

Abstract:

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The Aesthetics of Everyday Life observed in the Creative Processes of Young Children: about children's symbolic creativity when they with their bodies construct their own place and movement.

This paper draws on data from a large on-going study of 'Children, Mobility and Urban Space' in Denmark. The empirical material presented in this paper derives from observations of 3-6 year-olds bodily movements and presence in two different pre-school settings in Denmark. One of the day care institutions is located in a suburb of Copenhagen (Glostrup) and the other is located in a rural area of Jutland (Salling Sund).

In the analysis of the data we have employed a theoretical framework that brings together the conceptualisation of children's own creative cultures, as formulated by Flemming Mouritsen, with broader understandings of culture in particular the work of Raymond Williams (a whole way of life) and Paul Willis's notion of the culture of everyday life (incl. symbolic creativity and grounded aesthetics). The paper shows how children themselves are engaged in the making of culture persistently creating their own place (for movement and being) within adult pedagogical spaces. Using different illustrations the paper shows how an aesthetical and creative practice forms part of young children's own constructions. This aesthetical practice grows from the children's active bodily conquests, their innovations and use of materials, spaces and tools.

The examples that we draw on illustrate children's symbolic creativity in both indoor and outdoor spaces. Additionally, the examples show how children's symbolic creativity, expressed through different bodily displays, involves the use of sounds, rhythms, movement and construction. Thus the paper demonstrates how, within the pedagogical and institutionalised everyday lives of young children, there are everyday aesthetics created and expressed by children sometimes assisted sometimes countered by the context they are in.