

Representations of Child Poverty

Dena Aufseeser, Department of Geography and Environmental Systems, University of Maryland – Baltimore County

I will discuss how representations of child poverty both reinforce and potentially challenge more mainstream attitudes about the deserving poor and the independent self-made man. I will examine some of the tensions between ways in which children are assumed to be deserving of help, and how recognition of children's agency, especially among older children and teenagers, may remove them from this category of 'deserving'. I will conclude by thinking about how recognition of children's dependency can resolve some of this tension, and challenge the myth of the self-made man.

Key words: child poverty, deserving poor, agency, neoliberal subject.

Working children and rural poverty

Kacy McKinney, Department of Geography, Middlebury College

While my own work is focused on children engaged in agricultural wage labor in India and Brazil, I am interested in sparking a broader discussion on how we can think about shifting landscapes of rural poverty through the lens of children's and young people's experiences and understandings of work and economies.

(Keywords: children, labor, rural spaces, development)

Middle class and poor youth in India

Stephen Young, Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin at Madison

This talk will focus on how young men in some of India's more provincial cities are both reacting to and reworking processes of economic liberalization. I highlight moments of alliance and accommodation among different youth, as well as more nefarious forms of private enterprise that reinforce social inequalities. Key themes that emerge in the research are enterprise, inequality, gender/masculinities, mobility, and improvisation/adhocism.

“We belong together”

Kristy Copeland, Department of Geography, University of Washington

This presentation discusses alliances within the movement to frame U.S. immigration reform as a women's issue.

Thinking Relationally about Structural Racism

Magie Ramirez, Department of Geography, University of Washington

Discussing race and racism in the United States can be a challenging feat due to the dominant ideology of American society having reached a "post-race" or "colorblind" era. It can be particularly difficult to engage privileged subjects in a conversation about structural racism due to their reluctance to feel responsible, guilty or uncomfortable. How might we invoke a relational lens to understand how we are all implicated and paralyzed

by structural racism, and how we could all benefit from anti-racist organizing and scholarship?

The Poetry of Poverty: Voice and Visibility

Jane Wong, Department of English, University of Washington

In the poem “Penny Men” by Rigoberto Gonzalez, he writes: “They come to live like loose change//in a country that drops its pennies/and leaves them there; in a country whose jingle of coins muffles the sound of backbones cracking.” This poem acts as a dedication for migrant workers, through the act of poetic witness. Many Americans facing poverty feel the desire for “pennies,” for a life more than “loose change”. I am proposing a short, 5-minute lightning talk to discuss the impact of poetry engaging poverty. Moving away from the academy, what can poetry offer as an alternative mode of discussing poverty? What kind of communities can poetry create in response to poverty? Through examples of poems on poverty and youth organizations committed to discussing poverty through poetry, I argue that poetry strengthens visibility through safe, open expression (to say “we exist”). In this way, the poetry of poverty is both an act of personal expression and responsibility to witness. I hope to end my short talk with my own poem, in which I recall my upbringing.

Seattle’s Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

David Giles, Department of Anthropology, University of Canterbury / University of Washington at Bothell

Like many US cities, Seattle followed a federal mandate to implement a Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, beginning in July 2005. Ostensibly, Seattle’s plan emphasized the development of new affordable housing stock and new pathways to housing, in addition to maintaining the existing shelter system. But nearly ten years later, the crisis of homelessness in the city is far from over. Indeed, even as Seattle has become the fastest growing city in the country—and one of the wealthiest—so have the number of people sleeping rough or using the shelter system grown. Along the way, Seattle’s Ten-Year Plan has been the subject equally of congratulations, critiques, and allegations, the latter ranging from misguided priorities and inadequate representation, to underfunding and real estate profiteering. Based on interviews with local advocates, service agencies, and shelterless citizens, this lightning talk explores the ambitions, consequences, and complications at work, on one hand in the architecture and implementation of the plan, and on the other hand in the larger political economy of Seattle’s present fortunes—which remain largely unquestioned within the plan itself. As much of the city continues to grow and prosper, this paper asks: what will the next ten years hold for Seattle’s shelterless residents, and what can we expect to do about it?

Mapping Alternative political Futures: Neighborhood Assemblies and cross-class alliances in neoliberal Buenos Aires

Monica Farias, Department of Geography, University of Washington

The proposed research focuses on ‘successful’ *asambleas populares* (popular assemblies) in Buenos Aires to understand their durability and to explore their potential for renegotiating class differences, advance cross-class alliances, and rework middle-class

actors poverty politics. I have conducted ethnographic work in two *asambleas* that have persisted as part of post-crisis urban politics in order to explore the ways in which class identities, values, norms and representations of poverty are being renegotiated through long-term encounters between people from different class extraction. The objectives of this research are to understand what are the conditions of continuing existence for the these two cases, particularly after 2003; how class borders are blurred, privileges acknowledged and what sorts of new political subjects are being produced through interactions in the *asambleas*; and what's the relationship that *asambleas* have with political institutions and what kinds of political practices and alliance politics are emerging and being enacted in these spaces.