Monthly Seminar

Anthropology of Children and Youth Network

Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, VU University Amsterdam

Thursday 29 November 2012 10.30-12.00
VU University Amsterdam, Metropolitan Building, room Z-113

“And a child shall lead us”: the dynamic role of the young in the late modern world

Jim Block,
Professor of Political Science, DePaul University, Chicago

Jim Block, drawing on his study of the role of the young in American modernization in his 2012 book The Crucible of Consent: American Child Rearing and the Forging of Liberal Society (Harvard University Press, 2012), will discuss the powerful role of the young in creating American society. As Western European and then North American societies experienced the dynamic of modernization in the early modern period, they found traditional institutions, patterns of authority and hierarchy, and forms of social identity and place eroding and in the American case swept away. The young, less tied to traditional expectations and less limited by traditional constraints, quickly became more adaptive and, again in the U.S., guides to new modern ways of life, producing as a result the more fluid and open institutions of modernity. In this seminar, Block will consider the implications of the American experience for contemporary societies.

The Anthropology of Children and Youth Network (based at VU University, Amsterdam) brings together academics and practitioners engaged in research and work with children. Through monthly seminars, the Network promotes child-oriented theory, methodology, and research ethics. Besides, it serves as a platform for (interdisciplinary) academic research and it enhances dialogue with practitioners through joint research projects, publications and conferences.

Convenor / Dr Sandra J.T.M. Evers, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, VU University Amsterdam.

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

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