



Youth and marginalisation: Young people from immigrant families in Scandinavia

editors

Gestur Gudmundsson, Dennis Beach and Viggo Vestel

This book is the result of extensive ethnographic research that has analysed the experiences of young people from immigrant families in the Nordic cities of Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Oslo. Concepts of cultural and urban studies, sociology, education and other disciplines are used - inclusion/exclusion, territorial stigmatisation, post-colonialism and critical race theory. In many ways suburban youth are to be viewed as a class-in-itself: objectified by curricula and school practices, often vilified, downtrodden and symbolically exploited in the mainstream media and common understanding. At the same time their youth cultures evoke the other half of the Marxist

class concept, the class-for-itself, in understanding youth sub-cultures as creative collective responses and resistance to a shared social situation. The hip-hop cultures of youth in multicultural areas are often postmodern in identity-play and aesthetics, but by no means de-politicised, and furthermore these youths display creativity in the social media where they challenge dominant discourses of place, identity and belonging in society.

The Nordic countries are often seen as the home of egalitarianism and decent hosts of immigrants, but this book reveals a more complicated picture. Inclusion and multiculturalism may be key words in Nordic educational policy, but analyses of curricula and teaching practices show that these goals are far from realised. Curricula stress a Nordic, Western and Christian cultural heritage, school practices recommend migrants to adapt to life style of the natives and residential segregation is a central factor in mechanisms of exclusion. All major cities in the Nordic countries have immigrant-dense areas, primarily in suburbs that were originally built for the upwardly mobile native working class. This segregation means less opportunities in the educational system and it is difficult to apply for a job from 'the wrong address'. At the same time these areas have become the nests of creative and resistant youth cultures.

Contributors include: Gestur Gudmundsson, Katrine Fangen and Ivar Frønes, Sune Qvotrup Jensen, Dennis Beach and Ove Sernhede, Henry Mainsah, Frédérique Brossard Børhaug, Åsa Möller, Jonas Lindbäck and Ove Sernhede.

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