Conference Announcement

Save the Date

Preliminary Call for Papers

CTC 2020: The 9th International Conference on Child and Teen Consumption

Department of Childhood Studies at Rutgers University — Camden, NJ, USA

June 16-18, 2020

Child and Teen Consumption: Inequality and Identity in Consumer Markets, Media and Industries

An international, interdisciplinary conference

Since 2004, the Child and Teen Consumption (CTC) conference has convened biannually to address the issues, theories, research methods and practices of children and teens in relation to the consumer cultures they inhabit and co-construct. Previously held in Scandinavia, France, Italy and Scotland, CTC 2020 is being hosted by the Department of Childhood Studies at Rutgers University in Camden, NJ, just across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, PA, USA. CTC brings scholars, practitioners and industry members together to investigate the variety of ways that commercial goods, media and new marketing technologies impact the lives of young people. The conference strives to incite dialogue and debate to yield new insights regarding the complex interactions between child and teen consumption practices, youth industries, government bodies and social action.

The theme for the 9th Child and Teen Consumption Conference focuses on Inequality and Identity in Consumer Markets, Media and Industries. The inequalities and unevenness of a deeply stratified world necessarily shape how goods and media are consumed and, for that matter, produced. Issues of race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexuality, geography, age, disability and national origin inform how children and young people partake in consumer-media culture, the availability of and pathways to that participation, and the quality and meaning of those practices. We appreciate that “consumption” manifests as multiply articulated and variegated, as do social constructions of the “child” or “teen.”
At CTC 2020, we invite research and approaches which seek to **interrogate the interplay between identity and inequality in child and teen consumption**—be it through commercial markets and media, material practices or industry/practitioner efforts. To this end, we pose a number of questions: What kind of “child” is invoked or implied in the development and marketing of goods or technologies? How does young people’s engagement with media and consumer products at once reproduce or contest the logics/values of culture industries? In what ways do young people use the consumer-media tools available to them to enact identities, challenge cultural power, and/or understand and contest their own marginalities?

In the tradition and spirit of CTC, we **encourage inter- and cross-disciplinary thinking and research** to address these and other issues relevant to child and teen consumption. Contributions from anthropology, consumer research, childhood studies, history, girlhood studies, media studies, American studies, critical race and ethnic studies, literary studies, gender studies, policy, sociology, geography, and psychology—among others—are welcome and have been represented at previous gatherings.

Presentations may examine **a variety of topics including, but not limited to:**

- Inequality in virtual worlds: the role of (social) media and digital media literacy
- Gendered branding and marketing
- Sustainability, waste, and environmental justice
- Material cultures of child migration
- Industry/managerial perspectives on child and teen consumption
- Advertising and its new interactive forms
- Mothers, fathers, grandparents: carework and provisioning of media and things
- Consumption, race/racism, and white supremacy
- Kids and retail spaces
- Consumption and health inequalities
- Food marketing and youth practices: contexts of home, peers and schools
- Disability, play, and material cultures
- Dynamics of excess and scarcity
- Poverty and food insecurity
- Children, consumption and the climate crisis
- Theorizing inequality in child and teen consumption
- Historical and social injustices in consumption
- Children and adolescents as co-producers of consumer cultures
- Brand strategies and communication within youth industries
- Youth consumers, ideology and resistance
- Consumer education: responsibility, ethics, and social justice
- Market mediators relating to children: design, publicity, packaging, merchandising
• New methodologies in the study of inequality and consumption
• Contentions over child well-being and corporate social responsibility
• Ethics and responsibility vis-a-vis children: companies, researchers, educators, practitioners
• Children’s rights and the globalization of commercial activities

A pre-conference workshop for PhD students will be offered on Monday, June 15 at Rutgers-Camden. Details to follow.

A full Call for Papers with detailed information will be forthcoming along with information about housing and other logistics. Expected deadline to submit paper proposals is November, 2019.

Come to Camden and Philadelphia next June!

Please contact Dan Cook (dtcook@camden.rutgers.edu) with questions.

Thanks,

Meredith Bak
Kate Cairns
Dan Cook, co-organizers