

Call for Papers
Illegality, Youth and Belonging: International symposium
Harvard University, October 25-26

Although the protection of children and young people is seen as a valence issue worldwide, national governments face the growing challenge of how to best provide for children and young people's well-being, given the political popularity of strong enforcement stances and stringent immigration policies against undocumented immigration. This tension has produced a broad range of state responses, with implications for local communities, schools, social services, and other mechanisms of protection. Moreover, resulting from the uneven impact of the current global economic crisis, a new geography of migration is emerging, both in terms of new immigration destinations and of changing systems of governance of in- and out- flows of population. Little is known about whether and how membership is changing in association with these processes.

We are seeking papers that explore the ways in which immigration and related laws frame the everyday worlds of children, youth, and young adults and how they respond.

Background to *Illegality, Youth, and Belonging*

Over the last two decades, non-citizens living in Western democracies have experienced a contraction of their *de facto* rights, while immigrant communities have witnessed an intensification of enforcement efforts which limit their movement in neighborhoods and public spaces. These trends have sown fear and anxiety and narrowed the worlds of large, settled, populations, so much so that even mundane acts of driving, waiting for the bus and traffic stops can lead to the loss of a car, imprisonment or deportation. Paradoxically, immigrants have also benefited from certain local and national efforts which expand their access to public spaces. These inclusionary acts have proffered important opportunities to establish connections, form relationships, and participate in the day-to-day life of their communities. The experiences of today's immigrants teach us about the two-sided nature of citizenship—such that persons can be removed from spaces, denied privileges and rights, but at the same time can also experience belonging.

There is, perhaps, no better group through which to examine these complex processes of exclusion and belonging than children and young people; both those living in families subjected to the precariousness of undocumented immigration status, as well as young people who experience the constraints of immigration restrictions on their own, detached from family networks and support. Many of these young people face the difficult tasks of fitting in and making the most of lives as young adults within a society they have learned to call home but which defines them and their families as outsiders and lawbreakers to be punished. Are they “Citizens in Waiting” or “Impossible Subjects”? What are the implications of family poverty and precarious status on children and young people? How do young people experience and manage

undocumented status as they transition to adulthood? And how and by whom are these experiences facilitated and mediated in their daily lives? In answering these questions, we hope to draw particular attention to the conflicting yet overlapping experiences of illegality and belonging, and how young people experience, negotiate, embrace, and contest these forces. As these processes seldom play out evenly across differing state, community, and institutional contexts, we are particularly interested in how experiences of illegality and belonging are mediated in everyday life.

Call for Papers

We invite proposals for papers which investigate aspects related to the dual and conflicting experiences of illegality and belonging, particularly as they concern the lives of children, youth, and young adults who have grown up or spent their formative years in host countries. We welcome in particular proposals that focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Everyday experiences of ‘illegality’ among children and young people
- Intergenerational impacts of undocumented status
- The effects of widened access to rights and entitlements (e.g. DACA, financial aid, in-state tuition)
- The uneven geography of contemporary immigration policy and practice
- The political mobilizations of youth

Gender perspectives and methodological issues of research sensitivity and ethics are significant cross-cutting themes throughout these topics.

If you wish to present a paper please submit an abstract (max 250 words) and a brief CV (1 page) to immigrant-youth@gse.harvard.edu by Monday July 15, 2013. Participants will be notified if their paper has been selected by Friday, August, 2. Drafts of papers should be submitted to the organizers by Tuesday, October 8, 2013 and will be circulated to discussants before the conference.

Please note that by submitting an abstract you commit to producing an initial draft of an original paper of about 3,000-4,000 words (presentations are expected to be about 20 minutes). Also note that we can only accommodate a limited number of papers.

It is anticipated to turn conference proceedings into one or two journal special issues or edited volumes. Papers should therefore be based on original research and should not have been published already or be under consideration for publication elsewhere. Please note that inclusion in any publications arising from the conference will be subject to peer review.

Illegality, youth and belonging is the second of two international symposia on legal status, rights and belonging that jointly investigate the migration and citizenship nexus in contemporary diverse societies.

The symposia are jointly convened by Roberto G. Gonzales (Harvard University) and Nando Sigona (University of Birmingham) with the contribution of Elaine Chase, Vanessa Hughes, and Jenny Allsopp (University of Oxford), Helen B. Marrow (Tufts University), and Siwen Zhang (Harvard University). The symposia are sponsored by Harvard University, the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, the University of Birmingham's Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS), and the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society and the Oxford Institute of Social Policy at the University of Oxford.

The first symposium [*Within and beyond citizenship: Lived experiences of contemporary membership*](#) was held in Oxford on 11-12 April 2013. It brought together academics from a range of international institutions to explore and debate the interplay between forms and modes of contemporary membership, migration governance, and the politics of belonging. Participants discussed issues such as the position of the non-citizen in contemporary immigration and emigration states; the nexus between human mobility, immigration control, and citizenship; the tension in policy and practice between coexisting traditions and regimes of rights; the position of mixed status families in relation to the nation-state; and the intersection of 'race' and other social cleavages and legal status.

For further information about *Illegality, Youth and Belonging*, please email robertog4@gmail.com.

For further information about *Within and Beyond Citizenship: Lived Experiences of Contemporary Membership*: <http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events/legal-status-international-symposia>