

The 8th

YOUTH & SOCIETIES

(in Europe and the Mediterranean) Meeting

Lyon, October 12-14, 2016

Gender and Youth

(Ecole Normale Supérieure of Lyon)

The eighth *Youth & Societies* (in Europe and the Mediterranean) Meeting (Les *huitièmes rencontres Jeunes & Sociétés en Europe et autour de la Méditerranée* – RJS 8) will take place in Lyon on October 12, 13 and 14 2016. The focus will be on youths' gender.

In France, public launching of the “ABC de l'Égalité” (which promoted gender concerned education), images of street harassment on mass media broadcast and heated public debate about LGBT parenting caused the break out of a sharp controversy. It revealed how crucial it is to renew empirical and theoretical approaches on the role of the “sex” variable in the social construction of youth. It is the aim of this Meeting to address such questions.

Unlike the common sense which opposes male and female by nature, social sciences conceive gender both as a *process* based on power relations between the sexes, and as a moving *identity* defining sexes relatively to each other. But the sex does not only explain social behaviours nor it is a mere criterion for self identification; it also works as a scheme of classification and perception for actors to understand their environment and their interactions.

The prism of youth - both as a social category and as a stage of life - opens new avenues for analysing the construction of gender identities and social relations between the sexes. First because gendered categories of thought and classification are internalized during the early stages of socialization: at school, within their family or among their groups of peers, boys and girls are taught ways of being, acting and thinking differently. Second because initiatory rites marking the end of childhood, such as first sexual experiences, reveal the variety of norms which regulate sexual behaviour of youth. Moreover, gender differentiations in school trajectories question the social representation of a gendered distribution of academic skills as well as gender stereotypes' weight on school-based strategies. Unemployment, which is particularly high among the youth, is also affected by gender inequalities. Then it is crucial to study

in depth the causes and the consequences of gender discriminations, such as female censorship. Despite direct social inequalities, gender differentiation also affects youth's cultural consumption and their taste but also their sociabilities or their militant commitments. In the end, the very fact that public policies for youth show concern for the « gender gap » (see for example public discourses promoting an equal access to public space and to social and cultural services) reveal the need for social sciences to tackle the question of gender in more diverse areas.

Sociology - with its early commitment to denaturalize the male/female opposition and to think in terms of unsteady relations of domination between the sexes - remains the first field where gender relations are studied. Nonetheless, we believe that the question of youth and gender shall be understood at the light of all social sciences approaches. Papers in economy, social psychology, history, geography and philosophy from all over the world will be equally considered.

Recent works on gender have put forward new questionings such as the intersectionality of identification, the growth of masculinist claim, the transformation of sex, race and class labelling, vicissitudes of gender mainstreaming and sexual violences. All can be very fruitful to highlight youth's specific experiences. Three main dimensions of youth's gender relations can be emphasized: early socialization, gender inequalities, and public policies :

- ... *early socialization* : focus will be on how education (at school, with peers or in the family) contributes to assign gendered social roles. Specific attention should be paid to practical details in order to reveal historical continuities or changes.
- ... *gender inequalities* : contributions should care about measuring objective inequalities but also subjective perceptions of injustices and discriminations. The question of Internationality between class, race and gender inequalities should be especially addressed.
- ... *public policies* : if the question of laws and rights remain central to the study of the relations between the sexes, this specific thread mainly focuses on the positive or negative impact of gender concerned public policies on gender inequalities.

The « Rencontres » are divided in plenary session with invited speakers, and various workshops in smaller groups. If gender issues constitute the main concern, a greater variety of topics, recurrent since the creation of the « Rencontres », will be addressed in specific workshops:

- Social and occupational integration of the youth
- Academic trajectories
- Empowerment and dependency
- Mobilizations and commitments
- Inequalities among the youth

- Longitudinal approaches (life stories and trajectories)

As we said above, different disciplines are invited to contribute. But the aim is also to open the debate to foreign contributions: we want to promote both international and transdisciplinary analyses of gender representations and relations.

This 8th *Youth & Societies* Meeting is introduced by the laboratory Triangle (CNRS-ENS Lyon) and the Max Weber Center (CNRS-Lyon 2 University). It is co-organized with the National Institute of Youth and Popular Education (INJEP).

Proposals should be submitted on Triangle website (rjs8.2016@gmail.com) **between March 15 and May 15**. They should offer a summary of the presentation being proposed, including a short rationale for the focus, indicating any conceptual framing and empirical material to be covered or activities to be undertaken, specifying the main references of a targetting literature. Proposals for single papers or roundtables should be **no more than two sides of A4** (approx. 600 words – 5000 signs). **Please include: title ; author's first and last name(s); e-mail address ; academic field ; institutional affiliation/country ; 5 key-words**. The scientific board will review the propositions in June. Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their participation no later than June 25. Communications then must be sent **no later than September 15**. They could be in French or in English.