The Social Construction of Gender in Childhood and Adolescence

Edited by:
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How do children and adolescents become gendered individuals? The perspectives of children and youth have been missing from this discussion. The researchers in this cutting-edge collection of papers agree that it's critical to listen to the voices of children and youth and have relied on methodologies that draw directly from them—rather than solely from parents or teachers.

Exemplifying some of the most rigorous scholarship that outlines the links between individual behaviors, social structures, and social processes, this issue of American Behavioral Scientist focuses on the view of gender as socially constructed, created, and re-created in daily social interactions. It examines the intersections of gender, sexuality, and peer status as well as the tensions between structure and agency.

Divided into two sections, this special issue provides an in-depth and comprehensive picture of the emerging scholarship on children, youth, and gender. The first section concentrates on the experiences of children and youth in context: the family, early childhood centers in two cultures, elementary school playgrounds, and at a youth program.

The second part of this journal examines the role the interplay between sports and gender construction. Children in the United States spend more time now, compared to 20 years ago, in structured activities, including sports, outside of school. Those activities play a key part in shaping gender.

By paying attention to the voices of children and youth, the authors in this issue address many core issues in the fields of sociology, gender, and childhood and adolescence. Researchers, students, and practitioners will find every article an invaluable resource to this critical field of study.

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Section 1: Children and Youth in Context

Introduction
Nancy L. Marshall
Placing this collection of papers in context, the editor introduces core concepts and outlines the journal content.

Families and Children: Together, Apart
Marjorie L. DeVault
This article places children in the context of family and explores the use of time and space by children and adults in families.

**Differences in Children’s Construction of Gender Across Culture: An Interpretive Approach**  
Hilary Aydt and William A. Corsaro  
Following children into one of their activities away from family – early childhood centers – this article focuses on whether gender segregation among preschoolers varies from culture to culture. It looks at preschools in the United States and Italy.

**Gender on the Playground**  
D. Ellen Boyle, Nancy L. Marshall, and Wendy W. Robeson  
With the opportunity to observe gender as "performance" with few adult rules and fewer adults present on the playground, this article explores how fourth graders construct gender on the playground.

**Keepin’ It Real: Black Youth, Hip Hop Culture, and Black Identity**  
Andreana Clay  
Looking at racial identity and the use of performance and cultural capital, this article analyzes the processes within groups by which individuals negotiate identity through social interactions.

**Section 2: Sports and the Social Construction of Gender**  
**Parental Ideologies and Children’s After-School Activities**  
Janet S. Dunn, David A. Kinney, and Sandra L. Hofferth  
This article posits pre-adolescents' sports participation in the larger context of the family and community and provides insights into the adult culture that children interpret in their own constructions of their social world.

**Constructing Female Athleticism: A Study of Girls’ Recreational Softball**  
Nancy L. Malcom  
Exploring the cultural contradictions of female athleticism, the author looks at the performance of gender among preadolescent or adolescent athletes.

**Female Basketball Participation: Negotiating the Conflation of Peer Status and Gender Status from Childhood Through Puberty**  
Sohaila Shakib  
How do preadolescent girls' experiences in sports differ from post-puberty girls? This article looks at how female athletes have overcome gender-specific hurdles to sports participation from childhood through the adolescent transition.

**Multiple Masculinities? Teenage Boys Talk About Jocks and Gender**  
C.J. Pascoe  
Drawing the attention to the conflation of gender and sexuality for boys, this article examines how participation or lack of participation shapes the construction of masculinities in high school.

Michael S. Kimmel and Matthew Mahler

This paper addresses the possible consequences of the hegemonic position of Jock culture and how violence is linked to hegemonic masculinity and homophobia.