

Symposium

How do individuals find support during these times of difficult transitions?

Chair: Jane Goodman

What a fool I am: A Portuguese, action theory informed perspective on hindering dimensions of youth's transitions to adulthood

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(SFRH/BPD/43542/2008)



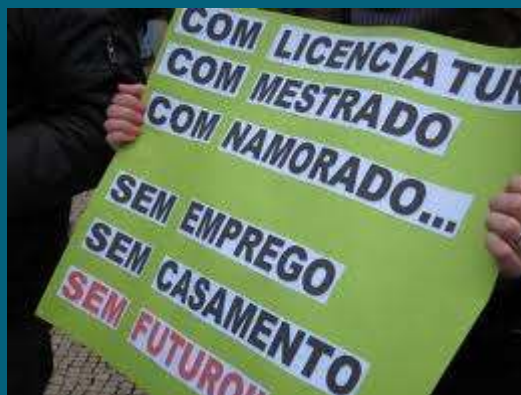
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Aim

To discuss how youth's ongoing actions and projects are affected by the less predictable and more prolonged sequencing of the traditional adulthood markers, especially by the absence or lack of consistency of the different kinds of support (institutional, relational) at their disposal

Parva que sou [What a fool I am] - Deolinda



Desperate
generation

Generation
in trouble



Deolinda - Parva que Sou, Coliseu do Porto. Assim damos a volta a isto!.mp3

I'm from the generation with no pay

And this condition not even worries me

What a fool I am

That things are bad and about to stay like

that

I must be so lucky 'cause I found an

internship

What a fool I am

And it makes me wonder

What a fool of a world

Where to become a slave you have to study

I'm from the generation parents' housing

If I have everything, why ask for more?

What a fool I am

Children, husband I'm always delaying

And I still have to pay the car

What a fool I am

And this makes me wonder

What a fool of a world

Where to become a slave you have to study

I'm from the generation why am I going to complain?

Someone much worse than I is on TV

What a fool I am

I'm from the generation I can't stand it no more

This situation lasts for too long

And a fool I am not

And this makes me wonder

What a fool of a world

Where to become a slave you have to study

What a fool of a world

Where to become a slave you have to study

Who are they?

- ❑ youths between 18-39 years

 - 3.826 million Portuguese
 - 33.1% workforce \leq 34 years

- ❑ steady increase in average education level

- ❑ labour market \Rightarrow mix of trends (access to employment)

- ❑ jobs mostly unstable \Rightarrow informal economy/3rd sector

- ❑ no access to benefits

Who are they?

□ employment



31.3% ≤ 34 years (employed workforce)

44% TWC ⇒ ≤ 24 years

1 in 3 TWC ⇒ ≤ 34 years

2 in 5 fake “green receipts” (total)

HE $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 4.7\% \text{ w/ fake “green receipts”} \\ 3/4 \text{ w/ TWC (temporary work contracts)} \end{array} \right.$

Who are they?

□ unemployment (total) = ± 690 000 (12.4%)



Youth ⇒ 27.8% ≤ 24 years

{ 320 000 unemployed (≤ 34 years)
± 75 000 w/ higher education (> 16% increase in 1 year)
seeking 1st job = 10.5% (of the unemployed)

Who are they?

- ❑ economic dependency from family
- ❑ living longer at family household
- ❑ marrying & having their 1st child later



Mediterranean
transitional model

Portuguese youth

low social visibility ⇒ scarcity/absence of

absence institutional resources (execution + generalization)

highest fear of future unemployment (Eurobarometer 88)

Transition to adulthood

Repercussions on
ways of acting

- ❑ structured by an extended linger
- ❑ plural & more heterogeneous
- ❑ need to make decisions in context of great uncertainty
- ❑ deal w/ contradiction

{ individual responsibility (choices & autonomous projects)
avoid long-term life projects, favor fluidity (not fixity) &
isolate the present

How do youths deal w/ uncertainty?



Different reactions

- planning ⇒ guidelines & “little projects”
- relying on “chance” & “minimum objectives”
- believing in “luck”

Decision making



non-sequential, non-
systematic, intuitive process
(Gelatt, 1989)

Shorter time span



extended present/
“presentification” = anxiety
damper

How do youths deal w/ uncertainty?

Awareness of

- ❑ unequal access to resources & opportunities
- ❑ lower institutional support
- ❑ gap btw transition experiences & institutional approach (multi vs. one-dimensional)

bounded agency

- socially situated agency
- actions guided
 - (i) past & future imagined possibilities
 - (ii) perception of structures

Young & colleagues

Youths' specific behaviors/actions

- ❑ skills & habits
- ❑ conscious & unconscious sources
- ❑ internal & external resources



Transition

- ❑ active engagement in the development of a personal sense of meaningfulness and coherence
- ❑ identification of goals organized across time (mid-length = projects)

ppl proceed towards
goals by exploring &
interpreting

Young et al. (2011)



Transition processes are needed by youths

Should be supported by people, institutions & agencies



Positive uncertainty (Gelatt, 1989)

- positive attitudes & paradoxical thinking**
- attitude: uncertain about future & positive about uncertainty**

**one's choices today not only determine
one's future, but also reflect what one's
believe the future to be**

Thank you!

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