Youth and Globalization

Call for papers

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Gangs and Globalization:
Between Resistance and Resilience

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Gangs are described as an episodic phenomenon comparable across diverse geographical sites, with the US gang stereotype often operating as an archetype. Mirroring this trend, academic researchers have increasingly sought to survey the global topography of gangs through positivist methodologies that seek out universal characteristics of gangs in different cultural contexts.
Following Thrasher’s classical definition, a gang is “an interstitial group originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict” (1927/2013, p. 57). This means that a gang is an informal group of locally rooted peers, in conflict with other peer groups, and sometimes with adult institutions. When delinquency was not considered as a fundamental attribute of youth street sociability, other concepts were used such as peer groups, street groups, subcultures, countercultures, lifestyles... reserving the term gang for street youth groups with members from migrant or ethnic minorities background and no for other youth groups. Because of this, when defining what a gang is, it is mandatory to refer both to the use of the term by informants and native actors -to their ‘emic’ meanings -and to their use by researchers and external actors -to their ‘ethic’ meanings. In addition, the terms and meanings may vary according to the geographical locations and subcultural traditions that we consider.

This call for papers invites to present theoretical, methodological and empirical researches on global gangs, in the continuum of resistance and resilience. Resistance we understand as a (sub)cultural movement that opposes the dominant or hegemonic culture. Resilience we understand as an affective, cognitive, relational and behavioural process that combines effective skills as a response to a situation of risk or adversity. Our perspective aims to recognize youth street groups as forms of youth culture for resisting hegemonic discourses and practices and as social resilience institutions for dealing with and fighting stigmatization. The question to answer is how transnational flows affect gang structures and cultures, and what kind of methods do we need to investigate the phenomenon in a comparative way, including the effects of COVID-19 and lockdown on street gang cultures.

About the Journal
Youth and Globalization invites contributions from scholars and advanced researchers that promote dialog in a way that resonates with academics, practitioners, policy-makers, and students as well as the general reader. The journal publishes peer-reviewed articles (8,000-9,000 words), book reviews (up to 1,200 words), and interviews/conversations (not to exceed 2,500 words). Also see the Author Instructions.