

*Book Review*

**Hedegaard, M., Aronsson, K. Højholt, C., & Skjær Ulvik, O. (Eds.) (2018). *Children, childhood, and everyday life: Children's perspectives* (2nd ed.). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.**

This contemporary book comes from a Nordic network of Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian early childhood scholars. Edited by Mariane Hedegaard, Karin Aronsson, Charlotte Højholt, and Oddbjørg Skjær Ulvik, this second edition volume, presents a scholarly toolkit for analysing children's perspectives and participation over time and across contexts of daily life. Thirteen authors contribute to richly varied chapters, each bringing detailed data from situated studies that challenge us to rethink child development.

Section I focuses on *family life as a social arena*; section II, *the social landscape of schools and residential care*; and section III, *children's own reflections of social life and development*. In this way, the book cleverly reinforces the child's perspective and ways in which children in Nordic countries (and elsewhere), live their lives across quite different social settings, including homes, schools and other institutions. Empirical ethnographic research is used to conceptualise children as beings in the present, and endeavours to capture their lives over the complexities of time and place. Each author brings to life the different ways young children contribute to their own development. The rich examples illustrate how embedded biological factors, cultural changes, and transformations in children, occur in relation to the social lives of others. Using ethnographic approaches, this volume provides vignettes and case studies with life stories drawn from empirical data.

Mariane Hedegaard begins section I with research into family life as a social arena. She proposes rethinking the concept of conflict as being developmental and positive in the upbringing and education of children. Karin Aronsson follows with findings of social accounts being recurrently co-constructed as parts of the local time politics of family life. Lucas Gottzén brings to a discussion on pocket money, a fascinating theory of consumption development with children. Concluding this section, Oddbjørg Skjær Ulvik's detailed research on foster parents' upbringing of an ordinary child as a culturally adequate child, reveals the paradox of developmental support as being more comprehensive than attitudes of cultural correction.

Section II holds the social landscape of schools and residential care in focus: Charlotte Højholt investigates children's perspectives and learning communities by asking how do children take part, what do they orient to or search for? Anchoring personal meanings in social practice, Højholt advocates the concept of *interplay* to bring attention to children's local learning resources. Dorte Kousholt's research finds the Family Development Center as a place for openly exploring the dilemmas and complexities of organising everyday family life, and advocates that moving from *treatment* to *collaboration* with families, works in a positive way for children. Maja Røn-Larsen moves on to discuss the paradoxes of inclusion, suggesting school, society, and institution, can actually contribute to children's "problems" unless they are reoriented, from the child's perspective. Her revelatory research into administration of referral processes, traced the fact that children were completely absent from both context and situation. The importance of advocacy

for children also becomes very evident in Louise Böttcher's chapter. Böttcher's use of the child's perspective to support children with severe impairments is shown to help them in becoming active subjects. Her beautiful narrative of children with Cerebral Palsy problematises the teaching of children with dysfunctions by showing ways that cognitive abilities and situational aspects are interwoven. In concluding this section, Ida Schwartz pays close attention to children who live outside their homes in a complex network of different professionals. Schwartz researches a child welfare system that, in conjunction with parents, is handled by caseworker "constellations". In this collectively arranged social world, she suggests that *relational mutuality* is embedded in social practices that move across situations to expand possibilities for children.

The authors of section III focus on the children's own reflections on social life *and development*. Ruth E. Toverud in Norway starts her chapter on "being oneself" and "being of use", and self-making and movement towards heterogeneity, with suggesting that any new opportunity structures for young people require new understandings of being members of one's current surroundings. Liv Mette Gulbrandsen then explores children's coming of age, noting self- and other-constructing processes across situations. Her research engages storying and life mode interviews. By working through the here and now, both retrospectively and prospectively, she found repositioning of self and others occurred in a spiralling trajectory. Next, in a very detailed and interesting story of two boys changing school, Ditte Winther-Lindqvist brings to life how social identities are produced and co-produced, showing the role of teacher as crucial in the two boys' social positioning. In the concluding chapter, Pernille Hviid's "Remaining the same", moves forward our understanding of developmental processes as processes of changing configuration of the remaining present and emerging novelties. Her research subject, a 13-year-old girl, had a striving will and active engagement with animals, which showed her situatedness as being strongly composed by herself.

This volume with its anthology of featured interview data and research narratives about Nordic children's lives in long daycare, foster care, family life and in specialised institutional care, powerfully informs the reader about negotiated processes of beings or becomings. An activity-based and situated approach makes this theoretical anthology both coherent and readable, with generalisable qualities relevant for international audiences.

The problematising of how time, change, continuity, transitions, and the dynamic of social demands and child's motives lead to psychological change, moves the reader beyond historical and decontextualised models of child development. The volume makes a valuable, original, and significant contribution to early childhood research.

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