

Call for Papers RGS-IBG AC2024, London (27th – 30th August 2024):

Education, social inequality and the quest for justice in children and young people's lives

Sponsored by the Geographies of Children, Youth and Families Research Group

Session Convenors:

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Session outline:

Education is a crucial arena in the struggle for social justice. Educational spaces of all sorts demand engagement with social inequalities and (in)justices intersectionally related to e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, climate, environment and socioeconomic status. This engagement is particularly relevant as educational spaces are a key element in children and young people's everyday lives, the formation of their social identities (Collins & Coleman 2008) and for finding their place in society as citizens (Phillippo 2019; Mills 2022). Although geographers have long emphasized social justice as a fundamental guiding principle for their research (Przybylinski 2022), questions about 'what social justice looks like and feels like, and what policies might be put in place to make social justice a reality' tend to be sidelined (Hopkins 2021, p. 382). Recent calls within the critical geographies of education, young people's geographies, and related fields align with this observation. Aiming to shift social justice debates into more positive territory (Passy & Ovenden-Hope 2020), current research advocates active engagement with ideas, alternatives and forms of activism developed by e.g., social movements (Nguyen et al. 2017) and young people themselves (Larkins, 2013; Wright & McLeod, 2024).

This session seeks to gather contributions that venture into such territory and sit at the intricate intersections of social inequality, education, and social justice in children and young people's lives. It welcomes both conceptual and/or empirical contributions from diverse geographical and/or educational contexts and particularly encourages submissions that strengthen marginalized voices. Possible questions include (but are not limited to):

- What does social justice look and 'feel like' for children and young people?

- How can we theorize social justice with and for children and young people?
- What are the benefits and pitfalls of justice-oriented frameworks in research with children and young people?
- How do social movements shape the discourse on social justice within educational contexts?
- How can or should researchers actively contribute to struggles over education and social justice?

The session is planned in two parts: The first part foresees paper presentations of 15 min. followed by short rounds of Q&A. In the second part, presenters and attendees re-group in clusters of interest, discuss questions and share ideas that are relevant to their ongoing research projects.

To submit an abstract:

Please email queries and proposals (title, presenter information & abstract of max. 300 words) to Lara Landolt (lara.landolt@geo.uzh.ch) and Itta Bauer (itta.bauer@geo.uzh.ch). **The deadline for abstracts is February 23th 2024.**

References:

- Collins, D., & Coleman, T. (2008). Social geographies of education: Looking within, and beyond, school boundaries. *Geography Compass*, 2(1), 281–299.
- Hopkins, P. (2021): Social geography III: Committing to social justice. *Progress in Human Geography*, 45(2), 382–393.
- Larkins, C. (2014). Enacting children's citizenship: Developing understandings of how children enact themselves as citizens through actions and Acts of citizenship. *Childhood*, 21(1), 7–21.
- Mills, S. (2022): *Mapping the Moral Geographies of Education Character, Citizenship and Values*. London: Routledge.
- Nguyen, N., Cohen, D., & Huff, A. (2017). Catching the bus: A call for critical geographies of education. *Geography Compass*, 11(8), e12323.
- Passy, R., & Ovenden-Hope, T. (2020). Exploring school leadership in coastal schools: 'getting a fair deal' for students in disadvantaged communities. *Journal of Education Policy*, 35(2), 222–236.

Phillippo, K. (2019). *A contest without winners: How students experience competitive school choice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Przybylinski, S. (2022). Where is justice in geography? A review of justice theorizing in the discipline. *Geography Compass*, 16(3), 1–12.

Wright, K. & McLeod, J. (2024). *Childhood, Youth and Activism: Demands for Rights and Justice from Young People and their Advocates*. Leeds: Emerald Publishing.

Sustainability, inclusivity and accessibility:

We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive space that allows all persons to participate in our session in an equitable manner. The session will be in-person but we are happy to make adjustments to make it accessible and inclusive for all – including attending the session remotely. Please see the following conference statements:

- Accessibility <https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/planning-your-attendance/accessibility-at-the-conference>
- Sustainability: <https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/sustainability-at-the-conference>
- Code of Conduct: <https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/code-of-conduct>