Monthly Seminar
Anthropology of Children
Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology
VU University Amsterdam

Friday 27 November 2009 13.30-15.00
VU University Amsterdam, Bellevue Building, first floor, room 50

Aim / This seminar brings together academics engaged in research with children. During monthly meetings, experts will deliver lectures and participants will discuss relevant literature. The seminar is designed to encourage child-centred approaches to children studies and to develop theory useful to cognitive and social sciences, with the accent on anthropology. The core aim of inspiring academic research with children will be stimulated through joint research projects, publications and conferences with national and international partners. Active dialogue is sought and facilitated with stakeholders and policy makers working on child-centred programmes. Specialists conducting research with adolescents are also cordially invited to participate in the seminar.

Convenor / Dr Sandra J.T.M. Evers, Associate Professor & Senior Researcher, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, VU University Amsterdam.

Information & Registration / Sandra Evers at childrenseminar@hotmail.com

We are excited to announce a lecture by Prof. Eyal Ben-Ari (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

“It’s bedtime” in the World’s Urban Middle-Classes: Children, Families, and Sleep

In the urban middle-class of the Euro-American societies we find a particular pre-sleep bedtime “ritual” that is (ideally) characterized by certain features: it usually takes place within the nuclear family, is centered on the private space of a bedroom, and includes a patterned set of activities centered on an evening meal, bathing, special clothing and toys, stories and lullabies, tucking or coddling the child, and then leaving the child alone in its room. In this lecture Prof. Ben-Ari examines this taken-for-granted “ritual” from three interrelated perspectives: an examination of how it is actually put into practice in Euro-American societies, a comparative investigation of the historical and cross-cultural differences in putting children to sleep, and an exploration of the manner and extent by which the scenario has been globalized.

Eyal Ben-Ari is Professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His broad areas of interest include the anthropology of the military, Japanese society and culture, and the sociology of anthropological knowledge. In Japan, he has carried out fieldwork on early childhood education. More information can be retrieved from Ben-Ari’s personal website: http://sociology.huji.ac.il/2006/staff/ben-ari/.