Generation in Childhood Studies

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Generation

- Alanen (2011:170) empirical research drawing on generation as a conceptual lens could reveal

- 1. those structures that can be identified as specifically generational

- 2. the inter-dependent positions that these generational structures define for generational groups to take and to act from

- 3. the social and cultural practices of positioning – both the self – and other positioning – through which the current generational structures and the generational order as their composite structure are generated, maintained and (occasionally) transformed
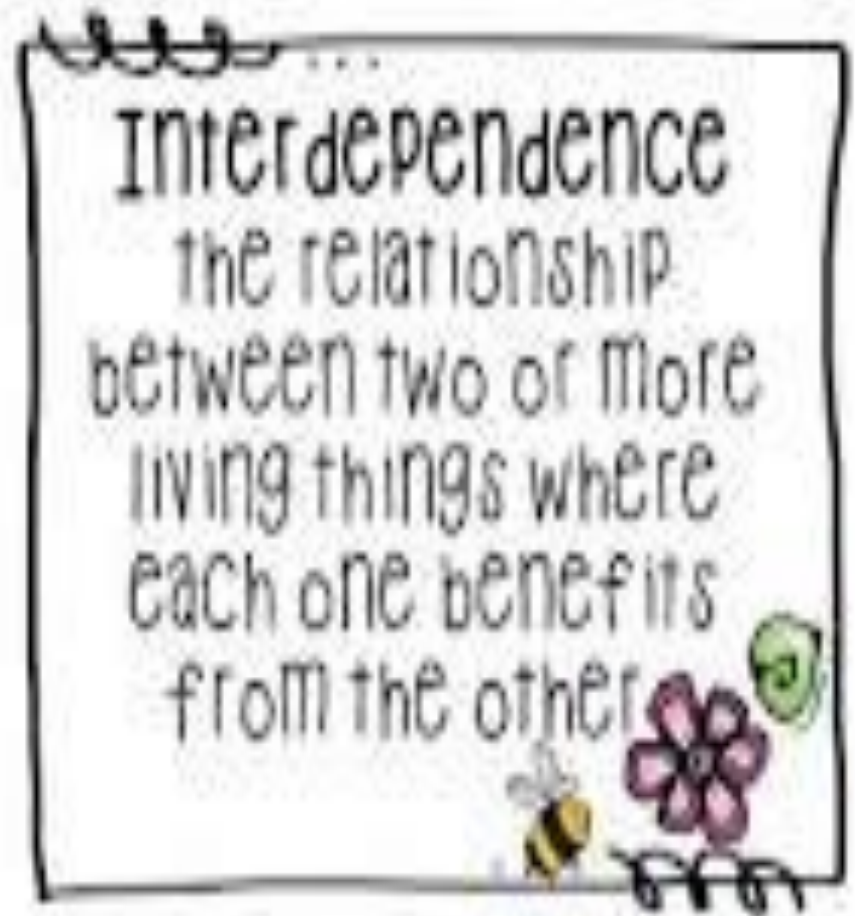
Generation

- Mayall (2013) concept of generation is crucial in enabling childhood researchers to draw out the interconnections and interdependencies between childhood and adulthood

- Generational relationship – messy, ambiguous, uncertain, interrelated rather than stable, durable and separate

Generagency:

- Gener – aspect of concept involves acknowledging ongoing relevance of generation for understanding the location of childhood and adulthood and the implications of this positioning for both parties
- Mutually reinforcing and interdependent relationship between generation and agency – children practice agency but within the positioning of childhood relative to adulthood
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Interdependence the relationship between two or more living things where each one benefits from the other

Intergeneragency

- Refers to existing hierarchal, structured relationships between adults and children – illuminating the macro framework within which children's agency is expressed and practiced

- Complexity of relationships between adulthood and childhood and how these are impacted not just by age, but also gender, class and ethnicity

- Dynamic and multi-dimensional relationships

Inter-generagency

- Boundaries exist between adulthood and childhood but like all boundaries these positions are not fixed and immutable but porous, fluid and constantly shifting and changing
- Adulthood and childhood are practiced relationally
- Relationships are for most part asymmetrical but also interdependent and reciprocal
- Within this broad asymmetrical relationship children accept, resist, challenge and modify relationship in myriad ways

Intergeneragency

- Moosa-Mitha (2005) 'differently equal'
- Relationships between adults and children generate fields of negotiation and renegotiation –norms and expectations are actively challenged and modified
- Children adopt strategies at times complying and at times resisting adult expectations
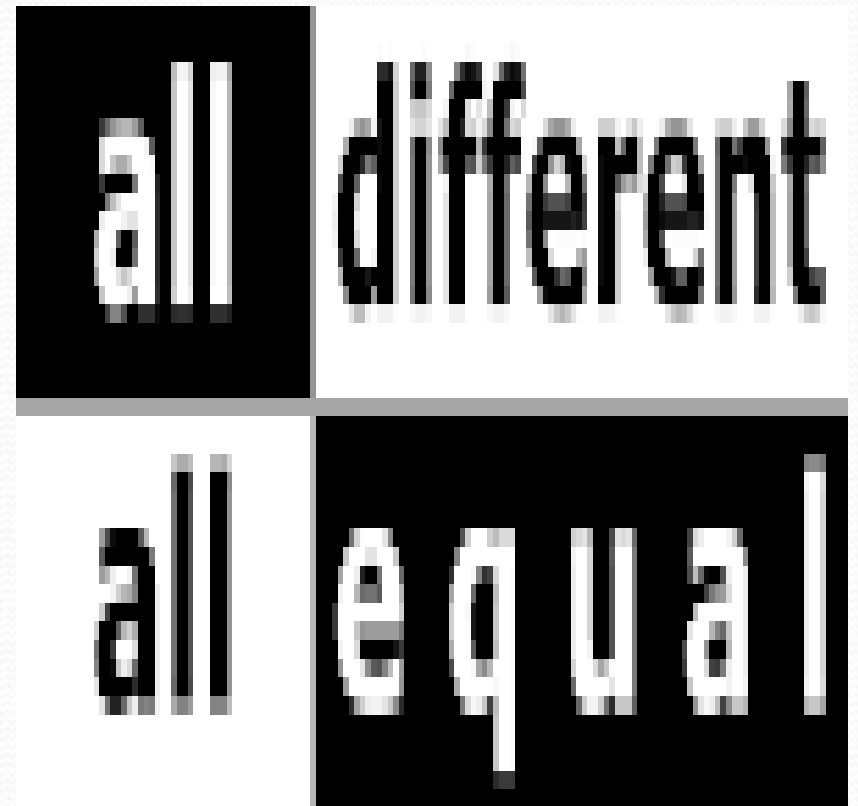
Intrageneragency

- Highlights heterogeneity of children's everyday lives within the structural location of childhood
- Children do not experience boundaries in uniform ways – other structural boundaries such as class, gender, ethnicity intersect with childhood - these variables interact socially and practically with generation
- Children do not simply internalise adult world but actively select, dilute, contest and challenge aspects of the adult world
- Children 'constitute their own reality' (Shanahan, 2007:419) – they reproduce, undermine and reconfigure stereotypical understandings of childhood

DIVERSITY

Intrageneragency

- Children simultaneously members of families, workers, school pupils, consumers
- Varying identities impact on relationships with adults and with peers
- Underscores need to contextually place children within multiple settings
- Relationships are messy, blurred, full of internal contradictions and complexities

Generagency - generagentree