In recent years processes such as individualisation, globalisation and increased digital interconnectivity have reshaped the youth period differently in different places. Young people’s lives are now shaped by intersections of global economic and cultural flows, national social policies, and local identity-making practices, all of which intermingle to produce unique and shared patterns across space. These processes raise new and unanswered questions about the spatial dimensions of youth, and suggest a rethinking of the contemporary significance of place amidst the global complexity of the contemporary youth period.

Whilst the significance of space to young people’s lives has more often been attended to by researchers within social and cultural geography (e.g. Valentine & Skelton, 1998), youth studies more generally has struggled to keep up with the changing spatial dimensions of youth. This leads to the dominance of homogeneous and placeless narratives of youth in the main debates and theoretical currents in the field. With important social changes reshaping the lives of young people across urban/rural; global north/global south dichotomies, there is a need for a new, spatialized approach to youth.

Drawing on the possibilities offered by interdisciplinary engagements between research traditions like geography, sociology and cultural studies, this special issue explores the spatial dimensions of youth in its theoretical, empirical and methodological aspects. The articles in this special issue will present fresh insights into spatial dimensions of youth and the contested role of ‘place’ in times of social change. It aims to create new interdisciplinary connections and dialogues, interrogating the meaning and significance of space and place in young people’s lives to reposition these as central dimensions of youth in a globalising world.

Aims

This special issue has three interconnected aims:

1. To explore the spatial dimensions of global and economic processes of social change upon youth

The ecologies of youth across the global north and south are increasingly influenced by global economic restructuring with significant spatial effects at local, regional, national and global scales (Katz, 1998). However, existing approaches to social change in youth studies are often place-less and spatially homogeneous (Farrugia, 2014), obscuring how processes like individualisation or globalisation influence the distribution and accumulation of economic and cultural resources across localities, regions and nations. In youth studies, social change has made the issue of space and place both more pressing, and more difficult to apprehend, requiring new explorations and theorisations of the spatial dimensions of youth. Including young people’s perspectives from beyond the traditional foci of youth studies has also become an increasingly pressing empirical concern which may have dramatic and productive theoretical and epistemological consequences for the field (Connell, 2007).
2. **To interrogate the role and theoretical meaning of ‘place’ amidst global complexity**

While accounts such as Giddens’ (1991) about the irrelevance of place in a globalised, late modern social order ignore the ongoing significance of locally situated resources for young people’s lives (Shildrick, 2006), the role and theoretical significance of place has become increasingly problematic. The signifiers and resources that young people draw upon to construct identities and navigate lives are situated within webs of social relations that transcend ‘the local’ (Appadurai, 1996), requiring new theoretical and empirical explorations of locale in the lives of youth. With theories of place becoming less parochial and increasingly ‘extraverted’ (Massey, 2005), there is a need to re-examine the meaning of place amidst the global complexity of youth.

3. **To explore interdisciplinary possibilities in youth studies as they relate to space and place**

As an interdisciplinary field, youth studies is well positioned to develop novel research agendas suited to grappling with new social processes and practices. Establishing interdisciplinary engagements between geographical and sociological perspectives, as well as fields such as area and cultural studies and cognate fields is also an important way of coming to grips with processes that increasingly cross disciplinary binaries established between ‘space’, ‘place’ and ‘the social.’ The project of exploring such interdisciplinary engagements unites the theoretical, empirical and methodological aims of this special issue.

Indicative topics include, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- The spatial dimensions of established themes in youth studies, such as youth transitions, cultures/subcultures, and political participation;
- The spatial dimensions of social divisions such as class, gender or ‘race’;
- Rural or urban transitions, cultures and identities;
- Spatially informed national or international comparisons;
- Theoretical engagements between established concepts and spatial theories;
- Mobilities, immobilities and displacement;
- Visual and other spatially focused methodologies as they apply to youth;
- Spatio-temporal dimensions of youth studies

**Potential Scope**

The special issue aim to cover a broad range of themes and include empirical, methodological and theoretically focused contributions. Of particular interest will be articles which address the themes of the issue in a novel and interdisciplinary manner. The articles will represent projects drawing on a variety of methodological approaches, potentially including ethnographic, visual, and historical approaches. The issue will incorporate articles with an international scope and may include comparative approaches. Overall the articles will work together to explore and interrogate the issues raised by the three aims, focused on the theoretical promise of interdisciplinary approaches to space, place, and social change.
Guidelines for Submission

The call is open and we invite articles from both early career researchers and established researchers in the field of youth studies.

Submissions must follow the journal guidelines and be submitted for review via the YOUNG SAGE Track website at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/young. This means for instance that all manuscripts are reviewed initially by the editors. Those papers that meet the editorial standards of the journal and fit within the aims and scope of the journal and of the special issue will be submitted for peer review through a double-blind reviewing process. In addition, submissions for this special issue should clearly indicate ‘Spatialising Youth Studies: Interdisciplinary Engagements’ in notes for the editor.

For further general information on submissions see: http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal201637#tabview=manuscriptSubmission

The special issue will contain five articles. Both YOUNG editors and guest editors are responsible for decisions on inclusion of manuscripts. A potential surplus of qualified articles will be offered publication in other issues of YOUNG.

If you have any questions regarding the special issue please contact one of the responsible YOUNG editors.

Deadline for submission is November 15th 2015

Editors of the Special Issue

Guest editors: David Farrugia and Bronwyn Wood.

Responsible YOUNG editors: Åsa Bäckström (asa.backstrom@gih.se) and Tea Torbenfeldt Bengtsson (tb@soc.ku.dk).

**Dr David Farrugia** is lecturer in youth sociology at the University of Newcastle, Australia. David’s research interests include contemporary perspectives on youth, space and place, including promoting a spatialized youth sociology as an interdisciplinary research agenda in youth studies. David has expertise in the areas of rural and regional youth, having recently completed an Australian Federal Government funded post-doctoral fellowship exploring the youth subjectivities and geographical inequalities in regional Australia. David has also published extensively in the areas of youth homelessness, and contemporary sociological theory, with work appearing in the *Journal of Youth Studies, Young: Nordic Journal of Youth Research, Sociologia Ruralis, Current Sociology* and *Urban Studies*.

Email: david.m.farrugia@newcastle.edu.au

**Dr Bronwyn Wood** is a lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. With a Masters degree (University of Auckland, New Zealand) in human geography and a PhD in the sociology of education, her research interests lie at the
intersection of sociology, geography and education and focus on issues relating to children and young people and their experiences and expressions of belonging, identity, place and citizenship. Bronwyn has published in a wide range of journals, including The British Journal of Sociology of Education, Political Geographies, Journal of Curriculum Studies and Children’s Geographies and contributed a number of book chapters and reference works focusing on ethics, emotions and affect and youth, youth exclusion, everyday citizenship and citizenship education.

Email: bronwyn.wood@vuw.ac.nz

References


