



## THE FINNISH YOUTH RESEARCH SOCIETY

# PUBLICATIONS

### Finnish Youth Research Anthology 1999–2014

**TOMMI HOIKKALA &  
MERI KARJALAINEN (EDS.)**

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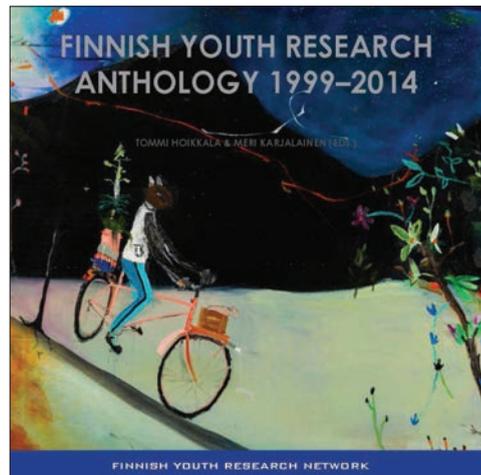
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**Price: 34 euros**

Orders: [office@youthresearch.fi](mailto:office@youthresearch.fi)

This book is a compilation of peer-reviewed articles in English by youth researchers connected to the Finnish Youth Research Network (FYRN) that have been published during 1999–2014. The book showcases the achievements of the vibrant youth research community in Finland. The anthology brings to fore a selection of the type of research conducted by FYRN that is published internationally. One of the historically distinctive features of Finnish youth research lies in its connection with youth and public policy. A context like



this produced the need for the research to contribute to the academic debate whilst also informing public policy. The book provides an overview of the Finnish youth research system and its fields. It contains an abundance of interesting articles from which to choose. The topics range from life cycle, social worlds and generation; scripts, discourses and narratives on youth; institutions and practices; media and consumption; ethnicity and multiculturalism, and youth work to research approaches and concepts.

All English abstracts are available at  
<http://www.youthresearch.fi/publications/abstracts>

# Exceptional Life Courses. Elite Athletes and Successful Artists in 2000s Finland

**MIKKO SALASUO, MIKKO PIISPA  
& HELENA HUHTA**

The publication is an abbreviated English translation of two books published in Finnish.

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Year of publication: 2016  
Paperback, 273 pages

This is not a guide book on how to become an elite athlete or a successful artist, in detail or in general. Instead, this book examines how a group of young Finnish people have become elite athletes and successful artists, and been socialized into athleticism and artishood, respectively. At the same time, we analyse what it means to be an athlete or an artist in the 21st century Finland.

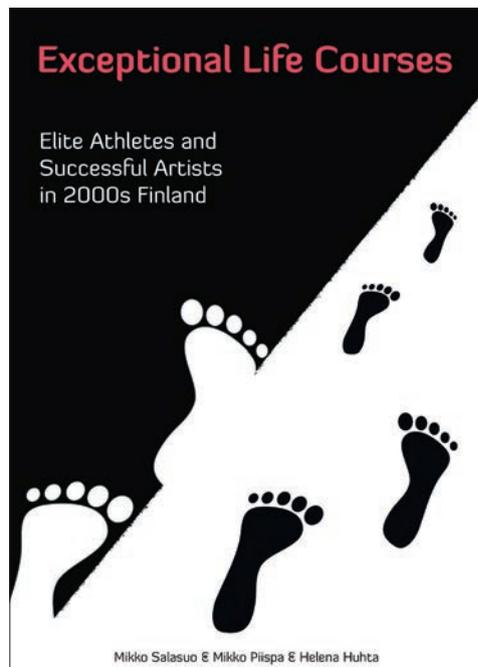
The research data consists of the biographical interviews of 96 athletes and 29 artists. The key research problem of this study is derived from the interpretation framework of the life course analysis. We try to retrace the life courses of those elite athletes and top artists who have succeeded in the late 1990's and early 2000's – precisely how and why these athletes and artists have made it to the top in their respective fields, in this particular historical time?

Of the athletes, 78 are elite athletes and 18 have dropped out on the verge of reaching the top. An additional perspective is introduced by the fact that 20 of the interviewees come from multicultural backgrounds. The interviewees represent a total of 45 disciplines. The average age of the athletes in the research data is 25 years and 6 months. In addition to the analysis, the study draws on extensive international research findings, particularly in the field of athletes'

career research. Along with the athletes, 29 successful young artists were interviewed. They represented various fields of art and their average age is approximately 33 years and 6 months. In arts, as in science, success is typically achieved some 10–20 years later than in sports, thus, the artists interviewed for the purposes of this study can be considered to have succeeded at a very young age.

The life courses of successful athletes and artists are often considered 'exceptional'. Life stories of exceptional individuals generally attract and interest people. A large number of different beliefs and myths are related to, for example, elite sports. A very different picture is drawn when studying the lives of elite athletes and successful artists, the different phases and contexts of life, and factors influencing them. This perspective pulls the superhuman or the genius down from his or her stand. This is the key idea of this publication. Examining the life courses of successful individuals in two very different walks of life opens up a very comprehensive and interesting research perspective.

What are the factors behind the success of those age groups that have spent at least part of



their childhood and adolescence in the final and culmination phases of the Finnish welfare state in the 1970's and 1980's but built their careers in the new, post-depression and technology-driven information society of the 1990's, in the "Nokia Wunderland"? Placing the life course in a particular time and place is the key starting point of this study.

The research method is called the life course analysis. In its analysis framework the vertical life history of the interviewees and the horizontal turning points – whether they relate to the interviewees own life or to the surrounding society – intersect. The analysis framework is a tool through which the life story interviews of the athletes and the artists are interpreted, viewed and analysed. This framework has, during the course of development of the life course research method, been recapped to five principles or axioms to trace and reconstruct the psychological, social, cultural and structural factors in an individual's life.

The first principle of the life course analysis is the cumulative nature of human life meaning that everything that has taken place also has an impact on the present and on the future. The second principle in the life course analysis is the meaning of social networks. Family, relatives, friends and acquaintances build up different networks in everyone's life. According to the third principle of the life course analysis, each individual is born to a certain historical time and place. In this case, the time is the end of the 20th century and the beginning of a new one. According to the fourth principle people actively strive to steer their lives, within the existing possibilities. This axiom, called the principle of agency in the field of the life course research, suggests that people intentionally plan and execute actions and practices in their lives. The fifth and last principle of the life course analysis: transitions. The life course consists of phases in life and transitions between them. The individual's position changes along with the transitions which has an impact on the individual but also on other people.

## Results

An athlete's or an artist's family is the primary institution of socialization. The parents of more than half of the interviewed athletes were former elite or competitive athletes themselves, i.e. insiders of sport. Athleticism was passed on to younger generations in many ways at the 'family table', either by active guidance or by merely showing example. When siblings were taken into account we noticed that only about a quarter of the athletes had grown up in families where they were the only ones engaged in competitive sports. In addition, sport and exercise played a key role in the parenting practices of many families.

The role of friends and acquaintances as well as other social networks outside the family was somewhat different. Whilst the athletes typically spent their time in sporty circles of friends, the artists had often found their peer groups only later in life. Mid-teen years, the early planning of the future career, including the choice of upper secondary school are important elements here. In those years, it also became evident how much more 'hurried' the career of an athlete is, compared to that of an artist.

This typically leads to a very unusual or exceptional life, in many ways, of the young aspiring athlete. Sport becomes an agent and an institution that greatly steers the athlete's life and its target setting whereas other life paths become secondary or marginalized. The development of an artist is the opposite. Although being an artist and the educational choices related to it undeniably build a strong identity, an artist is typically open to the world instead of excluding himself from it. At the same time, the various ways of developing as an artist open up new perspectives and widen the horizon which obviously may lead to insecurity, too. Contrary to being an athlete, being an artist is a profession, a career path and professional life that can last a lifetime. Being an athlete is a relatively short period of life after which the athlete has to look for something else in life.

An athlete's short career is strongly determined by different normativities. Research helps us locate important transitions and life phases in sport. Their development within

the sport system should be based on research knowledge. In this way, we could guarantee the sustainability of the growth processes of children and youth. The foundations for both a sporty lifestyle and a possible career in elite sports are laid in childhood.

Normativity is clearly less important in the growing up and the development of artists. Differences between artists were big, in terms of the onset of their creative or artistic activities and the timing of their artistic realization as well as their breakthrough as professional artists. Compared to athletes, transitions are not so obvious in an artist's career. Some essential transitions are recognizable, however: education is a kind of a cornerstone as the gatekeepers of art are standing by at the entry and exit doors of art schools.

When talking about success in sport or art, we cannot omit the role of chance. An aspiring athlete naturally tries to avoid unfortunate coincidences and maintain symmetry in life. In art, chance may play a significant role; who surfaces as well as when and why, often depends on chance or coincidences. Artistic fields are insecure in many ways, financially or otherwise, and chance always plays a role in, for example, the continuation of making one's living as an artist.

The role of chance was also emphasized in the interviews of those athletes who had dropped out. One unfortunate coincidence, an injury or something else, could stop a promising career. On the other hand, many had dropped out of sports because they wanted to do something else in life – in other words, the strongly normative nature of sport did not appeal. Another underlined feature was the exceptional amount of discipline, ambition and rationality needed in sport. Without these qualities, reaching the top becomes improbable. Discipline and commitment in the artist's work were brought up, too, as many interviewees stressed that what they do is 'so crazy' that you really have to believe in it and work very hard for it if you want to succeed.

In addition to dropout athletes, multicultural athletes constituted their own 'micro' research data within the athlete interviews. Their life stories were different from those of the

native Finns. The role of the family was equally important in the stories of multicultural athletes but there was also pluralism in their family backgrounds. Whereas some parents went as far as pushing their children to sports, others didn't even know that instructed sport activities exist. Racism was another important theme in the interviews of these athletes. Most of the interviewed multicultural athletes, especially those with a black skin, had experienced it. To most athletes, however, multiculturalism was seen as an asset and it should be seen as such especially from the perspective of elite sports. The theme clearly calls for some further research.

The publication is available free of charge from our website:  
[http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/images/julkaisuja/exceptional\\_life\\_courses.pdf](http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/images/julkaisuja/exceptional_life_courses.pdf)

See also:  
<http://www.youthresearch.fi/exceptionallifecourses-english>

# I am Fire but my Environment is the Lighter.

## A Study on Locality, Mobility, and Youth Engagement in the Barents Region

TOMI KIILAKOSKI

Original language of the publication is English.

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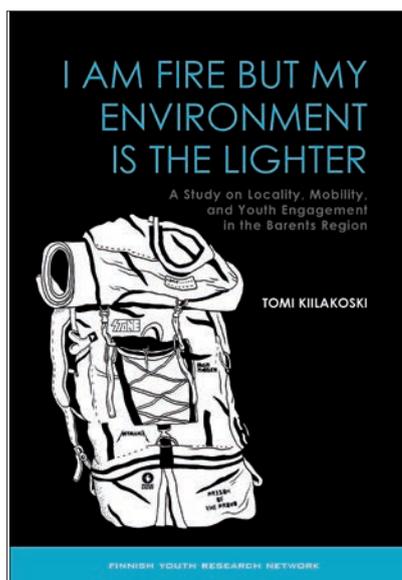
Year of publication: 2016

Paperback, 61 pages

The purpose of this study is to provide an insight into how the youth of the Barents Region view their lives and to analyse the implications of these experiences for youth policy. The study focuses upon three locations in the very north of the Barents Regions in Inari, Finland, Alta, Norway, and Murmansk, Russia.

The methodology of the research was to examine pieces of artwork done by young people. The data consisted of drawings, photographs, songs, and research interviews. The aim was to use artistic methods to explore the conditions, youth cultures, and daily life situations of the young residents. Accordingly, the research was both qualitative and participatory – the respondents were free to choose the themes they wanted to tackle and the art form with which to do so. The theoretical concepts that were used to analyse the data were space/place, mobility, and engagement.

The youth of the Barents Region emphasise the importance of nature and home. Their relation to nature is multifaceted, such as: traditional livelihoods, human-animal interactions with reindeers, hunting, hiking, jogging, or riding



snowmobiles. Nature becomes a meaningful part of everyday life. Additionally, nature is strongly connected to peer activities as it offers opportunities to be outside adult supervision. Furthermore, through media the youth in the Barents region are a part of global youth cultures. These results are in contrast with studies of urban young and youth cultures. A study emphasises when studying young people from outside urban centres, the different relationships to the environment cannot be analysed using the denaturalised categories of urban youth cultures.

Mobility in the Barents region is both a possibility and a social imperative. According to the results, the issue of mobility involves overcoming large geographical distances, facing the youth cultural distances, coming to terms with peers leaving (and thus addressing the temporality of social ties and learning to leave oneself. Furthermore, the this study found that youth should be able to face the temporality of their social ties and even their own living in the region. Due to the mobility imperative they should be able to make a transition to other locations and can live a good life there. There is a dual task of learning to leave and to be mobile, whilst at the same time learning to understand the value of their surroundings and community.

# Young people's life in the sparsely populated periphery of Finland

in Finnish: *Reunamerkintöjä Hylkysyrjästä – Nuorten elämänraameja ja tulevaisuudenkuvia harvaanasutulla maaseudulla*

**PÄIVI ARMILA, TERHI HALONEN & MARI KÄYHKÖ**

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Year of publication: 2016

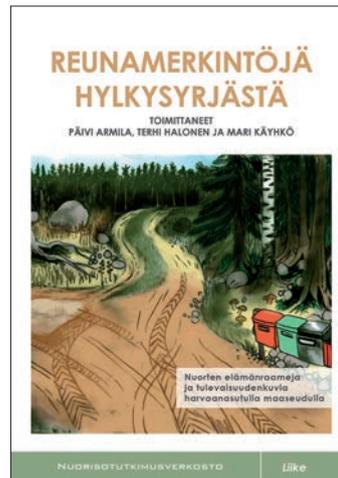
Paperback, 159 pages

Language: Finnish

The aim of the work entitled *Reunamerkintöjä Hylkysyrjästä* ('Notes from the margins: Hylkysyrjä village') is to examine and understand what it is to be a young person in places that are geographically and socially far removed from shared meeting points such as schools, organised activities and friends. This type of living environment was constructed for the purposes of the study as a methodological type, a village named Hylkysyrjä ('abandoned fringe'). Despite its name it is not simply a wretched landscape – or mindscape – forsaken by everyone.

The empirical material in the book's articles has been gathered from small villages in Eastern Finland that are situated far from municipal population centres. The book is composed of sections that depict the life cycle and historical development of Hylkysyrjä and research articles analysing the daily lives and future plans of young people living there today, based on listening to the views of young people and the adults advising them. Added to the mix are some more general views focusing on youth experiences in remote districts and research in this field.

The history of Hylkysyrjä is a tale of growth and decline, with a storyline focusing first on a carefully calculated regional policy designed to enliven village communities and then the systematic shutdown of this approach. When it



was once a vigorous community, the village had a lot of young people, access to schools close to home, active organised activities and a clear future outlook. Structural changes in society then led the prosperity and vitality of Hylkysyrjä to falter and fade, and the twenty-first century now sees a situation where the village has only one young person, with a hundred-kilometre trip to school and no opportunity to engage with friends other than at school, on the journey to and from it and over the internet. After the completion of compulsory education, these circumstances typically encourage early independence in young people and an ability to cope with the education or training that is demanded by society, in a provincial centre far from home. Coping is not always a foregone conclusion.

Living in Hylkysyrjä village is challenging, but it can also bring a lot of positives to the life of a young person: a life isolated by distance heightens the importance of the home and its surroundings, the family, grandparents and relatives, as emotional and tangible sources of support. The role of family is also very significant when putting together plans for the future: it will feel safer to leave home to study in a place where an uncle, aunt or big sister lives. When they reach their early teenage years at school, the young people of the village know that they will have to leave Hylkysyrjä. But there will always be one who plans to return – even to the same place where a parent was born or where grandparents once lived.

# A Healthy Soldier. An ethnographic study on conscripts' health sense as a social phenomenon

in Finnish: *Terve sotilas! Etnografinen tutkimus varusmiesten terveystajusta sosiaalisena ilmiönä*

**ANNI OJAJÄRVI**

ISBN: 978-952-5994-80-3, ISSN: 1799-9219

Year of publication: 2015

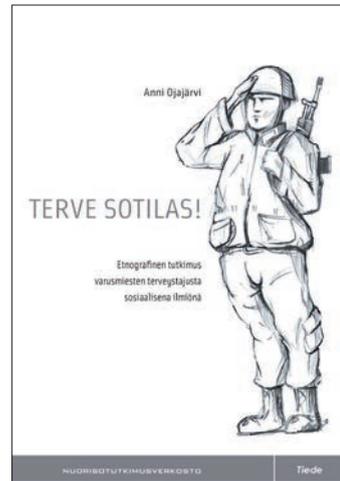
Paperback, 296 pages

Language: Finnish

This study observes young men's health behaviour during military service. In addition to individual health choices, the study analyses how the practices of the military institution, the conscript community and the images of and expectations for the conscript role guide and restrict the health choices of the conscripts. The purpose of this study is to determine how health behavior is constructed in different social contexts, amongst the orders of a total institution. The study is situated in the field of qualitative health research.

The research material involves an ethnographic field study conducted in Parolannummi Panzer Brigade in 2008. The researcher participated, during eight weeks and full time, in the initial conscript training, lived with the conscripts and observed the everyday life in the army. The conscripts were also interviewed; altogether 39 individual interviews of 15 men and 8 women, some of them twice, were made.

On the basis of the results, the conscripts' health behaviour can be determined as a communal process defined by an institution. An individual conscript makes choices in the midst of the strictly defined everyday life of a totalitarian establishment and the social reality of the conscript community. In the absence of a strong personal motive for guiding the indi-



vidual health choices, the young person adheres to institutional practices and to the conscript community. The logic and objectives of military training or the practices of the conscript community do not always support the aims of health education. Instead, the everyday life in the army often contradicts the health perspective.

In the analytical chapters of the study, the limits between sickness and health, eating, smoking and alcohol consumption are reviewed. Findings include answers to questions such as how smoking may be a smart choice from the conscript point of view, how collective army stories are related to conscripts' alcohol consumption, how being occasionally sick is connected to conscript's social identity, and how eating is split to fuelling up and eating for pleasure. At the same time, we discover how a 21st century young man revives the ethos of sustaining but, differing from the traditional ethos of self-sustaining, shares his difficult life situations with others. The analytical chapters also suggest conscript ideals, constructed on the basis of the study material, which define the limits of a socially acceptable conscript role. The study calls attention to everyday practices in the institution and the conscript community's ways of acting, whenever aiming at influencing the conscripts' health behaviour.

# Guidelines for defining and evaluating the youth affairs sector

in Finnish: Suuntaviivoja nuorisotoimialan määrittelyyn ja arviointiin

**ANU GRETSCHEL,  
PIRJO JUNTILA-VITIKKA &  
ANNE PUURONEN**

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Year of publication: 2016

Paperback, 248 pages

Language: Finnish



The aim of the study was to present an overall examination of the utility of practices for evaluating youth work and the youth affairs sector and for reporting on these, and to indicate how these practices can be reshaped. This also required a fresh look at and a redefinition of the youth affairs sector and its operating environment.

The study was carried out through network-based collaboration with young people, with operators and decision-makers in the youth sector, and with representatives of funding entities. The network-based collaboration emphasised the need to recognise that actions take place in a performance management environment and that the processes in youth work are diverse. There was also an understanding that improved evaluation practices would benefit all parties. In the proposals for new evaluation models the aim was to create models that would meet the aforementioned needs regarding the development of evaluation across a broad front. The study produced a number of youth work evaluation models that bring together the evaluation objective of: a) producing information for operators as a basis for further developing their operations; b) producing documentation for decision-makers

and funding entities in response to the funding of youth work; c) producing information for the entire sector on the use of services and the functioning of the services domain; and d) offering young people opportunities to participate in determining the orientation of services, in the role of co-evaluators.

For practical purposes the study was divided into four sections. The section on service and development centres for youth work examined the duties and essence of the centres, which fall within the performance management sphere of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the structural evaluation challenges. The study was undertaken as a networkbased process in cooperation with the service and development centres and representatives of the Ministry. It highlighted the extensive scope of the network as a structure producing various specialist and development services as well as youth services. The most significant development areas presented include the redefinition and highlighting of the criteria for designating service and development centres, and development of the evaluation tool used by the Ministry in evaluating the work of the centres. The study also involved an evaluation of the operation of one

of the service and development centres with the aid of a deliberative discussion day method. The evaluation process drew attention to the quality criteria for specialist services. It also validated the project's presupposition that an inclusive evaluation method that involves young people and the collaborating partners will produce benefits for all participants in the process.

In the section of the study dealing with on-line and local services, an evaluation was made of the extent to which six online services and the local services of one city district meet the needs of young people. The evaluators were young people, services providers and representatives of entities providing funding for the services. For the services providers and funding entities the evaluation gave rise to a number of service development ideas that were jointly discussed at length. The evaluation provided the researcher with a basis against which to compare the evaluation and reporting methods used earlier in the services and the results that emerged from these. The results of this part of the study emphasised the need for the identifiers in use today to be supplemented with elements that stress the nature of open youth work. Alongside visitor numbers the reporting should also include information on equal and unrestricted access to services, on the systematic nature of service quality monitoring, on client satisfaction and on the results concerning evaluation of the extent to which services meet young people's needs. There also emerged a need to further develop methods that document the impact and effectiveness of open youth work and which would take account of the significance of the work not only at the individual level but also for groups, communities and society.

In targeted services (outreach youth work, youth workshops and the Nuotta social reinforcement training for young people), the study focused on defining the form of the work and developing a multiple constituency evaluation model. The methods employed were a questionnaire survey directed at operators and a dialogue-based development process. In the internal specification of the form of the work, the way forward is seen as a recasting and reorganising of the collaborative opportunities in standard and specialised youth work. This

is highlighted as a youth work goal uniting the entire sector and replacing the notion of keeping different forms of work separate. Evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of targeted services can be furthered by applying the multiple constituency evaluation method to the process evaluation of a young person. With this method, the process evaluation criteria should take account of the need to be youth-oriented, the relationship between the process and the number of young people and the local availability of youth services, and the role of multidisciplinary cooperation as part of the learning and operating environments of targeted youth work. Alongside process evaluation, the application of multiple constituency evaluation to the targeted services should take account of the young person's previous service experience and the realisation of service needs, and subsequent process evaluation.

The section of the study that deals with definition of the youth affairs sector draws attention to the shortcomings of the sector's current definitions and presents a new analysis of the sector put together jointly by the researchers. The proposed new sectoral analysis draws on the extensive material collected in the network-based process and from youth work research. The new analysis model is proposed for wide use as a basis for evaluation of the youth affairs sector.

# Youth Barometer 2015

in Finnish: *Arjen jäljillä*  
– Nuorisobarometri 2015

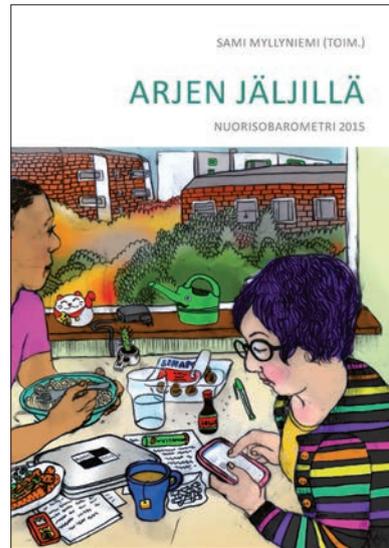
**SAMI MYLLYNIEMI (ED.)**

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Language: Finnish



The Youth Barometer is an annual questionnaire study on the values and attitudes of young people between 15 and 29 who live in Finland, carried out since 1994. The 2015 Barometer is based on a total of 1894 telephone interviews, and its theme is everyday life management.

The various dimensions of everyday life management form a compact whole in the questionnaire. The financial and social questions, as well as those related to practical everyday matters, are closely related to each other. Things learned at home as a child support coping with everyday life, which in turn supports the experience of doing well in life. Challenges related to everyday life cross both generational and sectoral borders.

Serious conflicts in the childhood home and the divorce of parents are strongly related to problems with life management in young people. Even if problems in the childhood home are to some extent explained by the low level of education of the parents, the fact that problems descend to the next generation cannot be explained by the descent of education level alone. Rather, we are also dealing with more direct relationships between problems that do not depend on education.

The respondents mainly estimated the atmosphere at their current home to be positive.

Almost 90 per cent experienced the atmosphere to be at least somewhat loving and supportive. The atmosphere was poorer in homes with lower income. Problems in the childhood home were visible as a poorer atmosphere in later stages of life. Problems related to practical everyday operations seem to be more common in those whose parents struggled with alcohol abuse. The childhood home, atmosphere within the family, and everyday life management are closely related issues.

The fluency of everyday life was studied through questions related to how the respondent deals with cooking, cleaning, and other such everyday chores. The general outlook was relatively positive, as the majority of the respondents felt that they deal well with these matters. Problems with everyday chores were clearly more common in boys than girls. The differences between the genders were particularly visible in laundering and cleaning. The everyday chores become easier with age, and young people with a higher education level deal better than others. Those who felt that they deal well with everyday chores were happier with their lives than others.

Everyday life management was also studied through questions related to life management, self-esteem, and social trust. The experience

of life management has a positive relation to dealing with practical everyday chores. Life satisfaction is strongly explained through the experience of doing well in life and life having a meaning. The experience of doing well in life was higher in young people who considered their finances better, had become independent younger, and were less dependent on external financial aid. It is peculiar that according to the data in the Youth Barometer, deficiencies in taking care of the basic needs in childhood increased the experience of doing well in life. It is possible that such people learned early on in their childhood to take care of themselves, and therefore consider themselves to be doing well later on as well.

The most common time for going to sleep during weekdays was 11 pm, and the most common time for waking up 7 am. The average sleep time during weekdays was 8.2 hours, and 9.4 hours during weekends. Particularly those under 20 pay off their sleep debts from the weekdays during weekends. Everyday life management, like success at school, is on average poorer in those who stay up late during the working week. Satisfaction with one's health was the highest in those who sleep 8–9 hours during the week or 9–10 hours during weekends.

Young women still drink slightly less than young men, but the difference is decreasing. Drinking for the effect has decreased fairly rapidly during the past years, as has regular smoking. The slight increase in drug use noticeable after the change of millennium seems to have decreased somewhat. The use of intoxicants is concentrated particularly among some boys.

The emphasis of the disadvantages of the various vices varies. The disadvantages of gambling and the use of cannabis were mostly concentrated on the financial effects, whereas harder drugs were seen to affect human relationships. The negative effects of excessive alcohol use were distributed quite evenly across the various areas of life. The disadvantages of drugs are seen as severe far more often than those of alcohol. The proportion of respondents who considered their own alcohol use to have affected their personal relationships and health was significantly higher amongst those who had

grown up in homes where alcohol abuse was a problem than those whose childhood homes had not been affected by such issues. There was a strong link between regular use of intoxicants and lower life satisfaction, poor health, and problems in other areas of life.

Eating and cooking seem to be important to young people. Three out of four expressed interest in the food cultures of various countries, and a majority considered cooking to be an important hobby. Three out of four said they cook at home often, girls more often than boys. Those respondents who cook rarely and consider themselves not to be good at it, also had the poorest ability to deal with everyday chores.

Hobbies seem to be becoming more common. 87 per cent of the young people said they have at least one hobby, whereas in the 2012 survey, the number was 83 per cent. Those young people who had to interrupt their hobby or were not able to start it at all due to shortage of money, meet their friends less often than others.

Those with a steady income meet their friends more, feel lonely less often, and exercise more than others. The financial situation at the time of the interviews was a significant factor in satisfaction with leisure time, personal relationships, and life as a whole. The passing down of financial disadvantages through the generations can be seen in the data through the phenomenon that those who had experiences of financial problems in the family when they were growing up, also evaluated their own financial situation to be poorer at the time of the interview than others. However, the passing down of financial problems from the childhood family mostly only applied to those young people whose educational career remained short. In other words, higher education was a protecting factor.

58 per cent of those who had moved out of their childhood homes said that their parents help them financially. This has become more common within the past ten years. Those who relied on the financial support of their parents were less satisfied with their financial situation than others, which seems to mean that parental support is only used in real need. This interpretation is also supported by the fact that

parents mostly support their children by buying them necessities.

Keeping in touch with friends daily online (75 %) is already more common than talking on the phone daily (40 %) and meeting face-to-face (52 %). The change has been rapid, and within only a few years, keeping in touch online has become more popular than talking on the phone. The share of those who talk to their friends on the phone daily is decreasing particularly among girls and the younger respondents.

Every third young person said they feel lonely at least sometimes. Only 4 per cent feel lonely often. Meeting face-to-face had more effect on feeling lonely than the other forms of staying in touch. Talking on the phone protects people from feelings of loneliness better and is more strongly related to meeting friends face-to-face than online contact.

Almost all of the respondents believed they will have a job in ten years' time, that their financial situation will be good, and that they will have good friends. A positive outlook on the future is significant for life satisfaction. The belief in a financially stable future, for example, explains life satisfaction even better than the current financial situation at the time of the interview. Optimism increases happiness particularly in those young people with deficiencies in their current situation.

Measured using Finnish school system gradings, on a scale of 4–10, the young people were the most satisfied with their psychological health (8.8), personal relationships (8.5), and their physical health (8.4). The respondents were slightly less satisfied with the way they look (8.2), leisure time (8.1), physical condition (7.9), and particularly their financial situation (7.6). The average rating for satisfaction with life as a whole was 8.5, which has not changed significantly during the almost 20 years that the situation has been monitored.

## Positive Recognition

in Finnish: *Myönteinen tunnistaminen*

**JOUNI HÄKLI & KIRSI PAULIINA  
KALLIO & RIIKKA KORKIAMÄKI**

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Language: Finnish

Positive Recognition is a theoretically informed practical approach that seeks to bring new insights to the advancement of wellbeing among children and young people and to the prevention of youth marginalization. It has been developed in academic research projects in close collaboration with professionals and practitioners who work with children and young people in different institutional contexts and in various occupational roles. The approach is based on the understanding that giving and receiving respect is one of the pillars of human life. People may feel accepted and included in all kinds of situations, environments and communities, and therefore these experiences can also be actively promoted almost anywhere.

As an operational principle, Positive Recognition sets out to strengthen dignity and inclusion in people's everyday environments. Drawing from theories of recognition, it acknowledges that care and respect in personal relationships, participatory inclusion in everyday communities and respect for equality and difference in society are imperative to the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-respect. The human capacities to care, respect and give acceptance provide for meaningful active agency that may unfold in different contexts of private and public life. Positive Recognition can hence be considered one of the important drivers of democracy.

This book introduces Positive Recognition as an aspect of professional work with children



and young people. It suggests an alternative way of thinking about the wellbeing and marginalization of children and young people, as well as a practical approach to how children and young people can be supported by professional means. Rather than a method or model, Positive Recognition is about understanding, exposing and engaging with everyday communal dynamics. It is appreciated primarily as an intuitive mode of operation that can be strengthened in institutional environments where children and young people spend much of their time.

The practices of Positive Recognition are mobilized within communities that are meaningful in the everyday lives of children and young people, instead of inviting them into separate supportive projects or environments. Empowerment in their communities of importance is considered vital to their wellbeing and to the prevention of youth marginalization. As a supportive measure, Positive Recognition is directed at all children and young people, including individuals with specific problems who may derive particular benefit from it. It leans on the dynamics of recognition, including the elements of familiarization, esteeming and support. The approach takes a normative

stand towards the power-knowledge relations that tend to place children and young people in subordinate positions and dependent roles. Practicing Positive Recognition requires that all parties involved accept equality as a basic principle and difference as a dimension of humanity. On these grounds, professional practices bring together people who view themselves as equals with differing needs, strengths and weaknesses.

The book presents results from multidisciplinary research work carried out by the Space and Political Agency Research Group (SPARG) at the University of Tampere. This long-standing research has been funded through projects entitled “Preventing children’s marginalization through place-based participation” (2010–2013) and “Early recognition in curbing the marginalization risk of children and youth” (2013–2015) as part of the Academy of Finland Research Programme on the Health and Welfare of Children and Young People (Skidi–Kids). The studies involved more than a hundred girls and boys aged eleven to sixteen, and a large group of professionals from various fields. Some of the professionals are involved in this book as authors.

The book begins with an introduction that presents the concept of Positive Recognition. This is followed by four sections. The first three discuss the dimensions of familiarization, esteeming and support, each including an empirically grounded research article and three professional contributions. The final section assesses Positive Recognition from the perspectives of public administration, youth policy and youth work. The book is intended for professional communities and future professionals working with children and young people, and for administrative personnel dealing with childhood and youth issues. The approach can also be implemented in other institutional contexts.

# Music fandom and modernizing youth. Emergence of popular music fan culture in Finland from the 1950s to early 1970s

in Finnish: *Musiikkifanius ja modernisoitua nuoruus. Populaarimusiikin ihailija-kulttuurin rakentuminen Suomessa 1950-luvulta 1970-luvun alkuun*

**JANNE POIKOLAINEN**

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The study introduces a historical perspective to the discussion on fandom by examining the emergence of popular music fan culture in Finland from the 1950s to early 1970s. The analysis focuses on the ways the forms, settings and meanings of music fandom, as well as the images attributed to fans, developed in the interaction between the music industry, publicity and audience. As primary sources, the study uses written reminiscences on popular music and fandom, and music magazines from the research period. The research material also includes e.g. fan letters and statistics.

The historical context of the analysis is comprised of the substantial changes in youth brought about by the post-war social change. In the study, these changes are referred to as the modernization of youth. The study examines the kinds of technological, social and cultural changes linked to the change in youth that facilitated the emergence of the fan culture. Secondly, the study identifies the kinds of socio-cultural needs, created by modernization, to which music fandom as a phenomenon responded.



In terms of content, the analysis focuses on three dimensions of fan culture. The first dimension comprises the musical and material settings of fandom, such as recordings, concerts and music magazines. The second consists of media discourses concerning the fan phenomenon. Here the study also questions and disassembles the gendered stereotypes constructed within the discourses. The third dimension comprises the socio-cultural meanings of fandom, particularly in respect of identity work taking place in the forms of identification and social distinction. Scrutiny of these dimensions also highlights the links between the fan phenomenon and the constituent phenomena of modernizing youth: for example, the mediatization, Anglo-Americanization and sexualization of youth culture, as well as the weakening of the traditional identity models.

The study shows that the emergence of fan culture was a process where the media contents and ideas concerning fandom interacted in multi-dimensional ways between the various actors. The music industry, media publicity and fan audience formed the macro-level of this interactive network. The contents of fandom formed within this framework assumed their practical meaning in the daily lives of young people. These everyday meanings of fandom were concretized in the form of various consumption and production practices, through which the macro-level interrelationships were again redefined.

# Social control and fragile autonomy: The construction of adolescents' agency in outreach youth work

in Finnish: *Sosiaalisesti kontrolloitu, hauraasti autonominen. Nuorten toimijuuden ranentuminen etsivässä työssä*

**TARJA JUVONEN**

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This doctoral dissertation examines the construction of agency among young people on the threshold of adulthood who are, or risk being, socially excluded. Adolescence involves many choices and decisions that impact later life, such as leaving the parental home and transitioning to independent living, establishing financial independence, making decisions about education and careers, and starting a family. An essential part of adolescence is the pursuit of autonomy and finding one's place in the adult world and its social order. Adolescents who cannot attain these goals are easily rejected as non-adults who fail to meet social expectations for different age groups and life stages. This rejection has the effect of excluding them from full citizenship. Emerging adulthood is particularly challenging for adolescents living in vulnerable circumstances who feel they are not yet ready or able to make decisions about their life. The choices they must make may also involve options that adolescents find dissatisfactory or difficult to handle.

This dissertation explores young people's agency from a relational perspective, emphasising the social and contextual basis of agency rather than its individualist foundation. The relational



perspective relates to autonomous agency primarily because the construction of autonomy can require the context of human relationships and mutual dependency. In contrast, an emphasis on agency that stresses individuality and independence may engender feelings of loneliness and insecurity as well as of going through the motions of a life with no true sense of meaning. People who work with and support adolescents should also bear in mind that wellbeing depends substantially on the ability of individuals to connect with others. A lack of relationships and a feeling of loneliness characterise the lives of many socially excluded and disadvantaged people. The relational perspective is particularly obvious among those without relationships.

This dissertation employs a constructionist philosophy and a relational viewpoint. It focuses on outreach work and, more broadly, the service network that strives to help young people. The research data comprise documents from 2001 on street-based youth work, recordings from the development seminar of a working group, interviews with young people encountered during outreach work in 2010 and 2011, the working group's focus group discussions and recorded client visits. The four scientific articles included in the dissertation use content analysis and the voice-centred relational method to consider the themes of control, the construction of autonomous agency and the concept of having-to as it pertains to young people. The first of the articles discusses elements of control in outreach work. The three other articles explore the theme of agency and the associated relational perspective.

The second and third articles examine the construction of young people's autonomous agency, first in tense meetings with outreach workers and the authorities, and then from the perspective of the challenges of independent living. The fourth article analyses the construction of adolescents' agency from the viewpoint of cultural expectations, particularly the concept of having-to.

The results of the articles inform the concluding section, which addresses the two research questions: How is the autonomous agency of young people constructed in the tense relationship of social control, professional support and having-to, and how is the relational approach connected to the construction of young people's autonomous agency? The results demonstrate that various social structures and service systems provide a framework for the construction of agency, particularly among young people who are or risk being socially excluded. Even the most autonomous individual must deal with certain "have-to's" and is the subject of control through both societal and social relationships. Both control and culturally defined having-to are factors that define the limits of agency based on freedom and choices. As clients of outreach work, adolescents who are or risk being socially excluded must negotiate with various societal representatives about the limits of their autonomy and range of choices and must respond to the expectation of stronger agency.

Young people's experience of their agency and place in the world depends partly on social ties, relationships and the various resources available to them. Strengthening the agency of young people encountered through outreach work requires long-term partnership and support to help them succeed in the challenging transition to adulthood, which is limited by having-to. Interaction in outreach work, the parties' meetings or failures to meet each other, plays an important role. Those involved in such work have the power to profoundly affect young people's lives as well as their ideas of themselves and their significance. External compulsion or decisions made without the adolescents' contribution do not improve their self-understanding or autonomous agency, which are important to any definition of a good life.

## The significance of ethnicity in youth peer relationships.

### A STUDY OF THE ENCOUNTERS OF YOUTH FROM IMMIGRANT BACKGROUNDS AND MAJORITY YOUTH IN YOUTH WORK FIELDS

in Finnish: Etnisyyden merkityksiä nuorten vertaissuhteissa. Tutkimus maahanmuuttajataustaisten ja kantaväestön nuorten kohtaamisista nuorisotyön kentillä

**ANTTI KIVIJÄRVI**

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Language: Finnish

The study is anchored in the tradition of integration research, where the organisation of multiethnicity is examined in the institutional, occupational and everyday fields of post-immigration societies. The study analyses the implications of ethnicity in youth peer relationships in the fields of Finnish youth work, seeking to answer three questions: 1) In what ways do the boundaries based on ethnicity define the encounters of young people from immigrant and majority backgrounds in the fields of youth work? 2) How are the boundaries based on ethnicity formed in different areas and different settings organised by youth work? 3) In what ways do the ties to majority youth facilitate the access of youth from immigrant backgrounds to new leisure resources?

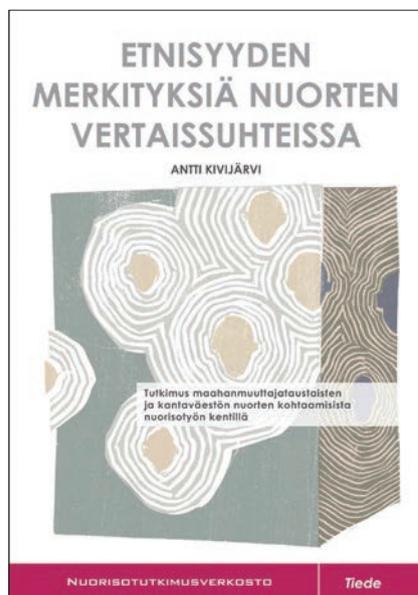
The theoretical foundation of the study is the constructionist view of ethnicity. Ethnicity is seen primarily as socially formed categories and differentiations between them, not so much as group attributes based on cultural characteristics or origins. In empirical terms,

the focus is on young people's daily interaction, within which boundaries based on ethnicity are formed. The study examines how ethnicity operates (or does not operate) in different youth work settings, defining the young people's peer relationships.

The study is based on qualitative data. The majority of the materials was amassed as part of a multi-sited ethnography in 2008–2011. The researcher has visited both youth leisure facilities (e.g. youth centres and hobby groups) and youth workers' meetings and training sessions. The ethnographic materials are mostly comprised of field diaries and interviews of both young people and youth workers. In addition, the study makes use of interviews of young people carried out in various parts of Finland in 2005.

The study consists of four articles and a summary. The publications show that despite its construed nature, ethnicity structures young people's peer relationships in a number of ways. The main ethnicity-based boundary is formed between the majority youth and youth from immigrant backgrounds. Ethnicity and cultural features rarely become as important instruments of differentiation in the interaction between youth from immigrant backgrounds. Thus, the demarcation is primarily based on the majority-minority relationships of Finnish society, not so much on origins or cultural differences. Boundary settings are mostly a case of the readyformed circles of friendships among the majority youth and the mutual solidarity uniting minorities. On the other hand, the demarcations based on ethnicity are partially situational. The significance of the boundaries between majority youth and youth with immigrant backgrounds varies depending on locality, group composition, local youth cultures, youth work practices, and sometimes also cultural differences.

Despite the structural nature of the boundaries between youth from immigrant backgrounds and majority youth, individual young people constantly transgress them. For example, youth from immigrant backgrounds that has lived in Finland for a long time or date majority youth, as well as the offspring of transnational unions, form many kinds of ties independent



of ethnic boundaries. On the other hand, a considerable part of the ties between majority youth and youth from immigrant backgrounds remain weak, as more distant acquaintances. The materials contain fewer examples of strong ties in the form of closer friendships or courtships. Moreover, many of the weak ties remain too fragile to contribute to the leisure resources of youth from immigrant backgrounds – to increase their knowledge of leisure activities, enable getting to know third-party young people, or lower the thresholds to new leisure facilities.

The results indicate that in many cases, ethnicity-based boundaries remain in place also in leisure fields. The significance of ethnicity may even be emphasized in leisure time, as young people choose their places and company. The informal interaction of leisure time may be based on ethnic categorizations more strongly than the more formal encounters of school classrooms, lecture halls and workplaces. Thus, the social integration of young people from immigrant backgrounds – the number and intensity of ties attaching them to the majority population – should also be examined from the viewpoints of the ethnic segregation within the education system and labour market.

# Youth Barometer 2014. Youth with human dignity

in Finnish: *Ihmisarvoinen nuoruus*  
– Nuorisobarometri 2014

**SAMI MYLLYNIEMI (ED.)**

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Language: Finnish



The Youth Barometer is a series of publications studying the values and attitudes of young people aged 15 to 29 living in Finland. It has been implemented annually since 1994. The 2014 Youth Barometer is based on 1,903 telephone interviews, and its theme is equality and discrimination.

According to young people, discrimination means, above all, unequal treatment of people. Almost all of them (95%) regard it as discrimination if, due to their ethnic background, a person is not served in a restaurant or does not get a job he or she is otherwise qualified for. Three out of four young people regard it as discrimination that same-sex couples cannot marry. However, especially boys do not find that the more structural inequalities in society are particularly discriminatory, such as the fact that those who are financially better off generally live longer than those with a lower income.

As many as 85% of the respondents had noticed discrimination against young people over the past 12 months. The media seems to be the most common arena for youth discrimination. It is also common to observe discrimination against young people at work (43%) and at school (37%), as well as in places where young people like to hang around, such as in shopping centres, streets, cafés or bars.

The most common forms of discrimination against young people include belittling or underestimating (observed by 72%), ridicul-

ing and name-calling (68%), and excluding a person from the group (65%). Half of young people have noticed a threat of violence and one in three actual physical violence. Of the more structural forms of discrimination, 35% have noticed inaccessibility or discrimination in facilities or services and 31% in getting a job, receiving services, gaining positions of trust, etc.

The majority (55%) of all young people find that they have been discriminated against at some stage in their lives, and 30% of them consider this discrimination to be continuous in nature. Most victims of discrimination refer to experiences of discrimination that have taken place a relatively long time ago. Only 4% of all young people told that they are currently being discriminated against, 13% over the past 12 months.

Just under one in three (31%) of all young people admit that they are involved in the discrimination of other people. Those with no personal experience of discrimination either as a discriminator or a victim of discrimination account for 37% of the respondents. Those who have experienced personal discrimination account for as many as 32% and those who have been involved in the discrimination of others constitute 8% of the respondents. According to the questionnaire, 23% of young people have either discriminated against others or been discriminated against. Therefore, it seems to

be the same young people who are often both victims and perpetrators.

Young people with an immigrant background have experienced somewhat more discrimination than those of the original population: especially being discriminated against is more common. Being part of any kind of minority is strongly related to experiences of discrimination. Appearance in particular is a factor in discrimination: this would apply especially to girls and to young people under the age of 20. All in all, girls are more susceptible to discrimination than boys, but gender-based discrimination in particular is more common: 5% of boys and as many as 18% of girls find that they have been discriminated against due to their gender.

Less than 2% of young people classified as Finnish-speaking members of the original population and as many as over 10% of young Swedish-speaking Finns find that they have been discriminated against due to their ethnic background. One in five of the second-generation immigrants and one in three of first-generation immigrants say that they have experienced discrimination due to their ethnic background.

The share of those who have been discriminated against due to their sexual orientation (4%) and sexual identity or gender expression (4%) must be proportioned to the size of sexual minorities. A total of 20% of boys and 33% of girls belonging to a minority due to their sexual orientation said they were discriminated against for their orientation. The majority of girls with a strong minority experience related to their sexual orientation have been discriminated against due to their orientation.

When examining the places and situations of discrimination, the school is in a class of its own. Of all young people, 43% have been discriminated against at school, and as many as 77% of young people who have been discriminated against have been victims of discrimination specifically at school. Discrimination is more common in comprehensive schools and upper secondary vocational institutions and less common in upper secondary schools and universities.

A young person's foreign background increases the risk of being discriminated against

and the likelihood of observing discrimination. On the one hand, discrimination experienced by people with an immigrant background often occurs in informal 'hang out' places during leisure time but, on the other hand, first-generation immigrants in particular have also experienced more discrimination than others in finding accommodation and in their treatment by the authorities.

Young people who have been victims of discrimination are clearly less trusting of other people, they have a more pessimistic attitude towards the future, and their belief in their own abilities and opportunities to make an impact on their own lives is weaker. Victims of discrimination feel more insecure than other young people, especially in relation to their own social exclusion and loneliness. They have fewer close friends than others, they meet their friends less often, and they are less happy about their relationships. Victims of discrimination have more medical symptoms that occur on a regular basis and, on average, they are less satisfied with their state of health and life in general. Therefore, young people's experiences of discrimination are strongly connected to many indicators of mental ill health.

Summary in English is available free of charge from the website:  
[https://tietoanuorista.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Youth\\_Barometer\\_2014\\_Summary\\_WEB.pdf](https://tietoanuorista.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Youth_Barometer_2014_Summary_WEB.pdf) (39 pages)

The Finnish Youth Research Society is a leading scientific organization in the field of cross-disciplinary youth research in Finland. The goal of the Youth Research Society is to develop youth research and to provide information and expertise on matters relating young people – studies, perspectives, interpretations and societal stands.

The Finnish Youth Research Society conducts its own research activities through the Finnish Youth Research Network, founded in the beginning of 1999. The Youth Research Network is a community of researchers which works together with universities, research institutes and institutes and various professionals in the field of youth work and youth policy. The Finnish Youth Research Network produces multidisciplinary research information and offers perspectives for practical work with young people and for the fields of administration and politics. Youth research has a particular responsibility to address topical phenomena that concern young people. Our research covers topics that are familiar to and acknowledged by society as well as themes that are ignored or marginal. This responsibility is local, national and global.

The research operations of the Finnish Youth Research Network are based on multidisciplinary and ethical approaches and a combination of basic academic research and applied research that is relevant in terms of youth policy. This broadens conventional understanding of the scope of expertise and the roles of researchers. Within the Finnish Youth Research Network, we seek to make versatile use of various research methods by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches and to look beyond conventional research questions and environments.

The research carried out by the Finnish Youth Research Network is divided into three fields of knowledge: 1) Generational relations, life course and transitions; 2) Democracy, equality, inequality;

3) Youth work, youth activities, services for young people. These fields reflect the key perspectives of social responsibility and the high-quality scientific research conducted by the Finnish Youth Research Network. The goal is to produce a diverse range of studies on social divisions that lay the framework for the lives of young people and on the everyday experiences and practices of young people and the adults who work with them.

In addition to the research, the Finnish Youth Research Society's primary activities are various kinds of seminars and discussion forums. The goal of the seminars is to offer forums for cooperation to researchers, government officials, teachers, students and youth work professionals. These events are based on structured dialogue regarding the questions and challenges facing young people. The Finnish Youth Research Society arranges Annual Conference of Youth Studies and gives out awards for thesis work of particular merit in youth research.

The purpose of the Finnish Youth Research Society's and Network's common publication series is to provide publications that are socially relevant, scientifically sound and take up fresh perspectives. This publication series is composed of monographs such as doctoral dissertations related to contemporary youth issues, article collections and research reports. The majority of the publications are in Finnish.

The multidisciplinary Finnish language journal *Nuorisotutkimus* [Youth Research] is published quarterly. This peer-reviewed journal describes and interprets a wide spectrum of young people's lives in the light of different themes. In addition to scholarly articles, journal contains editorials, book reviews and discussions related to youth research, as well as announcements of upcoming seminars and events. The journal contains English summaries of articles, which can be found on the *Nuorisotutkimus* web page.

**FINNISH YOUTH RESEARCH SOCIETY**  
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