrounding young people as knowledge producers and co-authors of their own meaning-making processes.

Methodologically, the project combines arts-based and participatory approaches, including collage, photovoice and audiovisual production. These methods are understood not only as creative practices but as an ethical stance that redistributes power and creates space for youth agency within research encounters. Co-creation becomes a principle for recognising the legitimacy of embodied knowledge and lived experience, while emancipation serves as a conceptual lens for interrogating narratives of vulnerability or deficit commonly associated with adoption.

When adopted youth shift from being framed as objects of intervention to acting as co-authors of their life stories, new possibilities emerge for self-representation, critical engagement and transformation. Findings indicate that co-creative spaces support identity affirmation, wellbeing and emerging forms of belonging among participants. The paper offers reflections on sensitive, ethical and co-creative methodologies within the field of youth studies.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:06 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 13

Studying Youth Cultural Participation Beyond Surveys: A Multi-Modal and Relational Research Design

General

Kenneth Larsen¹

Gullhaug Elisabeth¹, Ingelill Susan Berger Eide¹

¹ University of Southeastern Norway

Abstract text: Youth participation in organized cultural activities is often framed as a resource for belonging, well-being, and social inclusion. Large-scale surveys provide important knowledge about participation patterns and social inequality, showing that access to organized leisure remains unevenly distributed across socioeconomic groups. While quantitative approaches effectively map who participates, they offer limited insight into how young people experience cultural participation, negotiate meanings within specific settings, and shape participation through relationships, embodied practices, local youth cultures. This paper proposes a multi-modal, relational research design for studying cultural engagement beyond survey-based frameworks. Building on Nordic youth research and recent findings on organized leisure participation, we argue for approaches that capture the lived, affective, and social dimensions of cultural activity spaces such as youth bands, choirs, and community arts programs. The design combines three complementary strands: (1) quantitative survey data to identify structural and spatial patterns of participation and inequality; (2) ethnographic fieldwork in cultural settings to examine participation as situated social practice; and (3) participatory, arts-informed methods drawing on music therapy and special education research, including sound-based diaries, creative group conversations, and collaborative meaning-making. The paper further addresses ethical considerations in researching youth cultural lives, including voice, representation, and the positioning of young people as epistemic agents rather than merely informants. By bringing youth studies into dialogue with relational and aesthetic research practices, the paper contributes to debates on how methodologies shape what can be known about youth, culture, and participation, while outlining a framework for future interdisciplinary research on inclusive cultural spaces.

Youth agency and mental health

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Youth agency and mental health

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 14

The Development and Evolution of the Youth Wellness Lab (Toronto, Canada)

General

Stephanie Begun¹

¹ Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and Youth Wellness Lab, University of Toronto (Canada)

Abstract text: Housed at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work (FIFSW), University of Toronto (UofT), Canada, the YWL is a hub for academic researchers, community-based partners, and youth to collaborate on research to improve youths' health and well-being. The YWL is a collective of young people, ages 29 and under, whose identities and lived experiences reflect those that are too often excluded from but most impacted by issues of access and equity across public systems. Our research team is comprised of youth of colour, 2SLGBTQ+ youth, youth with neurodiversities and disabilities, and newcomer and refugee youth. Our team has lived experiences of homelessness, child welfare, and involvement with justice systems.

The YWL was founded in February 2020, in partnership between social work faculty members and a small group of young people who desired a space for authentic involvement in research. The issues that they initially sought to explore grew exponentially in magnitude and urgency amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, concurrent to other pandemics of anti-Black, anti-Asian, and anti-Indigenous racism, which intensified as the YWL began to take shape. During this period of heightened social isolation and upheaval, partnering with youth on the issues that matter most to them through research proved even more critically important to identifying ways of reshaping the systemic forces that erode youth well-being.

This presentation will discuss the formation and evolution of the YWL over the past six+ years, and will include highlights of YWL youth-led research projects that have used novel participatory action, arts-based, and critical qualitative methods.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 14

Youth agency in waiting for mental health treatment

General

Helle Bendix Kleif¹

Merete Monrad¹

¹ Aalborg University, Department of Society and Politics, Denmark

Abstract text: Vulnerable youth who find themselves outside education and employment and seek diagnosing and treatment for mental health conditions often wait for extensive periods of time (Lægeforeningen 2022; Ose & Jensen 2017). These youth are in a vulnerable position as they face multiple challenges and institutional transitions between youth employment services, health care and education systems that require youth to deal with waiting time (Ose & Jensen 2017) as well as increasing bureaucratic complexity, and fragmented services as they move into adult services (Skagestad, Østensjø, & Ulvik 2023).

Scholarship on waiting has emphasized waiting as an exercise of power (Bourdieu 2000; Reid 2013), fostering compliance in citizens (Auyero 2012). However, understanding waiting only as an exercise of power allows little understanding of the contradictory responses to waiting (Moore 2022; Nielsen, Danneris & Monrad 2021), the agency of those who wait (Seefeldt 2017) and potentials of support enabling well-being during waiting (Salisbury & Baraitser 2020). Rather than understanding waiting as a passive state, scholars are beginning to examine agency-in-waiting (Brun 2015).

Based on interviews with 15 youth facing mental health disabilities and seeking mental health support, we examine how young people exert agency in waiting, both in terms of the ways in which they seek to avoid waiting, and the ways in which they navigate during times of waiting. This allows us to unpack the diverse responses to waiting, the resources youth mobilize to exert agency in waiting and their implications for youth.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 14

The phenomenisation of the Youth Mental Health Crisis

General

Frederikke Skaaning Knage¹

¹ Aarhus University, Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Denmark.

Abstract text: This paper seeks to historically situate the so-called *Youth Mental Health Crisis* as it is currently perceived by adults – researchers, parents, youth professionals, and politicians alike – to take place across the Western World. The paper focuses on Danish youths, but the analysis and theoretical approach are relevant beyond Denmark.

The paper departs from the recognition that the Youth Mental Health Crisis appears to be a *new* phenomenon – a seemingly sudden rise in young people who experience more loneliness and anxiety and less self-worth. Yet, history shows that previous youth generations have also struggled. In the 1990s, nearly 25% of Danish schoolchildren reported experiences of bullying. Danish school history documents a rise in ‘school fatigue’ in the 1970s. Going further back, early twentieth-century psychiatric records show that children could be diagnosed with neurosis and psychosis, indicating that youth distress is not unique to the present.

In the paper, I trace these shifting accounts of youth distress from the early twentieth century to today in order to understand how the contemporary crisis has become thinkable and urgent. I introduce the concept of *phenomenisation* to suggest that although youth struggles are not new, the very *phenomenon* of a Youth Mental Health Crisis is new. In doing so, I draw on the post-structuralist concept of problematisation to argue that the crisis is not simply the result of rising youth mental health problems, but is also produced through societal, institutional, material, and discursive practices that make these problems appear particularly urgent and historically distinctive.

Media and digital practices: Embodiment, privacy and belonging

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Media and digital practices: Embodiment, privacy and belonging

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:22, Where: Lecture hall 15

“In this video I will tell you how I moved to Finland”: young migrants and TikTok belongings

General

Nadezhda Vasileva¹

¹ Tampere University, Faculty of Social Sciences

Abstract text: This paper examines how young immigrants mediate their belonging to Finland through social media such as TikTok. TikTok is a short video platform that relies heavily on individualized algorithmic content moderation, creating unique viewing experiences based on the user’s watching behaviors, interactions, and preferences. Young people utilize TikTok for different purposes, varying from entertainment to education, and the digital space serves as a very important site of public communication, mediating direct and indirect social contacts. For mobile subjects – young people, who move to Finland mainly to work and study – TikTok is a tool to learn and relate to their new surroundings, local people, Finnishness, and on the other hand, to make their presence in Finland visible to others. Drawing on ethnographic data - semi-structured interviews with content creators, aged 18-31, who moved to Finland less than 5 years ago, observations on TikTok and multimodal analysis of selected videos, this paper contemplates on how young migrants represent themselves and Finland online. Relying on digital migration studies (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2025), informed by decolonial perspective, the paper focuses on the way young people negotiate their belonging to Finland and navigate the affective regimes, manufactured and reinforced by TikTok. This paper draws on ongoing research project “TikTok (Anti) Democracies: Self-making, Skepticism, and Political Expression among Young People”, supported by Kone Foundation.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:22 - 09:44, Where: Lecture hall 15

Exploring methodologies for researching Swedish tweenhoods

General

Linnea Bodén¹

Tanja Joelsson¹

¹ Stockholm University, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Sweden

Abstract text: Contemporary societal changes create specific conditions for growing up in Sweden today. Social media, gaming, and online activities have sparked debates about excessive screen time, insufficient sleep, reduced physical activity, and declining physical competencies. Youth's online lives are thus framed through risk and uncertainty, with alarmist concerns about children growing up too fast. Simultaneously, youth are described as digital natives navigating blurred boundaries between offline and online worlds. This reveals a generational tension between adult perceptions of risky childhoods and youth's everyday experiences. 10–12-year-olds, referred to as *tweens*, are often described as particularly affected by these conditions.

This paper stems from a newly funded ethnographic project examining 10–12-year-olds' understandings and experiences of growing up as tweens in contemporary Sweden. The research focuses on tweens' experiences living amid frictions between adult anxieties about online worlds and their own social worlds with friends and family, spanning online spaces and everyday life inside and outside school. The project examines how tweens iteratively perform their everyday lives – how they “do tweenhood”.

The paper discusses the planning of the upcoming fieldwork, and our ongoing methodological review for researching tween lives. We will discuss possible approaches for conducting situated ethnographic studies with tweens combined with netnography of tween-related social media, addressing the methodological challenges of capturing the entangled nature of contemporary tweenhood. Central to our approach is positioning tweens not as in being *in-between*, but as in being *right here, right now, in the middle of their own lives*, as knowledgeable and agential.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:44 - 10:06, Where: Lecture hall 15

(Re)configurations of the body in a digital age: Fixed and disrupted bodily becoming among youth

General

Penille Rasmussen¹

¹ Danish School of Education, Aarhus University

Abstract text: As young people's engagement with social and digital media has become increasingly visual, new technological affordances – entangled with existing power structures and normative discourses – have expanded and reshaped understandings of bodily appearance. This paper explores how the material and discursive boundaries of bodies are (re)configured in ways that sometimes fix bodies within recognizable categories, while at other times blur or destabilize them – yet at all times saturate the possibilities for bodily becoming.

Focusing on authenticity and coherence as regulatory demands that both enable and constrain bodily becoming across analogue-digital spaces, the paper examines how such (re)configurations appear in young people's digital bodily performances through two cases. The first case concerns exposed or undressed bodies, which are often judged as unacceptably transgressive - particularly when simultaneously female, sexualized, or marked by religious apparel such as a headscarf. The second case concerns young women with eating disorders who strategically shift between two seemingly opposing social media profiles - one oriented towards extreme starvation, the other towards recovery. Together, these cases illustrate how technological affordances enable bodies to be configured in multiple, sometimes conflicting ways.

The paper argues that despite new possibilities, bodily becoming remains tied to - and at times fixed within - enduring discourses that shape which bodies are recognized, valued, and included. Drawing on poststructuralism and new materialism, the paper offers a reflexive, theoretically informed analysis based on qualitative material, including digital ethnography and interviews with young people engaged in diverse analogue-digital body practices and gender performances.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:06 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 15

Privacy matters – digital youth, concerns of contexts and awareness of publicity

General

Sari Tuuva-Hongisto¹

Kristiina Korjonen-Kuusipuro¹

¹ South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, Youth Research and Development Unit
Juvenia

Abstract text: Young people are often still portrayed as a homogeneous group of “digital natives,” which misleadingly suggests that all young people automatically possess strong digital skills and engagement. In reality, youth is a long and diverse life phase, and young people’s digital practices, competencies, and motivations vary significantly.

Many young people mainly use digital media for private communication and socializing rather than public content creation. They consciously manage privacy and self-presentation across different platforms, adapting their online identities to platform-specific norms and peer expectations. This is connected to a sense of security, a fundamental human need, and is intimately tied to overall well-being.

In this presentation we elaborate how and where young people act online and how they consciously manage different aspects of their identity across platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Discord. We argue, that they demonstrate strong media literacy, digital competence, and a high awareness of privacy, carefully considering boundaries and self-presentation online.

Our presentation is based on "Capturing digital social inequality: Young digital natives' asymmetrical agencies within socio-technical imperatives and imaginaries (DEQUAL) project, which examined the digital cultures and practices of ninth graders in Finland. We draw on quantitative and qualitative research material produced in 2021–2022. The quantitative material consists of an online survey (n=406), the qualitative material consists of individual interviews with 28 young people, two group interviews, and an online observation of the people followed by the participants on social media, as well as the Instagram behavior of some participants and researchers’ notes of this observation.

Temporality, generations and theoretical trends in youth studies

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Temporality, generations and theoretical trends in youth studies

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 17

Generation as a keyword

General

Elias le Grand¹

¹ Stockholm University

Abstract text: Following Raymond Williams' foundational work in the 1970s, a strand within cultural studies and neighbouring fields has developed that focuses on identifying and analysing keywords—everyday words that play a central role in shaping our understanding of the times we live in, and whose multiple, shifting meanings are rooted in ideological contestation and broader social and historical transformations. This paper responds to recent calls to develop 'keywords-as-method' (Moran 2021) or 'keywording' (Highmore 2021), which moves beyond simple lexical analysis. To this end, it draws on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall and Karl Mannheim to examine the formation of generation as a keyword in the current conjuncture. The paper demonstrates that while generation is used to describe family relations, in the present conjuncture it has been increasingly deployed to make sense of the historical experiences of different age-cohorts, especially various social problems. Generational categories such as Baby Boomers, Millennials and Generation Z are here typically imagined as particular social figures or character types who are pitted against one another through a discourse 'generational wars'. However, in a conjuncture marked by multiple interlocking crises, where crisis conditions have become permanent, deploying generation as a master narrative for contemporary social problems functions as a form of symbolic displacement. In conclusion, the paper argues that keyword analysis may fruitfully include an examination of key figures. Both keywords and their key figures can serve as entry points for analysing broader socio-cultural processes within specific historical conjunctures.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 17

Thematic and theoretical trends in NYRIS conferences between 1996 and 2022

General

Willy Aagre¹

Camilla Wiig¹

¹ University of South-Eastern Norway

Abstract text: The aim of this overview is to trace signs of theoretical and thematic changes and development traits during the NYRIS conferences through the time span from the fifth conference arranged in Tønsberg in 1996, and up to the fifteenth conference that took place in Oslo in 2022. The empirical base of the presentation is abstract texts written by youth researchers from the Nordic countries presenting papers during these decades, written for eleven conferences all together. Abstracts that ended up as articles in the journal *Young*, will be of special interest here. Our paper will focus on two main aspects: The first one is to document which subfields of youth research that are declining and/or increasing during this period. This could for example be connected to issues addressing marginalization, education challenges, youth subcultures, sexualities or racism. The second research interest will cross the subfields and document what kind of broad theories and concepts that are most widely used during these 26 years. This part of the presentation will also include quantitatively documented trends of increase and decline. As an historical guide into the founding years of NYRIS and its journal *Young*, we will use an article published by Johan Fornäs in 2013, *Forever Young: The Beginnings of the journal Nordic Journal of Youth Research*.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 17

Transitions: Temporality as Theoretical Framework and Analytical Tool in Youth Studies

General

Ann-Charlotte Palmgren¹

¹ Åbo Akademi University, Gender Studies, Finland

Abstract text: In this presentation, the researcher explores the intricate transition from childhood to youth through the lenses of temporality (Adam 1995, 1998), queer temporality (Halberstam 2005; Ivanchikova 2006), crip temporality (Kafer 2013), and chrononormativity (Freeman 2010). The presentation draws on in-depth semi-structured interviews with 10 young adults aged 19-25 from Finland, focusing specifically on their narrated experiences of time. One of the questions proposed during the interviews was: When and how did your childhood end and youth begin? This turned out to be a complex question, and some of the interviewees did not experience that their childhood had ended at all.

By adopting temporality as a broad analytical and theoretical lens, the presentation seeks to contribute to ongoing discussions in youth studies and foreground the complex, non-linear temporalities that shape young people's trajectories into youth. The interviews illustrate how queer and crip temporalities open alternative ways of conceptualizing youth beyond linear progress narratives. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates how normative timelines of maturation exert pressure on youth, while simultaneously failing to accommodate those whose experiences diverge due to gender affirming hormone therapy, mental health struggles, disability, or socio-economic precarity.

Gender in educational settings

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Gender in educational settings

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:30, Where: Lecture hall 19

Beyond 'Boys will be boys': Exploring gendered anxieties in Icelandic public education debates.

General

Katrín Ólafsdóttir¹

Íris Ellenberger¹

¹ University of Iceland, School of Education, Iceland

Abstract text: The 2022 PISA results raised concerns in Iceland about declining performance across genders. Public debate quickly narrowed to a familiar "failing boys" discourse, a re-emergence of gendered panic that obscures the picture. This framing was further institutionalised in the summer of 2024, when a parliamentary committee, established to map opportunities and barriers in boys' education, issued a report that firmly positioned the post-PISA debate along boys' perspectives. Boys' lower reading comprehension is a well-documented issue, yet studies also show that girls report lower life satisfaction and higher anxiety. LGBTQ+ students face rising hostility and violence, with poorer academic results. Socioeconomic background remains the strongest predictor of success but is often overlooked, especially in Iceland, which is often perceived as "classless".

Grounded in feminist and queer theory, this research examines how gendered power relations manifest in public educational debates. It employs an affective discursive analysis of media debates at two key moments: the immediate response to the PISA results and the debate following the parliamentary report's release six months later. We trace how the "failing boys" discourse is produced, reproduced and institutionalised over time, evolving from media panic to policy language. The analysis examines how affect, particularly anxieties and fears about the future of boys, circulate through these debates. Exploring the affective logics that frame public understandings, it maps how gendered power relations construct educational debate in Iceland in a way that renders its most vulnerable student populations invisible.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:30 - 10:00, Where: Lecture hall 19

The misgendering and misrecognition of transgender and nonbinary youth in secondary schools

General

Paul Horton¹

Camilla Forsberg¹

¹ Department of Behavioural Sciences and Learning, Linköping University, Sweden

Abstract text: The bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) youth is widespread in schools and transgender and nonbinary students are commonly subjected to a particular form of school bullying, *misgendering*, whereby they are misrecognised and addressed or treated in ways that do not correctly reflect their gender identity. There has been a lack of qualitative research into the bullying of LGBTQ+ youth in schools, and even less into lived experiences of misgendering. In this paper, we address these lacunae in knowledge by discussing transgender and nonbinary young people's lived experiences of misgendering at school. The findings are based on 21 semi-structured interviews with LGBTQ+ young people aged 15–19. The interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis and in relation to the theoretical concepts of *misrecognition* (e.g., Fraser, 1995, 2001) and *affect* (e.g., Ahmed, 2004, 2014). The findings reveal that the young people regularly experience misgendering from both school peers and school staff, and that misgendering can take different forms, including what we term *negligent* misgendering and *deliberate* misgendering. While deliberate acts of misgendering were perceived by the young people to be more serious than negligent acts, both forms were considered hurtful, with even negligent forms found to chip away at the wellbeing of the young people subjected to them. Taken together, our findings point to the importance of better facilitating the recognition of transgender and nonbinary identities in schools, not simply through affirmation but through the transformation of societal, institutional, and social norms and practices.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:00 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 19

Negotiating Femininity and Sensibility – Teenage Girls in the School Changing Room

General

Lisa Svärling¹

John S. Hellström¹, Åsa Bäckström¹

¹ The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, Department of Movement, Culture & Society, Sweden

Abstract text: Changing rooms have become contested spaces for youths, both in school and leisure contexts. Previous studies show variation in how these spaces are used, and reasons stated for avoidance include discomfort with collective nudity, time constraints, and perceptions of the spaces as unfresh (Gymnasieskolernes Idrætslærerforening, 2018; Moen et al., 2018; Østergaard & Juul, 2016). Additionally, changing rooms are spaces where social and cultural norms related to gender and the body are intensified.

In this study, we used the school changing room as an elicitor to explore how teenage girls negotiate femininity, theoretically informed by postfeminist sensibility (Gill, 2007, 2017) and Brighentis's (2007, 2010) conceptualization of visibility.

The study employed semi-structured go-along interviews, influenced by short-term ethnography (Pink & Morgan, 2013), and included a visual component of a video camera. 24 girls (14-16 y/o) from three schools in Sweden participated. The girls were followed through the school changing room, where they simultaneously showed, explained, and experienced their practices while fully dressed in an empty room. The chosen method yielded rich, multi-layered data and emphasized the importance of ethical considerations throughout.

Our analysis demonstrates how the girl's negotiated femininity in several ways. The changing room practices were endorsed by two sensibilities: the fear of being judged and desire for conformity, informing a 'right' and 'wrong' visibility. Navigating visibility, the practices, concerns, and strives reveal how frames of femininity affect the girls' everyday lives. Although changing rooms might amplify visibility, we argue that this reflects a deeper concern related to visibility and postfeminism.

Symposium. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

2026-10-22

09:00 - 10:30

Symposium. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

When: 2026-10-22, 09:00 - 09:18, Where: Lecture hall 25

Unsticking the stuckness – Introducing peer-research as a third element

7. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

Monika Grønli Rosten¹

Monica Five Aarset¹, Mona Ismail Hassan Moalin¹, Selin Ecmekci¹

¹ Oslo Metropolitan University, NOVA, Norway

Abstract text: As social scientists we are important stakeholders in “social problem work”—the practices of naming, defining, and managing conditions and persons as social problems (Loseke 2010). When doing research with minoritized youth from deprived urban areas we see that young people are routinely linked to social problems, while their knowledge is often discounted. Our research participants experience that bureaucrats and public service professionals often speak about them rather than with them. In other words: they are facing ‘epistemic injustice’ (Fricker, 2007) based on their age, their ethnicity, their social class and their post code. As a result these young people feel stuck in problem-focused narratives, and we as a researchers often feel stuck in reproducing them. This impasse in the relationship between researchers and minoritized youth - both stakeholders in social problem work - can be understood as a form of self-enforced relational stuckness (Aarset and Rosten forthcoming, see also Bateson, [1972] 2000). From a systems theory perspective, breaking such recursive patterns requires introducing a «third element», a difference that makes a difference. Based on several research projects this paper explores two third-element strategies in studies of minoritized youth: (1) involving minoritized youth as peer researchers to redistribute epistemic authority in the research process; and (2) recruiting minoritized youth and young adults from deprived urban areas as research assistants to build pathways into academia and foster more just representation.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:18 - 09:36, Where: Lecture hall 25

Co-researching the Digital: Sexual Harassment Online

7. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

Christer Hyggen¹

Mette Løvgren¹, Gerd Marie Solstad¹, Rikke Tokle¹

¹ NOVA - OsloMet

Abstract text: Understanding how adolescents navigate, interpret, and respond to digital sexual harassment requires methodological approaches that can capture the fastshifting, highly contextual dynamics of their online lives. This study presents findings from a digital ethnography conducted as part of a larger project on sexual harassment in the digital everyday lives of Norwegian youth. A central component of the research design is the involvement of adolescents as coresearchers, who contributed to identifying relevant platforms, documenting digital interactions, and interpreting emergent norms, symbols, and communicative cues. Using a secure mobile datacollection tool, coresearchers collected naturally occurring digital material and contextual field reflections, offering access to practices and environments that are typically inaccessible to adult researchers.

The combined ethnographic and coresearcher approach enabled nuanced insights into how young people experience and make sense of sexual boundary violations across platforms such as social media, messaging apps, gaming environments, and anonymous forums. Coresearchers played a key role in decoding platform norms, interpreting visual and linguistic cues, and situating episodes of harassment within broader social dynamics.

The study demonstrates the value of youthdriven digital ethnography for illuminating the lived realities of digital sexual harassment and for generating context-sensitive knowledge that can inform prevention, platform governance, and youth-centred support strategies. It also contributes to methodological debates by showing how coresearcher models can strengthen ethical practice, epistemic validity, and access to hidden or transient digital spaces.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:36 - 09:54, Where: Lecture hall 25

Language in Motion: Transnational Learning from the Margins

7. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

Anne Harju¹

Ditte Tofteng²

¹ Malmö University

² University College Copenhagen

Abstract text: The purpose of the presentation is to discuss how transnational workshops, through the interplay of language and marginalisation, enable youth communities to emerge beyond local and national boundaries. The point of departure is the experiences from the project Learning from the Margins, carried out as a collaboration between University College Copenhagen, Malmö University, and the University of Málaga. The methodological approach was grounded in Participatory Social and Educational Planning (PSEP), which aims to create reflexive processes for sharing experiences. This approach enabled discussions, reflections, and analyses that generated knowledge about young people's shared experiences of marginalization.

The seminar discusses the project's insights into the crucial role of language as a relational resource. The initial plan was to use English as the common working language, but many of the young participants did not have sufficient command of English. They did, however, speak Danish, Swedish, Spanish and/or Arabic. Since the researchers did not speak Arabic, there were several instances in which the young participants acted as translators and spokespersons. This, in turn, made it possible for participants with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to negotiate meaning, be heard, and share experiences of conditions and challenges.

The experiences from the Lema project show that multilingualism is not merely a practical challenge but a central resource for enabling communities that transcend geographical and social boundaries. When young people themselves take on the role of translators and meaning-makers, new opportunities for participation, understanding, and shared experiences of marginalization emerge.

When: 2026-10-22, 09:54 - 10:12, Where: Lecture hall 25

Developing epistemic justice through hopeful practices.

7. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

Ditte Tofteng¹

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¹ University College Copenhagen (KP)

Abstract text: “Working with young people, we have to recognize them as social agents or actors in their own right – not only as objects of socialization” (Thomas & Percy-Smith, 2019:11). The quote reminds us of how epistemic injustice occurs within the field of youth studies and youth participation. Even in the pursuit of more democratic and inclusive responses to the complex challenges of youth marginalization, research practices often reflect a form of path dependency, whereby the same phenomena and perspectives repeatedly re-emerge.

This paper takes its point of departure in the project “*Practicing Hope: Challenging Myths and Changing Narratives of Youth in Super-Diverse Urban Communities (YouHope)*.” A central component of YouHope is the recruitment and training of young people (16–29 years) as peer researchers. This participatory approach seeks to broaden and nuance knowledge of how young people practice hope and hopelessness in super-diverse urban neighborhoods. By involving youth in all phases of the research process, the project aims to enhance epistemic justice.

The project is a collaboration among researchers in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark and is funded by NordForsk. In the summer of 2026, a camp will be conducted in which young people from the three countries will gather to reflect on and further develop the methodological framework. They will contribute to shaping both the content and form of the project’s methodological and analytical work. This paper reports on these research processes and reflects on how epistemic justice emerges and unfolds.

When: 2026-10-22, 10:12 - 10:30, Where: Lecture hall 25

Hope in the Making: Scaffolding for Epistemic Partnerships with Youth Through a Nordic Training Camp

7. Youth Peer-Research as Process, Practice and Emerging Epistemic Partnerships

Aina Landsverk Hagen¹

Hilde Rønnaug Kitterød¹, Daniele Evelin Alves¹, Sara Berge Lorenzen¹

¹ Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract text: This paper explores the methodological and epistemological insights gained through a one week intensive “training camp”, where twelve youth (four from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark respectively) were trained as peer-researchers in the Nordic Youth Citizen Social Science project, YouHope (2025-2027). Rather than approaching the young participants’ training as a purely preliminary phase of the research project, the article conceptualizes the camp as a central practice of knowing in which traditionally hierarchal roles within academia (professor/advisor versus student) are challenged through emerging epistemic partnerships.

Lessons from the training camp reiterate the centrality of trust-building and care as integral to successful co-research and co-creation, confirming insights from extensive previous experiences in the field of youth participation in general, and Youth Participatory Action Research and Youth Citizen Social Science in particular. Here the concept of “scaffolding” visualizes the kinds of structures needed for co-learning through epistemic partnerships, as it implies multiple routes to growth (Hart 2008). Also, a metaphor like scaffolding would help in envisioning participation as a mutually reinforcing structure between *all* people of different abilities, not only relations between adults and children, as the more commonly used metaphor “The Ladder of Participation” (Hart 1992) indicates. Through the collaborative practices for acquiring relevant and applicable skills needed for subsequent youth peer-research in their urban neighborhoods, we argue that “thick” understandings of hope are actively co-produced by the extended research team during the training camp.

Learning to Labour

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Learning to Labour

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 13:52, Where: Lecture hall 8

What are ‘good jobs’ for young people?

General

Hannah King^{1,2}

¹ Durham University

² Youth Futures Foundation

Abstract text: The jobs we do can govern our quality of life, shaping our health, wellbeing, and economic inclusion, yet high employment does not guarantee good work. Poor-quality jobs harm wellbeing, entrench inequality, and increase social costs. The growth of precarious and insecure work in the UK has widened the gulf between good and bad jobs. Within this context, young people fare worst, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are disproportionately in low-paid, insecure roles, face higher labour market abuse, pay stagnation, zero-hours contracts and are the first generation facing downward mobility. With nearly one million 16–24-year-olds in the UK currently not in education, employment or training, many endure long-term scarring from economic crises.

So what does good work look like for young people? Defining and measuring ‘good work’ are complex tasks. Job quality is a multidimensional phenomenon, shaped by social, cultural and economic factors, and varies between individuals. In the UK, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development’s seven dimensions of job quality are broadly recognised as the most comprehensive definition of good work. Despite the proliferation of research in this area, little attention has been paid to the needs and preferences of young people. This presentation draws on a large mixed-methods study with the Youth Futures Foundation (What Works Centre for Youth Employment) to define and measure good work with and for young people.

When: 2026-10-22, 13:52 - 14:14, Where: Lecture hall 8

Professionalism and 'Authenticity' - The Conditions and Legitimacy of Professional Child Acting

General

Signe Barfoed¹

¹ Department of Thematic Studies - Child Studies, Linköping University, Sweden

Abstract text: Child actors can, in many ways, be regarded as an extraordinary group. Educational systems, regulatory frameworks, and workplaces all make exceptions for these young people. Child actors remain a persistent group and are, to varying extents, an accepted part of the contemporary cultural sphere. Despite a growing demand for young people's labour in artistic production, their work within the cultural industry has largely been rendered invisible.

This presentation sheds new light on professional child acting in a Swedish context. Drawing on interviews with practicing child actors aged between 12 and 17 and utilizing cultural sociological theory, the study examines the conditions understood as fundamental to the practice of child acting. It also explores how child actors create legitimacy around themselves, their roles, and the cultural practice they are part of. However, the very factors that legitimize the young people's work and participation, also place the child actor in an inherent dilemma, touching upon the boundaries and interrelation between childhood and youth.

By briefly looking ahead to the development of my ongoing PhD project on child actors, the presentation discusses this interrelation. It will address methodological and theoretical challenges within child and youth studies and consider how research may investigate young people's participation not only in the creation of youth cultures, but also in the (re)construction and contestation of norms within art worlds and artistic expression.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:14 - 14:36, Where: Lecture hall 8

Exploring upper secondary students' work-related images of the future

General

Pasi Keski-Pukkila¹

¹ University of Turku, Finland

Abstract text: The aim of this manuscript is to present a variation of the 'method of empathy-based stories' (MEBS) in exploring how upper secondary students imagine, discuss and negotiate work-related images of the future among themselves. This manuscript is focusing on the applicability of the method and the key findings including expectations, hopes and fears that influence how young people imagine their work-related futures.

MEBS is a qualitative research method, that utilizes 'frame stories' and fictional characters as tools to support imagination process. In this study, 132 upper secondary students (16–18-year-olds) were divided into small groups and their task was to discuss and imagine two different life paths from a perspective of a fictional character, approach the situation empathetically and to elaborate what might have led to these futures. The discussions were recorded.

The study suggests that this variation of MEBS is a promising tool in examining how young people imagine and negotiate their work-related futures. As a method, MEBS is particularly suitable for examining social, cultural and political logics which are connected to the way students think and make decisions about their futures. The method has a potential to reveal assumptions, power structures and norms that are connected to future-oriented thinking and decisions related to education and work. Preliminary findings suggest that the method has potential to shed light on stories about societal pressure, parental expectations and gendered career choices, all of which influence how young people view their futures.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:36 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 8

Young restaurant workers and flexibility as an essential skill

General

Lotta Haikkola¹

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society

Abstract text: The service sector employs many young people, offering both career opportunities and first experiences of working life. In formal classifications, work in this sector is often considered low-skilled and generally accessible without formal qualifications. However, for young workers, the fast-paced nature of the work demands a wide range of tangible and intangible skills. This presentation examines young workers' subjective understandings of skill and their definitions of what constitutes a "good worker" in restaurant work. It shows that workers place particular emphasis on intangible skills such as flexibility, solidarity, and the ability to work hard. A good worker is described as someone who is always available, takes responsibility, and supports coworkers. The presentation contributes to ongoing discussions about youth as workers and young people's understandings of their rights at work. Framing skills and professionalism in terms of flexibility in employment relations, working hours, tasks, and employers may further reinforce young workers' already vulnerable positions in the service sector.

Co-production of and in research

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Co-production of and in research

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 13:52, Where: Lecture hall 11

Co-research as a space of reflection and agency

General

Jaana Suontausta¹

¹ Tampere University

Abstract text: During my PhD research, I have worked together with young adults outside employment and education to reflect their perceptions and sense of meaning in life. As the research project is coming to an end, we are reflecting on the process of knowledge production together. The methodology of the study is rooted in Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and the Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

The Freirean approach emphasizes dialogue with the oppressed and marginalized groups, and their understanding and knowledge about the realities they live in. It also emphasizes their capabilities in changing their realities and the world, when given the opportunity to reflect on their circumstances.

Ana Lucia Souza de Freitas has written: "To dream is to imagine horizons of possibilities; To dream collectively is to embrace the struggle toward the building of conditions for possibility." Co-research process can provide an opportunity to reflect on and become aware of the oppressive or other circumstances. What Freire calls critical consciousness, develops during the research process, not while reading about the results. This is why it is crucial to take the time and effort to include the co-researchers as active agents in every phase of the research process.

In the presentation I will share and discuss the experiences with young adult co-researchers in this study, as a follow up to what I have shared before. I will discuss some of the ethical issues, successes and challenges faced during our exciting co-research process together.

When: 2026-10-22, 13:52 - 14:14, Where: Lecture hall 11

Participatory Approaches to Lived Citizenship among Translocal Young Adults

General

Pihla Maria Siim^{1, 2}

¹ University of Helsinki

² University of Tartu

Abstract text: In the NUORA research project (2025–2028), we examine young adults' lived citizenship and societal agency within the translocal context of Estonia and Finland. The aim of the project is to explore how citizenship is experienced, interpreted, and enacted by young people (aged 18–30) in their everyday lives. We ask how young adults define, make meaningful, and construct their citizenship and social participation - both individually and as members of various groups. We are further interested in how they envision their futures and position themselves and their activities within local, national, and transnational contexts.

The project employs co-creation as a methodological approach and seeks to challenge traditional research hierarchies by actively involving young adults in research design and knowledge production. We will generate research data through co-creation workshops in which we will experiment with different creative methods. The workshops - held in diverse settings in both Estonia and Finland - are co-designed with participating young adults to foster meaningful dialogue and collaboration while also enabling ethnographic observation and documentation. The workshops will be complemented by one-to-one and focus group interviews, where the results will also be jointly formulated and discussed.

Fieldwork will be carried out primarily in 2026. In this presentation, I reflect on how we navigated the theoretical emphasis on young adults as active agents in participatory research in relation to the practical realities of the research process. I critically analyse challenges related to power dynamics, data production, and creating conditions for meaningful participation among young adult collaborators.

Funding: Kone Foundation.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:14 - 14:36, Where: Lecture hall 11

Co-production with young people: examining the reproduction of power and privilege through research

General

Grace Spencer¹

¹ Anglia Ruskin University

Abstract text: Co-production with young people has become increasingly popular and as part of efforts to rebalance hierarchies of knowledge generation and promote young people's more meaningful engagement in research. The relative successes and challenges of co-production with young people are now well documented. However, relatively less attention and criticality have been directed towards the final stages of the research process and specifically, the co-production and co-authorship of research outputs. Co-authorship with young people reflects an important commitment to harnessing young people's epistemologies within research outputs – and going beyond simply involving young people in research planning and data collection activities. Indeed, co-authorship is often advocated as a positive outcome of our research collaborations with young people. Yet, the ways in which such outputs may also result in the reproduction of power asymmetries and adult academic privileges has been left under scrutinised. Drawing on examples of co-produced research with young people in majority world contexts, this paper troubles the idea that co-production straightforwardly translates into an authentic opportunity for power-sharing with young people. By examining how intergenerational and colonial legacies of power intersect to shape research processes and practices with young people, the paper will expose the ways in which the co-production of research outputs can ultimately reproduce, rather than transform, existing dominant knowledge systems and privileges of (Western-centric academic) power. Such critique serves to prompt new theoretical, methodological and ethics debates about how best (and why) we co-produce knowledge about young people's lives and experiences.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:36 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 11

Bringing people together. Reflections on involving youth research and stakeholder dialogues.

General

Trine Wulf-Andersen¹

Terje Olsen², Reidun Follesø³

¹ Roskilde University: Learning, Education and Pedagogy. Denmark

² OsloMet: NOVA. Norway

³ University of Southeast Norway: Helse-, Sosial- og Velferdsfag. Norway

Abstract text: Rapid societal change is reshaping the conditions of young people's lives. New challenges—and new forms of resilience—emerge alongside longstanding issues that continue to structure their everyday experiences. In this context, cross-sector dialogue is increasingly vital for understanding how young people navigate in both ordinary circumstances and moments of crisis, and for considering how societies can respond.

This presentation examines how young people, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers can engage in meaningful dialogue about youth marginalisation and belonging in the Nordic countries. Our point of departure is a seminar designed to bring these groups together to explore the potential and dilemmas of collaboration. The seminar focused on how diverse stakeholders can sustain attention to what matters to young people and addressed how research and cross-sector collaboration might contribute to meaningful change, translating shared dialogue into action.

Drawing on theoretical and methodological insights from *involving youth research* (Wulf-Andersen, Follesø & Olsen, 2021), the presentation analyses what the different actors in the seminar aim to achieve together and what they can learn from one another. We discuss when dialogues function well, the dilemmas that arise when diverse forms of knowledge, interests, power relations, and institutional logics intersect, and how researchers can work to ensure that young people's voices and situated knowledge actively shape agendas and inform the development of practice and policy.

Wulf-Andersen, Follesø & Olsen (2021). *Involving Methods in Youth Research. Reflections on Participation and Power*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Youth, health and wellbeing

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Youth, health and wellbeing

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 14:00, Where: Lecture hall 15

Wellbeing Work in Education: Rethinking Youth Wellbeing as Practice

General

Ida Andrea Nilsson¹

Noemi Katznelson¹

¹ Aalborg university

Abstract text: Research on youth wellbeing in education often treats wellbeing as an individual state to be measured, or as an outcome of targeted interventions. This paper proposes "wellbeing work" as an analytical lens that shifts attention to wellbeing as something continuously done in the everyday life of school through relationships, routines, teaching practices, leadership decisions, and organisational arrangements. Crucially, wellbeing work is not only performed by educators. Students also engage in ongoing efforts to secure belonging, safety, mastery and mattering in school life. Approached this way, student wellbeing becomes a contextual negotiation rather than an individualised problem.

Empirically, the paper draws on a four-year collaborative research and development project with 14 Danish upper secondary schools. The dataset combines focus group interviews with students, interviews with teachers and school leaders, observations of school life, dialogue-based research circles, and descriptive survey data.

Analytically, we show how wellbeing work operates across two interconnected scales: (1) framework-setting practices (articulating purpose and direction, cultivating school culture and norms, and organising wellbeing work through leadership), and (2) everyday practices in which educators and students jointly sustain, contest and adjust the conditions for wellbeing.

Conceptualising wellbeing as wellbeing work opens new questions for youth studies: not only how young people feel, but how youth agency and institutional practices interact to shape what can count as student wellbeing in education. We argue that wellbeing work provides a generative entry point for analysing youth wellbeing as an institutional, relational and practice-based phenomenon rather than an individual deficit or add-on agenda.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:00 - 14:30, Where: Lecture hall 15

Barriers to mental health support – experiences of at-risk youth with migrant background

General

Tuuli Pitkänen¹

Maria Cabello², Maria Teresa Gonzalez-Gil², Corina Hatzinikolaou³, Irati Higuera Lozano², Ilmari Kallius¹, Lyudmyla Kolisnyk⁴, Nadiia Pavlyk⁴, Maria del Pilar Serrano-Gallardo², Natalia Spyropoulou⁵, Theoni Stathopoulou⁵, Arseniy Svyrenko¹, Katerina Vezyrgianni⁵

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society, Finland

² Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain

³ Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

⁴ Aarhus University, Denmark

⁵ National Centre for Social Research, Greece

Abstract text: Various barriers hinder young people (17-29) from participating in society and seeking support for their mental well-being. In the framework of CROSSWAY project, we have recently started to explore the youth and stakeholder perspectives and practices in four European countries with the aim to learn from experiences in different countries.

Common methodology is used for mapping of stakeholders in Finland, Denmark, Greece and Spain and for conducting interviews. Experiences of young people and youth perspective, including Ukrainian youth, has a central role. Research based information will be processed in participatory activities. Preliminary results will be presented.

CROSSWAY – enCouRage dialOgueS to Support mental Wellbeing of At-risk Youth with migrant background is co-funded by the European Union (12/2025-6/2028). The aim of this ERASMUS+ project is to produce and spread research-based information and facilitate networking and dialogue in the field of youth work, NGOs and service provision for increased understanding and knowledge sharing and for developing good practices to support vulnerable migrant youth. More information www.youthresearch.fi/crossway

When: 2026-10-22, 14:30 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 15

Youth engagement in promotion of good health and well-being in Africa

General

Darius BENIMANA^{1, 2}

¹ University of Rwanda

² International Federation of Medical students association (IFMSA)

Abstract text: BackgroundThe third Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 3) is focused on promoting good health and well-being in the coming years. Various sectors have contributed to ensure the achievement of this goal, with young people playing a significant role. Given the rapidly growing population and numerous socio-economic challenges, empowering and involving young individuals in addressing prevalent health issues in Africa is crucial. Young people have participated in various activities aimed at contributing to the development of the health system and achieving the goal.**Objective**This review aims to address this gap by examining the successes and limitations of young people engagement in Africa, identifying key factors that contribute to their effectiveness, and providing recommendations for future strategies to further enhance youth engagement in healthcare promotion.**Results**Relevant articles, newsletters, reports and others were included in the analysis after passing a crucial condition of empirically investigating the youth engagement in promoting good health and well-being. And positive lead of youth-led initiatives, community health programs, fundraising activities to promote health in rural areas, and other related endeavors.**Conclusion**To conclude, involving youth in Africa in promoting good health and well-being has several benefits. It ensures that the specific needs of young individuals are taken into account, empowers them to take ownership of their health, encourages fresh and innovative ideas, and fosters social unity.

Crime, substance use and youth at risk

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Crime, substance use and youth at risk

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 13:52, Where: Lecture hall 16

Repeated narrations of crime and conviction among female youth with limited delinquency

General

Johanna Carlsson¹

Azadé Azad^{2, 3, 4}

¹ Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

² Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, Sweden

³ Barnafriid, Linköping University, Sweden

⁴ Department of Psychology, Kristianstad University, Sweden

Abstract text: Delinquency among young females remains underexplored, particularly in cases of limited delinquency involving first-time or low-level offending. This paper focuses on girls and young women who have been sentenced to youth service for committing a crime, and examines how they narrate these experiences over time. The study draws on two waves of interviews conducted approximately 18 months apart with young females sentenced to youth service (wave 1: age 15-18, $n = 12$; wave 2 age 17-19, $n = 6$). Building on findings from the first wave, which showed that limited delinquency can be understood in relation to processes of identity formation, this paper explores how narratives of crime and conviction develop longitudinally. Using an in-depth narrative analysis, following the practice of Josselson and Hammack (2021) adapted to a longitudinal design we analyzed both stable characteristics and change in the participants' narratives. Preliminary findings indicate substantial variation between participants' narratives and in how these narratives shift between interview waves. A recurring pattern across all accounts, however, is the absence of premeditation. At no time point do participants describe their crimes as planned. Instead, offending is consistently narrated as spontaneous, situational, and most often reactive. In the session we will present further results from this study along with the experience and challenges we faced when conducting longitudinal research with vulnerable youth. By foregrounding young women's own evolving narratives, the study contributes to theoretical and methodological dialogues in youth studies concerning gender, delinquency, and narrative meaning of experiences across time.

When: 2026-10-22, 13:52 - 14:14, Where: Lecture hall 16

Youth violence beyond gangs: Vape dealing as a form of solo venture

General

Malin Fransberg^{1, 2}

Antti Kivijärvi¹

¹ Finnish Youth Research Society

² Turku University

Abstract text: Recent criminal policy toward youth crime in Finland is characterized by a stronger punitive turn in public and political discourse. Public debate has increasingly framed youth violence in the 2020s as driven by new phenomena, such as youth subcultures that allegedly glorify crime and gang life. This study challenges these interpretations by examining youth violence by arguing that contemporary youth violence is linked to economic and materialistic ideals rather than subcultural group antagonisms. We focus on meso-level perspectives such as peer relations, youth group practices, and neighborhood contexts. Drawing on multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork conducted in three urban areas (Oulu, Tampere, and Vantaa), the study is based on participatory-observations and interviews with 44 youths aged 13–16. We use the concept 'solo venture' to describe youths street-level entrepreneurship and informal, profit-oriented activities through which young people seek autonomy and financial independence. In particular, we look into the practices of 'vape dealing', that is the selling and use of e-cigarettes among the youth. Rather than living up to a gang subculture, these practices are largely individual and opportunistic. However, they reshape the conditions of youth violence by relocating economic conflicts—such as unpaid debts and robberies—into peer interactions.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:14 - 14:36, Where: Lecture hall 16

“Back then it was just a cool rap song about Xanax”: Music, youth and tranquilizer use

General

Sofie Hector Borup^{1,2}

¹ Sofie Hector Borup, Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research, Aarhus University, Denmark

² Margit Anne Petersen, Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research, Aarhus University, Denmark

Abstract text: For decades, musicians have referenced alcohol and drugs in their lyrics. Since the early to mid-2000s, research has shown an increase in references to prescription drugs, prompting scholars to ask whether this trend reflects a broader societal rise in prescription drug misuse among young people. More recently, a new generation of artists has further amplified the visibility of prescription drug terminology in contemporary music. Internationally, many of these artists are recognizable by the “Lil” prefix in their stage names, such as Lil Peep and Lil Xan. This trend also mirrors developments in Danish music, where it originated in underground rap but has now spread to more mainstream artists.

With references to Xanax (alprazolam) as the primary focus of our research project, we examine how young people with lived experience of non-medical tranquilizer use interpret and relate to this type of music. The presentation draws on two types of data: an analysis of song lyrics that reference Xanax and similar prescription drugs, and approximately 40 interviews with young people aged 15 to 25 in Denmark. By comparing young people’s narratives with the ways in which tranquilizers are portrayed in contemporary music, our analysis refines both scientific and public debates about the influence of such music on young people’s use and understanding of such pharmaceutical products. Further, we demonstrate how such lyrics help young people articulate their embodied experiences of tranquilizer use and how their interpretations may shift according to their personal trajectories of prescription drug use.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:36 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 16

Dialogues with youth research on criminality and youth at risk in the Nordic context (and beyond)

General

ASTRID CAMILLA WIIG^{1, 2}

Willy Aagre¹

¹ Universitetet i Sørøst Norge

² Politihøgskolen

Abstract text: This study aims to trace how youth crime and at-risk youth in the Nordic context, and beyond, are thematised in leading Nordic academic youth journals. Amid growing concerns about youth crime and the portrayal of at-risk youth in national and social media, often relying on stereotypes and oversimplifications, this study seeks to explore how diverse research practices within youth studies engages with these issues.

Methodologically, we conduct a thematic analysis of academic publications from 2016 to January 2026 in prominent youth-focused journals, including *YOUNG*, the *Journal of Youth Studies*, and the *Nordic Journal of Youth Research*. The analysis focuses on two main aspects: (1) documenting the key themes related to youth crime addressed during this period. This could for example be connected to issues addressing violent crimes, youth perceptions of criminal justice, Street Gangs, social exclusion, marginalisation, poverty or violent youth groups; and (2) analyzing the theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches used to understand young people's involvement in crime and the social conditions shaping their lives.

Our contribution lies in offering a comprehensive overview of how youth crime has been addressed in academic discourse over the past decade, specifically examining how youth criminal matters and youth at risk are defined, approached, and given voice within this field.

Young people, far right and extremism

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Young people, far right and extremism

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 13:52, Where: Lecture hall 17

Children at the Political Fringe: Agency, Extremism, and Archival Challenges

General

Hedvig Heijbel¹

¹ Linköping University, Department of Thematic Studies - Child Studies, Sweden

Abstract text: This paper explores how politically extreme child organizations worked towards utopias during the interwar years. In recent years, historians have paid interest in how socialization processes of children's political groups have shaped new citizens. Yet, the focus on children as malleable figures has created a gap in research on children's own agency for the achievement of political utopias. The aim with this paper, which is part of my PhD project, is to address the nuances of children's agency at the political fringe. The material includes member magazines, correspondence and other preserved archival material from a communist organization, *Arbetarbarnens förbund*, and two fascist organizations, *Nordisk ungdom* and *Nationell ungdom*.

The main part will describe the organizations and the issues I have encountered so far. I will raise questions about methodological and theoretical problems. This includes challenges of finding children in the historical archives more generally but also specifically in relation to the fact that these child organizations were situated at the political extreme. How will I be able to find the members' own agencies in material highly edited by their leaders? How can I highlight the interaction between the children's agencies and the heavy political influences?

Hedvig Heijbel is a PhD student at Department of Thematic Studies - Child Studies, Linköping University. Her research focuses on the relationship between education, politics and utopias in the early 20th century. Her PhD project will study this relationship in three Swedish child organizations at the political fringe during the interwar years.

When: 2026-10-22, 13:52 - 14:14, Where: Lecture hall 17

Music's Role in Youth Far-Right Recruitment Online: Digitalisation, Dissemination and Reception

General

Sam de Boise¹

¹ Örebro university

Abstract text: Music has been used by the far-right to spread political messaging, finance political activities and recruit young men in particular. A number of sources have recently claimed that music's role has been substantially diminished. Yet, despite declining attendance to physical music events since the early 2000s, the dissemination of far-right music has grown significantly online. There is also some evidence that the music styles associated with the far-right have changed considerably over the last ten years with both digitalisation and the conscious mainstreaming of far-right messaging playing a role. However, it is currently unclear as to the extent of music's reach, what appeals to listeners, what music is being used by the far-right and how digital technologies have influenced these trends. This paper is based on a research project, exploring music's role in far-right spaces in the digital age. Based on webscraping of 188,997 posts from 6 far-right forums and 9 social media channels, this mixed methods approach quantitatively maps the genres, musicians and trends which are discussed, spread and valued amongst those using English and Swedish-language far-right forums and websites. It focuses qualitatively, too, on the primary motivations for listeners and the changing preferences and tastes of far-right listeners, exploring the material-discursive factors which contribute the spread of different musics and thus their function within contemporary far-right spaces. The approach offers methodological insights around studying youth cultural reception which may be useful for thinking through the relationship between digitalisation and mediation in extremist movements more broadly.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:14 - 14:36, Where: Lecture hall 17

Antidemocratic and right-wing extremist attitudes among Secondary School pupils in Sweden

General

Mats-Olof Deland¹

¹ Mittuniversitetet

Abstract text: This is a first preliminary report from an attitude study conducted in Swedish schools in spring 2026. The study uses well-known attitude scales such as the GFE (group-focused enmity); REX (Rechtsextremismus/Right-Wing extremism); MOA (Market-Oriented Authoritarianism); RWA (Right-Wing Authoritarianism); and SDO (Social Dominance Orientation). Additionally, it uses newly constructed scales aimed to measure attitudes to (high-end) grading, collaboration, and authority in school settings, reading and aesthetic activity habits, and differences between different school forms (such as theoretical (nature or social science), medical care, sports, or aesthetics, etc.). The general idea is to measure to what extent the school exacerbates or mitigates attitudes that are positive to authoritarianism and negative to human rights, and to what extent attitudes of these kinds proliferate in Swedish school settings. The report will deal with both methodological and theoretical issues and with preliminary results.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:36 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 17

Far right, affect and generational change: From subculture to mainstream

General

Lucas Gottzén¹

Elias le Grand¹, Ryan Switzer²

¹ Stockholm University

² Copenhagen University

Abstract text: This paper examines generational change in young far-right activism through the case of the Sweden Democrats (SD), tracing how the party's shift from marginal subculture to mainstream political force has reshaped the affective landscape of youth engagement. Drawing on Karl Mannheim's theory of social generations, Raymond Williams' concept of "structures of feeling," and the conjunctural analysis developed by Antonio Gramsci and Stuart Hall, we analyze how different generations of young SD activists develop distinct affective orientations toward their political identities within specific conjunctures. The analysis draws on two datasets: interviews with 22 far-right youth primarily active in Ungsvenskarna (SDU), and interviews with 14 former SD members active around 20 years ago who later left or were excluded. In the 2000s and early-to-mid 2010s, young SD members occupied a stigmatized and marginalized position, frequently "othered" in media through spatial and class-based stereotypes as uneducated rural "rednecks," outside Sweden's liberal urban center. Their activist identities were shaped by shame, social exclusion, and defensive pride. By contrast, contemporary SDU activists exhibit a different structure of feeling. With the party's electoral normalization and growing acceptance, they express little defensiveness about their affiliation. The "impulse, restraint, and tone" of their activism reflects a generational shift in what it means to be young and far-right in Sweden. A generational lens thus shows how the mainstreaming of far-right politics transforms the emotional texture of activism. Cohorts encountering the same party in different conjunctures develop divergent structures of feeling, highlighting the link between political normalization and affective experience.

Social media, online engagements and participation

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Social media, online engagements and participation

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 14:00, Where: Lecture hall 19

Digital Platforms, Social Media, and the Uneven Political Participation of Young People

General

Paula Joanna Sillat¹

¹ Tallinn University, School of Governance, Law and Society, Estonia

Abstract text: In recent decades, interpretations of political engagement have increasingly recognised forms of participation that take place outside formal political institutions, particularly through digital media. For young people, digital participation platforms and social media can offer opportunities for civic and political engagement. However, digitisation may also reinforce existing inequalities: marginalised youth are not necessarily re-engaged by digital opportunities and may lack the confidence required for active participation in online and offline political arenas. Even where access to the internet and digital skills is relatively equal, significant participation disparities persist between different groups of young people. Estonia, as one of the leading countries in the E-Government Development Index, provides a particularly relevant case for examining these dynamics.

This paper explores the opportunities and challenges of civic and political participation among youth with diverse backgrounds, focusing on digital participation platforms and social media. The empirical analysis draws on interviews conducted between 2023 and 2026 with educated young Twitter users, marginalised young people, and developers of digital participation platforms. Preliminary findings suggest that although digital participation platforms are designed to strengthen democracy, they tend to attract already active and resource-rich young citizens. Concurrently, for many young people, social media platforms such as TikTok and Twitter offer alternative avenues for accessing information, engaging in political discussion, and developing political viewpoints. Situating these findings within broader debates on democratic backsliding, youth participation, and new solidarities, the paper highlights the potential and limitations of digital participation in fostering inclusive civic engagement among young people with diverse backgrounds.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:00 - 14:30, Where: Lecture hall 19

“Peerness” and Peer Support on Social Media: Exploring Queer Youth's Experiences

General

Liinu Vento¹

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¹ University of Helsinki, Faculty of Social Sciences, Finland.

Abstract text: The adult-centred discourse regarding young people’s social media usage and its mental health effects continues to be overwhelmingly negative. Moreover, social media is commonly portrayed as one of the key factors underlying the ongoing youth mental health crisis in Finland. Little emphasis continues to be placed on the number of favourable resources social media has to offer; hence the one-sided nature of the discussion persists.

The overarching aim of this paper is to contribute to a more nuanced, experience-based discussion about the valuable community building resources social media has to offer young people. Utilising questionnaire data gathered from over a hundred young LGBTQIA+ people, the paper explores experiences of “*peerness*” and peer support in online queer communities in the context of patterns of social media use. The experiences are conceptualised through stages of belonging, which are marked by differences in experiences of representation, relatability, and commitment to group membership. This analysis is then connected to the young people’s patterns of social media utilisation (e.g. consuming, sharing, and creating LGBTQIA+ related content), as well as to the body of research regarding youth mental health and social media carried out by the TUBEDU project.

This study is a part of the co-research design of the TUBEDU project (YouTubers as Peer Mental Health Educators in Adolescent's Social Environments), funded by the Research Council of Finland and carried out by the Universities of Turku, Tampere, and Helsinki in collaboration with several NGOs (Nyyti ry, Yeesi, and Aseman lapset).

When: 2026-10-22, 14:30 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 19

Between Opportunity and Risk: Three cases of Young People's Digital Political Participation

General

Airi-Alina Allaste¹

Paula Joanna Sillat¹

¹ Tallinn University, Estonia

Abstract text: In recent decades, it has become widely recognised that young people tend to be less engaged in formal political institutions while showing greater interest in non-institutional forms of civic participation. Since the Arab Spring, a growing body of research has demonstrated the central role of the internet and social media in shaping political awareness and civic engagement among younger generations.

This presentation examines how different groups of young people make use of digital opportunities and social media for political participation. It explores how participation is shaped both by the affordances and constraints of digital platforms and by the diverse social positions, needs, and experiences of young people. Particular attention is paid to how young people themselves interpret the benefits and risks of digital participation, as well as to the conditions under which digital participation can become safer, more inclusive, and more meaningful.

Empirical part of the presentation draws on three case studies in Estonia: the political participation of new migrants, including university and secondary school students; the experiences of educated young Twitter users in the context of platform changes following its acquisition by Elon Musk; and the potential of digital participation platforms to engage young people who define themselves as politically inactive. The analysis is based on multiple qualitative datasets, including digital ethnography and in-depth interviews with young people conducted between 2021 and 2025.

Methodological challenges in youth studies

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Methodological challenges in youth studies

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 13:52, Where: Lecture hall 22

Bridging the Gap: Researching Contemporary Youth Cultural Phenomena

General

Magnus Kilger¹

¹ Stockholm University

Abstract text: Over the last decades, youth studies scholars have debated how youth cultural practices should best be studied and understood (Woodman & Wyn, 2015). In short, post-subcultural research has tended to emphasize increasingly individualized understandings of youth culture, while subcultural theory has foregrounded collective dimensions of youth culture, highlighting shared values and practices that distinguish particular groups from the mainstream (Hodkinson, 2016).

This presentation argues that contemporary youth cultural phenomena provide an analytically productive site for bridging these perspectives. Popular youth trends such as social media formats, influencers or reality TV genres should be understood not merely as individualized lifestyle expressions, but as discursively organized cultural formations embedded in wider social and structural conditions. These phenomena produce normative frameworks that shape ideals of subjectivity, belonging, and appropriate conduct among young people. While these trends are often understood as expressions of individual choice, taste, and lifestyle, central concerns within post-subcultural research, they also involve shared discursive meanings, practices, and forms of belonging that are central to subcultural approaches. As such, these trends highlight how individualized cultural expressions also are shaped by, and contribute to, collective identities. This points to the importance of analyzing the interplay between culture as collective identity and individual pathways within youth cultures.

Finally, youth cultural research should pay closer attention to collective values embedded in everyday youth practices and to why these values matter in young people's lives. Studying defined contemporary phenomena in young people's life can help connect these practices more clearly to wider social and structural conditions.

When: 2026-10-22, 13:52 - 14:14, Where: Lecture hall 22

Issues faced by young people from racially minoritised communities during education

10. Youth, Transitions and Social Justice- researching spaces of social action

Karan Vickers-Hulse¹

Sarah Whitehouse¹, Kane Allen¹

¹ University of the West of England

Abstract text: This interactive workshop presents findings from a qualitative study exploring how racially minoritised young people in England experience the transition from secondary education to higher education. Grounded in Critical Race Theory and socially conscious research practices, the study draws on focus group data generated during a university-hosted conference with Year 12 students (aged 16-17) and educators in Bristol. Rather than reproducing deficit narratives, the research centred young people's voices to illuminate how structural inequalities shape their educational trajectories and aspirations.

The proposed workshop will engage participants with four key themes identified in the data: belonging, representation, curriculum, and environment. Using anonymised student narratives and facilitated dialogue, participants will explore how everyday experiences such as racial microaggressions impact young people's sense of belonging and decisions about higher education. Participants will be invited to critically reflect on their own contexts and consider how educational spaces can act as sites of social action and transformation. The workshop will model dialogic and co-productive approaches, encouraging attendees to engage with the data, share perspectives, and collaboratively identify strategies for change.

The session will conclude with practical, research-informed recommendations, including developing racial literacy, embedding culturally responsive pedagogies, and fostering inclusive cultures. In aligning with the symposium's focus on youth, transitions, and social justice, this workshop aims to create a space for collective reflection and action toward more equitable educational futures.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:14 - 14:36, Where: Lecture hall 22

Why aren't you researching mermaids? Reflections on ethnographic failure in educational settings

General

Fanny Pérez Aronsson¹

¹ Department of Child and Youth Studies, Stockholm University

Abstract text: Although sometimes presented as a fairly straightforward and tried endeavour, ethnographic fieldwork in educational settings can be affected by some specific methodological and ethical challenges. Verbuyst and Galazka (2023) call for more scholarly work on ethnographic failure, as methodological difficulties tend to be framed by a narrative of success, where the ethnographer succeeds in spite of their initial challenges. The paper aims to contribute to a growing body of work on ethnographic difficulties, where ethical and methodological aspects such as (re)negotiating assent in research with young children (Paxman, 2025) and participant-led approaches (Sykes & Lamb, 2025) has recently been discussed.

Building on previous work on methodological and ethical challenges in fieldwork in educational settings, the paper utilizes field notes and reflections from an ultimately failed ethnographic fieldwork in a school-age educare centre (SAEC). The paper explores some of the challenges faced and lessons learned relating to access to a field, local conditions for research, ethical issues in collecting informed consent, and children's (dis)interest in participating in research. In particular, the paper points to the discrepancies between the identified relevance and importance of a research project from a research and school leadership perspective, and impact of the actual conditions and realities of everyday educational settings on the possibility of to conduct research. The time and resource constraints of the staff, logistical issues in reaching parents/guardians, and the disinterest of the pupils to participate in anything beyond their everyday activities at the SAEC all contributed to the fieldwork failing.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:36 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 22

Possibilities and challenges of the media go-along method in ethnographic studies of youth

General

Katja Ørsnes Jansen¹

Andreas Candefors Stæhr¹, Janus Spindler Møller¹

¹ University of Copenhagen, Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics, Denmark

Abstract text: One of the challenges of ethnographic studies of contemporary youth life is gaining insights into young people's use of digital media and the role these media play in their everyday lives. In this presentation, we discuss the methodological and ethical challenges of incorporating the media go-along method (Jørgensen 2016) as a means of doing so. The method involves screen recordings of participants' digital devices and sound recordings of the ongoing conversation while the participants give the researcher a guided tour of their social media activities. In this way, the method provides participants with a high degree of agency in terms of deciding what to show the researcher.

We argue that the media go-along is a crucial tool when studying youth life, but also a method that demands a high degree of ethical reflection. To illustrate this, we draw on data from the EDUCABLE-project where a team of researchers conducted eight months of ethnographic fieldwork in two classes in the last year of compulsory schooling in order to study school-related identity work. We show how the media go-along conversations provided important insights about for example engagement with TikTok videos and AI tools that would otherwise be difficult to obtain. However, we also discuss ethical challenges such as negotiation of access to online contexts, processes of informed consent and matters of privacy, including the ethical dilemma that arises when participants are exposed to the online behaviors of other participants during group media go-along sessions.

Youth sports, identity and bodies in motion

2026-10-22

13:30 - 15:00

Youth sports, identity and bodies in motion

When: 2026-10-22, 13:30 - 14:00, Where: Lecture hall 25

Re-visiting identity in sports – the role of sports in becoming someone

General

Åse Strandbu¹

Åsa Bäckström²

¹ The Norwegian School of Sport Sciences

² Högskolan i Gävle

Abstract text: Since youth became a category in its own effect and positioned in the broader landscape of youth cultures and lifestyles, the task of figuring out “who am I” has been of major concern for young people. Hence, questions about identity have played a significant role in teenage years and identity have subsequently been a key concept in youth research, but remarkably less applied in sport studies. The same goes for the conceptualization of culture. Given the popularity of sport among young people this is surprising. Sport participation is intertwined with identity concerns and cultural practices. In this paper we address the overlapping issues these two fields generate and how both youth studies and sports studies could benefit from re-visiting the importance of identity and culture in sports. Our theoretical anchoring is theories of identity from sociology (Jenkins 2014, Taylor 1998) and from studies on youth culture and sports (e.g. Giardina & Connely 2009; Dupont & Beal 2021) addressing particularly how identity has been employed as a theoretical tool in studies of the so-called lifestyle sports (Wheaton 2013). We discuss how these and other studies provide a leeway to understanding how sports, culture and identity form the everyday lives of young people today, and how these theoretical tools also appear relevant for understanding identity projects in mainstream sports. The discussion in this paper is based on reviews and analyses of existing studies of young people’s sport participation – both our own studies and others.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:00 - 14:30, Where: Lecture hall 25

Social Inequalities Across Youth Sports: The Impact of Costs and Parental Engagement

General

Anders Bakken¹

Kari Stefansen¹, Frøydis Enstad¹, Gerd Marie Solstad¹

¹ Oslo Metropolitan University

Abstract text: While previous research has documented substantial social inequalities in overall youth sports participation, less is known about how these inequalities vary across specific sports. This paper examines how gender, family socioeconomic status (SES), immigrant background, and place of residence, shapes adolescents' participation in different types of sports.

We also test two possible explanations for differences in sport engagement. The first concerns the costs of participation, including equipment, fees, travel, and extra activities, which vary considerably between sports and may influence who can participate. The second concerns parental involvement. Growing up in a family with an affinity for sports increases the likelihood of participation, but little is known about whether parental time, competence, and engagement differ systematically between sports. Some studies suggest, for example, that parents of cross-country skiers are highly involved; this paper seeks to understand such variation more broadly.

By analysing the relationships between sociodemographic background, sport-specific costs, and parental engagement, the overall aim is to highlight whether certain sports are more socially selective than others. Given the substantial public investment in organized sports, it is crucial to assess whether these resources benefit all youths from all social backgrounds or reproduce inequalities.

The analysis draws on data from the 2026 wave of the *Ung i Oslo* survey, covering complete cohorts of adolescents in Oslo. We focus on sports-active youth aged 16–19, who reported their primary sport, participation costs, and parental involvement, including parents' roles in clubs and their own engagement in sports.

When: 2026-10-22, 14:30 - 15:00, Where: Lecture hall 25

“Own” sports celebrities as boosters of young people’s sports hobbying in small and remote villages

General

Päivi Armila¹

¹ University of Eastern Finland

Abstract text: The aim of my presentation is to interpret the significance of successful competitive athletes – local sports heroes and celebrities – for the sports cultures in small and remote village communities. Special attention is paid to the ways these heroes, even though they usually live elsewhere, become actors and agents that affect young people’s sports interests and possibilities in environments where organized sports scenes for them are usually rare.

My analysis is a contribution to the recent discussion of research concerning sporty activities, equality of possibilities, and special conditions for participation of youth in remote and sparsely populated areas. Often these are approached in terms of closures, endings, and lacking – and contextualized by problematic realities of long distances, lack of guiding adults and coaches, lack of sports hobby facilities, as well as by "village death" representations with a kind of communal apathy as well: "There is nothing to do here." My approach, however, is more dynamic and focused on "hero agencies" with their positive communal influence. Local sports celebrities are often visibly represented in small villages, known by all, used as representations of "us", and as inspirers for personal sports careers as well. My analysis leans on data produced within two research projects examining young people’s everyday lives and hobby options in small rural settlements: church villages surrounded by smaller villages, and outskirts of regional town areas.

General

Digital Co-Agency as a Framework for Ethical Youth Safety

General

Mennatullah Hendawy

Abstract text: As digital environments become central to the social and political lives of young people, the governance of their "safety" has emerged as a site of intense contestation. Contemporary safety frameworks often frame youth through a lens of vulnerability, leading to a reliance on surveillance-oriented parental control tools. However, this approach risks creating a "Protection–Autonomy Paradox," where restrictive governance undermines the very trust and agency necessary for long-term digital resilience. This paper engages with the conference themes of theory, methodology, and ethics to propose a shift from control-oriented models toward a framework of **Digital Co-Agency**.

Drawing on a synthesis of child–computer interaction and digital parenting research, we introduce "Digital Co-Agency" to reframe online safety as a collaborative socio-technical process. Rather than treating youth as passive subjects in need of "repair" or monitoring, this theory positions them as active participants. We argue that safety systems should function as "digital mentors" that scaffold reflective judgment and self-regulation, moving beyond the binary logic of restriction versus exposure.

To ground this framework, we present findings from two distinct systematic analyses: a design-oriented literature review of 66 peer-reviewed ACM publications and an empirical audit of 65 industrial safety tools. we highlight the gap between technical surveillance and the lived experiences of young people across diverse geographic contexts.

Afghan youth's relational understandings of the self and the world

General

Mehdia Hassan

Abstract text: Young people, as social agents living in relation to their social environments, are constantly in the process of symbolically making and re-making their life narratives (Bourdieu, 1993; Corsaro, 2014; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Similarly, collage, as an arts-based method of inquiry, effectively captures the relationality of youth's experiences in non-linear ways that reimagine narratives to cross traditional boundaries of space and time (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010). With the sociological concept of habitus, an "open system of dispositions" that is evolving through past and ongoing socialization, I emphasize taking a relational approach in youth studies, between youth transitions and youth cultures (Threadgold & Nilan, 2015; Bourdieu, 2005). In this paper, I present multimodal findings from my doctoral research with 21 Afghan youth participants in the urban city of Toronto, home to Canada's largest Afghan diasporic community (Government of Canada). I explore their learning dispositions and agentic narratives of learning, as evident through Afghan youth's collage artworks, focus group discussions, and individual interviews. My research reveals interesting insights on how Afghan youth construct relational knowledges between the self, the world, and their learning. This is depicted through their use of Farsi poetry, various visual symbols, and keywords in their visual narratives of collage to creatively express how they viewed themselves as learners in their Toronto communities. Their distinct narratives shaped a larger coherent narrative of continuous lifelong learning. Young people can reflexively expand their semantic fields and gain deeper relational understandings with collage, as they build transformative life narratives (Sameshima et al., 2019).

Challenging adultism in research: Methods, techniques, and fieldwork encounters

General

Camila Conte

Abstract text: This presentation examines how research with young people can be conceptualized, practiced, and critically interrogated through a methodological lens that challenges adultist assumptions. It adopts an approach that centers children's ways of knowing, expressing, and relating to the world, while foregrounding the relational dynamics that shape encounters between children and researchers throughout the research process. Drawing on my doctoral fieldwork with children seeking asylum in Spain, the presentation reflects on the use of creative and participatory approaches, including art-based and play-based techniques, and explores how childist perspectives can orient both methodological choices and everyday fieldwork interactions.

The discussion highlights how a childist lens reshapes research in practice. Fieldwork vignettes reveal moments where adultist assumptions surfaced, through gatekeeping, negotiations around consent, children's refusals or disengagement with pre-fixed techniques, and tensions between the planned and children's own rhythms, interests, and needs. These moments illuminate how adult-centered norms often structure what counts as valid participation, how data is produced, and whose participants' perspectives are prioritized. At the same time, the discussion reflects on how slow research and methodological immaturity opens space for co-agency, improvisation, and other forms of participation. Embracing children's relational and embodied ways of engaging with the world enables methodological flexibility fostering more ethical and dialogic research encounters. It also requires acknowledging the researcher as an active participant in these dynamics, shaped by, and shaping, the rhythms, emotions, and relationality in the field. The presentation invites a broader reflection on methodological adultism and the possibilities of childist alternatives.

Constrained Choices in Children's School Mobility in a Car-Dominant Mediterranean City

General

Agni Gregoriou

Byron Ioannou

Abstract text: In car-dominant Mediterranean cities, children's school mobility is largely shaped by adult decisions, traffic conditions, and limited modal alternatives. In Limassol, Cyprus, where car ownership is among the highest in Europe and most daily trips are made by car, school commuting offers a lens through which to examine restricted mobility choice and limited autonomy among young people.

This paper examines how sixth-grade students travel to school, how they perceive route conditions, and what changes they identify as necessary for safer and more pleasant journeys. The study draws on a pilot case study conducted in a central primary school in Limassol, Cyprus and is based on a qualitative questionnaire completed by students aged 11–12. The analysis examines travel modes, accompaniment, route conditions, perceived safety, and willingness to walk or cycle under improved conditions.

Findings indicate a strong dominance of car-based travel, primarily accompanied by adults, even for short distances. While many students report feeling safe, responses reveal widespread concerns related to traffic congestion, high vehicle speeds, lack of pedestrian crossings, insufficient sidewalks, and poorly maintained pedestrian space. Nevertheless, many students indicate they would walk or cycle if routes were safer, cleaner, and better shaded, pointing to latent demand for active mobility constrained by infrastructural barriers.

The paper argues that children's school commuting reflects constrained choices rather than preferences. By foregrounding children's proposals such as safer crossings, reduced traffic, improved sidewalks, and more greenery, the study highlights school routes as key leverage points for reducing car dependency and fostering inclusive urban mobility.

Dalit youth, Education and Ritual labour in Theyyam performance

General

Shruthy Harilal

Abstract text: Theyyam, a ritual tradition of North Malabar, Kerala, India, is predominantly performed by Dalit communities within hereditary caste-based labour relations. Among Vannan performers, participation is organised through cherujanmavakasham, an inherited right and obligation that confers ritual authority but also reproduces stigma, coercive expectations, and restricted access to education and occupational choice. While Theyyam has often been read as ritualised resistance, it has also historically functioned as a caste-bound occupation shaping constrained mobility pathways. In recent decades, Theyyam has been transformed through its appropriation by tourism industries, corporate actors, and political establishments as a cultural symbol of Kerala. This cultural valorisation has increased the economic value and visibility of ritual performance, even as its caste foundations are partially erased. Drawing on ethnographic research with Vannan performer households, this paper examines intergenerational shifts in how young performers negotiate education, livelihood aspirations, and caste identity. Older generations experienced systematic exclusion from schooling, reinforcing dependence on hereditary ritual labour. The middle generation benefited from expanded educational access and affirmative pathways, enabling mobility through stable government employment. However, younger performers increasingly view Theyyam itself as a viable livelihood, often limiting education beyond school or college. The paper argues that youth trajectories do not follow a linear path away from caste-based ritual labour, but reveal uneven and reversible pathways in which cultural recognition, economic opportunity, and caste reproduction remain deeply entangled. By foregrounding Dalit youth experiences within intergenerational ritual worlds, the paper contributes to youth studies dialogues on dignity, voice, and mobility under structural inequality.

Embodied Resistance: Muslim Girls, Sport, and Place-Making in Mumbai

General

Shadma Ahmed

Abstract text: The paper explores engagement with sports, fitness, and everyday physical activity among young Muslim girls aged 16-24 years in Mumbai as embodied practices through which they inhabit, claim, negotiate, and remake urban spaces. With insights drawn from extensive ethnographic fieldwork across playgrounds, gyms, and fitness clubs, this paper examines how bodily movements among young female Muslim bodies become a site of control, regulation, and resistance. Access for Muslim girls to these spaces is shaped by intersecting forms of control, including gendered norms of respectability and modesty, religious moralities, discriminatory state practices, and urban regimes of surveillance. Within this context, sports and physical activity are not simply matters of health or leisure, but are deeply embodied negotiations of visibility, safety, belonging, resilience, and resistance. Decisions about how to dress and move, and how and when to participate, reflect their ongoing efforts to manage risk, safety, health, faith, and autonomy in public spaces. At the same time, this paper foregrounds the young girls' spatial and bodily agency. Muslim girls actively reinterpret sport and fitness as religiously and ethically meaningful while also questioning and reshaping dominant religious norms through the creation of female-only or community-based spaces, and appropriate mundane sites, such as neighbourhood playgrounds, school and college campuses, and gyms, as spaces of belonging and possibility. These practices constitute forms of everyday embodied resistance that challenge dominant framings and disrupt binaries between piety and movements, constraints and freedoms.

Generation Gap or Reality Gap? – The Nature of Mediatized Perceptions and Social Reality in Hungary

General

Levente Székely

Abstract text: In recent years, political polarization has intensified, and digital platforms have become central arenas for political communication, enabling participation but also amplifying disinformation, hostility, and ideologically segmented echo chambers. These dynamics have renewed debates about generational polarization and the presumed emergence of distinct political generations, often symbolized by expressions such as “OK Boomer.”

This presentation examines political culture in Hungary, focusing on generational differences in political attitudes, information consumption, and perceptions of social conflict. As the 2026 parliamentary election approaches, public discourse increasingly frames young voters as a politically distinct group whose preferences and conflicts with older generations could decisively shape electoral outcomes. The presentation therefore asks whether generational tensions in Hungary are empirically observable, how pronounced they are, and to what extent they are political in nature.

The analysis draws on a nationwide representative survey conducted in 2025 among 1,000 respondents aged 15–39. The survey explores perceptions of intergenerational relations and experiences of conflict across political contexts. However, the results also show that political differences are not the primary source of perceived intergenerational tension. Within families, agreement between young people and their parents remains the dominant pattern, including on political issues.

The findings challenge simplified narratives of generational political conflict. While generational tensions are increasingly visible in digital environments, they are only partially political. The presentation argues for a more nuanced understanding of generational polarization that accounts for the role of social media, context-specific experiences of conflict, and intergenerational cohesion within private social settings.

Inequality, Normative Demands and Young People's Strategies: Theorizing Transitions into Employment

General

Michael Duncan

Abstract text: How we theorize youth transitions into employment has critical consequences for what we can see and what remains invisible. This paper develops an integrated theoretical framework that situates transitions at the intersection of three dimensions: structural conditions shaped by social origin, normative demands defining what a "successful" transition looks like, and young people's active strategies for navigating these conditions. By bringing these three dimensions together, the framework addresses both the structure/agency tension that has long preoccupied youth research and the role of normative demands in shaping transitions.

The framework draws on three interconnected bodies of theory. First, Bourdieu's (1977; 1984) concepts of social space and habitus provide the foundation for understanding how social origin shapes both objective opportunity structures and "subjective space of possibility" (Altreiter 2019; Flecker & Zartler 2022). Second, the Political Economy of Youth debate (Côté 2014; France & Threadgold 2016; Yates 2021), and particularly Farrugia's (2021) "perspective of the supply of labour to capital", situates transitions within the logic of the capitalist labour. This enables a critical examination of self-realization as a normative demand structuring both the world of work and the transitions into it. Third, Threadgold's (2018) concept of "everyday struggles" helps to integrate these perspectives by foregrounding young people's strategic navigation of contradictory conditions, while still acknowledging structural constraints.

The theoretical framework is illustrated through qualitative-reconstructive analyses of interviews with youth in Viennese secondary schools, demonstrating its analytical potential for youth research beyond the Austrian context.

Life under pre-emptive suspicion and the violence of order

General

Noor Nassef

Abstract text: This paper presents findings from ethnographic research on youths' and parents' experiences with the police and security guards. In light of how migration and integration policies become grounds for directing repressive measures towards the multiracial suburbs in Sweden, the paper focuses on social processes related to *age*, *race* and *place*. To this end, it draws on participant observation and interviews with youths and parents connected to local community organizations in a multiracial district in Stockholm. The paper explores what it may mean for youths, and parents when specific places and groups are, on one hand, over-controlled and, on the other hand, under-protected by the police and security guards. A central theme concerns how suspicion is directed at youths even before any crime has been committed. Anticipatory logics of risk create imagined future scenarios of criminality that legitimize interventions in the present, thereby criminalizing both youths and the places they inhabit rather than preventing crime. In these situations, youths are treated as already responsible and punishable subjects, which gives rise to processes of adultification where they are positioned as fully accountable within policing practices. This occurs in parallel with an infantilization of parents, who are positioned in narratives that question their ability to care for and raise their children. The paper understands these dynamics as a forced coexistence between an accelerated youth and a delayed adulthood, and shows how racialized forms of governance reshape generational roles, moral responsibility, and the boundaries between protection and punishment in the contemporary welfare state.

Mediated Gender Visibility: Coping with Online Sexual Harassment in Türkiye

General

Aysima Kiris

Abstract text: This study explores how educated young women in Türkiye experience, negotiate, and resist online sexual harassment within digital environments that blur public and private boundaries. Online visibility is gendered through power relations, reinforced by image-based sexual abuse, unwanted sexual attention, and cyberstalking. These dynamics mirror offline structures, rendering digital intimacy complex and precarious.

Digital platforms operate as hybrid spaces where personal interactions unfold in publicly perceived arenas. For young women, participation requires constant negotiation between connection and privacy. Visibility enables self-expression and relationship building while simultaneously exposing one to surveillance, judgment, and harassment. Privacy strategies are therefore intertwined with emotional and embodied impacts of digital intimacy. Drawing on feminist standpoint theory and social constructivism, the study examines coping mechanisms shaped by surveillance, commodification, and emotional exposure. Although often framed as disembodied, harassment is deeply embodied emotionally, such as fear and shame.

Findings highlight the interconnection between online and offline harassment experiences and coping strategies. Based on mixed methods—an online survey (N=150) and semi-structured interviews (N=15)—gender harassment is more prevalent than unwanted sexual attention. Women aged 22–25 face heightened risk, while relationship status shapes experiences and responses.

Digital platforms function simultaneously as oppressive architectures and spaces for counter-public solidarity. Coping strategies range from active resistance to avoidance and impression management, evolving with age and experience. Repeated harassment fosters internalized safety work and self-blame, shaping how young women anticipate and navigate digital intimacy. Ultimately, young women are active agents, challenging gendered regimes of visibility and vulnerability.

Navigating Pathways: Understanding Educational Experiences and Youth Transitions into Adulthood

General

ISAH SANI

Abstract text:

Youth transitions through education remain central to how young people navigate pathways toward adulthood, yet research often underexamines the complexity of these processes from young people's own perspectives. This paper explores how educational environments shape aspirations, agency, and future orientations among young people moving from secondary schooling into higher education or vocational routes. Drawing on qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with students aged fifteen to twenty-four, the study investigates how classroom interactions, institutional expectations, and access to educational support influence the ways young people imagine and negotiate their trajectories beyond school. The research adopts a youth-centered methodological approach that prioritizes reflexive engagement and co-construction of meaning, enabling participants to articulate how they interpret success, uncertainty, and transition-related pressures. The analysis reveals that educational transitions are neither linear nor uniformly experienced. Rather, they are mediated by social networks, personal motivation, and differing levels of institutional capital. Participants described education as both an enabling structure and a site of constraint, where expectations surrounding performance, career choice, and adulthood generate competing pressures. A key theoretical insight of the study is that transitions should be understood not solely as milestones, but as dynamic processes shaped by everyday interactions, emotional labor, and shifting life circumstances. The findings reinforce the need to consider ethical dimensions when researching young people's expectations and anxieties, particularly when discussions evoke personal vulnerability or socioeconomic inequalities. The paper advances scholarship on youth transitions by foregrounding the lived experiences that underpin decisions, opportunities, and imagined futures.

Permanent Temporality among Russian Youth in Arctic: Between Staying, Earning, and Leaving

General

Daria Tolstykh

Abstract text: Young people in remote Arctic single-industry cities are often portrayed through narratives of decline, out-migration, and limited choice. This study examines how students in vocational education and training in a Russian Arctic monotown make sense of adulthood, work, and mobility under conditions shaped by geographic isolation and an employer-linked education-to-work pipeline.

The analysis draws on 31 semi-structured interviews with students in two vocational colleges (September 2024). A locally salient boundary between “here” and “on the mainland” organizes imagined futures, with “here” framed as secure and “the mainland” as desirable yet unpredictable. Staying is framed not as passivity but as a time-limited, agentic strategy.

Permanent temporality is conceptualized as a regime in which mobility is treated as an expected turning point, but its timing remains indeterminate: the break is anticipated yet rarely scheduled, and plans are revisable. Staying is narrated less as settlement than as calculated waiting - using the predictability of local pathways to accrue experience and a safety cushion before confronting uncertainty “on the mainland”.

This temporal indeterminacy provides the basis for a typology of imagined futures. Narratives vary by how they manage the ever-present but unscheduled exit point, and by the interaction of reflexivity (single versus multiple scenarios) and perceived agency (scripted endurance versus negotiated action), ranging from linear “stay-earn-leave” stories to “double-horizon” accounts that keep several possible futures open.

The study contributes to youth studies debates on agency under constraint and highlights aspiration formation in small-network, corporate-shaped settings where access, anonymity, and representation require particular care.

Rethinking Parent–Child Relationships in Childhood and Youth Studies

General

Ana Vergara

Abstract text: In social research, the parent–child relationship has frequently been addressed through normative and expert-driven frameworks, particularly within psychology and applied parenting studies. Such approaches tend to frame this relationship as a technical domain of intervention, obscuring its character as a socio-historical social relation embedded in inequality, governance and moral regulation.

This paper starts from the premise that parent–child relationships must be understood as socio-historical social relations. They are shaped by historically specific notions of childhood, youth, family and parentality, and traversed by class, gender, ethnicity and territory. They are also entangled with material and institutional contexts—including labour conditions, schooling, welfare arrangements, urban environments and digital technologies—that exceed the intimate sphere of family life. In Latin America, these relations are further marked by the uneven circulation of a modern Western family model, resulting in the coexistence of temporalities shaped by colonial histories and contemporary inequalities.

Within Childhood and Youth Studies, relational and situated perspectives have challenged individualistic views of young people. However, the parent–child relationship has remained largely tangential, despite being a key site in the social production of childhood and youth. When addressed, it is often framed through simplified oppositional lenses such as domination and resistance, limiting attention to its complexity as a relation shaped by interdependence, care, authority, regulation and negotiation.

Drawing on long-term research in Chile and Latin America, the paper argues for theoretical and methodological approaches that engage parents and children in dialogue and attend to the relational textures of intergenerational life.

The mosaic approach to researching children and youth

General

Mona Hemmaty

Abstract text: In this presentation, I reflect on the mosaic approach (Clark, 2001) to researching children and youth by placing it alongside sociological ideas about listening and power. The mosaic approach is known for using creative and participatory methods to bring children and youth perspectives into view. I draw on Back's emphasis on careful listening (2007) to discuss how power might still shape what can be expressed, heard and taken up in research encounters. Rather than seeing participatory toolkits as a solution to unequal research relationships, I suggest that the mosaic approach is perhaps most apt to grasp voices and perspectives when understood as practices that keeps power visible rather than resolved.

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The Paradox of Youth Participation: Ethics, Power, and the Limits of Inclusion in Youth Research

General

Amit Kumar Vishwanath

Sreehari Ravindranath, Joseph Thomas Rijo, Apoorva Bhatnagar

Abstract text: Youth participation is central to contemporary youth research and policy discourse, often framed as a marker of democratic practice, inclusion, and ethical integrity. Yet across educational and civic contexts, expanded opportunities for youth voice coexist with persistent constraints on young people's capacity to shape priorities, define problems, and influence decisions. This paper argues that youth participation constitutes a structural and ethical paradox: young people are increasingly present in research and governance spaces while the epistemic and political conditions of those spaces remain largely adult-governed.

Drawing on critical and relational ethics in youth research, participation is conceptualised as an ongoing ethical and political practice through which power, responsibility, and legitimacy are negotiated, rather than as a methodological technique. From a practitioner–scholar standpoint, the paper examines how participatory designs privilege consultation and expression while limiting youth authority over research agendas, interpretive frameworks, and knowledge use, particularly in large-scale reform contexts characterised by time-bound consultations and advisory or representational forums lacking decision-making power.

The paper develops an analytical framework comprising three interrelated dimensions of ethical participation: relational ethics, epistemic ethics, and representational ethics. Rather than proposing prescriptive models of best practice, it advances an ethic of situated judgment, reflexivity, and accountability that confronts enduring relations of power and positions ethics as constitutive of knowledge production.

Keywords:

Youth participation; research ethics; power; epistemic justice; governance

The quantity and quality of social relationships and the mental health of girls with ADHD in Sweden

General

Gökhan Kaya

Miia Bask

Abstract text: The number of children diagnosed with ADHD/ADD has increased dramatically over the years, and debates often focus on differing views regarding the mental health challenges of students with ADHD/ADD. In this study, we aim to investigate mental health disparities among school boys and girls with and without ADHD/ADD by focusing on the quality and quantity of social relations, including close friendship networks, perceived social support, and generalized social trust. In doing so, we used the Swedish Public Health Survey with school children in 2021 (grades 9 and 11) with a range of mental health indicators, including both internalizing problems (e.g., self-harm, anxiety/feeling depressed) and externalizing problems (e.g., school truancy, alcohol, drug use). The results show that girls with ADHD/ADD differ substantially from other groups and are more prone to mental health problems. This group also appears to have more difficulty benefiting from social support as a buffer against social stress compared to their peers. While they do not particularly have a deficit in close friendship networks, they have lower generalized trust. The results have implications for creating trustworthy relations and mobilization of social resources, along with evidence to inform social interventions to maintain health among ADHD/ADD school girls.

The Shower Room as a Social Place – How Children Create Friendship Spaces in Organized Sports

General

Astrid Hultin Svensk

Helena Hörnfeldt, Susanne Johansson

Abstract text: Friendships play a central role in children's everyday lives, yet they remain relatively underexplored within individual sport contexts, particularly from children's own perspectives. Drawing on a nine-month ethnographic study of five 12-year-old girls participating in competitive swimming in Sweden, this paper examines how friendship practices are shaped, sensed and made meaningful in relation to place. Guided by an embodied and emplaced perspective, the study explores how friendships are lived through bodies, materiality, environments and sensory experiences.

Based on participant observations and interviews, the analysis focuses on the shower room as an empirically emergent site of social life. In contrast to dominant representations of changing and shower spaces as risky or marginalised, findings show that the shower room functioned as a meaningful place for friendship, play and comfort. These meanings were dependent on specific social, material and temporal conditions, including sensory comfort, shared bodily presence, temporal flexibility and the absence of performance demands.

By foregrounding children's placemaking practices, the study contributes to research on children, sport and place by demonstrating how friendship is not only socially negotiated but also sensorially and materially emplaced. The paper highlights the value of sensory ethnography for understanding how children develop meaningful friendship relations within organised sports.

When everyone knows everyone: Ethics and methodology in small community contexts

General

Flora Tietgen

Abstract text: Conducting research on sensitive topics with vulnerable populations such as youth, immigrants, women, queer or disabled people in small communities raises methodological and ethical challenges that cut across research fields. This presentation draws on my experiences in researching immigrant women who have experienced intimate partner violence in Iceland and on teaching research ethics at the School of Education. The aim is to reflect on ethical and methodological considerations with regards to researching a vulnerable population about violence that are relevant across fields, including youth research.

With a population around 400.000 of whom 20% are immigrants, Iceland is a research context in which anonymity is structurally difficult to guarantee yet non-negotiable, particularly with regards to vulnerable populations. Participants may easily be recognized through demographic information shared in publications and researchers often navigate overlapping social roles within the communities they study. Conducting interviews with a marginalised population about violence under these circumstances requires special attention to participant and researchers physical and psychological safety.

Drawing on my research and teaching experiences, this presentation addresses three points. First, the protection of participants whose safety may depend on invisibility. Second, the navigation of researcher positionality and how reflexivity can be used as a tool to ensure participant safety. Third, the need for a stronger focus on the wellbeing of the researcher. Rather than offering definitive answers, this presentation seeks to engage in a dialogue with youth researchers who research sensitive topics while navigate similar tensions between proximity, visibility, and care.

Young Jews defying hate: everyday lived experiences of antisemitism

General

Paula A Cáceres

Abstract text: My ongoing doctoral research explores how antisemitism is experienced, sensed and understood on the everyday lives of young Jews in Sweden, ages 15-25. As a national minority with a 250-year history in the country marked by both antisemitism and narratives of resilience, the study takes young people's own accounts as its point of departure, asking how contemporary antisemitism happens in practice and how its recognised, felt and navigated across different contexts.

Drawing on qualitative individual and focus group interviews with young Jews, the analysis adopts an explorative, experience-based approach attentive to sensory, emotional and spatial dimensions of everyday life.

The presentation contributes to youth studies by conceptualizing antisemitism as a lived and relational process amplified through youth voices. Methodologically, it highlights the importance of centering youth perspectives to capture diffuse and normalized forms of harm that often remain overlooked. Ethically, the study raises questions of resilience, agency and belonging in research with young people navigating politically charged environments, particularly in the post-7th October 2023 context.

“100% me”: using hip-hop to voice diversity in Swedish identity-making

General

Sjors Joosten

Abstract text: This article examines the experiences, perspectives, and creative output of (young) hip-hop artists with immigrant backgrounds from the suburbs of Stockholm, focusing on the existing recognition gap in being and belonging as “Swedish.” Because the respondents are immigrant-Swedes and live in marginalized and excluded neighborhoods – symbolically referred to as *orten* – they are not perceived as “really” Swedish and are instead categorized as the *immigrant-Other*.

Hip-hop functions as a cultural form through which respondents emancipate themselves, create a voice, and articulate diversity within Swedish identity-making – an identity space in which they both shape and experience belonging. Theoretically, this study is grounded in Lamont’s recognition theory, which guides the qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews with 21 respondents, alongside ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the suburbs and at various performances.

The findings highlight a recognition gap in which Swedish citizens with immigrant backgrounds who do not conform to majority norms experience racialization as the *immigrant-Other*. The artists in this study, most of whom are young adults, generally do not seek acceptance within dominant definitions of Swedishness. Instead, through the emancipatory practices of creating and sharing hip-hop, respondents articulate alternative societal perspectives, construct hybrid Swedish identities, and pursue alternative routes to belonging – routes that challenge normative conceptions of Swedishness.

1. Family Formation in the Age of Uncertainty

Carry the Fire – Family Formation among Hungarian and American Youth

1. Family Formation in the Age of Uncertainty

Georgina Kiss-Kozma

Abstract text: Between December 2024 and January 2025, the Youth Research Institute and Cygnal surveyed 1,000 Hungarian and 1,000 American citizens aged 15–39 to examine their future plans and family formation attitudes. This age group faces pivotal decisions about relationships, career, and parenthood, navigating between tradition and societal change.

Most youth in both countries aspire to marriage and lifelong commitment, though Americans are more certain about their plans. Family experiences shape expectations, with Hungarians often influenced by grandparents and Americans by parents. Childbearing is increasingly postponed, resulting in fewer children than the ideal.

Despite rising cohabitation, young people envision an ideal family as parents sharing child-rearing responsibilities, often married or cohabiting, with active grandparental support. Findings highlight how delayed adulthood, evolving values, and practical concerns shape family planning, underscoring the importance of fertility awareness among today's youth.

Keywords: Family formation, Marriage, Childbearing, Young adults, Fertility

In the Grip of Hope and Procrastination: Family Plans and Future Perspectives Among Young People

1. Family Formation in the Age of Uncertainty

Levente Székely

Abstract text: Young people's challenges, such as the transition to independence, are nearly universal. However, the broader social and economic environments in which these transitions occur vary widely. In some regions, young people still face basic questions of economic security and survival, while in others they grapple with balancing career ambitions and aspirations for family life. Despite these differences, international research suggests that some shared trends are emerging, including a growing sense of uncertainty about the future. Recent data show that the proportion of individuals who feel their safety is threatened – without being able to identify a specific cause – has significantly increased, and this diffuse anxiety appears particularly strong among the youngest age groups.

This presentation examines how young people in Hungary and the United States navigate uncertainties and envision their futures. Using survey data and comparative analysis, it explores the attitudes of individuals aged 15–39 toward family formation, career planning, and life priorities. In both countries, young people continue to express strong preferences for two-parent families with shared responsibilities. However, economic constraints, extended educational pathways, and changing cultural expectations contribute to the postponement of marriage and childbearing.

By comparing the aspirations and concerns of Hungarian and American youth, the presentation seeks to better understand how young generations imagine their future and what this reveals about the broader prospects of contemporary societies.

The loneliest generation?

1. Family Formation in the Age of Uncertainty

Georgina Kiss-Kozma

Abstract text: It is estimated that more than 14 million young people aged 15 to 29 experienced mental health problems in 2019, and the Covid-19 pandemic has worsened young people's mental health across Europe. UNICEF reports that suicide is the second leading cause of death among European youth after road traffic accidents. Young people's mental health is becoming an increasingly pressing issue. In Hungary, one fifth of young people are considered lonely. In addition to loneliness, young people also struggle with frustration and insecurity. The issue of youth loneliness has become central to public discourse after the Covid-19 pandemic, and the place and role of young people in society is taking an increasingly prominent position.

A central question of this presentation is to what extent the loneliness and mental health of Hungarian youth align with international trends. The complexity of mental health includes self-acceptance, the ability to cope with difficult situations, the capacity to trust, and the ability to maintain meaningful relationships. The Youth Research Institute 2023 survey focused on social relationships and their connection to mental well-being. Conducted between December 2022 and January 2023 among Hungarian citizens aged 15 to 39, it used a nationally representative sample of 1,000 people with face-to-face interviews (TAPI).

The findings provide insight into the prevalence of loneliness among Hungarian youth and its implications for mental health. They highlight the role of social connections in fostering resilience and well-being, and situate Hungary within broader European trends regarding youth mental health challenges and societal participation.

9. Place, Space and Mobilities in Young People's Everyday Life

Gendered Access to Public Spaces: Young Women's Experiences at Delhi Monuments

9. Place, Space and Mobilities in Young People's Everyday Life

Avantika Kumari

Abstract text: The empirical study examines monuments as gendered public spaces by analysing young women's everyday experiences within four major monuments in Delhi(Jama masjid, Lodhi garden, India gate, and the lotus temple), each representing different historical periods. Drawing on feminist spatial theory and qualitative methods such as face-to-face interviews and non-participant observation , the study trying to explores how history, architecture , symbolism , crowd behaviour and infrastructure shape women's safety, mobility and behavioural regulation. A pilot study was also conducted at all the four sites to test the feasibility of the research design and confirming the suitability of qualitative methods for capturing women lived experiences in monumental spaces. The finding challenges the assumption of monuments as neutral and universally accessible public spaces, revealing how women continuously negotiate surveillance , fear and social expectations. The study contributes to feminist urban scholarship and advocates gender sensitive heritage planning. This empirical study is also limited by its focus on four monuments in Delhi, the use of purposive and convenience sampling with a small qualitative sample, and its exclusive focus on young women, which restricts wider gender comparison and limits the generalisability of the findings.

Keywords: gendered public spaces, women's safety and public spaces, monuments and gendered experiences, gendered access and public spaces, women experience and public space.

Making space: The everyday learning spaces of Afghan youth as transformative

9. Place, Space and Mobilities in Young People's Everyday Life

Mehdia Hassan

Abstract text: As social actors and young architects within their everyday spaces, Afghan youth are actively making and remaking relationships to their spaces and shaping their own belongings (Corsaro, 2014; Lefebvre, 1974). Therefore, Afghan youth in the diaspora are not “passive” refugees and immigrants reduced to their experiences of trauma and suffering (Sharif, 2025). With the sociological concept of habitus, as an “open system of dispositions” that is evolving through ongoing socialization contexts, I emphasize the importance of taking a relational approach in youth studies, between youth transitions and youth cultures (Threadgold & Nilan, 2015; Bourdieu, 2005). From my research with 21 Afghan youth participants who participated in creating collage artworks, focus group discussions, and individual interviews, I explore the significance of space and materiality in shaping their evolving habitus and how they are learning in the urban city of Toronto; this is especially relevant since Toronto is home to Canada's largest Afghan diasporic community (Government of Canada, 2023). My research depicts how Afghan youth are not only taking space, but also actively “making space” across their Toronto neighbourhoods, through their linguistic practices, building virtual communities, and interdependent relationships to their natural environments (Busch, 2012; Lefebvre, 1974; Harvey, 2003). By considering spatiality as a critical dimension of youth studies, I challenge disciplinary assumptions that youth is fundamentally about temporality (Lesko, 2001; Farrugia & Wood, 2017). Since Afghan youth's learning practices are interconnected with their diverse social geographies, my research emphasizes the need to deeply explore these transformative spatial relationships.

10. Youth, Transitions and Social Justice- researching spaces of social action

Professional Youth Work & Social Justice: A Dialogue with UNCRC & SDGs

10. Youth, Transitions and Social Justice- researching spaces of social action

Tim Corney

Trudi Cooper, Harry Shier, Hilary Tierney, Jamie Gorman

Abstract text: Professional youth work often makes claims to uphold social justice, but in the contemporary political landscape, social justice is contested and less likely to be automatically accepted as a laudable goal without further justification. In response, some youth workers have tied their work to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Corney et al 2022), and/or to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were proposed under the UN Agenda 2030 to provide legitimacy for social justice-oriented work. This paper analyses the ideological foundations of these UN instruments and compares how they have been used (in both Australia and Ireland) to support and validate youth work purposes and values. This presentation is conceptual, exploring the links between professional youth work and social justice as expressed in the UNCRC and the SDGs.

Youth and conservation in the Greater Kruger National Park landscape

10. Youth, Transitions and Social Justice- researching spaces of social action

Samantha Sithole

Abstract text: Youth are critical stakeholders in addressing environmental challenges, particularly in biodiversity conservation. In South Africa, however, high levels of unemployment continue to shape the experiences of young people, especially in rural areas. The Kruger National Park (KNP) provides an important context for understanding how conservation work intersects with youth engagement and employment.

This research explores the perspectives of unemployed youth in Belfast, Mpumalanga, alongside those working as environmental monitors in surrounding communities. It examines how youth classifications influence identities related to labour, employment, and unemployment within the conservation sector.

We introduce the concept of ‘liminal youth’ to describe individuals who experience a prolonged transition into adulthood. These young people are constrained by unemployment, underemployment, limited opportunities, and insufficient skills development, which restrict their ability to achieve meaningful participation in the conservation economy around KNP. As a result, they remain in a state of social and economic uncertainty, with limited power to establish themselves within the labour market.

Data was collected through in-depth and semi-structured interviews conducted between November 2020 and January 2023, focusing on individuals aged 20–35. These findings align with Youth Studies literature on transitions and anthropological theories of liminality.

The study finds that both unemployed youth and those engaged in the UNEP GEF-6 Environmental Monitors Programme experience prolonged liminality, shaped by persistent underemployment, limited job opportunities, and broader structural challenges within the conservation and local socio-economic context.