



CHILDHOODS

2005 Oslo

*Children and Youth in Emerging and Transforming Societies*  
International Conference, University of Oslo, Norway  
June 29 – July 3, 2005

***Call for papers from the network on  
Consumer Culture and Social Change  
Identities, Practises and Consequences on Every-day-lives***

The title of the conference refers to a world where new ethno-cultural encounters, new markets, technology and globalization shape the structure of social change, of new childhoods and the lives of children and young people. Plenary sessions will relate to this theme of change. The conference will be made up of parallel sets of sessions hosted by different thematic networks. Each set of sessions will feature individual keynote speakers, thematic paper presentations and workshops.

The sessions on *Consumer Culture and Social Change: Identities, Practises and Consequences on Every-day-lives* will constitute a special focus on the steadily increasing influence of consumer culture on children and young people's every-day-lives and on children's own appropriations of that culture.

In societies having a history with a market system, consumption and consumer culture have become highly visible parts of every-day-life which children and youth take for granted. Children and young people are treated, on one hand, as market segments and consumers with independent purchasing powers. They are viewed as economic agents and creators of special consumer practices. On the other hand, children and young people appear as victims of commercialism. Childhood and youth can thus be understood as being influenced by commercially constructed images of gender, sex, ethnicity, as well as ideals of bodies, looks and health which compete with traditional moral values. This span between children's agency on one end of the scale and the victimization of childhood on the other creates an interesting axis for an academic debate.

The purpose of this event is to situate modern childhood and youth in a global perspective. Seen in context of the global marketplace, it is crucial to understand the impact of consumption and consumer culture on children's and young people's lives in a diversity of settings. Societies that have experienced political change have also experienced a change in its economic structures, which again influence children and

youth's position within families and in communities. Social and economic change also affect how children are viewed, their "value" as individuals, as family members and as members of society.

Consumption and consumer culture have become an arena where matters of social class and status, exclusion and inclusion, participation, welfare, identity, life histories, sequencing of the life course, personal biographies and other well known social processes and mechanisms are played out with new and continuously renewed vehicles.

We invite paper submissions for the session on *Consumer Culture and Social Change: Identities, Practises and Consequences on Every-day-lives*. The organizers will give priority to papers dealing with empirical studies which relate to the theme of consumer culture and social change, or papers with theoretical approaches to the understanding of children and young people in the specific context of consumer culture. The steering committee of this network looks forward to receiving a variety of fresh approaches.

Some suggested topics are:

- Commercially constructed images of childhood and youth
- Commercial sequencing of childhood, youth and the life course
- Consumption as a field of exclusion and inclusion
- Commercial events, transitions or rituals of childhood and youth
- Consumer practices and consumer education
- Consumption in relation to social class, generations, cross-ethnic relations, gender etc.
- Consumer culture and identity work; e.g. gender identity and sexuality
- Consumption as necessity or "excessity"
- Between global culture and local marketplaces

We welcome individual or co-authored papers as well as posters. Abstracts and papers have to be presented in English. Abstracts should include the following: A statement of the purpose (preferably one sentence), summary of methods and results (presented in sufficient detail to support the conclusion) and statement of conclusions reached. Abstracts are limited to 200 words. Papers will be presented in work-shops and panels or as posters.

The abstract can be registered through the conference web-site (registration opens late June 2004), or be submitted by mail as typed/diskette abstract marked "Consumer culture" to the conference secretariat [childhoods@uv.uio.no](mailto:childhoods@uv.uio.no) no later than November 1, 2004.

Mail address:

"Childhoods 2005"

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Final registration for the conference will close on March 15, 2005.  
For information regarding program, registration, conference fees and other practical issues see the conference website <http://childhoods2005.uio.no>

Sincerely,

Randi Wærdahl (Norway)

Ragnhild Brusdal (Norway)

Dan Cook (USA)

Jesper Olesen (Denmark)

Bu Wei (China)