The neighbourhood of children beyond playing: a social-
pedagogical perspective

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Introduction

Many studies and policy practices relating to the neighbourhood of children construe the neighbourhood  
mainly as a play environment. As a result, the neighbourhood of children is predominantly if not  
exclusively assessed on the opportunities it offers to children for playing and interacting with other  
children (Ackermans, 1970; Jansen, 1996; Valentine & McKendrick, 1997, Blinkert, 2004; Vanderstede,  
2004; Burke, 2005). However, such a construction hampers a more comprehensive view of the role of the  
neighbourhood as a context for socialisation. Moreover, this type of research fails to reveal the meaning  
children themselves give to their neighbourhood.

Through its intermediate position between the private and the public spheres, the neighbourhood creates  
a specific context enabling children to explore society and to develop their identity vis-à-vis this society.  
From a social-pedagogical viewpoint, the focus is mainly on the various learning processes that are  
encouraged or impeded by a given neighbourhood and on the diversity of social relationships which this  
environment helps to create.

This paper addresses three questions. The first relates to the way in which the construction of the  
environment influences the learning opportunities offered to children. This issue covers both the  
physical setup of the neighbourhood and its mental aspects, such as implicit and explicit rules and norms  
relating to its use by children. A second question concerns the way in which children define their  
neighbourhood and how they influence the construction of this environment. The assumption is that  
children are not only passively influenced by their environment but that they actively impact upon their  
own position and their environment. The third question relates to the way in which developments in the  
environment help to shape the meaning of childhood. What does the dominant construction of the  
environment of children reveal about the significance that is given to “being young”?

1 In this paper, the word ‘children’ refers to all young people, aged less than 18.
The changing nature of the neighbourhood

First of all, we should define what we mean by the concept of ‘neighbourhood’. Ackermans (1970; p.7) gives the following general definition: “the common spaces around a number of individual dwellings”. However, this definition is very vague and it hardly sets off the neighbourhood from other public, semi-public and private spaces. Furthermore, a static definition of the neighbourhood can never fully include the borders of this environment as subjectively perceived by its residents (Silk et al., 2004). Residents’ subjective definition of neighbourhoods might include only the block on which they live, or the streets on which family, friends, or “familiar faces” live. Everyone has a different definition of their neighbourhood. In addition, the meaning given to the neighbourhood in terms of means of action and user value varies greatly according to its (groups of) residents. In other words, both the physical and the mental aspects of the neighbourhood are inspired by the social interactions among people on the one hand, and between people and their environment on the other. They are constantly (re)constructed, their meaning evolves over time and is interpreted differently by different groups in society.

The construction of the neighbourhood constantly evolves. The “privatisation” of the neighbourhood is cited as an example of how macrosocial processes have gradually influenced (and continue influencing) the role and definition of the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood forms a transitional zone between the private and the public spheres. Various authors (e.g. Sennett, 1977; Verschaffel, 1990; Krupa, 1993) suggest that the role of the neighbourhood has changed dramatically because of an increasing shift in the relationship between the private and the public spheres, resulting in a reduced importance of the neighbourhood as a meeting place. The neighbourhood has consequently lost part of its public nature and has been largely privatised. Living has turned in upon itself, making the neighbourhood no longer a place where people live together but a space belonging to everyone and to no-one, a kind of no-man’s land (Verschaffel, 1990). This no-man’s land is increasingly being perceived as unfamiliar and thus as (potentially) threatening. A greater transparency of the neighbourhood – for instance a better visibility of individuals’ behaviour in this environment – could help to avert this threat. When it comes to children, this analysis also involves a greater emphasis on the prevention of conspicuous and undesirable juvenile behaviour, such as vandalism (Wietsma, 1986).

This privatisation of the neighbourhood is connected with developments in society such as increased prosperity, mobility or new means of communication (e.g. the Internet). Sennett (1970) argued that this privatisation is functional to a specific social order: keeping people off the streets, off public space, makes it increasingly possible to dwell among ‘peers’. Viewed from this angle, the privatisation of the neighbourhood is a self-fulfilling prophecy: the perception of potential danger encourages privatisation but at the same time reinforces deficit thinking about the neighbourhood as a public space. Other authors (including Vranken, 1998; De Rynck et al., 2003) interpret the changing neighbourhood as an indication of the need for developing new political and social integration frameworks. The focus on the neighbourhood is thus viewed as a lever for community formation and the development of new types of social and political participation.

The description of the neighbourhood is also affected by the impact ascribed to the new communication media. Van der Wouden (2002) integrates the new virtual spaces created by these media into his conception of space. He argues that a distinction can be made in these virtual spaces between private spaces (personal e-mailbox, homepage, etc.), semi-public spaces (chatboxes, Web communities devoted to a specific topic) and public spaces (digital cities, portal sites). The question is what effects this virtualisation has on the social world of children. According to Holloway & Valentine (2000a), it involves a broadening of young people’s social world and of the means for developing social relationships. The rapid growth of the Internet, which is at once the cause and the effect of globalisation, creates a wealth of potential experiences. Vandenberghe (1999) takes a more critical view of this evolution and points to, amongst other things, the possible marginalising effects on young people whose parents are not familiar with the Internet or who do not have a computer at home. In this respect, we also raise the question to what extent the Internet and other new media offer children opportunities for developing social relationships, and whether these opportunities remain confined to contacts with their own group and/or social category.
The neighbourhood: a variety of experiences

Not all groups in society deal in the same way with the abovementioned developments in the neighbourhood. In contrast with the ‘privatisation’ discussed above and with the reduced value of the neighbourhood as a meeting place, research by amongst others Jókövi (2000), Greenhalgh & Worpole (1995) and Blokland-Potter (1998) suggests that certain groups in society do attach great importance to their direct neighbourhood as a meeting place. Especially age, sex, type and level of education, social class, ethnic background, and family income situation appear to have a strong impact on the way people experience their neighbourhood. Since it is not clear how these factors exactly affect the way in which the neighbourhood is perceived by children, it is important to study how different groups of children experience their neighbourhood.

The awareness of the neighbourhood as a reality experienced in a wide variety of ways affects the way in which the neighbourhood can be studied. A first consequence is that one cannot simply refer to the significance of the neighbourhood for children. Children experience the neighbourhood in differentiated ways. For instance, Karsten (1995) in her research distinguishes different patterns in the relationship of children with their neighbourhood. She refers to “inside children”, “outside children” and “backseat children”. “Inside children” make hardly any use at all of their neighbourhood, “outside children” make active use of their environment whilst “backseat children” make little use of their direct neighbourhood but are transported from one organised activity to another by their parents. Karsten’s research also shows that these patterns are connected with, amongst other things, the physical features of the neighbourhood and the sex and the social class of the children concerned. Degreof (2004) reaches similar conclusions based on an analysis of Dutch play-environment research. O’Brien et al. (2000) also reveal different patterns in the ways in which children use public spaces, especially in relation to the spatial layout of the residential setting, gender and ethnicity.

A second consequence of the understanding of the social meaning of the neighbourhood for research is the idea that children know their neighbourhood not only through their own experiences, but also through stories about others’ experiences in this environment, such as their parents’, grandparents’ or peers’. This not only applies to experiences in the current neighbourhood, but also to stories about the past neighbourhood and the changes that have occurred. If we are therefore to understand the meaning of the neighbourhood, we should analyse it in its social and historical context. Not only the physical appearance of the neighbourhood, but also the rules and opinions with respect to the use of this environment and the strategies for dealing with them are to be interpreted in their social and historical context. Valentine & McKendrick (1997) for instance discovered in research that social interactions between mothers play an important part in establishing local ‘norms’ about how far away from home and for how long children should be allowed to play.

Thus ‘middle class’ mothers argued that they experience pressure from each other to impose strict restrictions on their children’s play and to chaperone their children to and from social activities. In contrast, mothers from ‘working class’ neighbourhoods argued that they encounter peer group pressure to grant their children relative independence. Mothers in both ‘middle’ and ‘working class’ neighbourhoods whose childcare practices are out of line with the local ‘norm’ claimed that they were stigmatised and marginalised by other parents. (Valentine & McKendrick, 1997; p.227)

As a result, the influencing variables described above, such as sex and social class, are not independent but are closely related to the way in which the neighbourhood is socially construed. Social class, for example, in itself does not affect the way children experience their neighbourhood. It is rather the way in which the neighbourhood is construed differently vis-à-vis children from different social classes which affects the children’s patterns of use of their neighbourhood.

People shape their lives through the stories they tell and hear. This narrative structure of life implies that people are connected with each other through the stories they share with one another (Brugman, 2000). Oral history (e.g. Gaus et al., 1983; Bouw & Karsten, 2004) and neighbourhood reminiscence (Mercken, 2002), as sources of information in research, can help to reconstruct this social construction process in its historical context. Oral history is a body of spoken narratives that are told by people about themselves and their environment (Mantell, 1970) and that thus depict people’s social world against a specific social and historical backdrop. Conversely, reminiscence does not focus on facts but on the experience of past events or circumstances (Mercken, 2002).
Beyond playing: conflicting constructions

Approaching the neighbourhood as a social environment makes us realise that there are various (conflicting) ways of construing this environment. Certain constructions have come to occupy a dominant position in the social debate. Analysing the existing research on children’s neighbourhood, we have found that many researchers (e.g. Ackermans, 1970; Jansen, 1996; Valentine & McKendrick, 1997; Blinkert, 2004; Vanderstede, 2004; Burke, 2005) approach the neighbourhood as a play environment. As far as research in Dutch is concerned, this hypothesis is confirmed by different research reviews (Karsten et al., 2001; Degreef, 2004). In local youth policies in Flanders as well, the play-environment approach has come to occupy a major place (Van Duffel et al., 2002; De Visscher, 2004). The dominant construction of the neighbourhood of children is, at least in social-pedagogical research, a construction which reduces this environment to a play environment. The main focus is on the opportunities it presents to children for playing and for interacting with other children. The literature puts forth two theoretical frameworks for this play-environment construction, based on the concepts of protection and autonomy.

A number of authors (Valentine, 1996; Zeiher & Zeiher, 1998; Holloway & Valentine, 2000a) explain the dominance of the play-environment approach within a broader historical development, namely the banning of children from the adult world and from public space, which is run and controlled by adults. This spatial segregation fits in with the idea that minors should be protected in order to safeguard their personal, social and cultural developmental opportunities. In relation to public space, the idea of the need for protection refers to the dual concern about the risks run by children in public space on the one hand (Karsten, 2002) and the nuisance caused by children in public space on the other (Valentine, 1996; Harden, 2000). This concern is connected with the broader image of youth as ‘troubled’ and ‘troubling’ (Griffin, 2001) which underlies the pedagogisation of children’s and young people’s social worlds. In order to integrate them into adult life, children need to be ‘educated’. This concretely means that the social world of children is increasingly being structured in a ‘pedagogical’ sense (Depaepe, 2000; Simon & Van Damme, 1989). Children vanish from the ‘public’ street scene, whilst in relation to public space they are relegated to their own areas (playgrounds) created specially for them (Kassies, 1985). In the context of this discussion, James et al. (1998) point to the increasing privatisation of childhood within the domestic sphere as a recent development: childhood is lived increasingly in privatised spaces such as home and increasingly in public spaces. This play-environment construction, which is designed to protect children, clearly influences the physical and mental borders within which children are allowed to act, and it involves regulating their participation in public life – where they go, with whom, for how long and for what purpose (Harden, 2000; p.44). Limits to the scope of children’s autonomy, by parents and through legislation, are closely connected to the idea of children as a social group being immature, naïve, vulnerable and a danger to themselves (Pilcher, 1996). The question is to what extent the benefits, realised by this protection approach, counterbalance the costs of the segregation of children (e.g. Dasberg, 1984). The notion of protection is further supported by developmental psychology and pedagogical theories about the developmental opportunities that should be offered to children. For instance, it has been argued that the creation of (adventurous) playgrounds imitating a ‘natural’ environment for children enhances their mental and physical health (e.g. NUSO, 1965; Vanhelsuwé, 1974; Mergen, 2003; Fjortoft, 2004). Enough exercise, open air and the proximity of nature are major objectives of this approach. Vanhelsuwé (1974) formulated this as follows:

Everyone knows what is good for children. Playing and exercising have a beneficial effect on their physical and mental condition. Inside the house, the opportunities for exuberant play are decreasing constantly. The child is unsafe in the streets and in its turn makes the street unsafe. The neighbourhood no longer offers open spaces. And yet, exercising increases muscular strength, quickness of response and endurance. Furthermore, constant movement improves muscular tension, which has a beneficial effect on children’s posture. (Vanhelsuwé, 1974; p.27)

A second theoretical framework for the play-environment approach is offered, paradoxically, by a movement which, referring to the concept of ‘child-friendly environments’, advocates a greater emphasis on the autonomous use of the neighbourhood by children (Koning Boudewinstituting, 1980; Blinkert, 2004; Kytta, 2004). In other words, the protection discourse is complemented by arguments in favour of a greater autonomy of movement for children. According to Blinkert (2004), such a child-friendly environment should meet criteria such as accessibility, safety, flexibility and opportunities for interacting with other children. Kytta (2004) also proposes children’s independent mobility as one of the main criteria for a child-friendly environment. However, the relative autonomy which these frameworks aim to provide
to children is confined to the borders laid down by adults. Children are allowed freedom of movement only within those areas of public space where they are explicitly allowed. The child-friendly approach and the protection approach share the same starting point, namely the neighbourhood as a play environment. This overlooks the reality that children will inevitably grow up in an actual neighbourhood which may turn out to be totally different. From a social-pedagogical point of view, it should always be investigated what developmental opportunities this environment actually offers, in other words, what learning processes are allowed, encouraged or impeded by the neighbourhood. At the same time, it should be examined what factors influence these learning processes, and how the residential environment affects the often completely different situations children find themselves in, and on which grounds interventions may or may not be advisable. This question assumes that a good neighbourhood creates opportunities for children to broaden their social world, explore society, develop a variety of social relationships and construe an identity in relation to society.

The neighbourhood as a socialising context

The neighbourhood offers children a context for broadening their social world. Baacke (1985) developed a theoretical model representing people’s social world as a series of concentric circles. According to this theory, the neighbourhood is the environment in which young people are introduced to the public realm, against the background of their familiar home environment. This is where children are for the first time confronted with what is ‘foreign’ to them and where they can broaden their meeting and action opportunities. Biesta (2005) defines the social world of children as an aggregate of settings offering different (social) learning opportunities. The neighbourhood constitutes one of the settings in which children familiarise themselves with the rules of their community and in which they can develop an identity in relation to this community. In addition, the neighbourhood creates various learning opportunities. Bernet (1990) called this the ‘educating city’. This concept focuses on the learning processes taking place in the urban environment. One of its premises is that the urban environment creates an environment which produces relationships and educational effects which are both premeditated and accidental. These educational effects are mostly considered as the result of the social relationships developing in an urban environment. At the same time, the neighbourhood offers a framework in which and through which children can develop an identity vis-à-vis their community (Heyting, 1999; Holloway & Valentine, 2000a).

The educational opportunities offered by the neighbourhood (in its social sense) may be allowed, restricted or encouraged. Physically speaking, the organisation of a neighbourhood may create various meeting or action opportunities and has a spatial impact on the action range of children. For instance, some important conditions for the action range of children in public space are influenced by existing mobility policies, by the routes between the place of residence and the school, or by the availability of other social facilities such as sports grounds. Mentally, the conceptions which parents and society, as well the children themselves, have of the position of children in public space, transposed into implicit and explicit rules and norms, broaden or restrict children’s action range as well. For instance, the parents’ ambition to give their children a ‘good education’ may cause them to forbid them to play in the streets; in the same way, the prospect of running into unexpected and exciting situations or meeting other young people may cause young people to seek out certain areas of public space more frequently and spending more time there. Youth subcultural research already underscored the importance of loitering places such as the football ground or the shopping centre (Hazekamp, 1985), as well as the distinctions between young people, for example with regard to their level of education. From this perspective, we should again emphasise the restrictive nature of the play-environment approach. Indeed, within the play-environment construction, children are confronted mainly with peers from their own social group, and the introduction to the community at large is confined to specific areas in public space set apart for children by adults. Such a construction is childish rather than child-friendly (Mannion & I’Anson, 2004). Furthermore, it confirms the existing dividing lines among young people based on the residential environment: ‘other’ young people than their ‘equals’ are thus perceived as ‘different’. An alternative construction which is gradually gaining ground focuses on enabling meeting opportunities among different social groups within
the same spatial setting. Urban planners are thus increasingly using the terms ‘intergenerational design’ (Penninx, 2003) or ‘inclusive design’ (Jansen, 1996).

**Agency of children**

A second theme that, from a social-pedagogical perspective, should be given a greater emphasis in research into the neighbourhood of children, is the agency of children. Agency implies that children co-influence the reality they are part of. It refers to the way in which children deal with the rules and norms prevailing in their community in a specific historical and social setting, and thus also the way in which they influence this community (e.g. Holloway & Valentine 2000a). Agency refers to the process through which children develop an identity, not against but as part of a social reality. The agency concept is therefore related to the dynamics between the social world and the individual participant (Heyting, 1999). Giddens’s theory (1997) relates the everyday, contextual acting of agents to its impact on the (re)production of social structures. Individuals are capable of acting in that their actions can change the course of events in the world; they possess knowledge they can rely on for their actions and they are in principle capable of steering and monitoring their actions reflexively. This acknowledges the fact that people’s opportunities are not only determined by their individual capacities and competences but also by the social context which they constantly (re)produce in and through their actions.

This view on agency is closely related to a view on socialisation as a dialectic process. James et al. (1998) suggest that children participate actively in society and thus become expert actors who deliberately give meaning to their daily lives; they are therefore active in the construction and purpose of their own social and cultural situation.

The research into developments in the neighbourhood has so far devoted little attention to the ways in which children construe this environment. The abovementioned studies by Karsten (1995) and O’Brien et al. (2000) into the relationship between children and their neighbourhood revealed a number of different patterns of use. Although this type of research gives a general idea of children’s social worlds, it says little about the significance they themselves attach to their neighbourhood. Furthermore, the abovementioned studies into the developments in the neighbourhood, such as the privatisation (Sennett, 1977; Blokland-Potter, 1998) and virtualisation (Van der Wouden, 2002) of public space, fail to indicate how these developments affect children’s lives and how they cope with these developments. This criticism is part of the broader finding that youth research is mainly research about children and seldom reaches the level of research with children. Such studies do not necessarily teach us something about children themselves, but more about how children relate to an interest which is defined by adults (Verschelden, 2002). Studies from the perspective of the Geographies of Childhood – i.e. studies into children's spatial environments (Holloway & Valentine, 2000b) – propose investigating both the actual use children make of their environment (geography of children) and various aspects of perception, meaning-giving and representation (children’s geographies) (Philo, 2000). These Geographies of Childhood thus create a framework for the question as to how children perceive their neighbourhood and what places they define as their neighbourhood.

Children construe their own spaces. Research (Moore, 1986; De Visscher, 2003; Vanderstede, 2004) suggests that the spaces where children actually play are not confined to the formal locations provided by adults but that children themselves create their own informal places in public space. Research in the Ghent ‘Rabot’ quarter (De Visscher, 2003) for instance showed that, in spite of the presence of formal play areas in the quarter, the actual presence of children turned certain streets into playgrounds, whilst pavement bulges and grass plots were used by children as well. Conversely, some of the formal playgrounds were hardly used at all. Although children are generally expected to play in the spaces created for this specific purpose (playgrounds), we find that they themselves elaborate various strategies for modifying these borders. Children actively construct their own environment and change the physical and mental borders imposed on them in this environment. Although this type of research does investigate children’s agency, its analyses remain hedged in by the borders fixed by a play-environment approach. To chart this agency accurately, research methods should be developed which leave enough room for children’s own input.
The interaction between the construction of the neighbourhood and the construction of childhood

A third research topic we would like to address concerns the meaning of childhood. We consider childhood not primarily as an age group but as an institutionalised life stage involving a particular social and cultural position defined by others (Van Ewijk, 1994; Qvortrup, 1993). Although childhood is a universal biological stage, there are obvious historical and cultural variations in the ways in which children participate in the adult world, and in adults’ conceptions of the qualities and competences of children (Dasberg, 1984; Kennedy, 1998). For instance, the approach to childhood and adolescence in our Western world gradually evolved from a strong focus on identity formation, via a growing focus on conquering a position in the labour market, to the acquisition of social and cultural capital (Zinnecker, 1995). The way in which the neighbourhood is construed vis-à-vis children is also closely related to these developments. For instance, having a ‘room of one’s own’, including privacy and one’s own communication media, has become something self-evident for the majority of young people – of course this excludes those who do not (self-evidently) have a ‘room of their own’. Conversely, the freedom to move in the streets has been largely curtailed, channelled and – insofar as young people move in public space – subjected to increasing formal social supervision. Valentine & McKendrick (1997) in their research into children’s outdoor play found that a significant amount of children’s outdoor play is taking place in ‘private’ space (home, organised play settings), rather than ‘public’ space, so that although children are spending a considerable proportion of their leisure time ‘outdoors’ most have very limited opportunities to play in or explore the public environment independently of adult supervision (Valentine & McKendrick 1997; p.227). The construction of the neighbourhood of children and the construction of childhood itself are thus closely interrelated and interact with each other. Reference is being made to the creation of a “privatised” image of childhood (James et al., 1998), which only considers children’s participation in adult-supervised private contexts. Children who fail to meet these expectations, for instance by frequently loitering in the streets, consequently become an object of pedagogical concern. These developments are in their turn fostered by the dominant image of children, and more in particular the image of youth as ‘troubled’ and ‘troubling’ (Griffin, 2001) as mentioned above, or as ‘angel-devil’ (Holloway & Valentine, 2000a). The concerns about the risks that children run in public space and about the nuisance caused by children in public space contribute to the development of a privatised image of childhood and a privatised construction of children’s neighbourhood. Malone (1999; p.17) for instance argues that the media creation of young people as a problematic group contributed to the reluctance of planners to allow young people to participate authentically in the planning of relevant public and private spaces.

We already mentioned that the arguments in favour of child-friendly environments and of greater autonomy for children in public space reinforce each other, however paradoxical this may seem. The interest in child-friendly environments on the one hand implies paying greater attention to children in public space, in the sense that this acknowledges children as being specific interest groups whose claims should have a greater weight in decision-making. On the other hand, these developments paradoxically cause an increased sensitivity to ‘being a child’ as well, and the arguments in favour of a greater autonomy for children are accompanied with increased supervision of children and consequently more (potential) conflicts between young people and adults (Mortier, 1999). The image of the “autonomous child” is thus superimposed on the image of the “romantic child” (Vandenbroeck, 2003), which aims to protect children against the evil workings of society. The social world of children is thus also coloured by their residential environment, through the opposition between a growing social-cultural autonomy on the one hand, and an extended dependence in other areas on the other (cf. Bouverne-De Bie, 1994). The autonomy that children are granted remains confined to the areas that pertain to the children’s and young people’s ‘own’ culture. Children demand greater attention for their ‘own culture’ through the creation of specific facilities, ranging from play streets and youth cultural centres to the possibility of constantly broadening the borders of their neighbourhood, both virtually and actually, within their own sphere of interest. Autonomy and mobility thus de-border young people’s social worlds but may at the same time confirm the borders between young people’s social worlds.
Conclusion

Studying the neighbourhood as a context for socialisation is for several reasons an important social-pedagogical theme. Through its intermediate position between the private and the public spheres, this environment impacts upon young people’s developmental opportunities and upon equal developmental opportunities for young people. The investigation of both the physical organisation of the neighbourhood and the rules and norms governing the use of this environment is highly relevant, and so is its setup from a historical and social perspective, since the neighbourhood is not a static entity.

This paper introduced three questions relevant to research into children’s neighbourhood. First, there is the question as to how the neighbourhood is (predominantly) construed vis-à-vis children. We have found that the neighbourhood is predominantly construed as a play environment and as a meeting place for children amongst themselves. This construction is supported by on the one hand a protection ideal aimed at the spatial segregation of young people’s social world from the social world of adults, and on the other hand by arguments for greater autonomy for children and a child-friendly environment. Conversely, children grow up in widely different situations and environments. Research into the neighbourhood of children should therefore investigate which factual opportunities the neighbourhood offers children for broadening their social world, explore society, develop a variety of social relationships and construe an identity in relation to their community. A play-environment approach can achieve these goals only to a very limited extent. A second question we raised is how children contribute to the construction of their neighbourhood. In making use of and giving meaning to their neighbourhood, young people are actively (re)constructing this environment. This agency can be highlighted in research by investigating how children themselves define their neighbourhood and how they deal with the borders, if any, which the neighbourhood imposes on them. Finally, we also examined what conflicting constructions of the neighbourhood teach us about the way in which the meaning of childhood is construed. We argue that the developments in the neighbourhoods and the construction of childhood reinforce each other. These developments seem to move towards a growing privatisation of the neighbourhood and childhood on the one hand, and towards a growing autonomy of children on the other, be it within certain confines imposed by adults. Within these confines, young people develop their own ‘youth culture’, for which they demand space as well.
References


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