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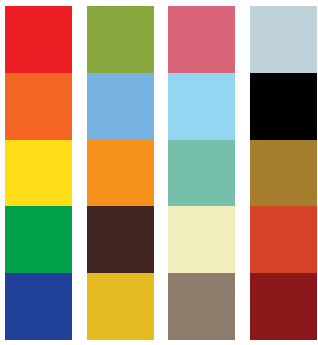
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A PUBLICATION OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH INTEREST GROUP

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## ADVISORY BOARD UPDATE

Lauren Heidbrink  
(California State U – Long Beach,  
ACYIG Convener)

Happy New Year from the ACYIG Advisory Board! We end 2016 reflecting on a year of growth in the fields of anthropology of childhood and youth while embracing 2017 as a call to innovate and engage with a broader public. The AAA's Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota saw an exponential growth in the number and range of childhood- and youth-related papers and sessions (over 110), a testimony to our growing field. ACYIG's business meeting invited our membership to discuss a number of key issues impacting ACYIG in the coming year. Such issues included the AAA's efforts to restructure interest groups and its influence on ACYIG's activities, new outreach and mentorship initiatives to our student members, and ongoing efforts to bolster our website as a hub of resources and communication. In addition, we discussed initiatives to enhance the news media's awareness of our members' expertise through an "Experts Database" and through targeted engagement via social media. ACYIG's strength grows from the insights and contribu-

tions of our members; the business meeting served to inform and enhance the future direction of our efforts. For this, we thank you!

In January, we welcome two new board members. Christine El Ouardani (California State University – Long Beach), a longtime member of ACYIG, will serve as Conference Co-Convener. Patrick Alexander (Oxford Brookes University) will serve as the Communications Coordinator, after building our social media presence over the past several years as the Social Media Coordinator. We are thrilled to have two thoughtful and engaged scholars to further strengthen the Advisory Board.

We are pleased to announce ACYIG's biennial conference "Childhoods in Motion: Children, Youth, Migration, and Education" from March 3-5, 2017 in Los Angeles, California. In partnership with UCLA's Center for the Study of International Migration and the Council on Anthropology and Education, we bring you a stimulating and engaged conference experience.

The conference launches on Friday morning with a community tour of the UCLA Community School, learning about the school's innovations in education, viewing murals painted by artists such as Judy Baca and Shepard Fairey, and exploring the surrounding community, home to migrants from Mexico, Central America,

Korea, the Philippines, and Bangladesh. Following the visit, we will take a brief tour of the area (Koreatown/Pico Union) and eat lunch at Guelaguetza: a Oaxacan restaurant famed for its mole!

In addition to 85 papers and roundtables throughout the 3-day conference, keynote Lynn Stephen (University of Oregon) will present her recent ethnographic film *Sad Happiness: Cinthya's Transborder Journey*, exploring the differential rights that U.S. citizen children and their undocumented parents have through the story of one extended mixed-status Zapotec family. Shot in Oregon and Oaxaca, Mexico, and narrated by 11-year-old Cinthya, the film follows Cinthya to her parent's home community of Teotitlán del Valle with her godmother, anthropologist Lynn Stephen.

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Saturday welcomes a movement-based theatrical performance by CalArts Center for New Performance and Duende CalArts. *Shelter: Una obra sobre travesías (A play about journeys)*, shares stories of young people crossing the U.S. border and navigating through the U.S. immigration detention system. *Shelter* is written and conceived by Marissa Chibas, directed by Mexico City-based director Martin Acosta, and choreographed by Fernando Belo.

Interdisciplinary art exhibits and a conference banquet of scrumptious dim sum round out this not-to-be-missed conference. Registration is \$60 for professional members, \$30 for students, and free for UCLA students. Advanced registration required. To view the conference program, register, and plan your trip, please visit the conference website at: <http://www.international.ucla.edu/migration/article/170150>. We look forward to seeing you in sunny Los Angeles in March!

## WEBSITE UPDATE

Dori Beeler (U of Notre Dame, Website Manager/Blog Editor)

### CALL FOR BLOG SUBMISSIONS

Have something to say? Write for ACYIG's blog! Please visit the submission guidelines for more details: <http://acyig.americananthro.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/ACYIG-Blog-Submission-Guidelines.pdf>. The blog is a great forum for brief essays intended for a broader public audience, and there's plenty of space for visuals as well!

## SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

Patrick Alexander (Oxford Brookes U, Communications Coordinator)

Our new Social Media Coordinator María Barbero takes over for Patrick Alexander (<http://acyig.americananthro.org/about/communications-membership-volunteers/>). Maria is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at Florida International University. Her research centers on questions of race and ethnicity, nationalism, migration, and youth both in the United States and Argentina. Her dissertation, titled "The Age of Migration Control: Youth and Governmentality in the Americas," looks at migration control policies, discourses, and practices as they specifically target and affect migrant youth living in the cities of Miami and Buenos Aires. Prior to joining Florida International University, Maria earned a Master's degree from the Department of Comparative Studies at The Ohio State University.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Amy Paugh (James Madison U, Membership Coordinator)

*Please add or renew your ACYIG membership for 2017*

ACYIG Membership is free to members of the American Anthropological Association (AAA)—we encourage you to join or renew today. Keeping our numbers high and participation strong contributes to the visibility and growth of the anthropology of children and youth as a field of study, both within the discipline

and for a broader public. Further, as an interest group, we receive vital AAA administrative support for activities such as a sponsored session at the AAA Annual Meeting, our publication *Neos*, and our vibrant website, blog, listserv, and Collaborative Research Networks (CRNs). A strong membership ensures continued recognition from the field as we advocate for these and new initiatives—for example, partnerships with other sections for conferences, a database of experts in the field, and even a column in Anthropology News. As the AAA deliberates how to best serve its growing sections and interest groups amidst its plateaued membership, demonstrating high levels of activity and innovation are important in securing ACYIG’s future.

To join or verify active membership, go to <http://www.americananthro.org> and login to your AAA account. Select “Add interest group” from the menu on the left side of the page. Check the box for “Anthropology of Children and Youth Interest Group” and proceed through the checkout process (there will not be any charge). The same box should be checked each time you renew your AAA membership. Please encourage interested colleagues and students to join as well.

Thank you for helping to make sure that ACYIG remains a robust and visible interest group at the AAA!

## PUBLICATION UPDATE

Véronique Gilbert (U of Edinburgh, *Neos* Editor)

This issue is my first as the editor of *Neos*, and I would like to thank my predecessor, Kate Grim-Feinberg, for the hard work she has put into making this publication such a success over the

last few years. Kate’s touch as an editor runs through the current issue and the upcoming Summer 2017 Special Issue, which she has put together brilliantly before (patiently!) handing the reins over to me. Hers are big shoes to fill, but thanks to the help of the wonderful team of volunteers who contribute to each issue of *Neos*, I have no doubt that we will continue to deliver the high-quality publication ACYIG members have come to expect.

We value and welcome your comments and reactions to articles and features in this or previous issues. Please send your letters of 250 words or less to [acyig.editor@gmail.com](mailto:acyig.editor@gmail.com) with the subject line “Letter to the Editor”, and it may appear in our next issue!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What a fantastic issue of *Neos* this month! Thanks to you both—and to our ACYIG *Neos* Board and volunteers—for continuing to elevate the publication.. I think it has become something very special within the AAA, and I wouldn’t be surprised if other groups started emulating it.

All the best, Rachael Stryker (CSU – East Bay)



## CORRECTION NOTICES

### October 2016 issue

The correct email address for Sara Thiam, ACYIG Content Coordinator for Blog & Social Media, is [sthiam1@jhu.edu](mailto:sthiam1@jhu.edu). This was printed incorrectly on page 15 of the October 2016 issue of *Neos*.





## CHILDHOOD AND COLUMN

### Childhood and the Anthropology of Violent Radicalization

Marisa O. Ensor (Georgetown U)

Counterterrorism policymakers and practitioners increasingly focus on developing a more effective strategic approach to address violent radicalization. This has been reflected in the emergence of the policy and practice of “countering violent extremism” (CVE). The growing salience of CVE-related initiatives is accompanied by a keen interest in understanding the reasons why young people are so heavily represented among radicalized militants.

Despite the long-standing anthropological interest in conflict, intergroup hostility and social cohesion (Fried 1957; Murphy 1957; Otterbein 1968), and a more recent focus on youth violence (Abbink and van Kessel 2005; Ensor 2013; Hart 2008), our discipline’s engagement with the CVE field has to-date been rather limited. I argue here that the anthropology of children and youth is well positioned to contribute to this field by elucidating the socio-cultural basis of radicalization and violent extremism. This understanding is crucial to the development of programs to mitigate extremist activity and foster societal resilience.

#### *CHILDREN, YOUTH AND EXTREMIST VIOLENCE*

A number of explanations have been offered to account for the differential targeting of youth—especially, although not exclusively, young males—for indo-

ctrination. Neurological developmental perspectives, for instance, construct all young people as overpowered by their “tumultuous biological, cognitive, social and emotional transition to adulthood” (Ramakrishna 2015, 116), and thus more vulnerable to the schemes of extremist ideologues. Others underscore the role of dysfunctional family contexts that fail to provide youngsters with “that necessary sense of connection to something of value that can buttress [their] self-esteem” (Jones 2008, 133-134). Still other explanations focus on the wider social milieu within which youth and their immediate families are embedded. Communities or sub-cultures that have been beset by a range of historical, political and socioeconomic setbacks are believed to generate a heightened sense of alienation among in-group youth that makes them more susceptible to radicalization vis-à-vis the members of dominant out-groups (Juergensmeyer 2000, 12).

Young people’s transition from ideological radicalization to membership in a violent extremist group also receives scholarly attention. Anthropologist Scott Atran, founder of the University of Oxford’s Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict, has posited that youth radicalize horizontally with their peers, rather than vertically through institutional leaders or organizational hierarchies. Recruitment into an extremist organization occurs from the bottom up, “from alienated and marginalized youth seeking out companionship, esteem, and meaning, but also the thrill of action, sense of empowerment, and glory in fighting the world’s most powerful nation and army” (Atran 2010, 3). A multi-sited, UNICEF-sponsored study I conducted in 2014 and 2015 underscores the premise that no single explanation or set of interventions generalizes to all groups or locations, necessitating continuous acquisition of information and updating/adaptation of assessments and strategies.

#### *TOWARDS AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND VIOLENT RADICALIZATION*

CVE programs have been an integral element of global peace and security programming for over a decade, often sparking controversy and divisiveness wherever they have been implemented. Social scientists have not always found it easy—or ethically palatable—to collaborate with CVE experts, owing to understandable concerns about interacting with counterterrorism actors, or participating in militarized security-related operations.

Children and youth are critical stakeholders in this complex and challenging geopolitical landscape as victims, perpetrators, and potential agents for positive change. Writing of youth engagement in Al-Qaeda, John Venhaus (2010) asserts that anthropologists can contribute to these global efforts by offering a nuanced analysis of the local contexts that lead individuals to support violent extremism. Additional topics crucial to addressing this urgent global security concern and formulating future research directions include identifying the cultural basis for violent extremism and radicalization, the factors that motivate individuals and groups to violence, and the role of technology and social media in propagating extremist discourses (Fenstermacher 2015).

Researchers of the anthropology of childhood and youth can address the contexts and risk factors—global and local—that may push radicalized children and youth into violent extremism. Additionally, we can elucidate how children and youth (including young women and girls) can become key actors in building resilience within their communities and help to identify good practices that promote rehabilitation and social integration of children and youth involved

in acts of violent extremism. Ultimately, advances in the field can be best promoted through collaborative, concerted efforts to “[e]ngage youth in the search for meaningful ways to make sense of the issues on their personal agenda, whether that be about oppression and political marginalization, lack of economic opportunity, the trauma of exposure to violence, or problems of identity and social exclusion” (Atran 2015).

## CONCLUDING INSIGHTS

Youth participation in extremist violence and radicalization are among the most complex threats currently facing our global community. Current research indicates that there is no universal indicator or determinant of young people’s involvement in extremist activities. Rather, this is a non-linear process resulting from a combination of idiosyncratic factors that shape an individual’s trajectory. Until we understand the socio-cultural basis of violent radicalization we cannot counter the threat. A youth-sensitive anthropology can help develop programs to mitigate extremist behavior, offering youth the chance to create their own local initiatives, and foster societal resilience.

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## Adolescence and Global Mental Health: Perceptions of Emotional Wellbeing in Tijuana, Mexico

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Olga L. Olivas Hernandez (U of California – San Diego), Sol D’Urso (UCSD), and Janis H. Jenkins (UCSD)

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*En mis tiempos mis papás eran diferentes, nos educaron diferente, los jóvenes de hoy ya tienen mucha libertad, ya se creen adultos, se creen que todo lo pueden... esa es la preocupación que tenemos... cómo los podemos educar.<sup>1</sup>*

*[In my days, my parents were different, they brought us up differently, young people today have a lot of freedom, they think they are adults, they think they can do everything... that is the concern we have... how can we raise them?]*

Since most mental health problems detected later in life begin in early stages of adolescence, there is a particular need to recognize behavioral signs of distress. Indeed, among teenagers worldwide, acts of “self-harm” are common and suicide is the leading cause of death (Patel, Fisher, Hetrick, and McGorry 2007). Patel and colleagues point to the correlation between youth mental health problems and the occurrence of other common experiences, such as substance use and abuse, violence, academic difficulties, and an array of issues related to sexual and reproductive health. Thus, it is imperative to add specific studies of children and adolescent mental health to the research agenda. Our study is based on the idea that the relationship between culture, emotion, and mental health in human experience is best approached on a continuum where there is no dichotomy

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1. From an interview with a Mexican mother of an adolescent.

between normal and abnormal. Within this framework, both problems that are commonplace and problems that are extraordinary are understood as constituted by intersubjectivity, and social and economic conditions (Jenkins 2015).

In this brief report, we present preliminary data on research conducted at a high school in an urban neighborhood in Tijuana. Approximately 19% of the city's population is between the ages of 10-19 (INEGI 2015). The socioeconomic status of the population where we developed this study is low and lower-middle income. The main objective of our study is to analyze cultural perceptions around adolescents' emotional wellbeing and help-seeking behaviors. In the first phase of our research, we focused on parent and teacher perspectives of 1900 students between 15 and 19 years of age.

Parents and teachers have a significant impact on the emotional, psychological, and cognitive development of these adolescents. To examine this impact, we conducted focus groups and individual interviews with teachers and parents. We are in the process of also collecting ethnographic data through interviews with counselors, mental health professionals, and religious healers on help-seeking behaviors.

A noteworthy observation is that parents and teachers alike expressed significant worries about feeling unprepared, incapable, or lacking resources to be able to identify and attend to their adolescents' emotional needs. There are different aspects that make the process of identifying the problems of adolescents particularly complex for these adults. Striking were themes of a lack of communication and trust between adults and adolescents. These were perceived by parents and teachers as due significantly to a scarcity of time that they could spend together, in relation to extremely long work hours. Additionally, they expressed

that adolescents may be refusing to communicate difficulties to their parents as part of a developmental process of generating a sense of independence and personal identity.

Despite these difficulties, adult participants did feel they could identify behaviors, attitudes, and emotions that they considered indicative of an emotional/mental problem that adolescents could likely be experiencing. Below is a list of problems noted by parents and teachers.

## ***SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL PROBLEMS FROM ADULTS' PERSPECTIVES***

### **PARENTS**

- Overarching need to be accepted by others
- Worry that no one is interested in or cares about them
- Irritability
- Sudden changes in mood/emotions
- Excessive concern with body image
- Excessive use of internet

### **TEACHERS**

- Low grades
- Absences
- Lack of academic motivation
- Challenging attitude towards authority
- Aggressive relationships
- Inattentive or sleepy in class
- Moody in relation to romantic relationships
- Parental inattention
- Isolation

In addition to these commonly-noted signs of problems, specific concerns frequently mentioned include:

- Low self-esteem
- Substance use and abuse
- Eating disorders
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Self-cutting

Teachers report that when they have a concern regarding a student, they make a referral to the counselling department within the school. In this setting, students are able to receive one-on-one assistance; however, the department doesn't provide therapeutic services. When deemed necessary, students are referred for psychological services to a public or private institution, depending on the student's presenting problem and their financial situation. A few teachers mentioned that they have handled problems within the classroom or with adolescents and their parents without resorting to the counseling department. Nevertheless, most teachers emphasized that they don't have the training or skills necessary to handle these types of situations.

Parents also report psychological services as an option to address adolescents' emotional problems, although the majority mentioned that they haven't used this form of care. Parents referred more frequently to the use of informal resources, such as the support of an adult friend of the family who could talk to the adolescent, and youth religious groups that can function as a network for peer emotional support. The infrequent use of psychological services is in part due to an array of issues, including social stigma surrounding the realm of mental health and the financial inability to access these services.



This first phase of the study allowed us to gauge teacher and parent interest in the emotional wellbeing of adolescents. Their interest is remarkably lively and engaged. Yet, they express that communication difficulties between adults and adolescents is a fundamental problem for identifying or helping to foster emotional wellbeing. Based on our findings, the next steps of this study will involve conducting ethnographic research with the adolescents themselves. We anticipate that our efforts to identify problems from multiple perspectives will greatly enhance our understanding of the terrain of mental health as a continuum from more “experience-near” and sociopolitical perspectives.

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## Childhood and Digital Civics: How Fieldwork with Youth Highlights the Need to Rethink Civic Education in Canada

Megan Cotnam-Kappel  
(U of Ottawa)

This story of research uncovers the ways that fieldwork with youth shaped my research agenda in meaningful and unanticipated ways. I am an engaged Franco-Ontarian researcher working with youth in Ontario, Canada—a linguistic minority context where approximately 4% of the population identifies French as their first language. Francophones have the right to attend separate French-language schools in this province, but recruitment and retention within these schools are ongoing priorities for the vitality of the minority community.

My identity continually shapes my research and leads me to investigate the experiences of youth in French-language schools. During my doctoral studies, I was specifically interested in improving student retention during the transition from elementary to high school, a period which sees a significant drop in student enrollment as youth opt to study in the majority language—English—for their secondary studies. In pursuing this topic, the more school choice research literature I read, the more I realized that youth voices were typically absent within the field. My research, therefore, took an important shift in direction. Instead of adopting a student retention framework, I set out to co-construct student experience research from a youth voice perspective. For the first time, youth voice and participation became central themes of my research (Cotnam-Kappel 2014a).

I conducted reflexive ethnographic research wherein youth were invited to actively participate throughout the research process through surveys (n=122), semi-structured interviews, and one-on-one co-analysis activities (n=17) (Cotnam-Kappel 2014b), creating a quasi-partnership research model between myself and youth participants (Kirsher, O’Donogue, and McLaughlin 2005). Though numerous themes emerged from this research, I will focus on the two that underscore the need to rethink civic education.

First, youth disclosed that their motivation to pursue their studies in French schools was least influenced by a sense of belonging, their identity, and their culture. When asked about her linguistic identity, Elena shared, “I don’t know because if people ask me, ‘are you like franco-ontarienne?’ I’ll say ‘yeah I guess,’ but I don’t know actually like I’m a part of their community.” When asked if he felt that he was part of the Franco-Ontarian community, Neymar replied, “I don’t feel anything. Well, ‘cause like I usually speak, like I speak Arabic a lot so I don’t feel like anything.” Indeed, while approximately 55% of youth in the study identified as bilingual and 35% identified as plurilingual, youth did not perceive that their complex identities were recognized or valued within the minority-language school, which primarily focuses on shaping Francophone, rather than bi/plurilingual, citizens.

Second, youth reported that schools structure a passive role for students in the school choice process by communicating important school choice information directly to parents rather than broaching the topic directly with students, thereby limiting youth agency in the choosing process. Indeed, Ray Lewis explains that teachers “don’t really tell us” about school choice in schools, while his classmate Neymar adds “they can at least tell you or show you how things work instead of just doubting you.” These research find-



ings prompt a call to action for the Francophone minority language community that is meaningful for youth, inclusive of their multiple identities, and that creates spaces for youth voice to emerge and be acted upon. I believe that rethinking civic education represents an important pathway for responding to this call.

The learning experiences of youth within schools have considerable implications for how they view their roles as citizens. If students do not feel that their voices are being heard regarding a pivotal school decision or if they do not have the opportunity to connect their multiple languages or identities to their education in meaningful ways, these experiences necessarily shape the construction of their civic identities and impact their connectedness as engaged citizens to local, national, and global communities. Data collected with youth in this study, therefore, urge me to conduct research that does not focus on a static or singular notion of identity, but explores how youth construct their (multiple) civic identities, while contributing to the development of justice-oriented citizenship pedagogies and curricula (Westheimer and Kahne 2004). This work is heavily influenced by the field of New Civics, which expands the definition of civic participation to include informal or unconventional ways that youth make their voices heard or contribute to their local communities. Additionally, New Civics underscores the necessity to move beyond a transmission or 'knowledge' model of civic education to a model that targets praxis (Haste 2004), action civics, or guided experiential civic learning (Levinson 2012).

In today's digital age, online spaces create new opportunities for individual identity expression and civic participation. Schools have an important role to play in teaching youth to use technology for civic and political purposes in informed, critical, and responsible ways (Bennett

2008; Gardner and Davis 2013; James 2014). Online civic expressions, which include "liking", sharing, posting, and commenting, can lead to or constitute civic participation for youth (Weinstein 2014). Consequently, rethinking civic education prompts me to have a particular focus on youth's digital citizenship experiences and the development of digital civic literacy skills. This includes a particular focus on online politics and discussions, as well as the resources that are needed to support youth in their online political activities.

This story of research sheds light on the essential ways that youth voice shapes research. In this case, youths' narratives and counter-narratives within minority-language schools lead me to rethink civic education in the Canadian context through a digital civics lens. This ongoing work will continue to highlight youth voice and will have an impact in the linguistic minority context in Canada as well as around the globe.

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## AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF CHILDREN OR YOUTH THAT HAS IMPACTED MY WORK

### Summerhill and Me

Aaron L. Miller, PhD (California State U - East Bay)

The book *Summerhill*, by A.S. Neill, looks well-worn on my parents' shelf. When I first asked about it, they told me it had a great impact on the way they raised my two older sisters and me. I recently picked it up to see how it might impact my own parenting—since I now have a one-year old son—and how it might influence my research, which compares youth sports in Japan and the U.S. I had flipped through it before, but never with such urgency.

The main ideas of *Summerhill* are simple: don't raise conformists, let children play, and let children decide what they do with their days and, ultimately, their lives. All these were controversial ideas when Neill proposed them in the 1920s, smack in the middle of the two world wars, when adults in England and beyond believed they needed to train young people for the difficult lives that lay ahead of them. Yet in *Summerhill*, Neill explains:

*The function of the child is to live his own life—not the life that his anxious parents think he should live, nor a life according to the purpose of the educator who thinks he knows what is best. All this interference and guidance on the part of adults only produces a generation of robots (Neill 1960[1964], 12).*

My parents read *Summerhill* during the 1960s. Not that they were the only ones: I was born not far from the Haight-

Ashbury district, and UC Berkeley was a stone's throw from where I attended high school. Progressive ideas of child-centered education wafted over the hills like fog from beyond the Golden Gate, affecting most of my schoolteachers.

When I went to college, I began to understand that all learning is self-learning, and that if you really wanted to learn something, you had to really *want* to learn something. True education was an invitation—no, a gift—that a teacher gave a student; by definition, it could never be an order. If there was no will to learn, nothing would be learned.

After college, I went to teach English in rural Japan, where I saw how the local schools seemed to create more conformists than I had remembered my suburban public high school producing. Teachers primarily lectured, and rather than child-centered progressivism, authoritarianism reigned supreme. Some teachers smacked children, which almost never happened back home.

Graduate school was an intellectual gauntlet, and I didn't have much time to reflect on these experiences, never had the chance to connect it to my own life. It took a generous postdoctoral fellowship and a healthy amount of time to contemplate my educational experiences to realize why authoritarianism reigned in one place but not another, and why it wasn't for me. I certainly respected the rural Japanese educators for the ways in which they maintained their culture and structured their education system—indeed, I marveled at how it seemed to create social harmony and order—but a Summerhillian way was much more my style. The tough love may have worked for some kids, but not kids like me.

So I dug deeper into *Summerhill*, and I began to realize how important it is for children, adolescents, and even “emerging adults” to have time to simply play (Arnett 2000, 469). I noticed that play is a precursor to deep thought, to deep

learning. Personally, I relax when I play, especially if I can submit myself to an endeavor and experience what the psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls “flow”. Then, my mind and body relax and I begin to grow (Csikszentmihalyi 2000).

Some have called Neill's style “radical”. Perhaps that is because Neill wrote things like this:

*You cannot make children learn music or anything else without to some degree converting them into will-less adults. You fashion them into accepters of the status quo—a good thing for a society that needs obedient sitters at dreary desks, standers in shops, mechanical catchers of the 8:30 suburban train—a society, in short, that is carried on the shabby shoulders of the scared little man—the scared-to-death conformist.” (Neill 1960[1964], 12)*

Yet I find the “radical” label unnecessary and un-illuminating, and ultimately more telling about the person throwing it than Neill himself. By letting kids be kids, Neill struck upon some important educational insights, and the world of parenting and (sports) education are better for them. Neill's students mostly ended up happy and well-adjusted to their adult lives, having had the time to explore their interests in childhood and set upon a career path that they knew they would enjoy. They did not simply get a job because they needed a job. Instead, they followed their passions, because, unlike in our current mass education system, they had time to explore their passions. The 1960s counterculture of Berkeley and elsewhere developed his ideas further, impacting more young people around the world.

Similarly, my post-doc—in *urban* Japan of all places—gave me the time to reflect upon many years living within the education systems of Japan, the U.S., and the UK, and what those experiences meant for my research about youth sports. That time helped me realize that by pursuing

a sport for the purpose of playful enjoyment first and foremost, youth can grow in ways that even their own parents may not expect. It happened to me when I played sports growing up, and it happened again when I was fortunate enough to explore my ideas about sport intellectually.

Now I am writing a book about youth sports in Japan and the US and how adults in both nations ought to channel the wisdom of books like *Summerhill*. In my definition of youth sports, I include college sports, because I believe that young athletes need more time than ever to grow and find themselves.

Youth sports should be enjoyable play, first and foremost. Although modern sports as we know them emerged during political times, their playful and enjoyable aspects predate their foundation for imperialism, spread via colonialism, appropriation by the forces of commercialism, and usurping by the nation-state. If children are not allowed to enjoy sports, they may end up as “scared-to-death conformists” or, worse, “robots.” Instead, we should invite children to play sports, and let them decide what they will play, how they play them, and, finally, who they will become in the process. In my research, I have found that adults in Japan and the U.S. have historically hijacked youth sports for their own purposes, and it’s about time we follow A.S. Neill and change that.

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- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. 2000. *Beyond boredom and anxiety*. San-Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Neill, Alexander S. 1960[1964]. *Summerhill*. London: Hart.

## PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



*Schoolchildren in rural South Africa's Eastern Cape Province peer through a window excitedly as they wait for a celebration of Human Rights Day to begin. March 2012. Credit: Amber R. Reed, Drexel U.*



## UNSUNG HEROES OF ACYIG

### Bill Clark of Child's World America

Cindy Dell Clark  
(Rutgers U – Camden)

*Bill Clark, featured in this article, is the President of Child's World America (CWA), a U.S.-based nonprofit that focuses on promoting the well-being of children, which he co-founded with his wife, ACYIG member Cindy Dell Clark. In 2015, ACYIG entered into a content-sharing agreement with CWA to promote the visibility and readership of each organization's online media platforms. CWA welcomes scholarly or public media works on topics related to children and children's well-being from ACYIG members, and ACYIG is also welcome to cross-publish relevant content from CWA's website in its blog and newsletter. For more information regarding this cross-publishing agreement and how we seek out authors' permissions, please email the ACYIG Blog Editor (dbeeler@nd.edu), or the ACYIG Blog Content Coordinator Sara Thiam (sthiam1@jhu.edu).*

Bill Clark, my husband and president of the new non-profit Child's World America, is not a member of the ACYIG since he is not a scholar. In some ways, he is a fairly unlikely hero. When we met in 1971, he was a business student at Penn's Wharton school with ambitions to be an entrepreneur. This was an unusual career goal at a time when most students were concerned with peace and greater equality in America. Still, even at the time, Bill was a force in social innovation—he helped organize and was elected president of the first College House at Penn,

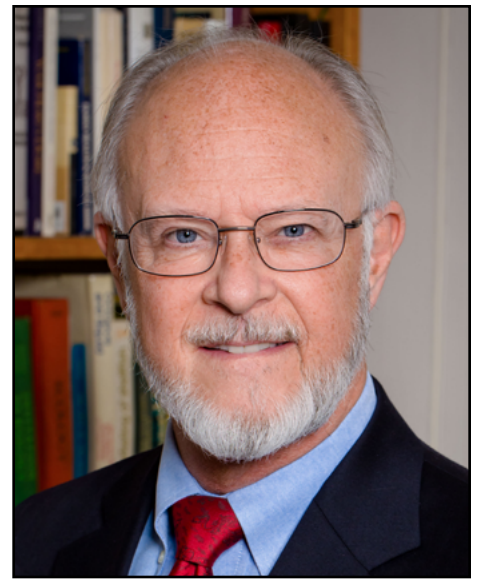
a residential intellectual community that became the template for residences throughout Penn.

Some time after graduation, when Bill did start his first business (in gourmet food), he did it in the inner city and provided jobs for those who really needed the work. As his food business grew, so did his social consciousness. He became part of the advisory board to South Shore Bank, a Chicago bank then dedicated to building neighborhoods with socially-minded investments.

After selling his business in the late 90s, Bill had the opportunity to take on the new role of Executive Director of Philabundance, a food bank in Philadelphia. At Philabundance he brought efficiency and communications expertise, increasing the amount of food distributed to the needy by Philabundance ten times over in a thirteen-year period. While at Philabundance, Bill kept innovating. In 2013 he completed a complicated challenge: to open the first non-profit grocery store in America, located in Chester PA, and going by the name "Fare and Square". The store remains a pillar of the community in Chester today. Bill came on the radar of the White House for showing that a real grocery store could be operated on a non-profit basis in a food desert. Other projects to open similar grocery stores in Boston, Detroit, and Oakland have been influenced by the success of Fare and Square.

Knowing Bill's tenacity, pluck and inventiveness, I'm happy to announce that his latest venture deals with placing a greater priority on children in the United States. Even though he isn't a scholar, he recognizes the important role that the work of scholars (particularly anthropologists) holds for informing effective policy and priorities.

I recently interviewed Bill, my husband of 41 years, about Child's World America. Here is a synopsis of that interview.



#### ***What is Child's World America and what are its goals?***

CWA is envisioned as a catalyst to improve the overall well-being of America's children. By catalyst, we mean to help be the worker bees that help build a social movement where a greater percentage of Americans see the issues, feel moved to see change, and engage with the collective effort to make a real difference for children.

As of the last UNICEF report on the well-being of children in the richest countries on the globe, the very richest country—the U.S.—ranked 26th out of 29 ([https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc11\\_eng.pdf](https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc11_eng.pdf)). That's deplorable and I'm personally offended that children in our advantaged country aren't doing better on the dimensions that UNICEF measures: education, material well-being, housing environment, behavioral risks, and health and safety. Our goal is to significantly improve that ranking, which means improving our society's performance on a wide array of metrics.

#### ***How did you come to develop Child's World America?***

After retiring from Philabundance, one of the nation's largest hunger organiza-





tions, I spent a year as a fellow at the Wharton Social Impact Initiative personally studying the dynamics of big social problems and how, historically, fundamental change was accomplished. Being married to Cindy gave me a front row seat in seeing the issues of America's children. So these threads came together: a gaping social problem and an applicable tool set of strategies for social impact.

***Why should Child's World America matter to members of the American Anthropological Association?***

For my entire career, as both a businessman and later a nonprofit executive, I have always been mystified at how little organizations really know and understand the experiences and contexts of their clients or customers. I've seen deep insights lead to transformative change. Without the ability to truly understand, there is no capacity to effectively aim our initiatives. Communicating in the blind leads lots of good intentions to yield little impact. The members of the ACYIG can be valuable guides and pilots for implementing change.

***Compared to your other career challenges and accomplishments, how would you describe the challenges of starting this non-profit enterprise, Child's World America?***

The approach we are taking is rare in that it takes a holistic approach. The American way of dealing with problems is to carve them up into smaller and smaller parts in the hope that solutions will aggregate back to a whole. Usually, we specialize and find niches to work on. But social problems, especially the big hairy problems, are complex and systemic in nature and can only be handled holistically.

Social organizations have tried reducing their scope to part of the problem, such as focusing just on literacy or child homelessness, approached with a small group of children in a particular city. We're hoping to provide a big-picture push for awareness. One way we intend to do this is through our online news site (Child's World News) which will cover newsworthy material across the whole of children's lives. We're covering pediatrics as well as education, juvenile justice as well as child care, government policy as well as local innovations, and more. We're hoping to raise the consciousness of Americans about children, for if we can raise the tide of social awareness and concern for all our children, then all the boats will benefit.



## NEW BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

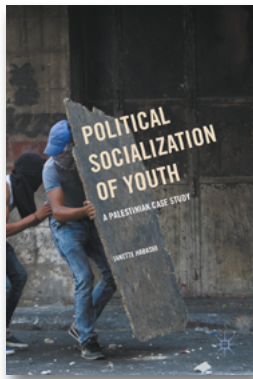


***Children and Forced Migration: Durable Solutions During Transient Years***  
 Marisa O. Ensor and  
 Elzbieta M. Gozdziaik (eds.)  
 December, 2016  
 Palgrave  
 \$119.00 (hardcover) \$89.00 (e-book)

For children and youth, who often constitute the largest demographic sector of displaced groups, the search for viable solutions typically prioritizes needs and aspirations that reflect the transient nature of their age group, and often differ from those of their elders. Additional difficulties are posed by the inconsistent definition and uneven implementation of the traditional "durable solutions" to forced displacement—e.g. "voluntary repatriation," "local integration," "resettlement to a third country"—on the part of national governments and international assistance agencies. Intergenerational differences regarding the impact and perceived desirability of these or other alternatives are rarely considered. They thus remain largely unexamined and insufficiently understood, impeding the transition from humanitarian aid to human development.

Conceived as a follow up to the earlier *Children and Migration: At the Crossroads*

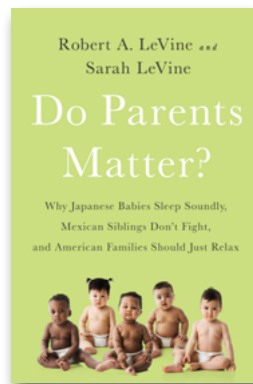
*of Resiliency and Vulnerability* (Palgrave, 2010), this edited volume draws on empirical field research and robust policy analyses of cases of child displacement across the globe. Findings seek to inform forced migration programming so that it better responds to the age-differentiated priorities of displaced communities, hence promoting more sustainable durable solutions. These dynamics are shown to have a significant impact on the way in which access to material assets, education, employment opportunities, political participation, and other key resources is negotiated among the youngest members of displaced groups.



*Political Socialization of Youth:  
A Palestinian Case Study*  
Janette Habashi  
January, 2017  
Palgrave MacMillan  
\$99.99 (hardcopy)  
\$74.99 (e-book)

This book increases the awareness of youth political agency and how it relates to adults, governments, communities, and local and global discourse. It reveals the complexity of youth's political lives as it intersects with social identifiers such as location, gender, and political status, and interacts with neoliberal discourse embedded in media, local politics, education, and religious idioms. This book fills a gap in existing research to provide a body of literature on the political socialization and its manifestation in youth

political agency. The research findings aid in understanding the abilities of youth to reason, reflect upon, articulate, and act upon their political views. This research is not only pertinent to children in Palestine but can also be applied to children living everywhere, as global discourse of oppression is not limited to a location, an age, or a group.



*Do Parents Matter?*  
Robert A. and Sarah LeVine  
September, 2016  
PublicAffairs  
\$25.99 (hardcover)

Over the course of nearly fifty years, Robert and Sarah LeVine have conducted a groundbreaking, worldwide study of how families work. They have consistently found that children can be happy and healthy in a wide variety of conditions, not just the effort-intensive, cautious environment so many American parents drive themselves crazy trying to create. While there is always another news article or scientific fad proclaiming the importance of some factor or other, it's easy to miss the bigger picture: that children are smarter, more resilient, and more independent than we give them credit for.

*Do Parents Matter?* is an eye-opening look at the world of human nurture, one with profound lessons for the way we think about our families. The book is a world survey of the parenting of infants,

toddlers, and older children by two anthropologists who have carried out fieldwork in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Their evidence on parenting shows wide variations in the goals, methods, and early effects of child rearing practices. They conclude that Americans have been led by "experts" to exaggerate the influence of parents and underestimate the resilience of their children.



## MEMBER NEWS

### Conference Calls for Papers

#### CALL FOR PAPERS—CHILDREN AND CHILDHOODS CONFERENCE 2017

University of Suffolk  
Ipswich, UK  
July 18-19, 2017

Papers are invited that theoretically and empirically engage with a broad range of disciplines reflecting the diverse nature of contemporary childhood studies. The Biennial International Children and Childhoods Conference aims to bring together established academics, early career researchers, PhD candidates, and students.

Topics could include but are not limited to international development; identity, culture and belonging; humanitarianism; methodologies; family formations; sex and sexualities; migration and movement; rights, advocacy and participation; health, wellbeing and embodiment; education; disabilities; and therapeutic care and interventions.

Traditional presentations of 20 minutes with additional time for questions; preformed panels of speakers and posters; and alternative modes of presentation—including performance, film, and photography—are welcome.

Please email [uoschildhoodspapers@uos.ac.uk](mailto:uoschildhoodspapers@uos.ac.uk) 250-word abstracts for a 20-minute presentation, 500-word abstracts for panels, and 150-word abstracts for posters. **The deadline for submissions is March 31, 2017.** For more information, please visit the conference website.

The conference is hosted by the Department of Children, Young People, and Education.

### Calls For Applications

#### JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Associate Professor/Assistant Professor, Human Rights  
– Binghamton University

The Department of Human Development in the College of Community and Public Affairs at Binghamton University seeks to fill a tenured position at the associate professor or tenure-track position at the assistant professor level in human development to begin Fall 2017.

We seek a scholar whose research interests are in the area of human rights as it pertains to communities that are marginalized within the U.S. and/or internationally.

**Applications will be considered immediately, and the position will remain open until filled.** Interested candidates should submit electronically: (1) a letter of application that describes how the candidate's background is commensurate with the field of human rights and a fit with our department, (2) a curriculum vitae, (3) a scholarly research statement, (4) two samples of academic writing (article or chapter), (5) a teaching philosophy statement, and (6) a list of names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of three academic references.

We actively seek applications from under-represented racial/ethnic groups, sexual minorities, veterans, persons with disabilities, and women. For additional information, please email [Dr. Leo Wilton \(lwilton@binghamton.edu\)](mailto:Dr. Leo Wilton (lwilton@binghamton.edu)), Search Committee Chair, Human Development.

### Other Calls For Submissions

#### Seeking Student Contributions for the ACYIG Blog

Have you been looking for a creative new course assignment to get students excited about the anthropology of children and youth? Have you felt like your anthropology students' written submissions could benefit from a broader audience?

The Anthropology of Children and Youth Interest Group (ACYIG) blog can publish your students' work in a special student blog series. Student posts could take a variety of forms depending on each instructor's goals—including ethnographic observations, critical reflections, fieldwork commentaries, and proposed research—and may range from very short contributions of a few hundred words to longer submissions adapted from student papers.

I invite instructors to contact me directly to express their interest, and we can work together to shape the parameters of a possible course assignment. I have some ideas to get started, but I hope this can be an iterative process. I welcome any suggestions that you may have. We appreciate your participation in this effort to enhance the variety and relevance of the ACYIG blog to the teaching and research of our professional and student members.

For more information contact Sara Thiam, the ACYIG Content Coordinator for Blog & Social Media, via email at [sthiam1@jhu.edu](mailto:sthiam1@jhu.edu).



## SOLICITATIONS FOR OCTOBER 2017

We are soliciting the following articles and features from ACYIG members for the next issue of *Neos*:

### ARTICLES (1000 WORDS OR LESS, INCLUDING REFERENCES)

**Methods and Ethics in the Anthropology of Childhood**, in which members explore the methods and ethics associated with doing research on, or with, children.

**Childhood and \_\_\_\_\_** (you fill in the blank!), in which members discuss a topic of interest to their research.

**My Experiences/Intersections with Interdisciplinary Research on Children and Youth**, in which members investigate the value, pitfalls, and lessons associated with combining anthropological research with that of other disciplines to study children and youth.

**An Ethnography of Children or Youth that has Impacted My Work**, in which members discuss their favorite classic or contemporary ethnography of children or youth. Note that this should NOT be written as a book review, but rather as an account of how a particular ethnography has impacted your theoretical or methodological approach, or how it might be used in your teaching.

**Children and Youth in Our Lives and Our Work**, in which members discuss the challenges and triumphs of balancing their own lives with their research, focusing particularly on the field work stage.

## FEATURES

**Letters to the Editor** (250 words or less), in which members comment on *Neos* and/or its contents.

**Obituaries** (250 words or less), in which members share memories of an anthropologist of children and youth. Please notify the Editor of your intent to submit an obituary.

**Photos from the Field**, which should be accompanied by a caption of 30 words or less explaining the context of the photo.

**Unsung Heroes of ACYIG** (1000 words or less), in which members interview an important contributor to ACYIG. Please notify the Editor of your intent to submit an interview. See the February 2016 issue for an example.

**New Book Announcements** (250 words or less), which must include the title, author, publisher (and the book series, if applicable), date of publication, and listing price of the book, in addition to a description of the contents. If possible, please send—as a separate attachment—a digital image of the book cover.

**Member News** (200 words or less), in which members may submit job announcements and research opportunities; grants/prizes available; calls for papers and conference announcements; recent appointments; grants received and/or prizes awarded; publication announcements; and other professional achievements.

**Correction Notices** may be submitted to the editor if *Neos* has printed an error in a previous issue.

Please refer to the General Submission Guidelines and Author Agreement for Publication on our website for more detailed information. All material should be sent to [ACYIG.Editor@gmail.com](mailto:ACYIG.Editor@gmail.com).

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