

Editorial: Local Realities and Global Challenges

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This issue of *NEOS* presents commentaries and research articles that explore childhoods in and of the Global South/Majority World to specifically redress inequities in knowledge production and dissemination in anthropology. While some authors are anthropologists, many come from aligned disciplines that lend important insights into what southern childhoods illuminate in terms of being in the world according to different structural disparities and situated experiences and perspectives. In this robust issue, we have prioritized a range of scholarship from Latin American, African, East Asian, Central Asian, and Eastern European contexts in response to the ongoing imbalances in research funding, recognition, and dissemination that continue to disprivilege Global South/Majority World scholarship.

We would be remiss if we did not admit that this issue was a struggle. This was due to an overwhelming number of submissions and interest from researchers around the world. Scholars and writers responded to the call positively seeking to contribute to conversations about what southern childhood scholarship can offer to the anthropology of childhood and child and youth studies more widely. While our current issue's theme *Local Realities and Global Challenges: Approaches to Childhood and Youth Studies from the Global South* specifically speaks to the need to attend to global-local dynamics and North-South inequalities more carefully, every researcher in the Global South intersects with other themes that could be reflected in other issues of *NEOS*; in addition to studying Global South/Majority World contexts, these scholars also study health care, education, family, participation, the arts, migration, and more. To recognize this breadth, we have divided the editorial introduction of the featured pieces into two collections: 1) Child and Youth Participation and Perspectives and 2) Migration and Movement.

Child and Youth Participation and Perspectives

The first collection of papers in this issue calls our attention to perspectives of children and youth in and of the Global South and the possibilities created through their active participation in research endeavors. The research articles are framed by the question raised in the commentary from Gabrielle Oliveira, Adriana Lacombe Coiro, and Mariana Lima Becker: "Where are Venezuelan children's knowledges in anthropological research in education in Brazil?" The authors contend that centering the voices of children and youth is essential for a deeper understanding of the educational experiences of Venezuelan migrant children in Brazil, particularly in the effort to address discrimination and structural barriers that inhibit access to formal education.

While not answering the specific question posed in the commentary, the research articles in this collection offer conversation in response to the broader question about child and youth knowledge, perspective, and participation in the research process. Through a focus on participatory research and meaningful engagement with children and youth, the articles in this collection contribute perspectives and possibilities from children and youth by centering their voices in research about them and their everyday lives. The articles in this collection aim to redress epistemic violence that has delegitimized young people as knowers and offer possibilities for meaningful paths forward that uplift, honor, and center these voices.

Two participatory research projects highlight the possible transformations that can emerge when children and youth are respected and honored as active agents in their lives. Parul Malik's article contributes findings from a Participatory Action Research project around sexuality education for and by youth in India. Malik reminds us of the "transformative possibilities" of participatory research for both researchers and participants, in this case, to challenge notions of children as passive victims in need of protection and to claim agency, power, and courage in responding to sexualized violence and its reinforcing social norms. In response to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Tomoko Tokunaga, Joshi Ratala Dinesh Prasad, Shinya Watanabe, and Arjun Shah share insights from a virtual Participatory Action Research project with immigrant youth in Japan. The authors engaged youth as co-researchers and embraced an emergent process, which created unique possibilities for responding to questions about youth health and wellbeing in the early days of the pandemic and inspired a sense of connection and community that was often lacking due to social distancing measures.

While the first two articles challenge the notion of children as passive victims of their lives and circumstances, Shaima Amatullah and Shalini Dixit remind us that agency is bounded by practical, temporal, structural, and ideological barriers. Exploring agency of Muslim children in response to hate crimes in India, the authors expose the complexities of agency and the ways in which adults—embodied by parents, systems, and discourses—play direct and indirect roles in how children and youth exercise their agency in the face of oppression, discrimination, and marginalization. Navigating adult-centric systems is a theme further explored by Krystal Strong's research on youth leadership programs in Nigeria. Strong illustrates the complexities and unique challenges for youth-led organizations and adult-led programs designed to promote youth leadership. Strong's research brings attention to the cumulative advantage gained through formalized leadership training systems, which can obscure the natural and informal leadership of everyday life. Notably, Strong argues that this dynamic reinforces a system of training youth leaders that aligns with adult definitions and priorities. Adult-centric or bounded leadership is a type of leadership training that reinforces the status quo rather than challenging it to create space for newly imagined possibilities.

Furthering our exploration of youth leadership, Chelsea Cutright's research on youth-led organizations in Tanzania explores a new type of culture resulting from the unique challenges and benefits in such organizations. Again, the theme of possibility surfaces, as Cutright notes that youth-led organizations, while challenged by inexperience and age-based discrimination, hold potential for deconstruction of hierarchies and less boundaried communication—both in form and content—that supports connection and change at the micro and macro levels. And finally, el-Sayed el-Aswad's exploration of Egyptian children's worldviews encourages us to see

possibility (*mumkin*) through the eyes of children. In particular, the children engaged in el-Aswad's research share possibilities for the future, for recognition, and for liberation from ideological and structural constraints. El-Aswad provides an important insight that children do much weaving in and of their worlds: "The essential quality of Egyptian children's narrative lies in the involvement of interweaving the unknown, the imaginary, the mundane, and the extraordinary into the fabric of their everyday lives." Interweaving is perhaps a method that allows us to challenge binaries, hierarchies, and dualisms across a global landscape where the global and local collide, lines of knowledge traverse North-South divisions, and children challenge adult-centerisms from many regions and purviews.

Migration and Movement in Global South Contexts

The second collection of articles in this issue focus on migration and movement as these concern geography, time, and categories. We begin with two commentaries, first by Maria Claudia Duque-Páramo and second by Manya Kagan. In "The Lives of Migrant Children in Columbia: Between Recognition and Invisibility," Duque-Páramo reflects on her own experiences of migrating from Tocaima to Bogotá as a child. Having little say over her migration at the time, she reflects on the changing importance of children's perspectives in anthropological studies of transnational migration and how children might better inform migrant-related policy in Colombia and beyond. In "Redefining integration: what can we learn from the educational experiences of refugee children in the Global South?," Kagan similarly reflects on refugee children's sense of belonging in a Ugandan classroom. Kagan argues that pedagogical techniques can facilitate community-building among students across difference, leading to heightened senses community membership beyond the classroom. Both commentaries advocate for closer attention to the experiences, perspectives, and desires of migrant and refugee children who spend so much of their time navigating and socializing within school-based settings.

Nataliya Tchernalykh and Jasmine Blanks-Jones consider young people's agency in relation to their mobility in their respective research articles. In "Time and the Child," Tchernalykh provides insight to the temporal, age-based construction of refugee childhood and discusses the immediate "evaporation of rights" that refugee children experience when they transition to the category of adulthood. Turning away from the court system, Tchernalykh argues, can be a refusal of these classifications for some young refugees. For Blanks-Jones, solidarity is a route toward mobility for young theater participants in Liberia who work to imagine new possibilities for themselves and harness new material realities through their creative work. Both pieces highlight less-expected avenues for agency and mobility among Global South young people who seek new opportunities for themselves and their futures.

In "Recently Arrived Maya Migrant Youth's Racialized and Languaged Experiences", David Barillas Chón traces the movement of Maya youth from Guatemala to the U.S. and the persistent anti-Indigenous racism that shapes their journeys. Recognizing that discriminatory ideologies follow these youths transnationally, Barillas Chón calls for larger and more collaborative strategies to address these issues of inequity experienced by recently arrived Maya youth in the U.S. While Barillas Chón considers migration at the intersection of indigeneity and language, Débora Gerbaudo Suárez examines migration at the intersection of gender and sexuality in "Young Migrants and the Construction of Desire in Popular Feminism." Gerbaudo Suárez

presents the perspectives of young migrants in Argentina who participate in feminist discussions about sexual rights along with queer liberation and joy. These two articles importantly offer intersectional analyses in the complex lives, oppressions, and hopes among Latine migrant youths.

In “‘The Future is Ours’: Youth Activism as a Matter of Equality,” Seran Demiral illuminates sites of tension when children express concern about the environment and climate change. Demiral’s article speaks to how renowned young climate change activists are doing important work on the world stage yet may also occupy a privileged position that drowns out the voices of young people also experiencing climate change in the Global South. In “Children’s entanglements with water: the local-global interconnections,” Ambika Kapoor insightfully considers how a minoritized and Indigenous group of children in Chhattisgarh region of India live intertwined with important and increasingly scarce natural resources. Kapoor shows that children know important information about natural resources, understanding not only some of the science behind climate change but also embodying these changes through their everyday lives. Demiral and Kapoor both show how the global phenomenon of climate change wedges its way into the ordinary yet known experiences of these children and collapses global-local binaries.

Introduction to Constellations: Connections Across Childhoods

We are excited to introduce a new section to *NEOS* entitled “Constellations: Connections Across Childhoods.” This issue of *NEOS* encourages us to think across culturally constructed divides and to challenge binaries by illuminating connections. It is with this in mind that Constellations seeks to build points of contact across our issues, past and present. Stemming from our earlier commitment to have a standing column on racial inequity and justice, that piece will be regularly featured in Constellations to keep issues of race and racism present and at the forefront of each issue.

In this issue, we highlight Stacie Hatfield’s research article, “‘You’re already Black...’: Racialized Care and Intersections of Gender for LGBTQ African American Children and Youth in Birmingham, Alabama.” Hatfield illuminates the complex negotiations Black LGBTQ youth experience navigating race relations and sexual orientation alongside their parents in Birmingham. Hatfield’s discussion is an important contribution to issues of racial equity and justice, and also complicates straightforward notions of Global North–Global South divides since Birmingham may be considered “a U.S. city of racialized Global Souths and Majority Worlds.”

We are also introducing new supplementary pieces that connect past authors and articles to present issue themes. In this issue of *NEOS* and its Constellations section, our Digital Scholarship Intern, Chloe Bozak, collaborated with Rashmi Kumari to offer an author interview specifically focused on Global South research and knowledges, drawing from their commentary featured in the April 2020 issue of *NEOS*. Chloe also collaborated with Velicia Hawkins-Moore to generate a teaching tool on the previously-published *Ubuntu Epistemologies* (2021) commentary. Readers teaching childhood and youth studies may find this teaching tool useful in developing classroom activities and dialogue on diverse ways of knowing.

We hope readers find our new Constellations section illuminating, engaging, and aligned with our commitment to innovation, imagination, and justice in child and youth studies.

As new Co-Editors of *NEOS*, we (Jennifer Shaw and Rebecca Sanford) are immensely grateful for the work that was done before us by our predecessors Courtney Everson and María Barbero, including their thoughtfully crafted call for proposals for this issue. In putting together this issue as our very first one, we also recognize the need to disseminate our calls for papers through more diverse channels in the future, ensuring scholars in and of the Global South are part of every conversation and issue; the challenges we faced with this issue illuminate the need to actively encourage submissions from Global South scholars in every issue of *NEOS* and not solely in this dedicated issue. We hope that this issue — featuring 3 commentaries, 13 original research articles, and 2 complementary pieces — fosters the kind of cross-regional dialogue that is of value to our membership and readership around the world as we engage in learning in transnational, transdisciplinary spaces like *NEOS*.

Finally, if you are interested in volunteering to support ACYIG and *NEOS*, please visit our [volunteer sign-up form](#), which reflects numerous opportunities including peer-reviewer, assistant editor, copyeditor, website roles, and more! We could not do this without our valued team of volunteers — we appreciate you all very much and recognize your generous contributions of time, labor, and expertise.

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