

studies that embraces rather than disparages young people. Its emphasis on music, while a bit narrow, provides a methodology for interpreting the multiple and varied youth subcultures and ultimately upholds Epstein's call for a "compassionate and reasonable understanding of what it means to be young in a rapidly changing world" (1).

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Vered Amit-Talai and Helena Wulff, eds. *Youth Cultures: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Pp. 239. US\$62.95.

In recent years, scholarship on youth cultural theories and practices in diverse settings has become increasingly visible in the field of post-colonial, diasporic, cultural studies, and ethnic studies. Few of the titles in print, however, offer a rubric for one to think comparatively about youth cultures in localized global settings. *Youth Cultures'* emphasis on inter-cultural perspectives sets it apart from much of the scholarship in the field both in its scope and range.

In her introductory essay, Helena Wulff acknowledges the vital contributions of work on youth subculture from the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in the late 1970s and early 1980s (particularly Stuart Hall and T. Jefferson's *Resistance Through Rituals* and Dick Hebdige's *Subculture*). She adds that while *Youth Cultures* is intellectually indebted to the work that came out of the CCCS, it also explores a nexus of different questions by "open[ing] up the concept of youth culture from that of spectacular, deviant, oppositional, marginal groups to include all young people" (6). Guided by the notion that "all young people" are active cultural agents who engage in specific and contextual cultural practices, and not merely future adults, this collection challenges the notion that in a postcolonial moment, studies of white working class male youth in England can normatively code the experiences of youth in all settings. Expanding the definition of youth to encompass the cultural experiences of youth outside the metropolitan contexts of urban London, the ten essays interrogate the contours of youth cultural subjectivity in many (primarily urban) formerly colonized settings.

The first two essays "frame" the collection by demarcating methodological concerns central to the study of youth and children. Helena Wulff introduces the importance of developing alternate ethnographic and anthropological strategies for the study of youth, particularly in cases when generation and age separate anthropologists from their subjects. Virginia Caputo's and Allison James's respective articles trace specific angles of the question of generational and age difference as they apply to the theorization of youth culture. Advancing the notion

that children and youth are “anthropology’s silent ‘others,’” Caputo interrogates the methodological and conceptual problems that arise from the study of children’s and youth culture. In asking how the categories of childhood or youth are produced and articulated by researchers, she notes that it is vital also to foreground the “lived experiences” of young people in these analyses. To counter the notion that children and young people are static beings that will merely “grow” into fully formed cultural subjects, James examines how young people use “talk” as a tool of socialization and acculturation. The essay presciently locates a way to understand how verbal play(s) function as important cultural markers of socialization in ‘children-only’ cultural locations such as school playgrounds.

In a similar vein, Vered Amit-Talai’s analysis of youth in Québec high schools argues against a facile romanticization of adolescence as a time of “freedom” and “safety” from the real pressures of the adult world. Addressing the specific concerns of adolescent girls in a Montréal high school, she explores how the (im)permanence of friendship is mediated (and policed) by specific pressures from school, family, and economic conditions.

Diasporic communities of youth are the focus of Sansone’s essay on black male Surinamese youth in Amsterdam and Paramaribo and Helena Wulff’s essay on black British teenage girls in London. How the contours of youth cultural subjectivity are intertwined with the history of migration of earlier generations to Europe from the Caribbean becomes a central focus in these two essays.

Mark Liechty explores how the concept of “teenager” takes on negative connotations when the cultural products of Anglo-American “modernity” come into conflict with the purportedly more “traditional” structures of Nepali culture. How Nepali youth forge a cultural identity between these two purportedly polarized forces is discussed at length in Liechty’s essay. Christine Jourdan’s essay examines how modernity produces specific effects in Honiara, Solomon Islands and affects the “Masta Liu”—a group of under-employed and unemployed youth in Honiara. Her essay explores how this younger generation of Solomon Islanders creatively use music and pidgin poetry to negotiate the problems that emanate from severe poverty, the loss of cultural autonomy, and urbanization.

Focusing primarily on patterns of socialization and acculturation for adolescents in urban settings, each article attempts to account for the fact that youth in these diverse settings experience modernity and “postcoloniality” in different ways from those of their adult counterparts. The strength of this collection lies in the analyses of youth cultural practices in settings with different histories of colonialism and imperialism.

Although many of the authors analyze how race, class, and gender intersect with youth cultural practices, few of the essays examine how issues of sexuality determine, and are determined by youth cultural practices. In the articles by Wulff, Amit-Talai, and Liechty, for example, youths are posited as partially formed sexual subjects that will “progress naturally” into heterosexuality. Christine Jourdan, Livio Sansone, Helena Wulff, and Vered Amit-Talai examine how affiliations are cemented between adolescent boys or girls but curiously do not pursue how homosociality or homoeroticism may undergird individual or group interactions between friends. Similarly, Marc Schade-Poulasen’s article about *raï* music in Algeria examines how the lyrics of *raï* music establish a masculinized version of heterosexual love as the norm, but implicitly disallow the possibility that queer affiliations might exist between Algerian youth that listen to *raï* music.

This collection ultimately points out that the study of youth in “postcolonial” spaces is fraught with methodological problems and pleasures. Grappling with some of the problems that have plagued anthropologists for years, many of the authors account for different methodological problems involved in studying youth in postcolonial and diasporic settings. As “outsiders” (in most cases the youth are of different races, ethnicities, and genders from that of the “observers;” in all cases, the observers are also distanced by age from their subjects), many locate themselves as the anthropologist-ethnographer seeking to understand the complexities of youth cultural practices. In this context, *Youth Cultures* is an invaluable text for postcolonial scholars in literature and the social sciences who recognize the importance of colonialism and imperialism in producing markedly different material lived conditions for contemporary youth who have little to no memory of “formal” colonialism. Analyzing how specific modes of cultural imperialism through global circuits of music, sport, and film produce differently colonized subjectivities for youth in many postcolonial spaces is, however, an issue that is overtly addressed by many of the essays collected here. As Vered Amit-Talai points out in her concluding remarks, “youth cultural production occurs at home, at school, at work, at play, on the street, with friends, teachers, parents, siblings and bosses, draws elements from home-grown as well as transnational influences, and intertwines with class, gender, ethnicity, and locality with all the cultural diversity that such a multiplicity of circumstances compels” (231). This collection thus goes beyond the early work of the CCCS on youth subcultures, paving the way for nuanced analyses that interrogate how age as well as race, class, gender, and sexuality are implicated in the construction of youth cultures in diverse postcolonial and diasporic settings.