We make the road by walking

Challenging conceptualisations of leisure time for children in poverty

Authors

Griet Roets, Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University

Dries Cardoen, Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University

Maria Bouverne-De Bie, Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University

Rudi Roose, Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University/Department of Criminology, Free University Brussels

Corresponding author

Dr. Griet Roets

Department of Social Welfare Studies, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Ghent University

Henri Dunantlaan 2, 9000 Ghent, Belgium

Email Griet.Roets@UGent.be Tel. 0032 9 264 62 93 Fax. 0032 9 264 64 93

Biographical details

Griet Roets is a postdoctoral researcher affiliated to the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) and based at the Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University, Belgium. She has a PhD in educational sciences. Her research interests are social work, poverty, gender, critical disability studies, and narrative and ethnographic research.

Dries Cardoen is a doctoral researcher affiliated to the Special Research Fund (BOF) of Ghent University, and based at the Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University, Belgium. His PhD research involves a participatory youth research on young peoples' leisure time participation, using lifeworld orientation as a theoretical and practical frame of reference.

Maria Bouverne-De Bie is a professor in social pedagogy affiliated to the Department of Social Welfare Studies and is Head of the Department at Ghent University. Her research interests include social pedagogy, social work, and the relationship between social care and social justice.

Rudi Roose is a professor in social work affiliated to the Department of Social Welfare Studies, Ghent University, Belgium. He is also a part-time professor in Criminal Justice Social Work affiliated to the Department of Criminology, Free University Brussels, Belgium. His research interests include social work, criminal justice social work, youth protection and children's rights.

Abstract

In this article, we discuss a research project focusing on the ways in which children in poverty spend and experience their leisure time. We argue that the dominant conceptualisation of leisure time participation reduces poverty to a lack of social and cultural capital, marginalising poor children as passive objects of socialisation. Inspired by the interpretative paradigm of lifeworld orientation, three insights are identified throughout poor children's experiences, which include the following: (1) challenging taken-for-granted divisions of time; (2) giving meaning to regimes of time as an on-going learning process; and (3) imagining a socially just future.

Introduction

Child poverty is a persistent social, multi-dimensional and intergenerational issue (Platt, 2005; Ridge & Saunders, 2009; Mestrum, 2011) that has figured high on social policy agendas of the European Union and its member states (European Commission, 2012) over the last decades. Following the Lisbon Council meeting in 2000 and the EU 2020 strategy as its successor, there is a particular concern to show tangible results of the efforts made in light of the *European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion* in 2010. In the aftermath of these developments, there appears to be an impressive body of research in which giving voice to children in poverty has taken high priority (for an overview, see Ridge, 2011). In this article, we explore the findings gained in a recent research project that was subsidised by the Flemish government (Coussée & Roets, 2011). In this research venture, we were commissioned to explore the ways in which children in poverty spend and experience their leisure time during the summer holidays in three specific cities in Flanders (the Dutch speaking part of Belgium). The research project ensued from the explicit policy focus of the Participation Decree (2008), in which active leisure time participation of poor children in formally structured leisure time activities is perceived as an effective anti-poverty strategy (Wijckmans & Dierckx, 2009).

In this article, we argue that this conceptualisation of 'active leisure time participation' marginalises children as passive objects of socialisation rather than recognising them as meaning-making subjects. In our research project, the interpretative paradigm of lifeworld orientation was adopted to gain an in-depth understanding of the various ways in which children in poverty actually shape and make sense of their regimes of time, and to question the ways in which poverty interferes with their lifeworlds.

Poverty and active leisure time participation

In international circles, it has been observed that conceptualisations of poverty and anti-poverty policy-making are closely interrelated (Dean, 2010; Lister, 2004). As Veit-Wilson (2000) observes, the ways in which poverty, anti-poverty policy-making and social justice are defined and pursued are influenced by prevailing welfare state regimes, depending largely on their respective social, political and ideological contexts and motives. In Flanders, the appearance of the *Global Poverty Report* (GPR) in 1994 embodies a significant and historical milestone in anti-poverty policy-making. The report details the claim of people in poverty and their allies to formally recognise the inherent participation of people in poverty in our society (Vranken, 1998). In this report, people in poverty drew attention to the complex and multi-dimensional character of the poverty problem. The importance of socio-cultural participation and symbolic interaction of people in poverty with others within our society was framed as a basic human right. It was stated that "one dies of desolation and boredom before dying of hunger (…) because cultural poverty has a profound impact on all the other life domains, it brings about a more profound exclusion than material poverty" (GPR, 1994: 296 – our translation).

This symbolic struggle of people in poverty for their recognition as full citizens has been translated in Flanders as a yawning gap between the poor and non-poor people in our society. It was argued that "the powerlessness of the poor is crucial: they cannot bridge the gap that separates them from the rest of society under their own power; they need help to do this. And that is exactly the role of government intervention and the welfare sector" (Vranken, 2007: 37). Therefore, combating poverty is currently seen as bridging this gap. This implies that anti-poverty policy-making is predominantly pursued through a paradigm of individual empowerment "to

improve the participation of people in poverty" (Van Regenmortel, 2002: 75). Also in the policy domain of leisure time, social policy makers strive for *more* participation of poor children in the supply of adult-driven and pre-structured leisure activities (Wijckmans & Dierckx, 2009). This is reflected in the Participation Decree (2008). In Flanders, this supply of leisure time activities embodies a diversity of organised and structured activities, ranging from youth work (e.g. youth movement,...), sport clubs (e.g. basket and football clubs,...), and cultural activities (e.g. music and painting schools, theatre,...). In the Participation Decree (2008), it is argued that particularly poor children need to participate more in these leisure time activities, since they are supposed to profit the most from the individual and social benefits linked to active leisure participation (see Wijckmans & Dierckx, 2009).

Underlying assumptions of active leisure time participation for children in poverty

Nevertheless, we want to problematise the underlying assumptions as embodied in the Participation Decree (2008) in Flanders. A historical and social analysis of the concept of 'leisure time' shows that a currently rather dominant problem definition of leisure time appeared in the course of the 18th century, when 'childhood' has been gradually recognised as a distinct phase of the life course. Following the prohibition of child labour at the end of the 19th century and the appearance of the law on compulsory schooling in 1914, 'being a child' was increasingly structured in a 'pedagogical sense' (Depaepe & Smeyers, 2008). Normative constructions were produced which referred to adult-centered ideals of a 'succesful youth phase' (Munchmeier, 1991), a symbolic 'youth land' (Dasberg, 1975) or 'moratorium' (Zinnecker, 2000). Childhood was constituted as a period of socialisation during which children were prepared and educated in order to guarantee their future social integration within the existing social order in society. This idea implies that children were typically treated as not-yet-rational, not-yet-social, dependent, or in-the-process-of-becoming-social (Alanen, 2004). In line with institutionalised regimes of time at school and time in the family, also leisure time was considered as a confined time category that serves the socialisation of children and warrants societal stability (Tinkler, 2003).

Ever since, unstructured leisure time participation, like strolling around in the park and on the streets, watching movies and TV, playing video games, doing nothing, ... increasingly started to function as the cause of an

emerging moral panics (Lloyd, 1923; Siegenthaler & Gonzalez, 1997; Bohnert, Fredericks & Randall, 2010). This is particularly the case with regard to children in poverty. Several empirical and international studies have consistently documented the existence of class-based differences with regard to the ways in which children's time is structured (Lareau, 2000; Sutton, 2008; De Visscher, 2008): while wealthier children spend a great deal of their time within the frame of adult-driven and pre-structured activities, poor children mainly do not participate in these activities. In that sense, also the Participation Decree (2008) considers children in poverty who do not participate in pre-structured leisure time activities as problematic, since it is stated that this prevents poor children of acquiring the social and cultural capital necessary to integrate socially (Coussée, Roets & Bouverne-De Bie, 2009). In these dominant policy discourses and practices, it is argued that the non-participation of children in poverty prevents them of becoming responsible "citizen-workers of the future" (Lister, 2003). Nevertheless, several authors have argued that these ideas strongly limit the space of children to loosely shape their own time (see Mayall, 2002; Powell, 2009). Critiques have been raised in which it is argued that, due to their future-oriented approach, these dominant discourses and practices risk discrediting childhood as a valuable period in its own. It is argued that the ways in which children interpret and shape their social worlds and regimes of time are ignored (Griffiths, 2011), which inherently marginalise children as passive objects of socialisation.

In this context, the ways in which children in poverty shape and give meaning to their regimes of time risk to be jeopardised in a twofold way (Zinnecker, 1995). Therefore, during our research venture we tried not to reproduce these definitions of 'leisure time'. Based on the question whether the non-participation of children in poverty can be seen as a major individual problem, we applied *lifeworld orientation* as a frame of reference that enables an open-minded exploration of children's lifeworlds.

Towards a lifeworld orientation approach

Our research project was inspired by the interpretive paradigm of *lifeworld orientation* that is rooted in theories of social pedagogy (Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009; Hämäläinen, 2003; Otto & Thiersch, 2011). This theoretical

framework was originally developed as a radical social criticism, challenging taken-for-granted and institutionalised problem constructions. It is argued that taken-for-granted problem definitions tend to wield an alienating and colonising influence on people's everyday experiences. This frame of reference requires an exploration of people's everyday experiences and problem constructions, which allows us to uncover the field of tension between taken-for-granted, institutionalised problem constructions and everyday life experiences. We adopted this frame of reference while being confronted with a significant empirical issue emerging during the first phase of our research venture, when the notion of '*leisure time*' as such did not actually resonate with the vocabulary and the lifeworlds of the research participants. Therefore, we tried to explore the ways in which children in poverty shape and give meaning to their regimes of time in their everyday lives. The reconstruction of the lifeworld is grounded within the concrete and lived, but often disregarded existence of human beings in the everyday human world (Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009). According to Grunwald and Thiersch (2009: 136-137), while reconstructing the lifeworld, "it can always be asked whether things have to be as they are, whether they could not be different. People are driven by a hunger, (…) for sufficient resources, creative freedom, acceptance and meaning (…). It is exactly these alternatives that are needed. In order to open oneself to new options, the taken-for-granted must first be problematized, broken open".

In that vein, research focuses on the individual's lifeworld in its interactional context, and explores dynamic, complex and interpretable ways in which material, social and cultural resources as well as discourses are viewed as constraints, opportunities and limitations for children to practise their agency. Within this process of reconstruction, lifeworld phenomena are to be understood as contingent upon social and systemic forces since children's lives are "affected by different factors, including social and structural conditions that play upon it (…) [and] implicated in the wider socio-political, economic and cultural order" (Lawy & Biesta, 2006: 43). From a lifeworld orientation perspective, moreover, social problems are considered from the point of view of human dignity and social justice (Freire, 1970). In our research project, this implies that the ways in which poverty interferes with the lifeworlds of children in poverty requires attention, since their space, time and opportunities are inherently influenced by the conditions under which children are growing up in our Western societies. In our research venture, this perspective enabled us to interpret the stories of the children in relation to the

social, political and cultural contexts and conditions in which their social worlds unfold, and to examine whether, and if so how, poverty interferes with the lifewords of our research participants.

Research methodology

Researchers in a range of disciplines have increasingly acknowledged the importance of grasping children's perspectives as sophisticated ways of knowing (Qvortrup, Corsaro & Honig, 2009). In an effort to move beyond constructing and reconstructing children's experiences based upon adult-centred ideals, the power relations implicated in knowledge production are reconfigured, framing children as "epistemologically privileged in that they are better placed than adults to produce situated knowledge (…) of their everyday experience" (Balen, Blyth, Calabretto, Fraser, Horrocks & Manby, 2006: 32). As a correction of existing research paradigms in which children in poverty are merely portrayed as victims of their situation and passive objects of research, relatively recently poor children's involvement in research has been widely accepted and also desired (Attree, 2006; Ridge, 2011; Ridge & Saunders, 2009). In the following, we explain our strategies of data collection, and our strategies of data analysis.

Strategies of data collection and data analysis

We applied a complementary variety of research approaches, employing an ethnographic research methodology during which open qualitative interviews were conducted with children in poverty. The ethnographic research approach gave us the opportunity to select contexts in which processes of meaning-making in working with children in poverty actually took place (Angrosino, 2008). Based on an analysis of interviews with local key actors who were involved in setting up leisure time activities (see Coussée & Roets, 2011), we identified three different research sites in three different cities where interactions could be observed between a wide diversity of children between 6-12 years old, their parents and other people such as volunteers, (professional) youth workers and social workers. In the first city, we immersed ourselves in a community-based, after-school child care centre. In the second city, we selected a city playground where day-

care was provided for more than 400 children in the summer holidays. In the third city, we followed an outreach youth worker, who travelled around different quarters of the city to set up sports activities on Wednesdays and during the weekend. We spent time with the children in these natural contexts during the summer holidays to learn from their experiences and meanings (Lareau, 2000). This research method enabled us to gain an understanding of how situations in which children and parents were living got coded and acted upon as 'poverty situations' in these particular research contexts,, and to figure out which children were named and named themselves as living in poverty. Relying on a very broad and sensitizing conceptualization of poverty as "a lack of material and non-material resources and power" (see Lister, 2004: 13), we used the ways in which children were self-identifying as being poor as a starting point. As soon as the issue of poverty was explicitly mentioned by children themselves, we invited them to participate in the research project. Many of the children who mentioned poverty also had a different cultural background, and were equally well included in our study as research participants. Our ethnographic research involvement did not directly lead to the production of research materials, but served the process of building rapport as a key ingredient to open up the problem definitions and lifeworlds of children (Roets, Roose & Bouverne-De Bie, 2013). We attempted to develop and establish dialogue with children in poverty, exploring their lifeworlds and problem constructions rather than reinforcing institutionalised problem constructions as a point of departure to conduct open qualitative interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). During our research process, eventually 39 children participated in the project. While constructing qualitative interviews, we further focused on decoding and recoding particular issues, concerns and problems that were constituted as real for the people in these settings in relation to poverty. During the qualitative interviews we explored in an open phrasing how the children could shape their social worlds and their regimes of time. In order to analyse the 39 transcribed qualitative interviews, we employed a qualitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) as a "sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (Patton, 2002: 453). Our process of interpretation was inspired by our theoretical frame of reference, implying a lifeworld orientation perspective (Grunwald and Thiersch, 2009). In our analysis, we use pseudonyms of the children's real names.

Findings

In what follows, we discuss three insights that were identified throughout the lived experiences of the children involved, including: (1) challenging taken-for-granted divisions of time; (2) giving meaning to regimes of time as an on-going learning process; and (3) imagining a socially just future.

Challenging taken-for-granted divisions of time

The answers and the stories of the children show that, while spending time and moving across different contexts such as the family and the school, they usually do not recognise institutionalised problem definitions of "leisure time". The children do not use conventional and taken-for-granted divisions and structures of time in which time at school and in the family is distinguished from leisure time, and they also do not use taken-for-granted discourses and practices that pre-structure the ways in which time unfolds as valuable time. The children value all sorts of happenings in their everyday lives. Charlot, a 9-year old girl, does not have plenty of time at home which could be considered as conventional leisure time, but she is very proud of bearing a joint responsibility in taking care for her little brother and her two sisters with her mom:

> *I have one brother and two sisters. At home I don't have a room of my own to make my homework. I'm just around in the house, to help my mother in the kitchen. You know, we have a lot of work in taking care for the children: making feeding bottles for my little sister, taking care of that 7-year old rogue! (…) At home, I take care of my two sisters when my mother is busy at work. And if they really misbehave, then I make a fuss about it just the way my mother does… and they listen well!*

Another 9-year old girl, Sonja, highly values the time spent in the extramural "homework class", where she works hard yet also experiences support and solidarity to keep up-to-date by studying with her friends, so she can keep a good perspective:

> *At school I got a low mark on my report! I had to cry, realising that I had to stay down a class. I was worrying about it in my bed at night. I want to become a doctor, so that I will be able to earn a lot of money for my family. Therefore I love to go to the homework class: if I am muddling on my homework, they help me! And here I have two real friends as well; I'm not alone in this!*

For Tom, a 7-year old boy who is going to special education, the inevitable daily 2 hours by bus to get there takes up his time. Nevertheless, he discovered that taking the bus also broadens his mind and offers new opportunities:

> *My school is located in the other city, I have to go there because I am disabled, by bus and it's for hours on the bus. But I have a brand-new friend on the bus in the meanwhile; he invites me to join him after school. He's fun!*

Karel, a 9-year old boy, experiences his time spent at school in very ambiguous ways, since he is easily bored yet also experiences school as a place to play with his friends:

> *I'm in the third class right now. School is a little bit boring but fun as well. We always have to concentrate, but I play in the class with my friends from time to time!*

In that vein, the children show a degree of freedom as subjects to generate their own experiences across different contexts, and construct and spend their time valuably, in surprising ways.

Giving meaning to regimes of time as an on-going learning process

The experiences of the children mirror their evolving social and cultural capital, which they have and further acquire during on-going processes of learning in their everyday lives while moving across different contexts. Their everyday participation and processes of meaning-making constitute them as producers of symbols, referring to their social and cultural capital, and as integral to society. Moreover, the relationality of these processes of learning is remarkable, as the children seem to experience and construct their time as particularly valuable in interaction with adults such as their parents, and other children. Time can be

considered as a space in which children co-construct what they do as interdependent human beings and learn permanently, since their stories show how they gain valuable experiences *with* adults. For example, Babdir, a 7-year old, following his father at his heels in the weekend is his favourite pursuit:

> *I have three brothers. My father works for the baker, he brings around the bread. My mother is a housewife, she takes care of me and my brothers. I prefer most to join my dad, taking a drive in the car to bring around the bread, on Sundays and on Saturdays too! We talk to all the people, we hear all the news!*

Marie is a 7-year old girl, Moroccan by birth. During the summer holidays, she loves travelling with her parents to their original country, where they run the farm with their family. Marie is proud that she is doing her bit there:

> *My parents don't have lots of money now. But my little brother and me, we lack for nothing! Quite the contrary, our eyes are popping out of our head during the summer! We travel to Morocco then, we run a big farm all together with our family there! We have a farmhouse, three dogs and chickens, and my uncle and aunt live there with my niece. We have our hands full with that!*

For Benjamin, a 7-year old, his new bike allows him to do things with his father and with his friends and to broaden his mind in between times:

> *I get my own new bike tomorrow. I have a lot of plans: riding on my bike to get a breath of fresh air while joining my dad going to the green domain! But I can do things without my dad too, I can join my friends when they are heading for school or going to our football pitch by bike. Now I can see my friends again who are in the second grade, now that I stay down a grade at school I never have the opportunity to see them anymore. But now I will see them again on our bikes when we are heading for school!*

For David, a 9-year old boy, joining his father during the holidays when he is up and about at work is one of his most treasured experiences:

I am the little one at home. My older sisters and brothers don't do things where I can join them anymore, I am just a kiddy they say. But in the summer holidays, when I'm bored stiff, my father takes me along to his work as a carpenter! That's fantastic! I help my father at work: putting nails in bags, sorting out screws in boxes of 50, 70 or 100 pieces. I want to do it again!

Imagining a socially just future

Poverty clearly shapes the lifeworlds of the children, as a constraint on their opportunities that are inherently influenced by the social, structural and material conditions under which they are growing up. Their lived experiences, and the ways in which they can shape and give meaning to their regimes of time, are clearly constituted by a lack of material and financial resources. Nevertheless, the children are not passively enduring the effects of poverty, and their perspectives do not demonstrate their acceptance of material constraints while coping with poverty. Although poverty restricts their space and time to do all sorts of things, they also imagine a socially just future. Many of them actively develop creative ideas to mediate and negotiate the impact of disadvantage on their own lives and the lives of relevant others, such as their parents and families. The solidarity in their stories is very remarkable. For example, Charlot, as a 9-year old, helps in the household with her mother yet wants to become a doctor, therefore she also hopes to support her family in the future:

In the future, I would wish to become a doctor! That would make it affordable if my father is getting sick, and so I would be able to help him in the house as well. My mom works as a cleaning woman. My father doesn't have money, neither does my mother.

Greg is 10-years old and plays in a local football club. Although he also wants to join the box club so that he can become a police man, his family does not have resources enough to do so. Nevertheless, from his perspective, the most crucial moments are those when his mother comes over as his fan:

Football is my very favourite! I'm a top sportsman! My brother is also top, he will possibly earn money when he is getting 18 years old as a professional football top player. My dad lives far away, and my mother cleans houses so we can just manage on her money. Later I want to live in Germany, so I can become a football star and earn money for my mother. The football club costs loads of money every year. But my

mom is really proud when she's coming over as my fan! School doesn't work out, doing sums is a pain in the ass! I would also love to become a police man, but I need to learn to box then. There's a box club in our quarter of the city, but my mom said that I can't do that, because I will get hurt and my eyes will be bruised and coloured!

André, a 12-year old boy, has been placed in a boarding school by the school welfare worker. Although he really wants to live at home with his mother, he is making provisions for the future:

I want to become a carpenter! I love to do that, I learned that at boarding school. They took me away from home, from my mother. They just don't see that I learn so much from her. They punished me because it didn't work out at school, not because it didn't work out with mom. I hate that women who decided that. Just because I don't listen when they just snap my head off at school. I refused to do my homework. Anyway, at boarding school I learn how to be a carpenter! The sooner I can do that, the better. I save my money in my piggy bank now, and I will save my money when I am a carpenter for my family. This week, I got 20 Euros from my granny. For the very first time, I bought fries for my family, as a surprise! But from now on, I will save up all my money.

Concluding reflections

"Wanderer, your footsteps are the road, and nothing more; wanderer, we have no road, we make the road by walking."

(Machado, 1982: 143 in Horton & Freire, 1990)

In this article, we critically scrutinised the actual policy discourse on leisure time participation of children in poverty, in which active participation in institutionalised leisure activities is enabled as an effective anti-poverty strategy (Wijckmans & Dierckx, 2009). For us, the Participation Decree (2008) implies that children's regimes of time are structured in a pedagogical sense, constituting 'leisure time' mainly as pre-structured activities that are based on adult-centered ideals, during which children in poverty are educated to become 'good' citizens of the future. We have argued that this conceptualisation of leisure time participation constructs children as passive objects of socialisation rather than as meaning-making

subjects. The actual incentives, covered in the Participation Decree (2008), to guide children in poverty towards institutionalised leisure activities mirror the idea that children in poverty have a lack of social and cultural capital, and that they should acquire this as an outcome of their active leisure time participation. Referring to this so-called lack of social and cultural capital of children in poverty, the question *what* social policy makers mean and *why* this outcome is so crucial for them is currently lacking. We argue that these policies de-politicise poverty while failing to respond to the initial claim of the *Global Poverty Report* (GPR,1994), requiring the recognition of children and adults in poverty, involved in on-going processes of learning in their everyday lives, as producers of cultural symbols and meaning-makers within society.

In this way, we remain sceptical towards social policy discourses and practices that refer to active leisure time participation as an effective anti-poverty strategy. The underlying assumption implies that active leisure time participation is necessary to guarantee the socialisation of children in poverty so that they learn to connect with the dominant societal values and behavioural standards in our societies. Our analysis of the perspectives and experiences of children in poverty shows that, despite the finding that poverty shapes and restricts their space and time to do all sorts of things, they also imagine a socially just future. From this perspective, children in poverty are to be considered as *de facto* citizens who participate inherently and integral to society (Lister, 2007), implying an on-going learning process and practice that "cannot be simply learned in school or in any other institution but is common to all situations" (Lawy & Biesta, 2006: 43). The relationality of the ways in which children in poverty experience their time as valuable is very remarkable, since the children shape and give meaning to their regimes of time in interaction with significant others, such as adults in their lives. These findings contradict the assumptions at play in the ways in which the issue of leisure time have been theorised as 'free-time' by several authors, such as Griffiths (2011: 191), who refers to the issue of "free-time" as the ways in which children "elect to spend their free-time", defined by Mayall (2002:133) as "a time out of adult control". In our findings, the notion of 'free-time' rather refers to processes of meaning-making in which children challenge taken-for-granted divisions of time and imagine a socially just future, as interdependent human beings who are involved in on-going processes of meaning-making and learning *with* adults and other children in their

everyday lives. In that sense, the quality of interactions between children, and of adults among the children, is essential, and implies an intriguing search for interpreting what children deem desirable while spending time.

References

Alanen L. 2004. Theorizing children's welfare. Paper presented at *New perspectives on childhood*, 449 University of Leeds, UK, 12-13 November 2004.

Angrosino M. 2008. Recontextualizing observation: ethnography, pedagogy, and the prospects for a progressive political agenda. In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Denzin NK, Lincoln YS (eds). Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA; 729-745.

Balen R, Blyth E, Calabretto H, Fraser C, Horrocks C, Manby M. 2006. Involving children in health and social research: 'human becomings' or 'active beings'? *Childhood* 13: 29-48.

Bogdan R, Biklen SK. 1998. *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Allyn & Bacon: Boston.

Bohnert A., Fredericks J, Randall, E. 2010. Capturing unique dimensions of youth organized activity involvement: theoretical and methodological considerations. *Educational Research* 80: 576-610.

Coussée, F. Roets, G. 2011. Lokaal vrijetijdsbeleid. Tussen vereniging en voorziening. In *Handboek Jeugdbeleid.* Barholomeus L, Cuisinier E, Gaublomme K, Ipermans M (eds).. Politeia: Brussel.

Coussée, F., Roets, G. Bouverne-De Bie, M. 2009. Empowering the powerful: challenging hidden processes of marginalization in youth work policy and practice in Belgium. *Critical Social Policy* 29: 421-442.

Dasberg, L. (1975). Grootbrengen door kleinhouden als historisch verschijnsel. Meppel: Boom.

Dean H. 2010. *Understanding Human Need*. The Policy Press: Bristol.

Depaepe M., Smeyers, P. 2008. Educationalisation as an ongoing process mordernization process. *Educational Theory* 58(4): 379-389.

European Commission. 2012. Council recommendation on Belgium's national reform programme for 2012-2015. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/csr2012_belgium_en.pdf [accessed at 30 December 2012]

Feinstein, L., Bynner, J. and Duckworth, K. 2006. Young People's Leisure Contexts and their Relation to Adult Outcomes. *Journal of Youth Studies* 9(3): 305–27.

Freire P. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Penguin: London and New York.

Global Poverty Report (GPR) (1994). KBS: Brussel.

Goldson B, Muncie J. 2009. *Youth Crime and Juvenile Justice Volume 1: The "Youth Problem"*. Sage: London.

Griffiths M. 2011. Favoured free-time: comparing children's activity preferences in the UK and the USA. *Children & Society* 25(3): 190-201.

Grunwald K, Thiersch H. 2009. The concept of the "lifeworld orientation" for social work and social care. *Journal of Social Work Practice* 23(2): 131-146.

Hämaläinen J. 2003. The concept of social pedagogy in the field of social work. *Journal of Social Work* 3(1): 69-80.

Horton M, Freire P. 1990. *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change.* Temple University Press: Philadelphia, Pa.

Hsieh HF, Shannon SE. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research* 15(9): 1277-1288.

Lareau A. 2000. Social class and the daily lives of children: a study from the United States. *Childhood* 7: 155-171.

Lawy R, Biesta G. 2006. Citizenship-as-practice: the educational implications of an inclusive and relational understanding of citizenship. *British Journal of Educational Studies* 54*:* 34–50.

Lister R. 2003. Investing in the citizens-workers of the future: transformations in citizenship and the state under New Labour. *Social Policy & Administration* 37(5): 427-443.

Lister R. 2004. *Poverty*. Polity: Cambridge.

Lister R. 2007. Why citizenship: where, when and how children? *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 8(2): 693-718.

Lloyd, A.H. (1922). Ages of Leisure. *American Journal of Sociology*, 28(1): 160-178.

Mayall B. 2002. *Towards a Sociology for Childhood: Thinking from Children's Lives*. Open University Press: Buckingham.

Mestrum F. 2011. Child poverty: a critical perspective. *Social Work & Society* 9(1): 161-168.

Münchmeier R. 1991. Pedagogiek van de jeugdruimten. Basisprincipes voor een sociaal-ruimtelijk georienteerd jeugdwerk. In *Focus op Leefwereld van Jongeren. Nieuwe Ontwikkelingen en Kwaliteit in het Jeugdwerk*. Stevaert R, Münchmeier R, Wildemeersch D (eds). Provinciebestuur Limburg: Hasselt.

Otto HU, Thiersch H. 2011. *Handbuch Sozialarbeit/Sozialpädagogik*. Luchterhand: Neuwied.

Participation Decree. 2008. Flemish Government, Department of Youth.

Patton MQ. 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods,* Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Platt L. 2005. *Discovering Child Poverty: The Creation of a Policy Agenda from 1800 to the Present*. The Policy Press: Bristol.

Powell S. 2009. The value of play: construction of play in government policy in England. *Children & Society* 23: 29-42.

Qvortrup J, Corsaro WA, Honig, MS. 2009. *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan: Houndmills /New York.

Reynaert D, Bouverne-de Bie M, Vandevelde S. 2009. A review of children's rights literature since the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Childhood* 16: 518-534.

Ridge T. 2011. The everyday costs of poverty in childhood: a review of qualitative research exploring the lives and experiences of low-income children in the UK. *Children & Society* 25(1): 73-84.

Ridge T, Saunders P. 2009. Introduction: themed section on children's perspectives on poverty and disadvantage in rich and developing countries. *Social Policy & Society* 8(4): 499–502.

Roets, G., Roose, R., Bouverne-De Bie. 2013. Researching Child Poverty: towards a lifeworld orientation. *Childhood* advanced access doi: 10.1177/0907568212475101.

Siegenthaler, K.L., Gonzalez, G.L. 1997. Youth sports and serious leisure. A critique. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 21(3): 298-314.

Sutton L. 2008. The state of play: disadvantage, play and children's well-being. *Social Policy & Administration* 7: 537-549.

Tinkler, P. 2013. Cause for concern: young women and leisure, 1930-1950. *Women's History Review* 12(2): 232-260.

Van Regenmortel T. 2002. Empowerment en maatzorg: een krachtgerichte psychologische kijk op armoede. In *Armoede en Sociale Uitsluiting: Jaarboek.* Vranken J, De Boyser K, Geldhof D, Van Menxel G (eds). Acco: Antwerpen: 71-84.

Veit-Wilson J. 2000. States of welfare: a conceptual challenge. *Social Policy & Administration* 34(1): 1-25.

Vranken J. 1998. Van 'moderne' armoede naar 'sociale uitsluiting': een verkenning van begrips- en beleidsontwikkelingen. In *20 Jaar OCMW: Naar een Actualisering van het Maatschappijproject.* Vranken J, Vanhercke B, Carton L, Van Menxel G (eds). Acco: Antwerpen; 63-78.

Vranken J. 2007. Armoede is niet gezond. In *Armoede en Sociale Uitsluiting: Jaarboek 2007*. Vranken J, Campaert G, De Boyser K, Dierckx D (eds). Acco: Antwerpen; 25-37.

Wijckmans J, Dierckx D. 2009. *Verboden voor Onbevoegden: Naar Lokale Netwerken voor Meer Participatie aan Cultuur, Jeugdwerk en Sport*. Acco: Leuven.

Zinnecker, J. 1995. The cultural modernisation of childhood. In *Growing up in Europe. Contemporary Horizons in childhood and youth studies.* Chisholm, L., Buchner, P., Kruger, H. & Du Bois-Reymond, M. (eds). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 85-94.

Zinnecker J. 2000. Childhood and adolescence as pedagogic moratoria. *Zeitschrift Fur Padagogik* 46(2): 36–68.