INVITATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:
Theories and Concepts in Youth Studies

Newcastle Youth Studies Group
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Faculty of Education and Arts
University of Newcastle

Friday 24th July 2015
Crowne Plaza Newcastle

Professor Andy Bennett (Griffith University) Dr Julia Coffey (University of Newcastle)
Dr Amy Shields Dobson (University of Queensland) Dr David Farrugia (University of Newcastle)
Dr Alistair Fraser (University of Hong Kong) Professor Andy Furlong (University of Glasgow)
Associate Professor Anita Harris (Monash) Alex Jones (University of Newcastle)
Professor Peter Kelly (RMIT) Joel McGregor (University of Newcastle)
Professor Pam Nilan (University of Newcastle) Professor Greg Noble (University of Western Sydney)
Megan Sharp (University of Newcastle) Dr Jodie Taylor (SAE Creative Media Institute)
Dr Steven Threadgold (University of Newcastle) Dr Dan Woodman (University of Melbourne)
Professor Johanna Wyn (University of Melbourne)
The sociology of youth has established a strong program of research focusing on the structuring of young people’s biographical transitions and their cultural practices. While these bodies of work have strengthened and specialised youth studies producing valuable understanding of the opportunities and risks young people face, the dominance of these approaches may deter a broader range of conceptual perspectives and innovations. This symposium will discuss some of the theoretical implications associated with researching youth in an era of rapid social, cultural and economic change. It will provide the impetus to explore the conceptual orthodoxies and challenges which continue to dominate the sociology of youth, and examine the potentials and pitfalls associated with theoretical innovations in the discipline.
# Postgraduate Workshop Timetable

**Thursday July 23rd**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.00-3.00pm</td>
<td>Joel McGregor</td>
<td>Post-release becomings of youth who have participated in crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00-4.00pm</td>
<td>Megan Sharp</td>
<td>Queer Punx: An exploration of young, female identity construction and curation in male dominated music spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00-5.00pm</td>
<td>Alex Jones</td>
<td>Working through spaces of representation and non-representation in the construction of youth’s social and global imaginaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theories and Concepts in Youth Studies Symposium
Friday July 24th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30-9.00</td>
<td>Register and Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00-9.15</td>
<td>Welcome and Introduction - Pam Nilan: Theory and Concepts in Youth Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15 - 10.45</td>
<td>Panel 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andy Furlong: Beyond Precarity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andy Bennett: Subcultural Debates, Aging and Adulthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greg Noble: Multiple becomings: youth, assemblage and cultural pedagogies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.45 – 11.15</td>
<td>Morning tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15-11.45</td>
<td>Panel 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Julia Coffey: The Body and affect</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steven Threadgold: Class, affect, emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alistair Fraser: The Street as affective atmospheres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45 - 1.45</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.45 - 2.15</td>
<td>Panel 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anita Harris: Past Imperfect, Future Tense! Working the Grammar of Possibilities for Theorising Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jodie Taylor: Queer youth and the future of sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy Shields Dobson: Youth and social media: structures of digital intimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15 – 3:30</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-5.00</td>
<td>Panel 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Kelly: Foucault’s Apparatus, Materiality and the Doing of Youth Studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>David Farrugia: The Rural Youth Mobility Imperative</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dan Woodman: Time: Transitions, Cultural Practices and Generations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.00 – 5:30</td>
<td>Summing up and discussion about Edited Collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postgraduate Symposium

Joel McGregor

*Post-release becomings of youth who have participated in crime*

This presentation will detail the developing conceptual framework of ‘post-release becoming’ to be used within the PhD thesis: Post-release becomings of youth who have participated in crime. It will briefly describe the pragmatics of the research, such as undertaking qualitative interviews with both youth workers of post-release services and young people, aged between 18 and 25, who have been released from juvenile detention centres. This presentation will acknowledge the current literature of crime and the biographical movements of youth before conceptualising the framework of post-release becoming. It will explore transpersonal principles of action, or how a person’s experiences are mediated through the embodiment of affective potentials embedded within social processes that exceed the person. However, this presentation will also detail how a Bourdieusian lens is being used within the thesis in order to analyse the social class and capitals of the participants. As such, this presentation will examine the tensions which exist by using two different ontologies. Subsequently, this paper will show how the proposed thesis will provide an analysis of youth who are transitioning to life outside of the detention centre.

Joel is a Sociology PhD candidate in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at The University of Newcastle, Australia. His PhD explores post-release experiences of youth who have been detained. Joel’s research interests centre on youth and crime while his theoretical interests include non-representational theories with a particular emphasis on affect and emotion. Joel completed a Bachelor of Social Science majoring in Sociology/Anthropology, receiving an Honours Class One and Faculty Medal for his thesis entitled ‘If you didn’t give them the war face when things are hairy you were gone’: The Emotion and Performance of Prison Work’.

Megan Sharp

*Queer Punx: An exploration of young, female identity construction and curation in male dominated music spaces.*

As an exploration of the experiences of young women who exist within the intersection of queer and punk, this research unpacks strategies of resistance (Halberstam 2003) to marginalisation and the transformative capacity of creative self-making in traditionally male-dominated music spaces. The doctoral thesis builds on a pilot study completed in 2013 which focussed on female queers in a regional hardcore punk scene. In this smaller scale study, concepts of visibility, collective authorisation (Hammers 2008) and identity production were discussed through qualitative interviews with participants. Using contemporary literature in the paradigm of queer theory (Jagose 1995), performativity (Butler 1990) and doing gender (West and Zimmerman 1987) an intersection between queer identity construction, youth culture and music participation became evident. The doctoral thesis, which extends to translocal sites in Melbourne, Australia and London and Brighton in the United Kingdom, seeks to better understand the experiences of young, queer identifying women who participate in punk subculture activity such as music, Do It Yourself (DIY) and Do It Together (DIT) expression.
and performance. These concepts included mapping and navigation of the queer self, subverting gender display, authorisation and space-making within male dominated spaces arenas. Respondents of the honours project discussed queerness through various streams of punk culture such as music, zines and DIY publishing, community workshops, physical aesthetic, emotion, affect and embodiment. The methodology for the doctoral thesis remains qualitative and incorporates participant observation as well as a digital ethnography, all of which are considered from a reflexive insider/outsider perspective.

Megan Sharp is a second year PhD student in Sociology in the School of Humanities and Social Science at The University of Newcastle. Currently undertaking fieldwork in Newcastle, Melbourne and the UK, Megan uses the intersection between lived experience and theoretical paradigms to explore the creation of female, queer identities within subcultures.

Alex Jones

Working through spaces of representation and non-representation in the construction of youth’s social and global imaginaries

Lefebvre (1991) has asserted that representations of subjectivity (conceived) and the embodied practices of individuals (perceived and lived) are mutually constitutive in the construction of understandings of place, ‘Other’ and ‘self’. Given that Lefebvre’s, along with a number of non-representational theorists’ understanding of social life (e.g. Anderson & Harrison, 2010; Thrift, 2008), asserts that there is more than a conceived and textual subject in social research or what Thrift (2008) terms as ‘representational’, how can we produce knowledge about the dialectic relations between spaces of representation and non-representation in the analysis stages of research? This paper has been written to document the ways the researcher has worked through and approached this question both theoretically and methodologically in their own doctoral research that aims to produce knowledge about how youth construct their own social and global imaginaries in relation to global processes in their everyday lives at school.

Alexandra Jones is a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of Newcastle. She is currently establishing her research within the fields of Cosmopolitanism and Global Citizenship in the secondary school context. Her introduction to this area was through the completion of a Masters in Educational Studies where her research examined the fabrication and reconstitution of entrepreneurial and innovative student subjectivities in both policy and strategy documents in the Danish university setting. Her most recent research is concerned with how youth understand their social lives in relation to particular ‘globalised’ entities and how these entities enter into their place-making projects. The research contributes to understanding young people’s place-making practices, and how in such place-making practices particular global practices and imaginaries are made possible that shape their understandings of ‘self’, ‘Other’ and world.
Theories and Concepts in Youth Studies
Symposium
Panel 1

Johanna Wyn

The necessity of rethinking ‘youth’

This talk addresses the ongoing project of rethinking youth. Wyn provides a brief retrospective on the field of youth studies in the late 1990s when ontology of ‘the youth question’ was being raised by Cohen (Rethinking the Youth Question, 1999), Wyn & White (Rethinking Youth, 1997) and Furlong and Cartmel (Young People and Social Change, 1997). These and many other contributions raised questions about what ‘youth’ means in the context of social change that in retrospect we can see as a period in which large-scale precarious work and increased unemployment rates for the young emerged, at the same time as increasing expectations of participation in post-secondary education. Importantly, these discussions also occurred against a backdrop of increasingly rigid youth welfare provision that generated categories such as NEET. In 2015, the question of the ontology of youth remains as central as it was then for a robust and relevant youth studies that makes a contribution to policy development. Wyn argues that in addition to the now traditional conceptual tools that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s (such as ‘youth transition’), the project of rethinking youth, with its critical focus, requires frameworks that make the nature, quality and processes of youth as a relationship to drive research. Recognising that the use of relational frameworks within youth studies has a long history (as is outlined by Cohen, 1999), Wyn’s talk provides a perspective on the possibilities and challenges of using the concept of belonging to understand young people’s experiences and transitions. It argues that while the concept of transitions has generated significant research on young people’s lives, the tendency for this approach to focus almost exclusively on education and employment (and the trajectories between these spheres). The concept of belonging, it is suggested, opens up the use of a relational register to enable a more holistic approach to research on young people’s lives. Although the concept of belonging is implicit in many of the traditional theories that underpin youth sociology (for example, Bourdieu), the concept has been more widely used in associated fields (such as the study of citizenship and identity). Wyn argues that as young people are subject to transition regimes that increasingly involve mobility, it is timely to turn to concepts that enable us to understand the subjective and structural aspects of young people’s place.

Professor Wyn is an educational sociologist, Director of the Youth Research Centre at The University of Melbourne and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences Australia. She has held the Jantina Tammes Chair at the University of Groningen, the Adam Smith Fellowship at The University of Glasgow and visiting Professorships at the University of British Columbia and Toronto University. She leads longitudinal research programs that are widely recognised as influential and important resources. Professor Wyn has made a sustained and highly esteemed contribution to the research community in the field of youth studies, influencing policy and research agendas both nationally and internationally. She has advocated for and in some cases pioneered participatory approaches to undertaking research with young people. Her work
focuses on the processes and relationships that enable young people to have positive transitions and to be productively engaged in their communities. Through a substantial body of work, she addresses young people’s learning and wellbeing in formal and informal educational settings, their transitions through education and beyond and the kinds of knowledge and skills young people need to be well in the 21st Century. Recent books include the Handbook of Childhood and Youth; Youth and Generation: Change and Inequality in the Lives of Young People; and Young People Making it Work: Continuity and Change in Rural Places.

Andy Furlong

Beyond precarity?

One of the core themes developed in Young People and Social Change involved a (partial) critique of the individualization thesis. We argued that in their enthusiasm to outline a theory of changed lives within a new modernity, sociologists like Beck and Giddens had tended to exaggerate change and understate significant sources of continuity. In particular, we identified an increased tendency to over-play the role of agency and understate the continued significance of structures, especially social class. While the work of Beck and Giddens continues to inspire many youth sociologists, one of the latest theoretical fads takes us in a different direction. Highlighting a significant deterioration in the labour market conditions faced by young people, Guy Standing argues that contemporary conditions have led to the establishment of a new class: the precariat. While Standing’s work has started to make a structural analysis of the social condition of youth fashionable again, in this paper I argue that his analysis over-simplifies contemporary contexts and misrepresents the dynamics of social class in a way that privileges middle class insecurities while helping to obscure the suffering of marginalized groups.

Andy Furlong is Dean of Research and Professor of Social Inclusion and Education in the School of Education at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. He also is Conjoint Professor at the University of Newcastle, NSW. Andy is an educational sociologist with a longstanding specialism in the study of youth and a strong interest in the reproduction of inequalities and in processes of social change. Since 1998 Andy has been editor-in-chief of the Journal of Youth Studies, one of the leading journals in the field. He has produced several books on youth, notably Young People and Social Change (with Fred Cartmel, 1997, 2nd edition 2007, Open University Press), Higher Education and Social Justice (with Fred Cartmel, 2009, Open University Press) and the Handbook of Youth and Young Adulthood (Routledge): his work has been translated into twelve languages. Andy has held visiting positions at Deakin University, the University of Melbourne and Monash University, and has held an Invitation Fellowship from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. He is an Academician of the UK Academy of Social Sciences and has recently been awarded a Doctor of Letters by the University of Leicester.

Andy Bennett

Subcultural Debates, Aging and Adulthood

During the early late 1990s and early 2000s, the concept subculture was challenged as a dominant conceptual framework in youth cultural research by a new body of work that came to be collectively known as ‘post-subcultural theory’. This comprised a series of counter-concepts – post-subculture (Muggleton, 2000), neo-tribe (Bennett, 1999; Malbon, 1999), lifestyle (2000),
and scene (Stahl, 2004; Peterson and Bennett, 2004). Although loosely configured (Bennett, 2011), at the core each of these concepts and their application was a concern to reposition the individual as a reflexive agent inextricably bound up in the co-production of the everyday meanings of specific assemblages of music, style and associated objects, images and texts. Despite gaining considerable traction as an alternative approach to subcultural theory, post-subculture has not been without its critics. Among the various points of contention raised is a shared concern that post-subculture is too vague and diffuse to offer a meaningful critical dialogue with subculture (Blackman, 2005; Hesmondhalgh, 2005). Similarly, others have suggested that post-subculture’s apparent lack of concern with issues of class obfuscates continuing issues of economic inequality among youth. This paper considers and evaluates the ongoing debates in the (post)subcultural context in relation to the emerging literature on youth, ageing and adulthood (see, for example, Bennett, 2013; Bennett and Hodkinson, 2012). The paper will argue that neither subculture nor post-subculture are adequate to the task of conceptualising the ageing youth phenomenon.

Andy Bennett is Professor of Cultural Sociology and Director of the Griffith Centre for Cultural Research at Griffith University in Queensland, Australia. He has authored and edited numerous books including Music, Style and Aging, Popular Music and Youth Culture, Cultures of Popular Music, Remembering Woodstock, and Music Scenes (with Richard A. Peterson). He is a Faculty Fellow of the Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University.

Greg Noble
Multiple becomings: youth, assemblage and cultural pedagogies

Despite frequent entreaties that scholarship engage more closely with the complexity of the lives of young people, youth studies often too quickly move to a reduction of that complexity to singular emphases on identity, resistance or subcultural style. I want to return a messiness to thinking about the lived experiences of young people, particularly because it allows us to develop a more nuanced approach in relation to questions around the contingent nature of youth cultural formations and the temporal and spatial dynamics of youth interaction. A key provocation will be to think of these formations as assemblages rather than defined categories, and then to think of the social interactions that operate around such assemblages as having a pedagogical character, such that youth becomes not simply a period of expression or transition, but a dynamic process which entails the accumulation and deployment of provisional resources in a culturally complex world.

Greg Noble is Professor in the Institute for Culture and Society at the University of Western Sydney. Greg has written extensively on the intersection of youth, ethnicity, gender and class in Australia, with particular focus on the experiences of young people of Lebanese background. He has also researched and published widely in multiculturalism, migration and education. His publications include Cultural Pedagogies and Human Conduct (Routledge, 2013), Disposed to Learn (Bloomsbury, 2013), On Being Lebanese in Australia (LAU, 2010), Lines in the Sand (Institute of Criminology Press, 2009), Bin Laden in the Suburbs (Institute of Criminology Press, 2004), Kebabs, Kids, Cops and Crime (Pluto Press, 2000) and Cultures of Schooling (Falmer, 1990).
Panel 2

Julia Coffey  
*The body and affect*

This paper develops an understanding of the body through the concept of affect and suggests some practical implications for how these themes can contribute to youth sociology. The concept of affect has numerous theoretical homes, and is drawn upon in different ways in a range of different disciplines. The theorisation of affect I draw on here stems from a particular onto-epistemology of the body developed by Deleuze, Guattari and Spinoza, and subsequently expanded upon by feminist and sociological scholars including Coleman, Hickey-Moody and Fox. The concept of affect as it is used from this perspective understands affect as embodied sensations which are crucial to the production of bodies and selves. In contrast to psychological uses of the term which focus on affect as an individual emotional properties, Deleuze’s theorisation of affect incorporates a focus beyond humans or individual subjects, and holds that bodies are produced by affects, rather than in possession of affects. Hence, affects are important because of their productive capacities; they motivate ‘becomings’, or what happens next in an encounter. As Adkins (2013) suggests, attention to affect and the sensate dimensions of experience is important in developing more fulsome sociological accounts of how individuals and the social interact. I consider the implications of this in relation to youth studies, focusing in particular on themes of gender and the body.

Julia Coffey is a lecturer in sociology in the school of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Newcastle. Her research is in the field of health sociology, with a focus on youth, the body, and gender. Julia has also worked on areas related to health and youth in education and development. Julia has published on young people’s body work practices and identity, health and the body, and pedagogy. Her current writing projects are a research monograph for Routledge in the Youth Studies series titled ‘Body Work: Gender, Health and Embodiment’ (forthcoming February 2016) and an edited collection (with co-editors Shelley Budgeon and Helen Cahill) with Springer titled ‘Learning Bodies: The Body in Youth and Childhood Studies’ (forthcoming 2016).

Steven Threadgold  
*Class, affect, emotions*

Ghassan Hage’s latest book has made a clear and convincing argument for the vitality of using different ontological perspectives to analyse the same research objects. Influenced by Hage’s call for less theoretical oppositions and more theoretical sympary, this paper argues that a combination (but not a synthesis) of affect theories and Bourdieu’s concepts can do much to illuminate young people’s emotional experiences of inequality. The notion of habitus can assume too much affective order. On the other hand a Bourdieusian perspective, as Wetherell has proposed, can explore ‘who is affectively privileged, who is able to ‘bank’ large amounts of ‘emotional capital’, and who ‘naturally’ seems to produce valued affective styles, avoiding abjection and contempt’ (Wetherell 2012: 105). This paper will propose two possible ways to start to do this work: fields have their own affective atmospheres; and forms of capital have affective properties.
Steven Threadgold is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Newcastle, Australia. His most recent research projects are on young people’s construction of ‘DIY Careers’ in networked music scenes and on the ways figures such as ‘hipster’ and ‘bogan’ are invoked in media to perform distinction whilst eschewing the very notion of class. His current writing projects are a research monograph for Routledge called Youth, Class and Culture; a co-edited collection for Routledge called Bourdieusian Prospects; and a co-written introduction to sociology primer for Cambridge University Press.

Alistair Fraser

The Street as Affective Atmosphere

The concept of ‘the street’ has a long and distinguished pedigree in studies of youth, crime and deviance. A site of both danger and protection, crime and culture, art and politics, ‘the street’ represents some of the most vital components of the criminological imagination, and has attracted a distinguished alumnus of scholars: from Benjamin to Jacobs, Whyte to Bourgois. Of late, the ‘thinking tools’ of Pierre Bourdieu have been put to work in making sense of street crime and street culture in diverse geographical contexts, through concepts such as ‘street capital’, ‘street habitus’, and ‘street field’. In this paper, I seek to expand these notions through engagement with the concept of ‘affective atmosphere’. Exploring the connections between transgressive street-based activities — be they criminal, artistic, or political — and the affective dimensions of public space, I seek to disrupt binaries such as ‘street’ and ‘non street’ youth, opening up questions of space, power and resistance in the urban environment.

Alistair Fraser is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, University of Hong Kong, where he is also Assistant Director of the Masters in Criminology programme. His interests lie at the intersections of criminology, sociology and youth studies, with a particular focus on youth gangs in a global and comparative context. His first book ‘Urban Legends: Gang Identity in the Post-Industrial City’ was published by Oxford University Press in 2015.
Anita Harris

*Past Imperfect, Future Tense! Working the Grammar of Possibilities for Theorising Girls*

In 2004 I published a book called Future Girl, which outlined how young women have become the poster girls for success in neoliberal times. I argued that girls were produced and regulated through the prism of ‘can do/at risk’ in the domains of education, employment, civics, welfare and the culture industries. I suggested that class and racial stratification were simultaneously repudiated and entrenched through the constitution of girls as the newly unencumbered subjects of late modernity. Ten years later, I am undertaking a second edition of the book in the context of:

- a significant expansion and legitimation of Girls’ Studies as a field in its own right;
- a globalised, mediated, post-girlpower, postfeminist cultural and political landscape (Dobson and Harris, 2015);
- evolving (and sometimes regressing) theorisations of the intersections between cultural forms/economic structures as they shape young women’s lives;
- one-step-forward-two-steps-back developments in conceptualisations of youth agency and (young feminist) resistance;
- an impending publisher’s deadline.

In this presentation I reflect on changing modes of theorising about the girl condition over the last decade or so and outline the key areas of focus for my revised edition.

Anita Harris is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Monash University and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow. She researches in youth/girls’ studies, with a focus on citizenship and youth cultures. She is the author/editor of several books including Young People and Everyday Multiculturalism (Routledge 2013); Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism (ed) (Routledge 2008); Young Femininities: Girlhood, Power and Social Change (with Sinikka Aapola and Marnina Gonick) (Palgrave, 2005); as well as All About the Girl (ed) (Routledge 2004), and Future Girl (Routledge 2004): both of which are currently undergoing revision for re-issue as second editions. She and Amy Dobson have recently co-edited a special issue of Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies (29/2) on ‘Post-Girlpower: Globalised Mediated Femininities’.

Jodie Taylor

*Queer youth and the future of sex*

On the eve of an historic referendum which saw the Republic of Ireland vote to legalise same-sex marriage, Former President Mary McAleese made a plea to voters: “We, the majority, have to make it happen for them and for all the unborn gay children who are relying on us to end the branding, end the isolation, end the inequality, literally once and for all,” (cited in Minihan, 2015). And According to McAleese, institutionalising gay marriage would enable such endings. More good news ensued on Friday 26th June 2015, in what many are calling ‘a victory for love’. After an historic Supreme Court ruling declared attempts by conservative states to ban same-sex marriage unconstitutional, gays and lesbians across all 50 of the United States have finally been
afforded the right to marry. Welcoming the news via social media, President Obama reportedly tweeted, “Today is a big step in our march toward equality. Gay and lesbian couples now have the right to marry, just like anyone else. #LoveWins” (Chapple, 2015). The love that claimed victory that day represents assimilation and the widening of the privatised, neoliberal state and may have ultimately cost citizens of these countries, and their unborn gay children the much greater right and pleasures of sexual freedom. Of the many problems I see with this rhetoric, touting gay marriage as a solution to the victimisation of queer youth is the most noxious. Since marriage did little to end the branding, isolation and inequality of women, it is difficult to see how it could offer queer youth a better deal. In this paper I will consider the effect of current gay marriage debates on more radical discourses of queer sex. If marriage operates as a socially sanctioned goal, then it is possible that queer sexual instruction could potentially become available to queer youth through official channels of school-based sex education. But this would necessarily reframe ‘queer sex’ as monogamous gay or lesbian love. Youthful sexual desires outside of these limited modalities of a queer relationship would likely remain abject, or subjugated to a greater degree than it already is. I argue that by privileging love over sex, we risk descending further into denial of the sexual desires and actions that organise queers as a minoritarian subjects. Moreover, privileging social discourses of gay love over queer sex is likely to have the greatest effect on relationships where the ‘certainties of love’ is less a goal than the pleasures of self-discovery and youthful sexual play.

Dr Jodie Taylor is a Senior Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies at SAE Creative Media Institute, Brisbane, where she is also the National Coordinator of the Cultural Perspectives Program. She is the author of Playing it Queer: Popular Music, Identity and Queer World-making (Peter Lang Press 2012) and co-author of Redefining Mainstream Popular Music (Routledge 2013) and The Festivalization of Culture (Ashgate 2014), which she completed while undertaking her postdoctoral research fellowship at the Griffith Centre for Cultural Research, Griffith University. Additionally, she has published numerous scholarly journal articles and book chapters on popular music, queer scenes, youth sexualities, subcultural style and ethnographic methods.

Amy Shields Dobson
Youth and social media: structures of digital intimacy

Youth studies concerned with social media and identity must find ways to engage more meaningfully with understandings of the structures that can be seen as co-constitutive of social media and of youth identities and subjectivities. It has become apparent that the corporate ownership and control of social media is not insignificant but centrally determines and structures the terms of use, visual design and layout, and visible content (Andrejevic, 2011; Dahlberg, 2015; Murdoch, 2015; Fuchs, 2015). These are not ‘platforms’ in the sense of being flat surfaces upon which pre-existing selves act, interact, share, and create (Dobson, 2015, p. 179). Rather, social media platforms shape and facilitate youth identities in meaningful ways, as some scholars have suggested (Robards, 2014; Sauter, 2014; Dobson, 2015a; Kanai, 2015a). Youth studies, and culture and media studies, has been hesitant to claim that technological devices and social media platforms and their designers and owners are deeply implicated in subjectification processes for fear of opening the door to the beast of ‘technological determinism’. (Scholars interested in how technology shapes sex and gender is one notable exception here—e.g., van Doorn, 2011; Dobson, 2015; Ringrose and Harvey, 2015; Salter, 2015). But this means that a lot of our work does not take into account, and has limited frameworks for taking into account, the economic and design structures that need to be understood as co-constitutive of ‘belonging’,
identity expression, subjectification, and relationships in digitally mediated youth cultures. My interest here is not in providing a post-humanist and/or affective understanding of youth and technology (Ringrose and Harvey, 2015), but in being able to provide an account of youth social media use that can meaningfully engage with political and economic structures as they are implicated in and co-constitutive of subjectivities and relationships. To this end, I outline some concepts from media and cultural studies that I suggest help to theorise the structures that co-constitute youth belonging and identity production in contemporary media cultures: social media cultures as ‘demotic’ (Turner, 2010), ‘connective’ (van Dijck, 2013) and ‘algorithmic’ (Carah, 2014). These ideas help us understand what I will term practices of digital intimacy as labour. Socially-oriented studies of youth and media also centrally need to understand digital intimacy as capital for belonging, which is unequally distributed along axes of social difference. Significant digital divides have been mapped (Dalhberg, 2015; Robinson et al, 2015; Smith, Hewitt and Skirbris, 2014). Following Illouz’s (2007) theory of emotional capital, I conclude by explicating some of the more subtle ways in which public digital intimacy increasingly determines youth legibility and value.

Dr Amy Shields Dobson holds a University of Queensland Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies, where her work focuses on youth, gender politics, and social media. Amy’s recent projects include research into gender and cyber-safety education, sexting in schools, and female genital cosmetic surgery in Australia, including the role of social media practices. Her book ‘Postfeminist Digital Cultures’ will be published in 2015 by Palgrave.
Panel 4

Peter Kelly

*Foucault’s Apparatus, Materiality and the Doing of Youth Studies*

Over a number of years I have argued that in the doing of Youth Studies a number of key concerns, a number of key issues, a number of key approaches have worked to mark out (territorialise) an orthodoxy at the heart of sociologies of youth (Coffey and Farrugia 2013). This orthodoxy enables some things to be said and done, and other things to be made...un-orthodox, peripheral, marginal. John Law (2004), and others, would argue that the assemblage we might name as the sociology of youth makes some things present, some things manifestly absent, and still more things absent as Other. In this paper I will raise some general points about this always shifting relation between presence, manifest absence and absence as Otherness, and with more particular reference to the problem of structure and agency in the doing of sociologies of youth. I want to draw on the work I have done using Foucault’s work on governmentality and his concept of apparatus (dispositif) to offer an account of the materialities that shape young people’s being-in-the-world. An accounting that unsettles, troubles, the character of the debates about structure and agency, and the roles these concepts play in shaping orthodox sociologies of youth.

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David Farrugia

*The Rural Youth Mobility Imperative*

Mobilities of money, symbols, and young people themselves are central to the formation of the contemporary youth period. While rural young people remain marginal to theoretical development in youth studies, this paper shows that mobilities are especially significant for rural youth, who experience a kind of mobility imperative created by the accelerating concentration of economic and cultural capital in cities. Drawing on theory and evidence from contexts including Europe, Australia, Africa and South America, this paper explores the mobility imperative for rural youth and offers a new theoretical framework for understanding rural youth mobilities. The framework understands mobilities across three dimensions: the structural, the symbolic, and the non-representational. These dimensions refer to material inequalities between rural and urban places.
in a global context; symbolic hierarchies that concentrate the resources for ‘youthfulness’ in cities; and the affective entanglements between embodied subjectivities and spaces that emerge as young people move. The paper shows how these dimensions interact in the production and experience of the mobility imperative, offering an ontological and theoretical platform for future research into rural youth mobilities.

David Farrugia is Lecturer in Youth Sociology at the University of Newcastle. His work focuses on inequalities and youth identities, as well as contemporary sociological theory. His interests include youth homelessness, theories of social change and globalisation, and the intersections between geographical and sociological theory as they apply to youth. His current projects include a study on young people, place and work in a peri-urban regional town, and a book contracted by Routledge titled ‘Spaces of Youth’ which establishes a spatial approach to young people and globalisation. David also has a book forthcoming titled ‘Youth Homelessness: Reflexive Identities and Moral Worth’ which will be published in Springer’s ‘Youth Perspectives’ book series in 2015.

Dan Woodman

Time: Transitions, Cultural Practices and Generations

Temporal question are central to thinking about youth. Underpinning the ‘twin tracks’ of transitions and cultures research that have shaped the recent history of youth studies is both a focus on temporal questions and a neglect of the sociology of time. Transitions research often emphasizes tracing changes in the timing of transitions and comparing their timing across groups. Youth cultural research emphasizes the cultural and symbolic practices of young people, practices that necessarily unfold over time, and through time shared with other young people. Yet, the temporal foundation of this research tends to remain implicit and under theorized. Drawing on Adam’s (1998) proposal to study the intersection of multiple ‘timescapes’, this presentation will discuss three intertwined temporalities – the time of everyday life, the time of the life course (or biography), and the time of generations – to propose that an explicit focus on temporality provides a lens in which to think anew about ‘youth’.

Dan Woodman is the TR Ashworth Senior Lecturer and Discipline Chair of Sociology in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. He is Vice President of TASA and Vice President for the region of the Research Committee for the Sociology of Youth within the ISA. His work focuses on the sociology of generations, social change, and the impact of insecure work and variable employment patterns on people’s relationships. His recent books include Youth and Generation (with Johanna Wyn) Youth and Young Adulthood (edited with Andy Furlong), and Youth Cultures, Transitions, and Generations (edited with Andy Bennett).
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