

Sensing the City

Antwerp, 6-8 July 2020



International Sociological Association, Research Committee 21 on Urban and Regional Development
2020 Annual Conference, "[Shaping and sensing the city: power, people, place](#)", Antwerp 6-8 July

SESSION 56

Sensing and shaping urban marginality: multimodal and engaged research with children and young people

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The presence of children and young people in the public space, as well as their participation to the social and cultural life of cities, can be seen as a litmus test of what works and what not in terms of social, environmental, and generational justice. In particular, the social navigations of those children and young people who experience urban marginality reveal how structural inequalities are reproduced and opportunities for social transformation are shaped. Their knowledge and views about the world, however, are largely disregarded and delegitimised in hegemonic discourses. These tend to depict urban marginality through stereotyped and essentialized descriptions, either as a site of resentment, insecurity and decay; or as a field where dominant norms about “worthy futures” trigger upward social mobility trajectories. In this context, children and young people are described through either alarmistic or pietistic imageries. What is often overlooked, however, are the constraints and negotiations that shape their navigations across multiple forms of urban inequality. Their ability to cope with the (re)production of marginalities as part of contemporary urban transformations, as well as their strategies to deal with the making of new boundaries, hardly enters into mainstream narratives, but is rather neglected and invisibilised.

Building on this, the session aims to collect contributions from scholars who with their work aim to co-create spaces of legitimacy, communication and imagination *with* those children and young people that rarely talk for themselves in the public sphere. The panel will provide a space to share research practices and to debate methodological and ethical dilemmas.

We welcome experiences of multimodal research that actively involve participants in the knowledge production process; collaborate or dialogue with social movements; take advantage of the opportunities generated by digital technologies; support children and young people to construct new narratives about themselves through creative practices; and critically reflect on research positionality and the limits of research as transformative force.

We are inviting paper submissions addressing the following questions:

- What are the principles to be considered when embarking on engaged research projects with children and young people experiencing urban marginality? In what way should these principles guide the research process, and what methodological choices do they bring about?
- What do creative and experimental approaches uncover about the methodological potentials of uncertainty and failure? How can we integrate inconsistency into our research projects?
- How do the “narrative spaces” created by multimodal research approaches contribute to reshape the imageries and the experiences of urban marginality?
- What are the main ethical dilemmas and criticisms that researchers face in their attempt to address power relations and inequalities within and beyond their research?

The main format of the session will be paper presentation. However, given the focus of our call, we encourage participants to share multimodal contributions.

Abstracts must be submitted by **15 March 2020** through the conference website via the following link: <http://bit.ly/session56>.

For any question and doubt, please email kitti.baracsi@gmail.com or s.piemontese@bham.ac.uk.