

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Engagierte Wissenschaft e.V. / Scholarship with Commitment, Leipzig, Germany

AG Kids Control

Web: www.engagiertewissenschaft.de

Contact: kids-control@engagiertewissenschaft.de

ARE THE KIDS ALRIGHT?

»Everyone can change
– if people who need help will not take it, we will make them.«
(Tony Blair, Respect Action Plan, 2006)

Introduction

Regulating and transforming behaviour has been at the centre of New Labour's mission for a "better" social order. "Troublesome youths" have been identified as the main obstacle to creating a cohesive and responsible society: Yobs, hoodies, "kids from hell" are common attributions in the mainstream media to kids who "just hang around" and appear as a "nuisance" to their community. According to this perception, anti-social behaviour, harassment and disorder are all around us and make a "normal life" impossible. A "moral panic" has been created in a society afraid of its own offspring. Interventions at national and municipal levels target the issue, asserting that the kids can only be alright if they are kept under permanent control.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) appear to be one of the most popular and convenient tools of regulation in the UK. ASBOs aim at streamlining conduct into "acceptable" behaviour by banning people from doing certain things or from entering defined places. This has not only resulted in bizarre discussions about what kinds of behaviour are perceived as anti-social but also in a revival of the time-honoured and ever-popular practices of anonymous denunciation, public shaming and banning of youths from entering designated areas of their towns. The massive use of ASBOs by British authorities in order to "get rid of the problem" has been complemented by diverse techniques of correction, surveillance and dispersal.

The exhibition

Our exhibition's aims are to document rationalities and practices of regulating youth behaviour in urban spaces as well as to explore creative forms of appropriation of and resistance to surveillance and control. Experiences from the UK and Germany will be displayed and discussed.

The British "Anti-Social Behaviour Order" (ASBO) serves as an example for the transforming practices of "disciplining and punishing" (Michel Foucault). The exhibition documents positions and practices, effects of power and struggles over meaning of anti-social behaviour. In doing so, the ASBO is not exclusively conceptualised as an instrument of regulation and punishment but also as a cultural symbol which is appropriated, devalued or reinforced by a variety of people. The ASBO phenomenon has inspired artists, "targeted youths", entrepreneurs and dedicated

people to deal with everyday surveillance, control and the permanent production of fear in a creative, political or profit-oriented way.

We would like to invite both artists and non-artists – any people who feel provoked and inspired by these new forms of control of urban youth and the *nuisance of everyday surveillance* – to participate in this exhibition with your contribution in the form of

- documentaries,
- music,
- illustrations,
- collages,
- videos,
- performances,
- installations,
- poems, etc.

The exhibition expressly looks for alternatives to the “necessities” of intervention.

The exhibition is proposed to take place in autumn 2008 in Leipzig, Germany, and will be complemented by a workshop/seminar, exploring critical approaches towards regulation of behaviour in a comparative perspective.

Please send your contribution proposal by 15 March 2008 (extended deadline) to:

Kids-control@engagiertewissenschaft.de

The exhibition will be supported by:

BILDUNGSWERK WEITERDENKEN IN DER HEINRICH-BÖLL-STIFTUNG e.V.

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