Geographies of Children and Young People

Volume 9

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

**Series Titles**

1. Establishing Geographies of Children and Young People
2. Methodological Approaches
3. Space, Place, and Environment
4. Identities and Subjectivities
5. Families, Intergenerationality, and Peer Group Relations
6. Movement, Mobilities, and Journeys
7. Politics, Citizenship, and Rights
8. Geographies of Global Issues: Change and Threat
9. Play and Recreation, Health and Wellbeing
10. Labouring and Learning
11. Conflict, Violence, and Peace
12. Risk, Protection, Provision, and Policy

More information about this series at [http://www.springer.com/series/13414](http://www.springer.com/series/13414)
Geographies of Children and Young People now constitutes a major subdiscipline within Geography. This is a very exciting and influential time in its development. Hence, it is important to capture the dynamism, depth, and breadth of the subdiscipline within a Major Reference Work (MRW). Springer Major Reference Works are produced in such a way that updating and editing of the online version can be done every few years. This means that the publication does not fix the data, debates, and delivery but rather moves and evolves with the subdiscipline itself. The intention and expectation of this MRW is that this substantive collection will be the go-to resource for scholars, educators, and practitioners working with children and young people.

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

This Series was founded on certain key intellectual and political principles. Working with young people and children within the academy has not always been easy nor a straightforward pathway for academics. It has taken time for scholars to convince their colleagues of the following: that children and young people really matter; that they should not be marginalized by the academy; that they have competency and agency and play important roles in society; and that they should be taken seriously as people regardless of age or size. This 12-volume collection is material evidence of the academic importance of children and young people in our
world. The MRW is determinedly international in approach, in authorship, and in content. The huge diversity of nations and territories explored in the collection as well as the geographic locations of author contributors is a real testament to the commitment of the Editor-in-Chief and Volume Editors to be genuinely international. Children and young people are everywhere on the planet, hence it is imperative that this Series reflects that ubiquity. Drawing from scholars and scholarship from within and about the majority world has been a key achievement for each volume. Another aspect of inclusivity relates to authorship. Foundational, well-established, and early career scholars are all well represented throughout the volumes.

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

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

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

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May 20, 2015

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The volume on play, recreation, health, and wellbeing within this series consists of two interlinked sections: the first on play and recreation and the second on health and wellbeing. Each section includes a rich variety of conceptual and empirical work by researchers working in diverse geographical contexts, and within diverse methodological and conceptual traditions. Both these sets of topics are important concerns for researchers working in the subdiscipline of children’s geographies. While the two sections contain common themes, it is also important to view these topics separately in order to avoid any reduction of the value of play and recreation or understandings of wellbeing to instrumental developmental-medical approaches. Some of the chapters within these interlinked sections address directly these instrumental understandings of play, recreation, health, and wellbeing that dominate policy approaches, some contributing to these understandings and some critiquing them. However, other chapters do not start from this position and offer a range of alternative methodological and theoretical approaches to understanding children and young people’s play, recreation, health, and wellbeing. These include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research designs and theoretical developments in geography such as feminist, poststructural, critical race, disability and queer theory, more-than-representational theory, and approaches which acknowledge the role of more-than-human actants in the lifeworlds of children and young people.

Within the section on play and recreation, three key themes draw the chapters together. First, many of the chapters offer a critical theorization of play and recreation which challenge taken-for-granted academic, policy, and popular understandings. These chapters, in particular, emphasize the importance of a geographical approach in the development of more critical approaches, through demonstrating the need to take seriously the spatialities of children’s play in challenging nostalgic and developmental understandings, and through highlighting the role of more-than-human worlds in children’s play. The second theme in this section relates more directly to the spaces that are designed or designated for play and recreation. Particular emphasis in chapters in this theme is placed on outdoor spaces, playgrounds, cultural activities, and urban space. This attention to space allows further challenge to any normative understandings of play and recreation drawing attention to the ways in which play and recreation is mutually constituted by and of the social, material, and historical spaces in which play and recreation take place. Thirdly, other
chapters in this section focus on the everyday playful and recreational practices and mobilities of young people. In contradistinction to some of the spaces discussed in the previous theme concerning spaces specifically designed for play, these chapters demonstrate the ways in which play and recreation intersect with, disrupt, and subvert normative uses of often highly regulated adultist public space. The spaces discussed in these chapters include often banal everyday spaces, public space, shopping malls, and spaces of media consumption. The chapters offer insights into children and young people’s playful engagements with these spaces and the differentiated affordances of these spaces for, for example, young wheelchair users. Play is conceptualized here in its broadest sense, and these chapters also include discussions of identity play in relation to celebrity culture and the sometimes dark spaces of digital transgression and grief tourism.

The second section of the volume, on health and wellbeing, also seeks to challenge normative understandings – this time of wellbeing. There are three themes which run through this section. First, chapters in this section draw on the significant influence of the social studies of childhood in children’s geographies to highlight the ways in which children and young people are knowledgeable actors in the context of health and wellbeing. Here, chapters on diverse contexts, including children’s use of medicines, adolescent anaphylaxis, and young people’s drinking geographies, demonstrate the multiple ways in which children and young people care for their own and others’ health and wellbeing. The second theme in this section moves on from these discussions of agency to challenge dominant policy and media representations of children and young people. In particular, these chapters question the ways in which young people are seen as “risky” or “at risk” in relation to public health concerns around obesity, food, sex education, and smoking, which often emphasize risk to future adult populations. These chapters challenge the ways in which concern for children in such campaigns intersects with other discourses of class, race, gender, nationhood, questioning the framing of young people as “at risk,” and offering alternative approaches. The third theme within this section is one of space. Here chapters discuss questions of health and wellbeing in relation to children and young people’s embodied experiences of everyday spaces, including spaces of the home in the context of domestic violence and family life in relation to alcohol consumption, and also discuss institutional spaces, including spaces of mental health care, secure care, and clinical space. Across these spaces, the chapters illustrate the range of ways in which microgeographies articulate with politics at larger scales to impact on the lives of children and young people in different and intersecting ways.

Across both sections of the volume, the chapters extend key theoretical developments that children’s geographers have been at the heart of, including intergenerational approaches and moves to emphasize and retheorize agency in a way that recognizes children’s role as actors in a wide range of everyday contexts. While nearly half of the case studies that the chapters draw on are from the UK, there is also an impressive range of other national contexts discussed, including Canada, New Zealand, USA, Finland, Sweden, Singapore, Malaysia, Benin, and the Netherlands, and several chapters which provide case studies from multiple countries. What becomes evident reading the volume as a whole is therefore the diversity of
conceptual positions possible within geographies of children and young people and what emerges is a caution against universalizing and normalizing ways of thinking about play, recreation, health, and wellbeing. In this sense, putting play and recreation together with health and wellbeing is a risky strategy given the dominance of medico-developmental approaches to both. However, herein also lies an opportunity – a chance to more playfully engage with ideas of health, wellbeing, and recreation that centres on children and young people and may offer new understandings of these topics for adults too. Children’s geographers with the range of methodological and theoretical tools on offer are well placed to do just this.

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Bethan Evans
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John Horton Dr. John Horton is Associate Professor in Human Geography and Research Leader in Social Sciences at the University of Northampton, UK. He is a Cultural Geographer with a research specialism in relation to children and young people’s geographies. He is Editor of two international academic journals: Children’s Geographies, and Social and Cultural Geography. He is coauthor of the book Cultural Geographies (Routledge, 2013), and Series Editor of a new major book series on Spaces of Childhood and Youth (Routledge, 2015–20). John has been Principal or Co-Investigator on more than 30 funded research projects with children, young people, and families in the UK. For example, he has been Co-Investigator on major interdisciplinary research projects funded by ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) and AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council). John’s major research interests relate to children and young people’s play and popular culture, spaces of care and service-provision, and
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A/P Skelton is a recognized international leader in the subdiscipline of children’s and young people’s geographies. In particular, her work has served to challenge the invisibility and marginalization of young people from geographic academic research at the same time as it has demonstrated the rich and varied ways in which young people live their lives both spatially and temporally alongside, but differently from, adults. Her research work has been funded by key research institutions such as the Economic and Social Research Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the UK; the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Academic Research Fund and the Global Asia Institute, both of the National University of Singapore; the Australian Research Council; and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

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