Symposium: Multimodal Research Methodologies with Children and Youth

ABSTRACTS

**MARCH 5
SESSION 1: BETWEEN ROOTS AND ROUTES: YOUNG PEOPLE'S SPATIAL ATTACHMENTS**

Seeing Otherwise: Graphic Anthropology and the Multimodal Representation of Stateless Lives

Charlie Rumsby (Sussex University)

In collaboration with illustrator Ben Thomas, this project transforms ethnographic written text into an 'ethno-graphic' novel. It traces the evolution from working with single images, to sequencing those images alongside interview transcripts, and ultimately to the creation of comic panels. Each visual sequence explores the unique contributions illustration can make to ethnography: fostering empathetic engagement, preserving anonymity, enabling alternative storytelling modes, and representing the intangible aspects of participants' everyday lives.

Ethnographic data and photography - archival, field-based, and participant-generated - served as catalysts for imagining unseen worlds. These visual anchors bridged the gap between lived experience and creative interpretation, guiding the illustrator in crafting scenes that are both grounded in reality and rich in possibility.

Working with stateless children and youth, the project foregrounds ethical considerations in multimodal research. Rather than directly depicting individuals, we used anonymised visual storytelling to protect identities while still conveying emotional depth and lived experience. This approach reflects a commitment to relational ethics - honouring the trust and vulnerability of participants while exploring creative methods of representation. The project also highlights the benefits and challenges of conducting multimodal research with children and youth. While illustration offers accessible and empathetic ways to communicate complex realities, it requires careful negotiation of meaning, consent, and cultural sensitivity. Although still in progress, this project demonstrates the potential of graphic anthropology as an interdisciplinary practice that enhances the communication and analysis of ethnographic research beyond traditional academic boundaries. The creation of an ethno-graphic novel offers anthropologists new ways to share their work beyond conventional texts. Graphic anthropology must critically consider how images are curated, how they represent participants' lives, and how stories are (re)told. While these concerns are not new to anthropology, what is distinctive about graphic anthropology is its capacity to challenge the dominance of text, often laden with inaccessible language, and offer more inclusive modes of engagement.

Listening from and to the margins: Podcasting as co-research methodology with transnational migrant-background youth

Laura J. Ogden (Maastricht University), Vera Klocke (Hildesheim University) and Rachel Yeboah Afari (independent researcher)

This paper discusses a multimodal and youth-centric co-research podcast project about transnational sibling relationships. The project was facilitated by 2 university researchers and involved 11 co-researchers and 9 interviewees, all Ghanaian-background youth living in Germany. The first-author has conducted long-term ethnographic research on transnational youth between Germany and Ghana; this project was a response to many participants' increasing interest in learning to do research, not just be the subject of it. Workshops in research ethics, data-collection,

and analysis supported co-researchers in interviewing peers with transnational siblings and – from these recordings – produced podcasts. The paper makes three claims.

First, given co-researchers' and interviewees' shared social position as racialised migrant-background youth, the project constitutes a case of 'listening *from and to* the margins' (inspired by Voeglin 2019). In the process, the co-researchers who analyse their interviews – and the interviewees they listen to –together 'take up sonic space' (Tiffe & Hoffmann 2017). Second, we address the value of multimodal co-research for young people as both experts and learners. While scholars commonly emphasise the value of co-researchers' identity-based 'expertise' (CRIS n.d.), we argue that co-research also provides young people with the time, space, and conceptual tools for talking and thinking about aspects of their lives they haven't previously paid attention to. Third, the paper argues for a culturally- and contextually-defined notion of 'youth' that prioritises the resonances of multimodality with young people's own lives. The co-researchers and interviewees ranged from 15 to mid-20s, yet all straddled shifting categorisations of 'youth' between Germany, Ghana, and 'transnational migrant youth' research. Crucially, they chose the project's aural medium because of its prominence in their media landscapes (i.e., podcasts) and the perceived usefulness of the skills involved (i.e., interviewing and audio-editing). Ultimately, this multimodal co-research demystified data collection, analysis, and research dissemination, making academic knowledge-production accessible and achievable.

CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH TO RESEARCH OF MIGRANT CHILDREN
Mateja Sedmak, Zorana Medarić & Barbara Gornik (Science and Research Centre Koper)
Traditional research methods, such as surveys and oral interviews, often hinder children's meaningful participation and fail to capture the complexity of their lived experiences. These limitations are even more pronounced for migrant children, who frequently face language barriers and occupy multiple disadvantaged positions—both as children in relation to adult researchers and as migrants navigating unfamiliar linguistic and cultural environments. This raises a crucial methodological question: how can researchers effectively explore the experiences, perspectives, emotions, and everyday realities of migrant children who are not fluent in the local (researcher's) language and come from culturally distinct backgrounds?

The presentation provides a theoretical reflection on child-centred methodologies grounded in empirical findings from comparative studies conducted across multiple countries. Drawing on the interdisciplinary experience of the international research team involved in the MiCREATE (Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe) Horizon 2020 project, this presentation examines the strengths, challenges and opportunities of participatory visual methods for research involving children. Used as an umbrella term, these methods encompass a wide spectrum of tools, including drawing, photography, visual narratives, and digital storytelling. Such approaches foster children's participation and self-expression and are particularly suitable for those who struggle with verbal communication, including migrant, pre-school, or introverted children. By prioritising non-verbal expression and promoting non-hierarchical interactions between researchers and children, participatory visual methods support a child-centred research paradigm that recognises migrant children as rights-holders, meaning-makers, and authors of their own life stories.

Mapping territory through embodied experience: multimodal research with racialized girls
Natalia Pineda Quintero (University of the Basque Country)
This presentation aims to offer a reflective analysis of the methodology and research process in an ethnography conducted with a group of racialized girls and adolescents (9–13 years old) living in the Distrito de Aguablanca, an impoverished area of Cali (Colombia). The study mapped the territory through their embodied experiences of sexual harassment in public space, using multimodal techniques such as cartographies, body mapping, and podcast production. Likewise, in this work we explore the benefits and challenges of implementing these methodologies with girls in these contexts. The multimodal methodology employed supported the active and situated participation of the girls in the research process because childhood and youth experiences became the core of the narratives produced, and participants exercised greater control over the recording

tools and sound-creation processes. In this sense, the hierarchies typically embedded in knowledge production were unsettled. Likewise, the community circulation of these products (podcasts, body maps, and territorial maps) opened intergenerational conversations about girls' right to inhabit their territories and made visible the problems that disproportionately affect racialized children and youth. Moreover, these methodologies have the potential to serve as forms of denouncement and increase public visibility regarding issues that affect childhoods and youth. Nevertheless, the process also revealed significant challenges, particularly in the management of power relations because during the editing phase, responsibility fell mainly on the adult researchers due to the time and technical skills required. This generated tensions regarding the degree of participation that girls and adolescents could have in the final stages of the creative process, revealing structural and methodological limitations that merit further discussion. Taken together, this work invites us to consider podcasts, body mapping, and territorial mapping as tools that expand the modes of knowledge production and enable more horizontal relationships in research with children and youth.

TOWARDS AN "EMIC MULTIMODAL APPROACH"? EXPLORATION BASED ON THE NARRATIVE OF A CHILD GUIDE IN MEXICO
Charles-Édouard de Suremain (IRD/MNHN/CNRS)
My presentation aims to contribute to the discussion on "Multimodal research methodologies with children and youth" by addressing the topic of "Benefits and challenges of conducting multimodal research with children and youth". To this end, I will draw on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Mexico on the ways in which child guides narrate, dramatize, and literally "bring to life" the touristic sites they invite visitors to explore. I will show that they use a form of "emic multimodal approach", that is, one conceived and expressed by the children themselves, rather than being initiated by the anthropologist. From this standpoint, I will focus on a case study, namely a visit to a Baroque church in a village located in the Cholula region.

My proposal will provide insight into the principles that drive the vitality – in the sense of "vital energy"– of the touristic site visited, as well as the relationships that the child guide engages in with a plurality of non-human entities. Once the multimodal narrative of the visit has been presented, both in its sensory (sight, touch, smell, taste) and extra-sensory modalities (vibrations, waves, silent voices, etc.), there will be a discussion on the "emic multimodal approach," which combines various skills of the child guide, such as intentionality, emotions, subjectivity, and reflexivity. In particular, the focus will be on the epistemological, theoretical, and methodological benefits of emic multimodal research: (i) recognizing the diversity of communication modalities; (ii) exploring and constructing other forms of knowledge; and (iii) rethinking the collaboration between children and anthropologists within the ethnographic relationship.

SESSION 2: YOUTH NAVIGATING DIGITAL PUBLICS

Employing a Multimodal Participatory Methodology to Examine Adolescents' Perspectives on Immoral Content and Acts on Social Media
Kristina Rakinić (University of Ljubljana)
The primary research question addressed how adolescents conceptualize immorality on social media, both in terms of inappropriate content and objectionable behaviours. Existing studies exhibit two main limitations: they tend to focus narrowly on isolated immoral acts, such as cyberbullying, and they largely overlook the active involvement of young people, who are typically treated as passive subjects. The aim of this study was therefore to develop a new research method—the participatory walkthrough method—to bridge these gaps. Originally devised by software engineers to analyse and refine program code for improved usability, the walkthrough method has more recently been adapted to investigate cultural and social practices, as well as ideologies embedded in digital applications. In our study, this approach was reconceptualised to enable researchers to "walk with" adolescents through their everyday social media experiences. Consistent with participatory research principles, adolescents assumed the role of co-researchers. Over a three-week period, they explored their social media environments for examples of immoral

content and documented their observations using a specially designed data-collection form. Particular emphasis was placed on the method's capacity for multimodality: adolescents were encouraged to collect both written and visual materials, including photographs, screenshots, videos, and audio recordings. They were also given the option to submit their reflections either in written form or as audio recordings. The method was assessed for its reliability and validity, as well as for the added value it provided in comparison with other methods (based on one type of data) used to examine adolescents' perceptions of immorality on social media. The collection of multimodal data offered a significantly deeper understanding of how adolescents interpret and define immorality in digital environments.

Where Visual Technologies Carry Us Home: Youth, Multimodality and Cultural Revitalization in Indigenous Contexts
Lamiae Zeriouh (University of Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah)
This presentation sheds light on visual technologies not simply as methodological tools but as epistemic environments through which Indigenous cultural knowledge is produced, circulated, and reimagined. The presentation discusses what happens when cultural knowledge is *performed visually*, not written, but *stitched*, edited, captioned, remixed, and shared across screens. Drawing from ongoing co-creation with Indigenous youth in digital cultural revitalization online initiatives, this presentation portrays how visual/ multimodal storytelling, including micro-videos, Instagram Reels, and hybrid audio-visual performances through Zoom meetings, becomes a form of thinking, remembering, re-imagining new possibilities, connecting with the past, producing, and revitalizing. Here, multimodality is not a technique applied from the outside; it emerges from *within*, from community rhythms, from inherited stories that refuse stillness, from youth who film their landscapes shortly and find their ancestors in the visual frame and the digital space. These artefacts are not outputs of research. They are *multimodal cultural interventions*, alive with emotion, solace, irony, critique, pride, and uncertainty. They testify to identity in motion, to the paradox of the *here* and *there*, that is, the home and the *to-be-home,* to belonging negotiated in pixels, to futures imagined in edits and voice-overs. Positioning youth and youth researchers as co-creators unsettles the notion that research begins when the project is defined. In this context, knowledge is already happening, late at night on cracked screens, in caption drafts shared in online group chats, in conversations about which stories travel beyond the community and which remain close to home. Deep down, it is at these very visual assemblages that *cultural resurgence* takes shape. Through multimodal gestures, Indigenous youth are not simply documenting their cultures; rather, they are composing new forms of continuity, reframing loss as possibility, and crafting or *rejuvenating* visual futures that insist on presence where erasure was once presumed. Rather than asking "whether the digital makes us more human", this work asks how multimodal digital practices become visual sites where cultural memory and ancestral knowledge are reactivated, and hence what becomes newly possible in those visual moments of resurgence.

Reliability, Consent and Researcher Positionality in a Multimodal Case Study on Children's Literacies from Global South
Ekta Singla (Tata Institute of Social Sciences)
A qualitative case study that critically examined formal conceptions of literacy among chlildren at the margins between ages 10 and 13 years in Warangal, Telangana (India), utilised a Social Semiotic Multimodal Methodology (SSMM) (Kress, 2010). SSMM helped to move away from a purely linguistic understanding of knowledge and in conceptualising children's knowledge and literacy practices within their culturally shaped 'modes' (Stöckl, 2017) embedded in sensory, material and cultural forms of knowledge. It also provided a structural language to conceptualise children's unqiue, socially situated, intersectional and personal literacies. Nevertheless, as Anupriya's (11 year old girl) case highlights, within a Global South context, with social variables like caste, class, language and gender, use of multimodal methods posed unqiue challenges of reliability, consent and researcher positionality. The current discussion, highlights the aforementioned challenges through the case of Anupriya and her digital artifact, an Instagram profile, and ways the challenges were navigated in the current study.

Acknowledging children's diversity through multimodal research methods: Legislative Theatre as an inclusive approach

Sabrina Fialho (University of Lisbon), Roberto Falanga (University NOVA of Lisbon), Ana Sofia Ribeiro dos Santos (University of Minho), Anabela Carvalho (CRIA-UMinho)

Growing interest in research with children has benefited from the emergence of innovative methods designed to elicit their aspirations and perspectives (Sevón et al., 2025). Several research projects have explored arts-based participatory methods to both advance knowledge and stimulate children's agency (e.g., Cuidar, Mort et al., 2020, or The Educational Forum, Cruz et al., 2019). As we searched for epistemological clues on how children aged 8-14 and members of their community can (re)imagine mechanisms and means of expression to boost their involvement in shaping (more) sustainable futures in their municipality, we devised a multimodal research approach to embrace children's sweeping diversity in public schools — age, gender, socioeconomic background, linguistic limitations, neurodivergences, cognitive and learning disabilities. By inviting diversity, multimodal research methods can diminish the risk of marginalization in youth participation settings (Cahill & Dadvand, 2018) while protecting children's "emotional safety and agency" (Zirak Ghazani, 2025). Legislative Theatre (LT), an evolved form of art performance to mobilize citizens for "political action" (Cruz & Soeiro, p. 172 in Monteiro et al., 2024) was elected as the primary method in this research because it offers new engagement possibilities for "underrepresented communities to have a voice in policymaking" (Rosa et al., 2025). LT was combined with roleplay, mimicking games, debates, voting, writing, and drawing, experienced through a sequence of five interactive workshops conducted with each class cohort to encourage collective action, stimulate political agency, and critical thinking. In parallel, children were challenged to contribute anonymously to a Future Box and voluntarily to a Future Mural to tap into future aspirations for their municipality through writing and/or drawing. This research seeks to align with children's rights (Angelöw & Psouni, 2025), grounded on the General Comment CRC/C/GC/26 (2023), and uses GreenComp, the European sustainability competence framework (2022), as a reference.

Exploring "Phygital" Youth: Methodologies for Studying Connected Realities

Manuel García Gándaras and Inès Dinant (Fundación Cibervoluntarios)

Contemporary youth inhabit a "phygital" reality, in which physical and digital realms intertwine to constitute a single, connected experience. Based on this premise, the study explores how to investigate a field that is simultaneously multi-sited and interconnected, and which cannot be approached through traditional divisions between online and offline. This is the central question guiding this presentation and one that compels a rethinking of the very notion of "field" as well as the spatial hierarchies that have historically shaped ethnographic research. In the face of this methodological challenge, multimodality emerges as an approach capable of broadening perspective and integrating heterogeneous records—voices, trajectories, materials, practices, and spatial data—enabling a situated, dialogical, and collaborative approach. From this perspective, we seek to understand how young people's "phygital" experiences are configured, negotiated, and lived, paying attention to the ways in which different spaces are articulated in their everyday lives. The project, currently under development, grows out of our earlier research and combines ethnographic and netnographic approaches, exploring innovative strategies to study these fluid spaces. Fieldwork will be conducted with adolescents aged 14–18 in Spain. The first phase includes focus groups and in-depth interviews. The second phase incorporates personal diaries, participatory mapping, co-creation workshops, monitoring via Google Maps, and a dedicated Discord server that serves as a multimedia communication hub for the group. It also includes a podcast created by the young participants themselves and the systematic collection of their feedback, thus consolidating a dialogical and co-productive process of knowledge creation. Finally, the dissemination phase envisages the creation of resources aimed at mapping the connected experience and contributing to the methodological discussion on how to investigate realities that unfold simultaneously across multiple layers. By integrating innovative approaches,

this research highlights both the challenges and the potential of investigating "phygital" experiences in contemporary youth culture.

SESSION 3: NARRATING CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH THROUGH IMAGES

The ambivalences of filming intimate and domestic areas and children
Manca Filak (Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, ZRC SAZU)
Mothering practices, together with housework and childcare, are closely linked to broader social and political processes, while also revealing intimate choices, tactics, and everyday strategies. This study—a visual ethnography of Slovenian stay-at-home, homeschooling mothers and housewives—offers a reflexive account of filming the intimacy of family life, with particular attention to the presence, experiences, and representations of children. The act of recording family routines further intensifies the sensitive nature of accessing domestic privacy, especially when depicting children's daily activities, learning environments, and culturally conditioned expectations about appropriate or ideal child-rearing practices. The intimacy of home life and the methodological use of the camera make the researcher's reflexivity and positionality essential, contributing to the methodological and theoretical complementarity of multimodal research. In this sense, conducting ethnography both at home and in the home not only challenges traditional ethnographic field narratives but also involves concrete ethical decisions about what to reveal—or not reveal—regarding children's lives and their participation in the research.

Drawn (on)to screens: introducing thematic illustrations as a methodological approach for conducting research with youth
Sarah Anschütz (Utrecht University; University of Antwerp)
Recent research has begun to explore the potential of participant-created drawings to generate rich data and the value of visual outputs to disseminate findings to broader audiences. Less attention, however, has been paid to the analytical affordances of drawings, particularly in research with youth. Visual practices can reveal experiential, affective and spatial dimensions of young people's lives that are difficult to access through language alone. This paper introduces **thematic illustrations** as a generative method for conducting research with young people. It draws on multimodal ethnographic fieldwork with Ghanaian-background youth in Berlin (Germany) and stayer youth in Ghana, conducted as part of the DIGIMOBYOUTH project that investigates the relationship between digital media and young people's transnational mobilities between Germany and Ghana. Data collected included fieldnotes, ethnographic drawings, interviews, soundscapes, photos and a variety of maps, which were subsequently used to create illustrations to visualize the most prominent themes. These thematic illustrations serve two purposes: 1) as an **analytical tool** that provides access to embodied ways of thinking and knowing beyond the verbal and textual, and foregrounds the material, affective and spatio-temporal aspects of mediated youth mobility; and 2) as a **prompt in follow-up interviews** to elicit more nuanced data, including through invitations to edit, cut up, collage, alter or redraw illustrations1. Together, these methodological contributions demonstrate how visual approaches can expand the epistemic and co-creative possibilities of multimodal research with young people.

Hanging Out: Ethnographic film as a multimodal experience with Teenagers
Mari Korpela (Tampere University)
Ethnographic documentary films allow the audience a much richer sensorial experience than written texts, and visuals express much more than words. At the same time, the film-making process is highly sensorial experience for the film-maker and the participants. In this presentation, I discuss my ethnographic film-making project with five international 14-year-old boys in a Finnish town. I argue that the film provides the audience rich visual and auditory insights into the teenagers' lives. It expresses their, at times chaotic yet meaningful hanging out, their embodied encounters with each other as well as the physical intimacy amongst them and the

significance of play in their interactions. In the presentation, I will also discuss my own multimodal experiences during the project – first of all, my frustrations with failed plans and the joys of successful encounters. In addition to my emotional experiences, I will elaborate on my physical experiences during the film-making process; the hardships with the heavy equipment, my exposure to the natural environments etc. I will also discuss the joint sensorial knowledge building process during our film-project, and the different types of relations that the film-making project enabled among the research participants and I. Eventually, I will also discuss my ongoing embodied encounters with the boys during the film-screenings that they attend until today.

Visual-Tactile Storytelling with Children and Young People in Humanitarian Contexts: The Life Story Board Method with Rohingya Children and Youth
Ashley Stewart-Tufescu (University of Manitoba), Bree Akesson (Wilfrid Laurier University), Karen Frensch (Wilfrid Laurier University)
Research with children and young people displaced by political violence and war demands methodologies that move beyond text-centric approaches to create meaningful opportunities for participants to narrate and make sense of their worlds. This presentation examines the methodological innovation of the Life Story Board (LSB), a visual–tactile data elicitation tool, used in three studies with Rohingya children and youth living in refugee camps in Bangladesh: (1) a longitudinal study of children's wellbeing during the perinatal period; (2) a cross-sectional study of children's perspectives on climate change; and (3) a program evaluation of a livelihoods and empowerment initiative for young Rohingya women and girls. Originally developed for war-affected children in Sri Lanka and subsequently adapted across diverse humanitarian and intercultural settings (Chase, Mignone & Diffey, 2010), the LSB has not previously been applied in research with Rohingya children, which is a population characterized by prolonged displacement, restricted mobility, and limited formal schooling. Its use in this context extends the methodological reach of the tool and illustrates its relevance for populations with constrained verbal or literacy-based modes of expression.

The LSB transforms narrative, memory, relationships, and emotion into a co-constructed "lifescape" using magnetic cards, symbolic zones, and diagrammatic notation. As a graphic and tactile elicitation method, it facilitates engagement, reduces power asymmetries, and deepens data quality by externalizing experience into a shared visual field for both the young research participant and the researcher (Mignone et al., 2019). For school-age children, the LSB supports autonomy, agency, and rights-based participation through hands-on meaning-making (Stewart-Tufescu et al., 2019). For adolescents and young adults, it enables reflective, in-depth narration and offers cognitive distance critical in contexts shaped by trauma, displacement, and limited opportunities for verbal expression (Chongo et al., 2018). Across the three case studies, the LSB functioned as a relational, participatory, and multimodal method that elicited rich accounts of family life, wellbeing, environmental change, and evolving opportunities within camp settings. By foregrounding sensory, spatial, and symbolic modes of expression, the LSB advances multimodal, participant-led research with displaced children and youth.

Resilience, Vulnerability, and Decolonial Childhoods: Collaborative Audiovisual Research with Working Children in Bolivia
Léa Klaue (Bern University of Applied Sciences, University of Bern)
Through audiovisual excerpts and ethnographic text, this paper discusses the ethical and epistemological challenges of conducting participatory visual research with minors in politically charged contexts, and how multimodal anthropology can contribute to decolonizing knowledge about childhood. It also examines the ethical and methodological dimensions of conducting multimodal research *with* children and adolescents through audiovisual collaboration. Drawing from long-term ethnographic fieldwork with members of the Bolivian working children's union (UNATsBO), it explores how participatory video, fiction filmmaking, and shared storytelling can become tools for children to assert agency, challenge Western ideals of "childhood," and claim authorship over their lived realities.

The research builds on a **subject-oriented and creative methodology** that foregrounds children as social actors and knowledge producers, rather than as objects of protection or moral debate. Combining visual anthropology with childhood studies, the project approaches ethnography as an intersubjective and ethical encounter—one that demands reflexivity about power relations and visibility. The process of co-producing films and narratives allowed participants to engage politically and aesthetically with questions of work, identity, and justice, while also negotiating their vulnerability within broader colonial, capitalist, and patriarchal structures and against adult-centric notions. Through a multimodal format that merges video, ethnography, and evocative writing, the paper reflects on how creative and adaptive research practices can narrow the gap between lived experience and theoretical abstraction. It argues that collaborative audiovisual methodologies not only generate new anthropological insights but also constitute a form of relational ethics—one that empowers participants, enriches representation, and redefines what counts as data, analysis, and knowledge in research with children and youth.

MARCH 6
SESSION 1: THE DIVERSE TERRAIN OF YOUTH POLITICAL POWER

Protagonist and intergenerational participation in public policies through the mosaic approach method
Paulina Jara Osorio (Ulster University)
It is essential to move beyond treating child participation as a uniform concept to progress in implementing children's rights in policymaking. A compelling framework is protagonist participation, rooted in critical and Latin American perspectives, which provides a robust foundation for promoting the active involvement of children and adolescents in Chilean public policymaking. This approach prioritizes the practical dimensions of participation, highlighting power dynamics and evaluating participatory practices. Research findings underscore the importance of intergenerational collaboration, policymaking influence, and recognition of diversity within the concept of childhood participation to promote children's participation in the Chilean policymaking. This study employs Semi-Structured Interviews and the Mosaic Approach Method (MAM), a flexible and adaptive methodology, to foster intergenerational and protagonist participation, particularly in contexts characterized by significant inequalities and adult-centric dynamics as the Chilean policymaking.

Seeing Change: Creative Storytelling, Experiential and Social Learning and Multimodal Practice in Youth Leadership and Participation
David Kendall (Studio Kendall)
Creative storytelling offers a powerful pathway for amplifying youth voice and fostering leadership, equality, diversity, inclusion and social action. Grounded in the learning theories of David A. Kolb and Albert Bandura, this presentation explores how multimodal and visual methods—such as photography, photovoice, action research and human-centred design—engage young people in iterative cycles of doing, reflecting, conceptualising and acting. Kolb's experiential model highlights how young people learn through active participation and reflective meaning-making, while Bandura's Social Learning Theory illuminates the importance of modelling, collective problem-solving and peer-to-peer influence in shaping confidence, agency and behaviour. Drawing on a range of youth, photovoice and educational projects conducted both online and in-person in the United Kingdom, the presentation examines how co-learning environments support young people as co-researchers and designers. These projects demonstrate the value of collaborative practice, while also revealing challenges, including differing communication styles, varying digital access, and evolving ethical considerations when working multimodally with children and young people. Despite these complexities, experiential and socially grounded approaches have proven highly effective in cultivating trust, creativity and critical awareness. As a result, when young people engage in visual inquiry and iterative design processes, they develop stronger capacities for leadership, resilience and reflective thinking. In line with Kolb's theory, the cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualisation and experimentation

enables deeper understanding and sustained engagement. Similarly, Bandura's emphasis on observational learning and self-efficacy is evident as young people gain confidence through shared storytelling, peer learning and visible community impact. Ultimately, the presentation argues that embedding experiential and social learning frameworks within multimodal youth practice strengthens participation, harnesses expertise, nurtures community ownership and supports positive neighbourhood change. It invites practitioners and researchers to integrate creative, inclusive, reflective and participatory multimodal methodologies more intentionally within youth engagement and educational research to support meaningful social action and change.

How to Study Children's Activism: Ethnographic Experiences (and Experiments)
Nicoletta Sciarrino & Roberta Bosisio (University of Turin)
Our study examines children's activism in Turin, Northern Italy, focusing on 10- to 15-year-olds— a cohort commonly portrayed in Italy as apathetic toward civic and political life, a narrative grounded more in adult-centered assumptions than in empirical evidence. Such a view obscures the diverse ways in which children engage in social and environmental struggles— activism, n Martin's (2007) terms. Recognizing these practices highlights children's agency, frames them as political subjects, and reveals the cultural and normative barriers affecting their participation. It also raising methodological questions for researchers studying phenomena not typically associated with childhood.

Fieldwork revealed two central challenges: identifying young activists—who are few in number and often unaware that their civic or political engagement may constitute activism—and addressing persistent skepticism toward children's participation, even within groups usually supportive of youth involvement (e.g., Fridays for Future). To address these issues, the ethnographic fieldwork was conceived as a co-constructed space for reflection. One methodological strategy emerged from the need to elicit reflections on activism, a phenomenon often unrecognized by its young protagonists. Drawing on activities carried out by some adolescent participants, elements from social media—such as vision boards—were adopted as research tools. These visual supports both facilitate dialogue and become part of the research process and its outcomes. The materials produced will be displayed across university campus spaces, turning the campus into a "grid" for showcasing the participants' perspectives. In doing so, researchers—representatives of a world often distant from the participants—act as conduits for articulating their concerns and viewpoints.

Additionally, a workshop has been designed for lower secondary school students. Two classes of 11- to 13-year-olds will—guided by the researchers—take the lead in fieldwork activities, interviewing university students and young adult or adult activists. This experimental initiative— will be implemented for the first time in early 2026—aims to generate knowledge through intergenerational interaction and explore ways of reshaping fieldwork relationships and producing knowledge beyond the cultural and normative barriers limiting younger generations' civic and political participation in Italy.

Relational arts-based multimodal methodologies for Social Transformation, Emotional Expression and Leadership of young women in Nepal
Juhi Adhikari (UNESCO Kathmandu), Laura Wright (University of Edinburgh), Laura Lee (University of Victoria) & Claire Paterson-Young (University of Northampton)
This presentation explores how relational, peer-led, arts-based multimodal methodologies create space for emotional empowerment, leadership, and social transformation among young women in conservative and patriarchal contexts. Drawing from the Youth Advocacy Advisory Research (YAAR) initiative under the Mobile Arts for Peace (MAP) project in Nepal, the presentation examines *Image Theatre* and other creative and relational methods as tools for expressing and interpreting socially sensitive issues often silenced in conventional school and community discourse. Data was captured through creative, relational methods with 390 participants from rural government schools including 222 girls and women, 14 educators, 34 policymakers, 25 local artists, and 1 female artist. Throughout the project, 39 girls (YAARs) supported the design,

collection, and interpretation of data; thus, this presentation draws on experiences not only of participants but of the YAAR.

Findings highlight the significance of creative practices in promoting a body-positive, participatory, multi-layered platform for non-verbal expressions. Through *Image Theatre*, participants articulated layered meaning on stigma, gender-based violence, girls trafficking, and the dowry system through non-verbal language, enabling cross-gender and intergenerational understanding within culturally sensitive environments. The interactive format encouraged interpretive freedom for participants and audiences, enabling community dialogue, where participants choose how to express, and observers engage in layered interpretation to navigate sensitive topics. The integration of arts-based learning into school environments marked a shift in cultural pedagogy, allowing expression of complex social realities in safe, impactful, and transformative ways. Participants engaged in the project reported increased self-confidence, ownership over their narratives, and a heightened ability to lead advocacy initiatives in schools and communities. The study concludes that arts-based pedagogy, when combined with peer-led research, becomes a powerful vehicle for emotional empowerment and grassroots mobilisation. This model exemplifies how creative expression can transcend cultural silences and cultivate the next generation of female leaders in peacebuilding and education.

Multimodal Youth Engagement in the Nature for Peace Concept implementation
Marta Korchemlyuk (Carpathian National Nature Park & Environmental NGO "MAMA–86-Yaremche) and Elisabeth Wiegele (Carinthia University of Applied Sciences)
This paper highlights the role of the *Nature for Peace* Concept through a multimodal framework of youth engagement in shaping their understandings of ecological interdependence, resilience and peace building. The study analyzes the initial steps of the Carpathian National Park (Ukraine) toward practical concept implementation of *Nature for Peace*. The aim of the concept is to unite people, especially youth, around the values of nature, the living environment through personal responsibility. The concept is designed to assist those affected by armed conflicts and to accompany them in the rehabilitation process to restore both physical and mental health. It also seeks to prevent potential conflicts that could harm people and the environment through a system of practical knowledge and skills about the value of nature.

A multimodal approach to engage with youth involves empirical materials such as drawings, photographs, stories, and workshops. Demonstrating how children relate to nature, creating a safe environment, and engaging collective imagination is the goal. Particularly effective are environmental practices such as researching environmental projects, educational environmental excursions with specialists, creative competitions on environmental topics, entertainment and educational events. As well as trainings on forming an active patriotic position in protecting the environment of one's native land, and mastering environmentally friendly skills for living in nature. A multimodal approach to ecological education of youth helps to harmonize the internal state; create and realize one's intentions and goals; reveal one's creative abilities; learn to know oneself and the world; harmonize private space; fill oneself with positive emotions.

The study proves that youth base their harmonization with nature via creative and participatory practices with the opportunity to estimate the consequences of environmental degradation caused by conflicts, and increasing risks to their own health.

SESSION 2: CARE, CONSENT, AND CREATIVITY: ETHICS IN YOUTH MULTIMODAL RESEARCH

An Assessment of the Challenges in Conducting Multimodal Research with Young Kurdish Populations in Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Region (Kurdish District)
Ali Bedir (Mardin Artuklu University)
This paper discusses the main difficulties encountered when adapting multimodal research methodologies for use with children and young people in a study of the peace process involving young Kurds in Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Region (specifically the provinces of Urfa, Mardin, Diyarbakır and Batman). While these methodologies (e.g. digital storytelling, photography and

mapping) offer participatory and interactive engagement, they present unique obstacles within this socio-political context.

A primary challenge is the communication barriers that extend beyond language and translation. Nuanced expressions of emotion, identity and political stance may use metaphors and body language that are difficult to convey through standard interpretation. Secondly, ethical and safety concerns are extremely sensitive. Protecting participants' identities and viewpoints is far more complex than in traditional methods, especially when dealing with politically charged visual materials such as photographs and drawings. A third challenge lies in the researcher's positionality and in building trust. It takes significant time and cultural sensitivity to gain the trust of local communities as an 'outsider' researcher and ensure that young people feel comfortable expressing themselves openly without perceiving the researcher as an authority figure. Finally, gender dynamics may restrict certain activities or forms of expression, particularly when working with young female participants.

In conclusion, this work argues that multimodal methods cannot be viewed as merely a "toolbox" in this sensitive context. The aforementioned challenges are not merely a methodological checklist; they necessitate deep ethical and contextual reflexivity. They compel the researcher to constantly question their own positionality, power dynamics and the potential consequences of the knowledge produced. Therefore, the true potential and scientific value of multimodal methodologies for working with this region and population does not lie in the technical application of the methods themselves, but in transparently recognising these challenges, critically addressing them, and meticulously constructing a research environment in which young people can safely and meaningfully express themselves.

A Prelude to Ethnography with Children: Ethical and Methodological Foundations for Multimodal Research with Children in Serbia
Sonja Radivojević & Katarina Mitrović Ražnatović (Institute of Ethnography SASA)

This presentation examines the ethical and methodological foundations of ethnographic research with children in Serbia, situating local practices within broader international debates. While this topic has attracted significant global interest, it remains underexplored in local anthropological literature. The analysis focuses on two interrelated domains: the ethical challenges of engaging children as research participants and the methodological questions surrounding multimodal approaches, with particular attention to drawing as a material method.

First, we review how ethnologists in Serbia have historically conducted research *among* and *with* children, and consider the representational and interpretive practices that have shaped this field. We then discuss key ethical considerations inherent in research with children, including power imbalances, risks of romanticization or adult-imposed interpretations, and the need to ensure that children genuinely understand their participation. Emphasis is placed on dialogical and participatory strategies, such as jointly interpreting visual materials, as well as on commitment to relevant ethical and legal frameworks in Serbia and internationally, particularly regarding consent and assent, voluntariness, and privacy.

In parallel, we give special attention to drawing as a multimodal research tool, situating it within the longer visual tradition in which it played a central role in ethnographic documentation prior to the advent of photography and film. Shifting the focus from ethnographers' drawings to those produced by child interlocutors, the paper examines how children's visual expressions can contribute to contemporary ethnological and anthropological inquiry. We argue that children's drawings offer valuable insights into their lived worlds and function as a meaningful multimodal tool for developing methodologically innovative research practices.

Multimodal Methodologies: Unexpected Encounters with Children's Worlds
Pola Gradowska, Martyna Chojnowska, Zofia Link (University of Warsaw)

In the presentation we want to discuss parts of three studies conducted with children in Poland as part of a larger project called "Children and the Environment: A Childhood Studies Perspective". The research carried out with children aged 6–8 focused on concepts of womanhood; the project involving children aged 8–11 explored bans and substances; and the study with children aged 10–

12 examined notions of childhood and adulthood. Our idea was to learn children's perspective on topics that tend to be dominated by the perspective of adults. Across all three projects, we employed a range of visual methods, including authorial techniques, as well as Picture Categorization Method and other participatory tools.

The material gathered through these methodological approaches shows how children's imaginations often slip away from established research assumptions. A telling example comes from the Picture Categorization Method exercise, in which participants were asked to assign images to either "childhood" or "adulthood." Among the images there were some with obvious associations — money, lipstick or a cigarette clearly belonged in the 'adults' category — but there were also illustrations that prompted less obvious connections. One of these images depicted a tree, and it revealed the unexpected and layered nature of children's associations.

For many of the children, the tree evoked childhood—play, meeting peers, and spending time outdoors. Others connected trees with adulthood, noting that adults plant and care for them, yet also, at times, destroy them and negatively impact the natural environment. We argue that there are many such cracks in children's narratives, and that methodology becomes a crucial lens for making these nuanced, often ambiguous associations visible. It is precisely within these cracks that children's ways of thinking challenge adult analytical categories and offer new perspectives on the relations between children and their environments.

Using drawings in anthropology: Epistemological insights and ethical dilemmas from three research projects
Élodie Razy (University of Liège)

The growing interest in visual methods in the social sciences has been particularly influential in research on and with children. While the need to use specific methodologies with children remains a controversial issue, drawing holds a distinctive place among visual methods that is rarely emphasized in the literature. Over the centuries in the West, drawing has become both the preferred medium for educating children and communicating with them, but above all, it has become a specialized activity for a specific period of the life cycle. In this way, it contributes actively to the social and cultural production and reproduction of childhood. Recognizing the need to deconstruct Western representations of childhood, which are partly globalized, in the implementation of any anthropological research, I propose to examine several dimensions of the use of drawing based on the following question: how does the use of drawing, a seemingly methodological question, raise key epistemological and ethical questions that anthropology can shed light on?

Using the example of the ChildHerit project, I will address the issue of the materials made available to children to express their personal vision of heritage during "heritage workshops" (Mexico) (1) (see Appendix 1). I will examine the effects of the diversity of materials and their use by children, as a result in their own right, beyond the production of the drawings themselves. The example of the Food2Gather project will provide an opportunity to examine the aesthetic criteria of children's drawings in the context of publicized productions (Belgium) (2), a multimodal encyclopedia co-produced with children, L'alimenpédie enfantique (Children's Food Encyclopedia). Finally, the question of how to present the research results to children (Belgium) (3) will be addressed in the context of the project "Early childhood through the lens of gender in an intercultural context" to examine the question of the visual translation of research results and the role of multimodal evocation with young children (Annex 2). This presentation will conclude by highlighting the need for collective reflection, experience sharing, and experimentation (Giving research feedback to children. Connecting arts and social sciences).

Children´s circulation and play in a Brazilian small city: Ethical issues from multimodal methodologies
Joelma Andreão de Cerqueira (Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais)

This study aimed at analyse how children engage with public spaces in a small Brazilian city through their everyday patterns of circulation. The methodology is based on a qualitative approach of ethnographic inspiration, employing participatory and visual approaches. The study

involved 29 children, 13 boys and 16 girls, most of them from a socially vulnerable area who circulate autonomously in the city. These children were accompanied during their daily circulation through public spaces.

Ethical considerations were integrated into all stages of the fieldwork, particularly with regard to preserving the children's identities and personal safety. All children and their legal guardians consented to participation by signing informed consent forms. The children received a booklet presenting all relevant information in accessible, child-friendly language; on the final page, they were invited to sign or draw their face to indicate their agreement. Despite the formalized consent procedure, consent was renegotiated continuously throughout the fieldwork. During the daily circulations, a variety of visual materials were produced by both researchers and children. Photographs, videos, and audio recordings were captured using mobile phones and a first-person camera worn by participants. These recordings were produced in open areas - streets, playgrounds, squares, and green spaces - which, at times, resulted in interruptions to the children's conversations and limited the depth with which some issues could be explored. To address this limitation, two workshops were organized. The children were invited to discuss and present their perceptions of the city through drawings, storytelling and model-like maps.

This study highlights the need to consider ethical issues from multiple angles and throughout the entire research process when working with children. Ethical practice requires more than adherence to committee-approved guidelines. Researchers must remain attentive to children's signals and feelings about participating at every moment, ensuring that their protection and well-being are prioritized.

SESSION 3: TRACING YOUNG LIVES' RELATIONALITIES THROUGH MULTIMODALITY

Multimodal, community-based and decolonial methodologies in the EXPECT_Art project: Insights from the Slovenian fieldwork

Maja Zadel & Lucija Dežan (Science and Research Centre Koper)

Multimodal approaches have become increasingly important in research that seeks to understand how children and youth make sense of their everyday worlds. Drawing on the Horizon Europe project EXPECT_Art, this presentation examines how multimodal, art-based, and community-based research approaches can highlight how critical cultural literacy (CCL) is negotiated in children's everyday environments. Stemming from critical pedagogy, decolonial theory, and multiliteracies, the project understands CCL as a socially situated practice where individuals decode, understand, and/or express themselves in a critical manner through and about artistic/cultural forms of expression. Based on fieldwork in two Slovenian primary schools with children aged 8 to 15, this presentation discusses how multimodal methodologies, including drawing, performative activities, and survey co-design, enable children to articulate cultural knowledge and experiences. Multimodality emerged as a relational and collaborative process in which children actively shaped the research process through drawing, performance, multimodal storytelling, and participation in theatre clubs. These methods revealed forms of CCL that often remain invisible in text-centric research: children's engagement with popular culture, their reinterpretations of social inequalities through theatre plays, and their navigation of intercultural everyday spaces. The Slovenian cases also highlight tensions documented in the field diaries, e.g. structural limitations in arts education and teachers' capacities to recognise children's critical cultural expressions. The presentation further reflects on benefits and challenges of multimodal engagement, including researcher positionality and power dynamics, as well as how highly structured and directive educational environments can limit children's creativity and autonomy, making it difficult for them to navigate open-ended or less structured multimodal tasks. By emphasising collaboration and multimodal participation, this contribution demonstrates how multimodal, decolonial, and community-based methods open new analytical possibilities for understanding and supporting children's CCL across formal and informal educational contexts.

Using Multimodality to Centre Youth's Perspectives on Intergenerational Socio-ecological Learning in Mongolia's Countryside
Kim Chi Tran (Carinthia University of Applied Science)
Multimodality expands the toolbox with which researchers can centre young people in generational research. Such an approach is especially important in research with young lives in communal contexts. In this paper, I share how I deploy a multimodal research methodology to trace the social, spatial and temporal relations that shape Mongolian youths' experiences of intergenerational socio-ecological learning among herders. Embedding participatory visual methods in a multi-sited ethnography, I followed the lead of 15-year old to 17-year-old research participants in exploring semi-nomadic pastoral structure and practices of socio-ecological learning in the Mongolian herder community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Due to their participation in formal schooling, Mongolian herders' children spend most of their childhood and youth living away from their homes in the countryside. Yet, during school holidays, these young people develop their pastoral skills, knowledge, and relationalities by playing and working with their household and community members. Mapping out their seasonal social networks, my research participants showed that multi-generational and communal living provide the social structure through which herders' children engage in intergenerational and intragenerational learning. Using photovoice, my research participants documented how intertwining dynamics of play and work set a socio-ecological learning rhythm that enables rural Mongolian children to develop their capacity to lead a life as herders. These youths' photo essays also show how they bring changes to Mongolia's countryside through their embrace of contemporary technologies in rural everyday life. This paper thus demonstrates that multimodal research methodologies offer an approach for researchers to follow youth's lead in drawing out multiple layers of data that highlight young people's agency in generational knowledge re/production processes that shape rural futures.

It's (not) just my imagination. Weaving together creativity into anthropology of childhood
Alice Sophie Sarcinelli (Université Paris Cité and Université Sorbonne nouvelle, CNRS, CERLIS) & Monika Weissensteiner (CNRS)
This paper reflects upon the potential of "creative ethno-graphic practices" (Sarcinelli, Weissensteiner et al. 2022) to generate a different type of thinking and creating child-centered knowledge. It is based on long-term epistemological reflections were driven by experimental forms of writing and restitution on, for and with children during several researches carried out by Alice Sophie Sarcinelli with some creative collaboration with Monika Weissensteiner. We will illustrate the challenges and insights of individual and collective attempts to engage with creative and multimodal methods within child-centred ethnographies (Sarcinelli, Weissensteiner, 2024; Razy, de Suremain et al. 2023). We will focus on a long-term ethnography (2015-2025) on a generation of children of same-sex parents living in three European countries (Belgium, Italy and France). Creative ethno-graphic methods enable to re-imagine research: rather than being creative tools that come into play as a fieldwork method, a tool in analysis, or a form of restitution as separate phases of research, creative methods shape a different kind of thinking, waving these phases together (Sarcinelli, Weissensteiner et al, 2022). How has our (collaborative) creative approach shaped and is shaping our anthropological analysis of children's views, participation and voice? How does this work transcend the classic boundary between art and science? We conclude by envisioning further possibilities and conditions for imagining and putting into practice "creativity at work".

Reimagining the Horizon: A drawing game to bring out children's visions on their life environment
David Dhert (University of Antwerp and University of Newcastle)
The horizon around the village where I grew up, in Flanders, Belgium, has changed drastically over the past two decades. The fields and rural hamlets that once surrounded the village were bulldozed and transformed into industrial parks for the nearby North Sea Port. What had been my childhood playgrounds in a not so distant past have become corporate areas with logistical

warehouses, factories and intense freight traffic. The generation of children nowadays have never known it in any other way: they were born into this village with its aggravating liveability problems and nuisances coming from the surrounding industry. This paper will outline a drawing method I have used to explore how the children of today see the village surroundings themselves – if they ever have at all. For this experiment, I took them out to the edges of the village, where they were given a drawing device, digital colour pencils and total authority over the horizon they were seeing in front of them. If they could decide, what would the village horizon look like?

By taking the children out and letting them unrestrictedly unleash their ideas in their drawings, the experiment aspired to offer them both a sensory conscientisation and a liberation, in the sense of Freire (1974), from the world they inherited, allowing them to reflect and express themselves disregarding the ruling order. The drawings that came out of the experiment offer a glance beyond the smoky industry-filled landscape we have become accustomed to. As sparkles of hope, the imaginations contain the power of the *not yet,* that one day may be (Bloch, 1959). The reimagined horizons communicate proposals for liveability in the midst of unliveability and give expression to ways in which the children sense the complex, conflicting relationship between the village as habitat and host for surrounding industry.

The Sun Touches Everything: Children's Solar Attunement in an Urban Desert
Dilraba Anayatova, Marina Basu, Arizona State University, Andrea Weinberg, Iveta Silova, Ann Nielsen (all Arizona State University) and Carrie Karsgaard (Cape Breton University)
This multimodal study explores how children in an urban desert learn to coexist *with* the sun in conditions of extreme heat. Conducted in an Arizona summer camp, we invited children aged 5-8 to explore their relationships with the sun through movement, material play, and artmaking. The inquiry spanned three interconnected practices: movement that mirrored the rhythms of sunlight (sun salutations), creation with natural materials that once held its energy (mandala making), and expression through art and words. Seeds and pinecones became temporary suns, and words such as *"bright," "happy," and "cooked"* captured the paradox of living under the desert sky.

These activities functioned as haptic interfaces (Swillins et al., 2021) that allowed children to feel their relationship with the sun and trace how light, heat, and feeling flow through bodies, material, and time. In moving, drawing, writing, and (re)building together, they expressed tactile and affective connections to the sun.

The presentation will combine text, field images, artifacts and audio capturing laughter, movement, and desert soundscapes. Using multimodal and sensory methods, approached diffractively (Barad, 2007), tracing how light, heat, and movement co-shape children's experiences, revealing how their solar worlds illuminate possibilities for learning that is embodied, ecological, and radiant—an inquiry into what it means to live, and learn, within the sun's touch – and its scorch.

We approached the sun as both an *actor* and a *metaphor:* a source of illumination and cyclical renewal, but also of exposure and inequity. Its intensity marks the urgency of living on a planet that we, as humans, have transformed through our actions and inactions — where heat has become both a stressor and a teacher. Attuning to the sun's rhythms revealed how learning with the more-than-human world can generate awareness of reciprocity, temporality, and interdependence, qualities essential for reimagining education in a climate-altered world.