

Children's Embodied Social Capital and (Dis)ability: Connecting Micro- and Macro-scales of Exclusion/Inclusion

End of Project Conference, 8th July 2013
Loughborough University, UK



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Welcome

A very warm welcome to the end of award conference for our ESRC-funded project 'Children's embodied social capital and (dis)ability: connecting micro- and macro- scales of exclusion/inclusion.' This event marks the end of our funding and is a central component of our on-going dissemination activities. The aim of the conference is to present the findings of our research and to stimulate debate, discussion and the application of themes emerging from the research. We endeavour to promote dialogue between academics, policy makers, young people and parents, and other interested parties about our research findings and other, connected projects and initiatives.

We will have the honour of engaging with our esteemed keynote speaker, Professor Gill Valentine, and Panel Members: Dr Anita Franklin, Jon, Professor Janice McLaughlin and Professor Deborah Youdell.

We hope that the atmosphere is respectful, informal, and encourages lively, critical, debate that moves the research and policy field forward in a meaningful way. We are delighted that there will be over 50 delegates at the conference from a variety of academic disciplines and policy backgrounds. Please enjoy the conference; meet colleagues, acquaintances and friends new and old, and forge new and fruitful inter-disciplinary and inter-sector collaborations.

Dr Louise Holt, Dr Sophie Bowlby and Dr Jennifer Lea

The Project

This Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project investigates the links between children and young people's social relationships, (dis)ability and inclusion and exclusion. The research has examined how everyday social relationships of young people in different school, home and leisure spaces reproduce (dis)ability as a variously valued or devalued identity position, and how performances of disability and ability intersect with other power-relations, such as socio-economic class, gender, ethnicity and so on. We have been particularly interested in how such practices are connected to broader patterns of social exclusion and inclusion (how these are connected is conceptualised through the idea of embodied social capital). The starting point for the research is that identities are not natural or given, but are rather (re)produced through everyday practices. Thus, the everyday social practices of young people and adults can reflect, reproduce or potentially transform broader enduring inequalities at a variety of intersecting scales.

The context for this research is the currently contested terrain of school education of young disabled people and those diagnosed with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Over recent decades, rather than being educated in segregated special schools, increasing numbers of disabled children have been attending mainstream schools. The policy and practice of this inclusion agenda are based, among other things, on the assumption that the co-presence of (dis)abled children will transform dominant, devalued representations of disability among children currently, and in wider society in the future.

However, critical accounts of inclusion have questioned to what extent the ways in which educational inclusion is implemented promotes disabled children's long term social inclusion. Moreover, there is a current re-appraisal of the appropriate place for the education of disabled children and those with SEN in the UK and other national contexts. Debate about the education of children and young people with SEN and disabilities generally focus on *adults'* perceptions. Within the small amount of research that has explored young people's accounts, the experiences of certain groups has been largely absent – particularly those with learning or socio-emotional differences and young people diagnosed as being on the Autistic Spectrum.

The purpose of this research has been therefore to focus on young people's experiences, especially those groups who have been absent in previous research; to assess how far the everyday practices and social interactions of young people in different school contexts promote greater social inclusion of young people with mind-body-emotional differences. However, in our research we have not handed epistemological privilege to young people. Rather, like adults, young people are embodied beings, constrained and enabled by a variety of factors in conscious and subconscious ways (i.e. young people are knowledgeable, but not all-knowing actors). This complex view of agency has presented methodological challenges.

The research is particularly timely given the current national review and assessment of the inclusion agenda and a broader reanalysis of special education.

The Research Team

Dr Louise Holt (Principal Investigator) is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography, Loughborough University:

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/geography/staff/academic/holt-l.html>

Dr Sophie Bowlby (Co-Investigator) is Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences, The University of Reading:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/geographyandenvironmentalscience/About/Staff/s-r-bowlby.aspx>

Dr Jennifer Lea (Research Associate) is Lecturer in the Department of Geography, University of Exeter:

https://geography.exeter.ac.uk/staff/index.php?web_id=Jennifer_Lea

Ms. Gudbjorg Ottosdottir (Research Assistant) is a doctoral student at Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences, The University of Reading.

Programme

10:00 – 10:30	Registration - Swift Room Coffee - Main Lounge Area
10:30 – 12:00	Overview of the Project and Key Findings – Dr Louise Holt, Dr Sophie Bowlby and Dr Jennifer Lea
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch – Main Restaurant
13:00 - 14:00	Workshops
14:00 -14:30	Coffee – Main Lounge Area
14:30 -15:00	Workshop Feedback
15:00 – 15:45	Keynote – Professor Gill Valentine: 'Children and 'Difference': social capital, moral dispositions and the (un)making of prejudice'
15:45 – 16:45	Panel Discussion
16:45 – 17:00	Closing Remarks – Dr Louise Holt, Dr Sophie Bowlby and Dr Jennifer Lea

The Venue

The main room for the conference is the Swift Room. We will also be using two break-out rooms for the workshops. Coffee will be served in the main lounge area. There are specific coffee breaks. However, refreshments are available in the lounge area throughout the day. Lunch will be in the main restaurant.

Internet Access

To connect to the Wi-Fi search for "imago" and select. Then click on the self- registration link at the top of the page. Enter the details as required & the daily login code (available at reception).

Invited Speakers

Keynote - Professor Gill Valentine

Professor Valentine is Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Social Science, University of Sheffield. She is a leading international social scientist and a founding researcher of social studies/geographies of childhood and disability. More specifically, Gill's research focuses upon social identities and belonging; childhood, parenting and family life; and urban cultures and consumption. Many of her 15 single and co-authored or edited books have been translated into multiple languages. Gill has written 170 journal articles and reports, and been awarded 14 research grants. The recipient of many prizes, Gill's recent awards include the Philip Leverhulme Prize and Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographies Gill Memorial Award. She is also an Academician in the Social Sciences. Her published research has inspired the research team.

Panel Members

Dr Anita Franklin, Centre for Children's and Families' Applied Research, Coventry University

Anita has recently taken a position in the Centre for Children's and Families' Applied Research at Coventry University, after working for many years in the voluntary sector as a Senior Researcher at the Children's Society. Her research interests and expertise focus on the participation of marginalised children and young people in both research and broader society, with a particular focus on young people with chronic illnesses and disabilities. Recent projects include: Viper – a three-year project funded by the National Lottery to explore effective ways of encouraging the participation of disabled young people in the development of services; Evaluations of the Communicate Together and PACT fun and friendship for disabled children and young people project (both funded by the Children's Society) and a scoping review of the practical care arrangements of children who have been or who may have been trafficked. Anita is the author of over 23 publications.

Jon, Head teacher, Special School

Jon is the head teacher of a special school for young people with complex learning differences. In the interests of preserving the anonymity of our young participants, we cannot give further biographical details of Jon, but he will speak for himself at the panel.

Professor Janice McLaughlin, PEALS, University of Newcastle

Janice's current research is concerned with exploring how childhood disability or illness is framed from within the worlds of medicine, community and family. Through this research interest crucial insights are being generated on the importance of the relationships between these different worlds in the production of meaning. The work challenges existing perceptions within disability studies that children and their families are simple objects of medical inquiry, alongside challenging perceptions in medical sociology that disability is interesting when it happens to previously 'normal' adult bodies. This research has inspired an interest in both the fluidity of kinship relations, which are not framed by biology, and the significance of genetics in ascribing particular narratives of family, based on biological ties. Janice also has an enduring interest and expertise in contemporary feminist social theory, in particular in relation to identities, materiality and critical theory.

In addition to many journal articles and book chapters, Janice is author, co-author and editor of multiple works including: *Feminist Social and Political Theory: contemporary debates and dialogues*; *Families Raising Disabled Children: enabling care and social justice*; *Valuing Technology: organisations, culture and change*; *Contesting Recognition: culture, identity and citizenship*; and, *Intersections Between Feminist and Queer Theory*.

Professor Deborah Youdell, School of Education, University of Birmingham

Deborah's work is concerned with inequalities and their connection to subjectivities, everyday practice, pedagogy, institutional processes and education policy. Her work covers a range of categories of identity and their intersections including race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, social class, ability and disability. A central concern is how educators can practice in ways that interrupt educational exclusions and intervene in inequalities. Deborah's research is underpinned by post-structural thinking about power, the subject, space, and the political. Key theorists include Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, as well as the work of Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Her research expertise is in ethnography and action research.

Among other works, Deborah is author of *School Trouble: identity, power and politics in education* and *Impossible Bodies, Impossible Selves: exclusions and student subjectivities*. She is co-author of the award-winning book *Rationing Education: policy, practice, reform and equity*. She is Regional Editor of the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* and is on the Editorial Boards of the *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *Race Ethnicity Education*, and *Gender and Education*.

Workshop Themes

If you have yet to select a workshop to attend, please sign up to one of the workshops at the registration desk:

1. How have the research findings contributed to the academic field:
 - a. Empirically?
 - b. Conceptually?
 - c. Theoretically?

Professor Deborah Youdell, University of Birmingham

2. The methodological approach; what are its innovations, strengths and limitations in comparison with other research in the field.

Professor Janice McLaughlin, University of Newcastle

3. What lessons can be learned from our research for policy and practice at different scales:
 - a. The school
 - b. The Local Authority
 - c. Nationally
 - d. Internationally

Jon, Head Teacher, Special School

4. Making an Impact: what mechanisms can we employ to ensure that the potential contributions of our research to policy and practice are realised?

Dr Anita Franklin, Coventry University

5. The Big questions – what big questions are raised for future research?

Dr John Horton, The University of Northampton.

Publications

Holt, L. Lea, J. and Bowlby, S. (2012) 'Special units for young people on the Autistic Spectrum in mainstream schools: sites of normalisation, abnormalisation, inclusion and exclusion' *Environment and Planning A* 44(9): 2191 – 2206

Holt, L. Bowlby, S. and Lea, J. (in press) 'Emotions and the habitus: young people with socio-emotional differences (re)producing social, emotional and cultural capital in family and leisure space-times' *Emotion, Space and Society*
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1755458613000170>

Bowlby, S. Lea, J. and Holt, L. (in press) Learning how to behave in school: a study of the experiences of children and young people with socio-emotional differences, in Mills, S. and Kraftl, P. (eds) *Informal Education, Childhood and Youth: Geographies, Histories, Practices* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Presentations

'Behaviourally, emotionally and socially 'problematic' students: interrogating emotional governance as an exclusionary practice.' 4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Emotional Geographies, University of Groningen, July 2013.

'The use of restorative approaches to justice within school inclusion units.' Geographies of Education Conference, Loughborough University, September 2012.

'Embodied social capital and (dis)ability – what an attention to social and cultural spatiality, (de)valued identities and intersectionality can contribute to our understandings of (dis)ability.' Invited presentation, Disabled Children's Research Network, Bristol University, May 2012.

'Young people with socio-emotional differences in primary schools: from socio-spatially diverse experiences of (dis)ablement to the increasing codification and formalisation of socio-emotional norms.' Association of American Geographers Annual Conference, New York, February 2012.

'Policies and politics of inclusion and exclusion for young people with socio-emotional differences'. Association of American Geographers Annual Conference, New York, February 2012.

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'Alternative spaces of education for young people with socio-emotional differences in mainstream schools: inclusion through exclusion or exclusion within inclusion?' Association of American Geographers Annual Conference, Seattle, April 2011.

'Special units for young people with socio-emotional differences: sites of inclusion and/or segregation?' Does Every Child Matter? End of Award Conference, Manchester Metropolitan University, April 2011.

'Children's embodied social capital and (dis)ability – connecting micro- and macro- scales of inclusion/exclusion across the life-course.' RGS-IBG Annual Conference, London, September 2011.

'Emotional, social and behavioural norms: making inclusive education?' RGS-IBG Annual Conference, London, September 2010.

'Emotional, social and behavioural norms: making inclusive education?' Critical Disability Studies Conference, Manchester Metropolitan University, May 2010.

'Placing emotional, social and behavioural norms: geographies of children and (dis)ability.' Seminar, Department of Geography, University of Brighton, February 2010.

'Children's embodied social capital and (dis)ability: connecting micro- and macro- scales of exclusion/inclusion'. Spaces of Education Conference, Loughborough University, September 2009.

Further Information

Please see our website: <http://socialcapital.lboro.ac.uk.webhost1.lboro.ac.uk/>

Children's Embodied Social Capital and (Dis)ability

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