How to Support Young People in a Changing World: The Sociology of Generations and Youth Work

Dan Woodman and Johanna Wyn

In this chapter we revisit the idea of generations as a tool for thinking about the unequal lives of young people in changing times and extend this to the question of how a generational awareness can be helpful in the context of youth work. Young people today are likely to be living very different lives to their parents at the same age. Many changes are positive but some are not. In general, young people are more educated, physically healthier and have greater mobility and expanded cultural options compared to their parents. The opportunities for young women, LGBTI young people, and other minorities have improved, although a backlash is emerging in some places. But as in the past, some young people have greater access to the new opportunities afforded to their generation. The young people that have missed out often have parents who were similarly denied opportunities. Yet there have been significant changes in how these inequalities are manifested. In our work we have argued that the sociology of generations can provide the tools to think about the impact of social change on young people, without neglecting the essential step of recognising the significant and increasing inequalities between young people today (Woodman and Wyn, 2015a). Across the areas of education, work and leisure many young people face barriers to creating the relationships and ways of living they desire. Here we contend that, at its

best, youth work can facilitate intergenerational relationships built on joint learning, where both young people and those who work with them make an effort to understand the similarities and differences in their life worlds. Generational awareness can be a catalyst for youth work supporting young people to control their own lives and be part of collectively shaping the future of their respective communities.

The use of generations as a tool to help understand the relationship between individual lives and social conditions emerges from the foundational work of Karl Mannheim (1952 [1927]), a Hungarian born sociologist who aimed to link the subjectivities of groups of people to the historical and structural conditions that shape lives and livelihoods. In this sense Mannheim's sociology was a forerunner to C. Wright Mills's (2000 [1959]) concept of the sociological imagination – which advocates for a sociology that explicitly links historical change, social structure and individual lives. One of Mannheim's insights was that the pace of social, structural and cultural change is uneven, and intersects with the life course and the age stratification of human societies. His conceptualisation of generations was not of a 'natural process' in which one biological generation replaces the previous generation through a cycle of births and deaths, but sociological; new generations emerge as previous ways of life become impossible or unacceptable, and new subjectivities and possibly new social movements arise, and shape society in novel ways. Thus one of the important aspects of having a generational sensitivity in youth research and working with young people is an openness to the ways in which young people are shaping new realities and ways of being.

It is important to acknowledge at the outset that the usefulness of the concept of social generation is debated. Critics of our approach to social generation argue that a

generational approach homogenises youth, washing out class, gender and race-based inequalities and overstating the case for social change (see for example Roberts, 2007; France and Roberts, 2015). We dispute this, arguing the critique is based on a misrepresentation of the sociology of generations (Wyn and Woodman, 2007; Woodman and Wyn, 2015b).

Within a generation there are groups of people with very different experiences and holding different, even radically opposed, views (Mannheim called these groups ‘generational units’). These differences are related to dimensions such as different class position, gender or race. What unites a generation is not that they think the same way or have the same priorities, but that they have no choice but to orient around and struggle over a distinctive set of economic, cultural or political stakes that are ‘theirs’, different from the previous generation (Mannheim, 1952 [1927]: 306–307). As such, the subjective dimension of a generation does not mean that all young people share the same beliefs or values, or that these will stay constant as they age. A sociological conceptualisation of generations is based on the assumption that experiences in youth and young adulthood create a set of distinctive dispositions and ways of living, which can be built on and changed over time.

In our work we have used and developed the concept of social generations as a heuristic for understanding youth and inequalities between young people in the context of social change. We have argued that it provides a more nuanced approach than the one that sees youth as primarily a period of transition (Woodman and Wyn, 2015a).

Concern about the educational and employment futures of the young is not new. The link between education and employment has been a core social and youth policy focus for several decades (Quinlan, 2012). Yet, until the late 1980s, youth transitions in Western countries were considered straightforward. In a famous study that was part of

the formation of youth transition studies, British scholars Ashton and Field (1976: 115) asserted that although the transition from school to work ‘involves inevitable stresses and strains, [it] does not normally create serious problems’. The minor strains they had in mind were ‘learning the ropes’ and ‘getting on with older workers’ in the workplace. In Australia through the 1960s, full-time employment was widely available, even to teenage job seekers, and this supported a relatively straightforward transition into work for young men, and for many young women, at least before they started a family, providing a foundation for other successful transitions into ‘adult’ statuses (Cuervo and Wyn, 2012: 8).

Now it is relatively common to read that youth transitions into employment, and young people’s achievement of adulthood lives have reached a point of crisis (Denny and Churchill, 2016). Anxiety over contemporary youth transitions has a solid basis. In the Australian case, youth unemployment rates show peaks and troughs, but have remained high for decades, particularly impacting on those with less education. In the 1980s and 1990s casual employment grew significantly, with younger employees among the most affected. More recently, underemployment has grown explosively, particularly since 2000, and is now affecting almost 20 per cent of 15–24-year-olds in the labour force (ABS, 2015). The underemployment rate is approximately double the unemployment rate. Underemployment now ranks alongside unemployment and insecure conditions as the major challenges facing young people entering the labour market (Campbell and Price, 2016). Job and income insecurity impacts on other aspects of young people’s lives, including housing and relationships (Woodman and Wyn, 2015a). This is part of the explanation for the increasing trend for young people to live in the family home into their twenties and exacerbates the housing stresses driven by rapid house price and rent rises.

Although our own research is based in Australia, and our suggestions in this chapter are most applicable to Australia and similar countries, the patterns highlighted are mirrored, and often more stark, in other parts of the world. Globally, youth unemployment rates have been growing over the past five years, driven in part by a slowdown in employment growth for young job seekers, even in nations in the Global South that have had very rapid economic growth (ILO, 2016). In the European nations worst hit by the economic crisis of 2008–2009, particularly Spain and Greece, youth unemployment rates hover around 50 per cent. Rates are similar in other parts of the world, such as South Africa (OECD, 2016). Underemployment rates are not as easily available across nations, but working poverty rates are particularly high among young people, at almost 70 per cent in Southern Africa, 50 per cent in South Asia and almost 40 per cent in Arab States (ILO, 2016), even as many nations in these regions have invested significantly in raising levels of secondary and tertiary education (Brown et al., 2011). So, while the degree of hardship faced varies markedly, there are global trends towards under employment and precarious employment for young people, despite an equally worldwide trend of growing levels of education. The failing nexus between education and work creates new challenges for youth workers, as even the well-educated can find it difficult to obtain secure enough work to build a life.

Within the field of youth studies these changes are largely, and mistakenly, understood as delaying the (inevitable) transition to adulthood. While this makes intuitive sense, we have challenged whether the concept of individual ‘transitions’ to adulthood is the best framework for understanding these changes and their significance (Andres and Wyn, 2010; Blatterer, 2007; Cuervo and Wyn, 2014; Woodman and Wyn, 2015a). The foundations of adulthood (such as secure employment and home ownership) for the landmark ‘baby-boomer’ generation (against which subsequent generations have been

judged) were available across society. The legacy of ‘the’ transition to adulthood lies in the specific conditions available to the baby boomers, who could leave secondary school at age 15 and find a secure job. At that time, undertaking post-secondary educational qualifications pretty much guaranteed a secure, professional job. The traditional markers of adulthood (leaving home, full-time work, marriage) were relatively within reach by the age of 23. However, today these markers of adulthood are more difficult to achieve for young Australians across all social classes, and for those with fewer resources, increasingly out of reach (see for example Crofts et al., 2016).

As it becomes normative for young people in many countries and locations to spend longer in education, they experience common generational effects. This includes increased or new forms of dependence on their families, or the state, for a longer time than the previous generation, and increased levels of financial stress as they struggle to finance their education and to meet debts incurred during their education years (ILO, 2013). Young people are also increasingly mobile, as they shift from rural to urban areas to access secondary and tertiary education, and an elite go offshore to access educational institutions in other countries. Finally, spending longer in education contributes to a pattern of increased precarious work, as young people seek flexible employment to survive financially through the student years and yet, as noted, often remain stuck in less secure employment after they graduate, despite their credentials (Crofts et al., 2015; Furlong, 2015).

There is some evidence that young people are responding to these conditions by adjusting their expectations, developing new understandings of adulthood not reliant on traditional markers like marriage and family, and placing their hope in their personal resilience to succeed (Blatterer, 2007; Silva, 2012). Some young people are developing

new understandings of career and family, and refusing to invest too much of their sense of self in their education, their job, or even in their relationships (Howie and Campbell, 2016).

Given the global nature of new patterns of education and work, in recent years it has become common to talk of a global generation (Edmunds and Turner, 2005). While it is possible to talk in generalities about shared generational conditions, and emerging new attitudes, it is essential to recognise differences among groups of young people (which, as noted above, Mannheim referred to as ‘generational units’). In the face of the changes mapped out above, inequalities in resources and opportunities are significant and in many cases are exacerbated by the global trend towards income inequality (ACOSS, 2015), and the benefits of increased participation in education are not even. Some young people are living (physically) healthier lives than any previous generation (AIHW, 2016), while others are caught in protracted and deadly conflicts (UNICEF, 2012; WHO, 2016).

There continue to be great differences in the resources available to young people in different parts of the world and at local and national levels, and inequalities are often stark. Parents who were not supported in school, or excluded from the labour market, are more likely to have children who are also excluded (Lamb, Jackson, Walstab and Huo, 2015). Supporting young people through these transitions, often with a social justice aim of improving outcomes for the least well resourced, has been one of the major aims driving youth research and youth work (Williamson, 2011). Yet focusing on these continuities alone can mask important changes that help us understand and work with young people. For example, notions of ‘extended transitions’ (from youth to adulthood) create the false impression that adulthood is simply a phase of life that has shifted further along the life course because of circumstances. It is far more helpful to

understand that, for *everyone*, adulthood has changed, its boundaries have become increasingly unclear and the stability and securities that once (in the days of baby-boomer transitions) underpinned adult life, for many have disappeared. Youth workers (and others working with young people, such as teachers), have an important role in grasping the nature of adult life that young people are facing and understanding and supporting the kinds of social, emotional and material resources that are now required to manage lives characterised by insecurity, especially for those who are the most disadvantaged.

Some of the most compelling work on youth transitions goes beyond focusing on patterns of transition among individuals, to identifying the institutional ‘transition regimes’ that structure young lives, often with life course effects (du Bois-Reymond and Stauber, 2005). Young people across the world are increasingly subject to a shared transition regime that is built on the completion of secondary education and achievement of post-secondary qualifications within a neoliberal policy framework. This approach shows how government policies and institutional practices in education, labour markets and welfare create the youthful experience as well as the horizons of identity available to young people (see for example Hodkinson et al., 2013; Kelly, 2007; Mizen, 2004).

Across most countries, young people’s subjectivities are shaped by institutional patterns in education and the youth labour market that valorise ‘the market’, competition, and the notion of reward for investment, creating a shared set of ‘transition regimes’ (du Bois-Reymond and Stauber, 2005: 63). These transition regimes concurrently provide a structural set of pressures leading to unequal outcomes, and propose an individualised discourse about the causes of, and responsibility for, these outcomes. These changes have done more than reshape the economy, or even the

institutions of the welfare state, they have reshaped the life course, giving both youth and adulthood distinctive new features. Education provides a particularly powerful example of global transition regime.

Across the world, governments have responded to the pressures of global competition and ‘neoliberalism’ by facilitating the expansion of higher education. Largely this expansion has been paid for by expecting students (or their families) to cover a greater share of the costs of their education. Post-school education has become the norm in North America, Europe and Australasia, and has expanded most rapidly in North and West Asia (the ‘Middle East’) (Cole and Durham, 2008; Anagnost et al., 2013). Despite this greater investment in education, in the current context of high unemployment and rapidly expanding rates of underemployment, many young adults, even with reasonable levels of education, are unemployed, or if they do find employment, it is more likely to be insecure, or for fewer hours than they want.

In this context, achieving educational credentials becomes less of a guarantee of success, but even more important than before in the competition for jobs. Finding quality employment and financial security, or even work at all, is much harder than previously for those who do not finish high school; while a higher degree continues to provide most with better quality employment and higher pay, it is far from the pass to middle-class success that it was for baby boomers (Brown et al., 2011).

The concept of personal investment for reward is the foundation of the neoliberal model of education (and the economy). Education is positioned as a tool for both personal and national development and international competitiveness. This model aims to increase individual ‘choice’ and competition between providers. As Connell (2013) highlights, notions of choice and competition depend on inequality to be meaningful, hence within a neoliberal framework of education, individuals have to face

consequences for their ‘poor choices’. For choices to matter some options have to be considered better than others (and hence can command a price premium) and some choices better than others.

This section has drawn attention to global and local processes impacting on young people in the current generation. We hold that educational institutions and labour markets today increasingly constitute a global transition regime that is part of the new (if variable) generational conditions. These processes include the expansion of transition regimes in which universal completion of secondary education is a reality in developed countries and a goal in developing countries, and in which tertiary education is increasingly normative.

As we have suggest above, a generational approach has value because it opens up the question of what adulthood now means. The idea of a ‘new adulthood’ (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Blatterer, 2007), that all young people (and adults) must contend with, makes the work of youth workers all the more crucial, because many of the insecure ‘transitions’ young people are seen to pass through (and sometimes need support with), are not the developmentally based uncertainties of a protracted youth phase, but institutional and systemic insecurities that continue to mark their lives well into adulthood.

Youth work can play a significant role in supporting young people to (a) understand the local and global context of their situation, (b) develop the personal resources they (like their generation) will need to thrive in ‘the new adulthood’, and (c) gain access to the material resources that may support this. This attention to understanding one’s generation and developing the capabilities to be part of that generation is controversial, because it is often conflated with simply conforming to the imperative to develop ‘neoliberal’ identities (see for example Roberts, 2007). However,

our experience is that young people are deeply immersed in generational practices (many of which are supported by online applications) and seek to understand themselves, their worlds and those of the older generation. It is important that youth workers understand the specific generational identity work that young people are compelled to do. An example is the account of young homeless people by Farrugia and Watson (2011), who show how they try to manage their extreme structural inequality by building relationships (both intimate ones and with friends), actively taking up the sense of responsibility and reflexivity that is common to their generation. We develop these suggestions for youth work practice in the final section of the chapter.

Concern about young people's behaviour, and efforts to intervene, have a long history. Youth work has traditionally been driven by a philanthropic class who wanted to save children from poverty, and more importantly 'immorality' (Bessant, 1997). The recent past of such interventions has been shaped by the use of a risk and resilience framework that has continuities with traditional concepts of youth as 'adolescence', implying that youth is a developmental period dominated by risky transitions, and characterised by storm and stress (Bessant, 2008; Furlong and Woodman, 2015).

Youth work is fraught with tensions, and performed in this context of rapid change, needing to rethink its purpose while operating with budgets that are being continually squeezed and often overly simplistic, but onerous, reporting requirements (Sercombe 2004). Youth workers are frequently positioned as a point of intervention to bring young people's behaviour into line – particularly as they are often employed to support young people who are defined as 'risky' and making this 'risky transition'. Yet this is combined with a youth work ethic that also champions supporting young people's critical engagement with the status quo (Williamson 2011; Sercombe 2010). There is no easy way to resolve the tensions involved in youth work, but attention to generational

elements can provide a tool to critique the focus on managing risky transitions that shapes many youth programmes and a tool to frame productive interventions.

The approach to youth and young adulthood that we have described above is one in which failure to conform to the timelines of transition regimes is not due to the risky nature of youth (or ‘adolescence’) as such. Nor is it suggested that variations in transition patterns should be characterised as ‘delayed transitions’ (or for that matter transitioning to adulthood too early). For many of the young people youth workers are engaging with, the insecurity and stress that characterises their current life cannot be considered a transitional situation. Insecurity and stress are also a characteristic of young adulthood and this situation is unlikely to pass as young people’s lives progress. Rather, the attitudes they form to accommodate or resist the elements that characterise young adult life will have lifelong generational characteristics. The challenge for youth workers and youth researchers alike in understanding the impact of social change on young people, is to recognise how changing social conditions makes it necessary for young people to use new strategies and ways of thinking, even to achieve many of the same things as their parents’ generation have.

In popular formulations of generational change, the young and old often appear alien to each other, conflicting groups holding such different understandings of the world that communication is difficult. Such crude generationalism (Davis, 1999) obscures more than it makes visible and the concept of generations is limiting if it fails to recognise the positive interactions and solidarities between age groups as well as the conflicts. While we have argued that new generational dispositions are emerging, we do not see strong evidence of ‘generational wars’ (as is suggested in the media). Young people are not developing a set of values and beliefs radically opposed to those held by their parents. Our research shows that young people in Australia have hopes that are

fairly modest and were in large part available to their parents. They rank a secure job, to own a home, to have a long-term intimate relationship and to start a family as among the most important aims for their future (Crofts et al., 2015). Yet as we have tracked our participants through their twenties and thirties, these goals have taken a long time to eventuate for many, and for a significant minority appear to be forever out of reach. It is in this context that they are having to reinvent adulthood (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001).

From the outset, the sociology of generations has offered a more nuanced understanding of how younger and older people can work with each other than the crude generationalism that is common in the popular press, and sometimes academia (Eckersley et al., 2007). In Mannheim's (1952 [1927]: 301) foundational work he identifies the interaction between the emerging and previous generation as one of the key sociological problems of generations. Mannheim recognises that generation is only one social division, and those of different generations can share other aspects of their social positions that might lead to shared experiences. Yet he also claims that if rapid social change has taken place, an older teacher (or youth worker) will confront challenges in doing their job. A new generation is defined by the different set of institutional demands, obstacles and cultural elements they experience (and shape) to those that existed for older cohorts, such as the baby boomers, when they were young, who are themselves living a different version of older age to the generation before them. By definition, a new generation will have a different understanding of and disposition towards acting on the challenges they face. Yet, for Mannheim (1952 [1927]: 301), the 'compensating factor' that can overcome this challenge is that 'not only does the teacher educate his pupil, but the pupil educates his teacher too. Generations are in a state of constant interaction'. This principle is documented strikingly in research that brings two generations into dialogue about values and futures (Eckersley et al., 2007). The

facilitated dialogue between young people from a Melbourne Secondary School in a disadvantaged area and older people who were community members and academics resulted in a profound reassessment for both generations. Being positioned as ‘experts’, the young people rose to the occasion and offered considered, thoughtful and provocative assessments of their worlds and their futures. The older people connected with the younger generation on the issue of adapting to change, promoting ‘generational intelligence’ (Biggs and Carr, 2016). Other research shows how learning partnerships between young people and trainee teachers and medical practitioners enable both groups to learn things of value. Young people, especially those whose voices are not traditionally heard, have important insights to offer, given the opportunity to work with respectful adults within a facilitated environment (Cahill and Coffey, 2013).

Youth workers, like all who work with young people, are required to be ‘generationally intelligent’ (Biggs and Carr, 2016). In the context of intergenerational workplaces, Biggs and Lowenstein (2011) define generational intelligence as an ability to reflect and act, drawing on an understanding of one’s own and other’s life-course, family and social history, within a contemporary social context. The value of generational intelligence is amplified by the reality that all age cohorts have been influenced by rapid changes over recent years. For example, few youth workers today have the type of job stability that was commonly available to social service providers thirty years ago. The emergence of different generational conditions does not mean that the values of today’s young generations around the world will be radically alien to those of their parents. They may inherit a set of values, such as progressive or conservative, but will have to operationalise these values in a new context (Dunham, 1998).

One way that the tension between control and empowerment in youth work has been managed is to instigate various levels of youth participation into youth work

practice, and this resonates with the need for generational intelligence. This potentially opens a space for young people to understand the context they find themselves in, such as the transition regime discussed above, and for intergenerational learning. However, critique and advocacy through various forms of youth participation can also reflect privilege, with well-resourced and privileged young people having greater opportunities to have their views heard. Youth participation can have the potential to open up new ideas that bring benefits to young people, especially those who are marginalised or disadvantaged. An example is the initiatives supported by UNICEF in the Asia Pacific to counteract gender-based violence and HIV (Cahill and Beadle, 2014). However, as long as the idea of youth is framed by a developmental model that positions young people as not completely formed and adults as ‘complete’, young people’s contributions to decision-making and problem-solving will remain undervalued.

The lines between youth and adulthood are increasingly difficult to define, and the fluidity and complexity traditionally associated with the idea of an extended period of youth are, we suggest, now a characteristic of many adult lives for this generation – not a precursor to it. Economic, employment and housing insecurity is now spread throughout the youth cohort; these conditions are ‘transitioned’ beyond by fewer people and inequalities are expanding. What this means in practice for youth workers is complex. Some of the same economic pressures that are shaping young lives in new ways are also squeezing funding for youth services. All of this will create significant challenges for the allocation of resources and difficult tensions to manage. The research on young people in the current generation provides strong evidence of new generational conditions, which means that the age range that youth workers engage with will need to be flexible. For example, initiatives to support young people will fall short if they

are simply to ‘see them through the risky stage of youth’, because young people need to develop lifelong skills in a context of widespread insecurity.

Welfare and income support measures that are based on outdated information about the conditions faced by young people (such as measures that fail to support young people in out of home care beyond the age of 18) are counterproductive and often harmful. An understanding of how social change contributes to generational change opens up new understandings of the contemporary situation of young people. In the context of youth work, this approach raises the question of whether older-generation social policies and measures are fit for purpose as conditions change.

Youth researchers who study ‘transitions to adulthood’ have shown that, in general, these transitions are taking longer and are less linear (than was the case for that unique generation, the baby boomers). Yet the changes to young lives are of a greater magnitude than this. Lacking generational intelligence, many commentators have suggested that transitions are simply ‘extended’ and have given little thought to the nature of the adulthood young people now have access to. A greater proportion of young people face these transitions with few resources, or with additional barriers. For example, an increasing proportion of children in Australia are in out-of-home care, or in sole parent households.

There are radical disparities between young people, within particular countries and across the world. The generational conditions we have traced show that while difficult transitions through school might correlate within families across the generations, the impact of marginalisation from education is heightened in a world where educational credentials have never been more significant.

Youth work is about more than supporting a particular age category through a defined period of time. Across their diversity, young people’s lives in a majority of

cases will be very different in significant ways to those of their parents. We have used the concept of generations to think through what this means for youth work. Understanding young people through the lens of youth transitions has been very important in youth studies, and identifying the transition regimes that shape young lives remains central. Yet these regimes are changing, and those in the youth field need the right conceptual resources to ask ‘transition to what’ and to understand what the patterns they discover mean for the life course, as well as the tangible ways that young people may be supported to creatively understand and manage the context of the social change they are living through. Generational intelligence provides a lens through which young people’s insights and contributions can be valued, because increasingly it is not the older generation who will tell young people about the world they will live in, but young people who will have insights into the world for us all.

The research that this chapter draws upon is and has been supported by numerous grants from the Australian Research Council – Grant numbers: DP160101611, DP1094132, DP0557902, DP0209462 and A79803304.

Anagnost, A., Arai, A. and Ren, H. (Eds) (2013) *Global Futures in East Asia: Youth, Nation and the New Economy in Uncertain Times*, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.

Andres, L. and Wyn, J. (2010) *The Making of a Generation: The Children of the 1970s in Adulthood*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ashton, D. and Field, D. (1976) *Young Workers*, London: Hutchinson.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2015 update) *6265.0 – Underemployed Workers, Australia*, September 2013, ABS: Canberra.

- Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) (2015) *Inequality in Australia 2015*, Strawberry Hills: ACOSS.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2016) *Australia's Health 2016*, Australia's Health Series No. 15. Cat. no. AUS 199, Canberra: AIHW.
- Bessant, J. (1997) 'Free market economics and new directions for youth workers', *Youth Studies Australia*, 16(2): 34–40.
- Bessant, J. (2008) 'Hard wired for risk: neurological science, "the adolescent brain" and developmental theory', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 11(3): 347–360.
- Biggs, S. and Carr, A. (2016) 'Age friendliness, childhood, and dementia: toward generationally intelligent environments', in T. Moulaert and S. Garon (Eds) *Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in International Comparison: Political Lessons, Scientific Avenues, and Democratic Issues*, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 259–276.
- Biggs, S. and Lowenstein, L. (2011) *Generational Intelligence: A Critical Approach to Age Relations*, London: Routledge.
- Blatterer, H. (2007) *Coming of Age in Times of Uncertainty*, New York: Berghahn.
- Brown, P., Lauder, H. and Ashton, D. (2011) *The Global Auction: The Broken Promises of Education, Jobs and Incomes*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cahill, H. and Beadle, S. (2014) *NewGen: A Leadership Training Course for Young People from Key Populations at Higher Risk of HIV in the Asia-Pacific Region*, Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.

- Cahill, H. and Coffey, J. (2013) *Learning Partnerships*, Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.
- Campbell, I. and Price, R. (2016) 'Precarious work and precarious workers: towards an improved conceptualisation', *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 27(3): 314–332.
- Cole, J. and Durham, D. (Eds) (2008) *Figuring the Future: Globalization and the Temporalities of Children and Youth*, Santa Fe: SAR Press.
- Connell, R. (2013) 'The neoliberal cascade and education: an essay on the market agenda and its consequences', *Critical Studies in Education*, 54(2): 99–112.
- Crofts, J., Cuervo, H., Wyn, J., Smith, G. and Woodman, D. (2015) *Life Patterns: Ten Years Following Generation Y*, Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.
- Crofts, J., Cuervo, H., Wyn, J., Woodman, D., Reade, J., Cahill, H. and Furlong, A. (2016) *Life Patterns: Comparing the Generations*, Melbourne: Youth Research Centre.
- Cuervo, H. and Wyn, J. (2012) *Young People Making it Work: Continuity and Change in Rural Places*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Cuervo, H. and Wyn, J. (2014) 'Reflections on the use of spatial and relational metaphors in youth studies', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 17(7): 901–915.
- Davis, M. (1999) *Gangland: Cultural Elites and the New Generationalism* (2nd edition), Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

- Denny, L. and Churchill, B. (2016) 'Youth employment in Australia: a comparative analysis of labour force participation by age group', *Journal of Applied Youth Studies*, 1(2): 5–22.
- du Bois-Reymond, M. and Stauber, B. (2005) 'Biographical turning points in young people's transitions to work across Europe', in H. Helve and G. Holm (Eds) *Contemporary Youth Research: Local Expressions and Global Connections*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 63–75.
- Dunham, C. (1998) 'Generation units and the life course: a sociological perspective on youth and the anti-war movement', *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, 26(2): 137–155.
- Dwyer, P. and Wyn, J. (2001) *Youth, Education and Risk: Facing the Future*, London/New York: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Eckersley, R., Cahill, H., Wierenga, A. and Wyn, J. (2007) *Generations in Dialogue about the Future: The Hopes and Fears of Young Australians*, Youth Research Centre and Australia 21, Melbourne.
- Edmunds, J. and Turner, B. (2005) 'Global generations: social change in the twentieth century', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 56(4): 559–577.
- Farrugia, D. and Watson, J. (2011) "'If anyone helps you then you're a failure": youth homelessness, identity and relationships in late modernity', in S. Beadle, R. Holdsworth and J. Wyn (Eds) *For We are Young and ...? Young People in a Time of Uncertainty*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing.

- France, A. and Roberts, S. (2015) 'The problem of social generations: a critique of the new emerging orthodoxy in youth studies', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18(2): 215–230.
- Furlong, A. (2015) 'Unemployment, insecurity, and poor work: young adults in the new economy', in J. Wyn and H. Cahill (Eds) *Handbook of Children and Youth Studies*, Singapore: Springer, 531–542.
- Furlong, A. and Woodman, D. (2015) 'Youth studies: past, present and future', in A. Furlong and D. Woodman (Eds) *Youth and Young Adulthood*, London: Routledge, 1–20.
- Hodkinson, P., Hodkinson, H. and Sparkes, A.C. (2013) *Triumphs and Tears: Young People, Markets, and the Transition from School to Work*, London: Routledge.
- Howie, L. and Campbell, P. (2015) 'Guerrilla selfhood: imagining young people's entrepreneurial futures', *Journal of Youth Studies* (online first, doi: 10.1080/13676261.2015.1123236): 1–15.
- International Labour Organization (ILO) (2013) *Global Employment Trends 2013: Recovering from a Second Jobs Dip*, Geneva: ILO.
- International Labour Organization (ILO) (2016) *World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for Youth*, Geneva: ILO.
- Kelly, P. (2007) 'Governing individualized risk biographies: new class intellectuals and the problem of youth at-risk', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 28(1): 39–53.

- Lamb, S., Jackson, J., Walstab, A. and Huo, S. (2015) *Educational Opportunity in Australia 2015: Who Succeeds and Who Misses Out*, Melbourne: Centre for International Research on Education Systems, for the Mitchell Institute.
- Mannheim, K. (1952 [1927]) 'The problem of generations', in *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Routledge, 276–322.
- Mills, C.W. (2000 [1959]) *The Sociological Imagination*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mizen, P. (2004) *The Changing State of Youth*, New York: Palgrave.
- OECD (2016) *Youth Unemployment Rate (Indicator)*. doi: 10.1787/c3634df7-en (accessed on 7 December 2016).
- Quinlan, M. (2012) 'The "pre-invention" of precarious employment: the changing world of work in context', *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 23(4): 3–24.
- Roberts, K. (2007) 'Youth transitions and generations: a response to Wyn and Woodman', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 10(2): 263–269.
- Sercombe, H. (2004) 'Youth work: the professionalisation dilemma', *Youth Studies Australia*, 23(4): 20–25.
- Sercombe, H. (2010) *Youth Work Ethics*, London: Sage.
- Silva, J.M. (2012) 'Constructing adulthood in an age of uncertainty', *American Sociological Review*, 77(4): 505–522.

UNICEF (2012) *Progress for Children: A Report Card on Adolescents*, New York: United Nations Children's Fund.

Williamson, H. (2011), 'A complex but increasingly coherent journey? The emergence of "youth policy" in Europe', in L. Chisholm, S. Kovacheva and M. Merico (Eds) *European Youth Studies: Integrating Research, Policy and Practice*, Innsbruck: EYS Consortium, 136–148.

Woodman, D. and Wyn, J. (2015a) *Youth and Generation: Rethinking Change and Inequality in the Lives of Young People*, London: Sage.

Woodman, D. and Wyn, J. (2015b) 'Class, gender and generation matter: using the concept of social generation to study inequality and social change', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18(10): 1402–1410.

World Health Organization (2016) *Adolescents: Health Risks and Solutions* (WHO factsheet), Geneva: WHO.

Wyn, J. and Woodman, D. (2007) 'Researching youth in a context of social change: a reply to Roberts', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 10(3): 373–381.