

SUMMARIES

Sven Mørch: Youth research. Its perspectives and possibilities

Youth is both a social and an individual construction and as such an objective and subjective possibility. Therefore youth research has become a traffic centre of different theories and methods inspired from sociology and psychology.

Being a social and individual construction youth at the same time is in an ongoing change. Today youth is maybe prolonged or maybe disappearing in a world of late modern individualisation. Therefore the basic perspective of youth as 'transition' between childhood and adulthood has become criticized in youth research.

In this paper the different perspectives and possibilities of youth research are outlined and the methodological challenges of youth research described. Especially the relations between a sociological and psychological youth research are discussed.

To overcome the contradictions between a sociological and psychological position social psychology seems an obvious candidate for bridging between a social and a psychological youth research. Social psychology, however, is also divided between a psychological and sociological approach. Therefore it has become necessary to find other solutions for understanding the relation between the objective and subjective aspects of youth development. In the article an activity theoretical social psychology is outlined and it is shown how this theoretical perspective opens new understandings of central youth phenomenon.

Arne Poulsen: Adolescence in developmental psychology

After a presentation and evaluation of international empirical research on adolescent egocentrism, risk behavior, brain development, storm and stress, cognitive development, and identity, it is concluded that adolescent egocentrism is not a coherent phenomenon and it depends at least as much on the situation and the person as on age. Risk behavior is more characteristic of 20-25 year olds than teenagers. Skills involving self reflection and social understanding improve gradually from childhood till sometime during the twenties and there is no adolescent period that is marked by particular social immaturity. Negative mood fluctuations appear, but they are caused by individual psycho-social conditions, rather than hormones. The theory about a stage of formal operations must be abandoned. Instead, cognitive development during adolescence and emerging adulthood consists of thinking becoming increasingly guided by meta-cognition and domain-specific strategies. Identity-exploration correlates negatively, commitment positively, with adjustment, and it can be argued that the moratorium is a cultural rather than a developmental phenomenon.

Torben Bechmann Jensen: Youth, Language and the Question of Conceptualisation

Literature as such is fuelled by words and language. But language and particularly concepts and conceptions are also the main content of scientific research. One of the most important endeavours in research is to develop concepts and to strive for accuracy and precision within these.

This article focuses on three different foci. Firstly it is sought to clarify and define the concept of Youth from an empirical and pragmatic everyday perspective. Secondly the ambition is to illuminate how the language spoken in a Danish context continuously develops and change. Last but not least the concept of Youth as well as the ever changing use of language is discussed regarding the existing and coming Youth Research taking on a qualitative methodology.

In short the focus of the article concerns Youth, language and research from the assumption, that all three elements are continuously changing and that Youth Research both have to be understood and given perspective, taking into account, that youth, as a societal phenomenon and a social construction is verbalised in certain discursive ways while young and other people at the same time changes their verbal aptitude and verbal expressions.

Charlotte Jonasson, Jacob Klitmøller og Lisbeth Grønberg: Situated perspectives on youth, educational policies and drop-out within vocational education

Participation in, and completion of, education are central aspects of society's expectations towards its youth. A substantial part of a youth cohort is trained in vocational institutions. These institutions experience a lack of prestige and a large number of drop-outs. Research concerning vocational education in general and drop-out in particular has been sparse in contrast to a growing political interest in the area. This paper argues that the very concepts of 'youth', 'drop-out' and 'educational policies' are co-constituted and create certain conceptions of what vocational education practice is, and what characterizes a 'drop-out' student from such an education. The paper shows the necessity of viewing 'drop-out' in a situated perspective in which students' participation in concrete social practice is basic to the understanding of education and 'drop-out'. The paper suggests, drawing on concrete empirical questions, a possible framing of a situated analysis of drop-out within vocational education.

Liselotte Ingholt, Betina Bang Sørensen, Tine Curtis & Vibeke Asmussen Frank: Young students' perspectives on communities and vocational education within technical college

The article is based on 22 qualitative interviews with young Danish students who are either still in or have left vocational education. The article deals with their perspectives on being part of various communities within technical college.

The theoretical approach is rooted in the theory of social practice and in critical psychology. Key concepts include community of practice, institutional trajectory of participation, and personal trajectory of participation.

The interviews with the students show that they expect to develop new friendships when they start their vocational education. However, the institutional trajectory of participation within the vocational education mainly focuses on the development of the students' professional skills, not their social relations. Thus, the vocational education within technical college does not develop a basis for the students' interaction after school time. For this reason the students' life after school class is over becomes separated from their life within the school. Thus, the expectations of new friendships are not fulfilled. This is in contrast to Danish high schools where school life and social activities after school are closely interlinked. Furthermore, the article shows how different students are more or less committed to the development of their participation.

On this background we argue that the institutional trajectory of participation within vocational education should be organized in order to improve the students' social relations. This may reduce the risk of drop out from education.

Lene Larsen: The absence and presence of work in contemporary youth

The research in youth typically differentiates between young people and youth as a psychological, social and cultural phenomenon. The starting point in this article is a theoretical concept of work to understand the orientations of young people. The choice of education and work is an important part of the process being an adult in contemporary society, and all societal work – including labour – constitutes the adult life which young people are going to be a part of. The historical and bigger distance between childhood and working and adult life has the consequence that young peoples admission to work is postponed. Therefore work and labour are more absent to children and young people than for generations ago. A theoretical concept of work opens an understanding of work as fundamental for the qualification and socialization process. This opens an understanding of young people's subjectivity of work and its importance and influence during their choices of education and work. During two examples the analysis shows, how work and labour can be concrete and abstract both absent and present as horizon of the future by different young people.

Ditte A. Winther-Lindqvist: On the verge of youth

In the paper a cultural-historical activity theory approach on social identity formation and negotiation is suggested for the transition between primary and secondary school. The central values circulating in the classroom hierarchy and constituting it, are ideas of precociousness practised through friendships and particular activities and anti-activities as markers of youth. These dominant activities and particular persons affiliation with them are communicated via different strategies of (in)direct self-presentation. In order to account for the developmental movements across schools and classrooms a general transitional model is suggested: It includes Preparation (positioning and negotiating closure) and Actualisation (self-presentation and (dis)integration). The model is exemplified with a group of 12-13 year old girls as case. Whether or not the girls succeed with creating and maintaining popular social identities rely on their success with convincing others of their authenticity as belonging to a particular version of practising youth.

Clara Møhl Schack: Identity Construction on Facebook – A Qualitative Study of Young People's Use of the Social Online Network Facebook

The main focus of this paper is self-presentation of the young individual on Facebook and how this process influences construction of identity. Goffman's classic theory gets a renewed meaning with the investigation of identity construction on Facebook and in connection with this it is possible to talk about a *personal Facebook front*, which refers to the behavior of the individual on Facebook that differs from offline behavior because of the fact that the individual has a higher degree of control on the signals being exposed on Facebook. The individual's higher degree of control over how he/she appears on Facebook gives the opportunity to create certain social desirable identities. This kind of identity is in Markus & Nurius theory (1989) called *hoped-for-possible-selves*. The es-

tablishment of hoped-for-possible-selves can be illustrated by a feedback system showing a reflexive dynamic between self-concept and the identity performed on Facebook. The concept of hoped-for-possible selves is being examined in a minor qualitative study that investigates the character and qualities of these hoped-for-possible-selves.

Furthermore Facebook can be understood as a context within the young individual gets an opportunity to develop and play with certain personality traits. This process expands the actions and possibilities of the individual in order to develop a wanted identity and in this perspective an empowerment of personality can be claimed.

Louise Margrethe Pedersen: Loneliness - When Social Relations Become Antisocial

Youth loneliness can be produced as a result of the structural positioning of youth in a society of commodities. Work related social interaction in a society of commodities is dominated by intersubjective alienation, which in fact originates from a commodification of social relations. The grading system in public schools structurally reproduces these commodification processes and thereby contributes to the practical degradation of the quality of the social relations between teacher-student and student-student. The practical commodification of social relations can significantly diminish the student's possibilities of attaining intimacy. Such a conflict of praxis could be internalized over time and hence become a psychological conflict; a conflict of motive. Intimacy would consequently become even more difficult to attain, and loneliness would wrongfully appear as a result of intrapsychological dysfunction.

Mathias Lasgaard: Lonely in a social world

The period of adolescence is often described as social, dynamic and with a wealth of opportunities. Nevertheless, some adolescents feel left out and experience the social contact as empty or meaningless. On the basis of a national survey ($N = 1009$), this paper investigates loneliness among high school students from 46 different schools. Loneliness was found to be associated with symptoms of depression, anxiety, deliberate self-harm, and considerations about dropping out of school. Moreover, social loneliness, family-related loneliness and romantic loneliness were associated with different psychosocial factors, maladjustment and displaying risk behaviors. In conclusion, the study indicates that loneliness in adolescence is a serious indication of failure to thrive. Also, it emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between experiences of loneliness in different social domains.

Christian Graugaard: The art of growing. Notes on the sexual lives of adolescent Danes

In the light of existing research literature, the article presents an overview of the sexual lives of Danish adolescents. Young people's living conditions are outlined and the societal setting surrounding their sexual relations and identity forming is discussed. It is demonstrated that the majority of sexually active youngsters are satisfied with their current sex life and that most teenagers are handling the challenges of Late-Modernity with marked pragmatic skills. At the same time, however, various types of risk behavior are frequent among teenagers, and a minority of adolescents seemingly finds it difficult to accommodate the demands for reflexivity, changeability, and navigation in the complex

social landscapes of their everyday life. Consequently, the author argues that systematic research and empowerment of young people should be prioritized in the years to come.

Dorthe Meinike, Grete Teilmann og Kirsten A. Boisen: Cronically ill – but above all young

Approximately 10 % of young people suffer from a chronic condition, and this group has challenges that are frequently overlooked by society and by the health care system. Chronic conditions can disturb the psychological and social development and the attachment to parents can be affected negatively. Nevertheless, the majority of young people overcome the challenges given by the disease and many gain special experiences and resources compared to healthy adolescents. A common understanding of adolescents suffering from chronic conditions (without distinction between different diagnoses) will help us to increase our knowledge and experiences as health care professionals.

Laila Wattar: Life and possibilities of young people - action research in Paamiut

Paamiut Youth Voice (PYV) is a Participatory Action Research project carried out with young people in Paamiut, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland). Youth visions for enhanced well-being and participation in the local community are investigated. The research project is part of the community project Paamiut Asasara, and was developed and initiated on community requests concerning the need for more knowledge of how youth can become more integrated in the community, how to enhance youth well-being and reduce social exclusion through a participatory framework. The youths' perceptions and experiences of well-being and participation were explored through a focus on individual and community strengths and resources, and their thoughts and dreams on how well-being can be enhanced and further promoted were investigated. Sixty-one youths aged 12-24 participated in the research project, which included focus group and individual interviews, completing an open-ended questionnaire, questionnaire organizing a town meeting where preliminary results were presented, and participating in the methodological process of the research project, design and analysis of data. Findings point towards social cohesion, social support and communication, and access to leisure and sports activities as significant conditions for the experience and enhancement of well-being. Furthermore, counseling and improved work and education are noted by the youth to be important conditions for increasing their well-being. Lack of participation was explained by the youth through inexperience, lack of support, skills and self-confidence, and a lack of visible leadership and initiative among the adults in Paamiut.

Mia Glendøs og Peter Berliner: "To get rid of a heavy load....." Structural Violence and Youth in Paamiut in Kalaallit Nunaat

The high level of direct violence in Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) is often seen as a symptom of alcohol abuse and thus as affective, spontaneous events. Through empirical quantitative data and phenomenological analysis of qualitative interviews, it is found that episodic violence is seen as symptoms of structural violence. This structural violence is seen as a context that promotes feelings of powerlessness,

social isolation, conflict avoidance and suppression of emotions – until they explode in incidents of violence. It is shown how this understanding both legitimate violence and opens for an interventions aiming at changing the structural violence. Finally it is shown that the structural violence is harmful to young people as it promotes violence – but that a community-based intervention can counteract this in an effective manner.

Kristine Jensen de López & Giselle Christoffersen: Culture, Gender, Parents and Danish Adolescents' Subjective Age

The teen years are often characterized by the teen's participation in adult-like behaviour and risk behaviour. The phenomenon of subjective experience of age can be viewed as an expression of the teen's psychological maturity and well-being. In the present cross-sectional study of 321 Danish teens aged 12-21 years we investigate a range of different types of risk behaviour associated with the teen's chronological and subjective experience of age. Similar to the results from Canadian studies, chronological and subjective experience of age correlated positively and there was a tendency towards the teen years being characterised by several transition periods where the teen either felt younger or older than her age. Compared to Canadian studies we find cultural differences regarding whether risk behaviour is associated with subjective experience of age. Parents' involvement in the teen's everyday course of life correlated negatively with the teen's subjective experience of age. The possibility that subjective experience of age can be viewed as a component of the teen's psychological well-being and self-esteem and whether subjective experience of age could be seen as a marker of whether the teen is at risk of engaging in risk behaviour or oppositely as an expression of the teen's well-being within a specific type of family dynamics is discussed.

Ole Michael Spaten, Julie Rahbek, Nadia Christiansen, Linda Engholm Bøytler Rahbek, Sara Dahl-Jensen og Maj-Brit Lyngsaa Ovesen: Self-conception, gender and parental support

How do boys and girls perceive themselves, and how does the parenting style affect the self-perception? Even though the adolescents interact in a broad variety of social contexts that might cause confusion and frustration, studies show that Danish adolescents in general have a high self-perception. In this study 216 adolescents from 9.th grade and 3.g gymnasium participated and completed two international validated questionnaires "Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) and "Authoritative Parenting Measure" (APM). Our findings show that boys rate themselves higher than girls on the domains of scholastic competence, athletic competence, physical appearance and global self-worth, while the girls only consider themselves higher on the domain of behavioral conduct. This article discusses what might cause these gender differences. Furthermore there is found a difference in the way boys and girls are raised. A larger sample of the boys is raised with the permissive parenting style, characterized by an expanding independence compared to the girls. This article is addressing these issues and compares findings to earlier research on the area while discussing cross cultural differences.

Jonas Holst: Psyche and logos – to approaches to Aristotle's theory of the soul

The present paper offers a reinterpretation of one of the most famous definitions of the human being in the Western tradition: "Man is the living being in possession of reason". This quotation can be traced back to Aristotle, whose understanding of the soul is based, at least up to a certain point, on the government of reason over the more uncontrollable striving desire. It is also this understanding which almost all of the commentaries on his work has taken as their starting point. This "first" way into Aristotle's theory of the soul does, however, contain some problems which the paper will present with a view to opening up another approach to the soul in his work, according to which the soul rather than being hierarchical structured is composed of parallel, interacting forces. Drawing on the aristotelian notion of friendship, *philia*, this second approach will finally prove to be more in accordance with his own conception of being human: a being in possession of reason and an establisher of commonwealth.