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Διευθύντρια έκδοσης: ΣΤΕΛΛΑ ΒΟΣΝΙΑΔΟΥ

Ειδικό αφιέρωμα
Το φύλο ως αντικείμενο διαπραγμάτευσης στην ψυχολογική έρευνα

Επιμελήτριες ειδικού αφιερώματος
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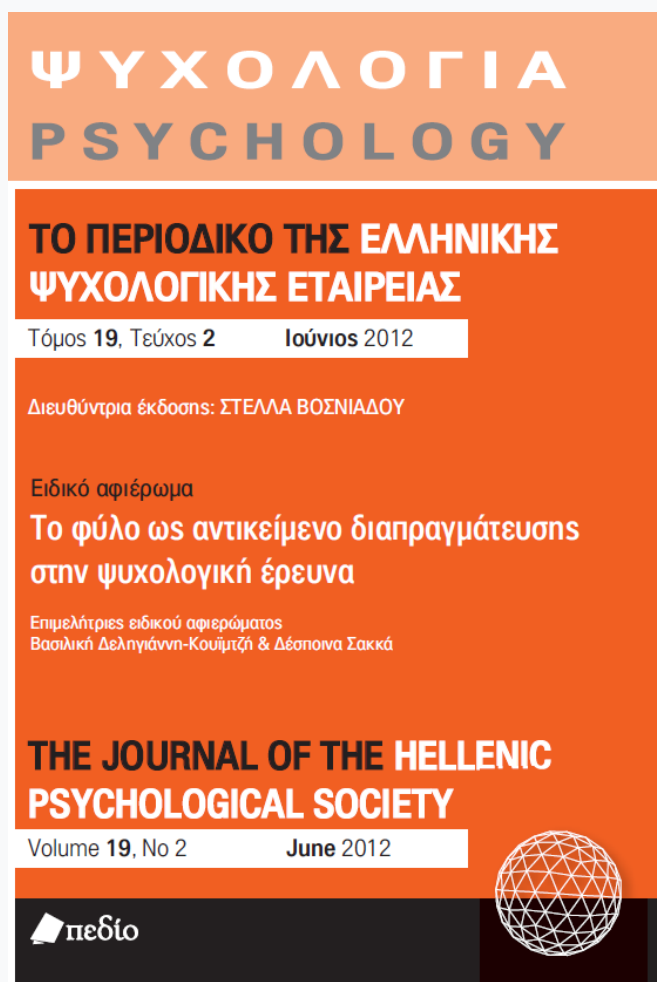
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Un/thinking children in development: A contribution from northern antidevelopmental psychology

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Un/thinking children in development: A contribution from northern antidevelopmental psychology

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ABSTRACT

This chapter outlines a feminist antipsychological approach to analyzing child-hoods. Taking up Squire's (1990) characterisation of feminism as antipsychology, this paper analyses child development *as text*. Examples drawn from a range of institutional practices and genres are juxtaposed, to highlight some newly emerging twists of contemporary tropes of northern, normalised childhoods. Unsurprisingly perhaps, recent departures from the rational, autonomous, unitary subject of modern developmental psychology (c.f. Henriques et al, 1984; Burman 1994, 2008a) betray political continuities with older formulations (especially in relation to familialism). Notwithstanding these supposedly flexible times, it will be argued that covert continuities underlying discernable shifts - especially around the configuration of gendered and racialised representations - indicate some key consolidations, albeit now accorded apparently 'democratic' hues. Both in their proliferation and via their juxtaposition, it is suggested, these diverse texts can be installed within a narrative of critique. This political-methodological intervention works, therefore, firstly, to deconstruct the opposition between popular cultural and expert (developmental psychological) knowledges to mediate their mutual elaboration and legitimation. Secondly, this sample of available representations of childhood illustrates a key strategy of (as in Richards's formulation, 1998), putting psychology in its (culturally and historically limited) place. The paper ends with some more general epistemological and ethical reflections on the alliances and antagonisms of inter- and cross-disciplinary approaches to childhood, and their contributions to challenging wider developmental discourses.

Key words: Antidevelopmental psychology, Feminist theory, Feminist antipsychological approach, Text analysis.

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1. A northern contribution?

It is fitting for a paper whose substantive topic concerns the enmeshed psycho-politics of childhood, memory and representation to start backwards. So, taking the last part of my title first, let me start with the question of contribution.[2] As a British feminist developmental psychologist – the knowledge I have at my disposal, perhaps even my presence, is part of the problem – precisely as someone British, as a developmental psychologist, and in some ways also perhaps as a feminist. I want, at the outset, to topicalise this ambivalence. For, inevitably, I occupy an invidious position: either parochial bystander or global co-conspirator. Whether there are other possible positions of transnational and transdisciplinary solidarities and alliances is perhaps the core question at issue at this time, and for this special issue.

But even as I recognize the privilege, and hopefully anticipate the irrelevance, of my northern position, it is analytically and methodologically important to consider: *which* north? Of course what space or place or (especially) home is, and whose, is very much at issue – whether in terms of home discipline, home language, home town, familial home, or the originating home cultural contexts from which dominant theory is elaborated.[3] In acknowledgement of the many norths and souths that exist within, as, and alongside, the global geopolitics of north-south relations, it is relevant to the kinds of texts that I analyse below to explain that I live and work in the North of England. Within England (as well as across the UK generally), the discourse of north and south positions northern England (along with Scotland and Wales) as less developed, economically and culturally, than the more affluent south (although we are supposedly more friendly and with a thriving counterculture of music and humour) – in other words, this geographical division is (generally speaking) marked in terms of class.

2. The British state of childhood

Before examining some idealized texts of childhood, at this point, methodologically-speaking, I should offer some account of the contemporary state of British children. Current social statistics consistently indicate that the gap between rich and poor in Britain – as elsewhere – is widening, and that at least a third of all British children live in poverty. There is also a sense (at least among British childhood and educational researchers) that Britain is a particularly child-hating nation, as reflected perhaps also in the UN report published in October 2007 that suggested that British children are the most unhappy children in Europe, a finding that sits significantly alongside the October 2008 report criticising Britain as having the most punitive approaches to children (in terms of practices of detention of young offenders and the imposition of Anti-social Behaviour Orders), but which has also been questioned for its partiality on other grounds (Franklin, 2002). Nevertheless,

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2. Phrasing this issue in this way is particularly resonant to me. Although I was not – consciously – thinking of this incident when I selected this title, some years ago on perhaps my third visit to (the 'new') South Africa, when relaxing after a day at the university in a café-bar in Johannesburg's chic district of Melville, I recall being challenged on the way out by a young, perhaps rather inebriated black man, demanding of me: 'what is your contribution?'. We spoke for a while, and I recall coming up with nothing that was very convincing to either of us. This taught me that this question must be asked, even if it cannot be easily answered.

3. Just to complete the set of resonances, I want to acknowledge that thematizing home and the necessary risky work to displace conventional epistemological anchors is not to romanticize either the cosy intimacy of 'home' (since much of my work has concerned domestic violences of various kinds), nor homelessness. Anyone who thinks about the position of displaced or homeless people, especially children, must surely worry about the ease with which academics ennoble nomadity, while the 'home' of the mind is very much what the theme of childhood both settles and unsettles.

alongside having the least state support for childcare in Europe, it is largely accepted that children are unwelcome in many public spaces because they are deemed to be a nuisance, a risk or at risk – and of course these three aspects often become elided. Corporate notices up in my former workplace, for example, exclude children in the name of 'protecting' them from hurt in 'buildings not made with children in mind'. In fact these notices contradict precisely what they proclaim by disclaiming (legal) responsibility for any injury to children occurring on the premises. Such notices, of course, enrage and inconvenience our many mature students, many of whom have no alternative but to bring children with them into the university during school holidays. They are an indication of the increasing impact of a culture of litigation, of defensive practice, that in the name of 'choice' transfers the onus of responsibility from the state and organizations onto individuals, and produces a proliferation of bureaucracy around children that fails to meaningfully address or engage with them, or their carers.

Even in the heartlands of the North, therefore, childhood as a state is not only endangered, but children themselves easily acquire the pathologised status of 'risk' (that is, as being 'risky'), by transgressing some normative threshold; portrayed as being in one way or another (metaphorically or even physically) too much. This is all the more paradoxical in the current political context where neoliberal state policies increasingly aim to mould 'active' and flexible children for the creation of autonomous and economically self-sufficient citizens (Fendler, 2001; Lister, 2005, 2006; Ailwood, 2008).

More generally, the British state is regarded as more protectionist and less participatory in relation to children when compared to other European countries. It has particularly segregated services, and appears to be especially ambivalent around questions of children's agency (Moss & Petrie, 2002; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). Currently, British newspapers are full of reports of rising violence directed to and by children[4], and the rise in 'knife crime' produces on average around two murders of young men a week. On the other hand, escalating concern about child abuse, and particularly child sexual abuse, increasingly renders work with children a zone of acute anxiety for child professionals, often working also to prohibit the building of emotional connections and relations (Piper & Stronach, 2008).

3. An antipsychological approach

Moving from geographical to disciplinary spaces of belonging, in terms of intellectual history my 'home' discipline is psychology, specifically developmental psychology. This is rarely a popular discipline in childhood and child rights circles – with good reason. Indeed part of why I am here is to work out how feminist critics in psychology can challenge (and even contribute to undoing) the damage done by much developmental psychology to children worldwide.

The widespread developmental anxiety about 'saving' the childhoods of poor children, that is so routinely mobilized within aid imagery, alludes to the overdetermined linkages between child and national development, and the global capitalist agendas played out via the concern for children. The injustices, exclusions and pathologisation of the discourse of development are writ small in the story of what happens to children and their families while, reciprocally, the story of individual development is writ large in the story of national and international development (Burman, 2008a). But even if we accept those resonances across different units and disciplines of development, psychology is not the only culpable discipline

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4. For example there was a report in the rightwing *Daily Telegraph* that 55,000 violent crimes were committed by school-age offenders in 2007 (1 in 8 of the total), which was up by 27,000 in 2006 (reported in *The Week*, Friday 15/8/08 p16).

within the instrumentalisation and maximization of children that is also a key consequence of globalization. Hence rights discourses are subject to similar problems of universalisation and normalization (often also because the norms are derived from elsewhere). Nevertheless, while psychology is not the only source for all that is wrong in educational, legal, social support or health practices around children and families, it certainly has played its role (Walkerdine, 1984; Urwin, 1985).

So far I have been trying to indicate how my own context is disciplinarily but also necessarily nationally and culturally located. My conceptual-methodological approach is precisely to aggravate the tensions and play up the disjunctions between these different forms of development (as Nieuwen-huys, 2008, has noted in relation to tensions around child rights). Clearly this is a strategy with limitations: there is little difference between universalisation and cultural relativism if all that this means is that we agree that we're all different. Nevertheless it is useful to draw attention to the partiality and limitations of all available develop-mental accounts, and to attempt to resist accounts of developmental completion. Any general model tends to obscure the complexity of practices and contexts of development, and the structurally diverse character of the economic, cultural and interpersonal relationships that produce these varied developments (Burman, 2008a, 2008b).

4. Feminist critique as antipsychology

Positioning feminism as antipsychology, as in Squire's (1990) early characterisation, pits feminist debate against, rather than in relation to, mainstream/malestream psychology. It plays up their tensions and necessary irreconcilabilities in order to refuse easy compromises or collabo-rations (see also Burman, 1998). Clearly feminist theory and practice are also under interrogation here, in relation to similar charges of universalist, exclusionary models but also in relation to their (understandable, if also ultimately misplaced)

suspicion or overlooking of children's rights work (Thorne, 1987; Burman, 2008c). I suggest that feminist political rhetoric offers a stronger safeguard against assimilation into mainstream models, even as it also poses new challenges. These challenges arise in particular, in relation to the treatment of plural 'childhoods'. For the current focus in feminist theory on intersectionality (e.g. Nash, 2008) intimates the instability, as well as disunity, of any category of analysis when we start to take questions of gender, class and other encultured meanings of gendered positions seriously in relation to childhood (see Burman, 2006).

A particular benefit of claiming feminism as antipsychology is that it sidesteps interminable preoccupations of (for example) critical psycho-logists about whether, how, or how much they are (or their work is) part of psychology. But it also mobilises the wider reaches of feminist inquiry and brings these to bear on more apparently parochial psychological matters. Claiming this does not appropriate feminist debates, in the sense of confining their remit merely to antipsychology (for perhaps they are equally antisociological, and they are certainly relevant to development, Elson, 1995). Rather, there are particular moments or issues when playing up the antagonism can be useful.

Antipsychology identifies as its topic the refusal to accept psychological claims on their own terms, but rather interrogates their concepts and underlying assumptions, and evaluates them in terms of their epistemological, methodological and especially practical effects. This is a particularly relevant approach to the critical evaluation of developmental psychology, owing to the met-onymic role developmental psychology plays within psychology in securing psychology's truth claims. By curious circularity, developmental psychology functions both as method (by which to measure 'psychological change') and as a topic (so becoming the exemplary arena in which psychological models can be tested and warranted) (see Burman, 2008d). Further, develop-mental psychology also seems to function as a

key foundering point for more sociologically-oriented childhood researchers and child rights – in terms of how developmental knowledges are mobilised within discussions of 'best interests' and 'competence' in ways that confirm children as deficient or incomplete, and so in fact incapable of exercising their participatory rights.

There are two other matters for an antipsychological agenda: psychologisation and feminisation. These two notions are intertwined via their explicit concern with instrumentalising the domain of the personal (including the home, the domestic, and relational qualities). Epitomised perhaps by the rise of 'emotional intelligence' programmes (Boler, 1999; Burman, 2009), both are central to individualism and the incursion of contemporary practices of individualisation that separate people from each other, and prevent wider reflection on the conditions producing such subjectivities.. As a correlate of the contraction of public sensibility and engagement under neoliberalism, there has been an expansion of the psychological domain in true voluntarist mode from specialist expertise to 'self-help', such that we are saturated with incitements to grow, learn, change yourself, make yourself better. In sum, to develop and demonstrate the flexibility and determination to optimise oneself (or what Fendler, 2001, termed 'developmentality'). Similarly, although in some ways women's work has never fitted models of patriarchal capitalist production (Staples, 2007; Pearson, 2007), its affective features as well as temporal and cultural capital are currently being colonised into global capitalism (Nieuwenhuys, 2007).

We need to connect critical childhood studies with feminist critiques to make sense of these economic practices. This means reading the current promotion of feminine-style skills against the grain to insist that feminisation is not feminism,

and that women have much to worry about in the celebration of supposedly feminine relational and intuitional qualities now entering business and education (Burman, 2006b, 2008).[5] In this paper, therefore, I highlight how these features are now filtering through into models of childhood, including particular emotionally-inflected understandings of memory and activity mobilised through and by the child.

5. Childhood as text

Many resources support this kind of antipsychological consideration of childhood as text – in particular from historical and cultural analyses. Treating mainstream psychological theory and practice as text disrupts its scientism and naïve realist claims, and facilitates attention to how the knowledge, 'facts', norms and models are the outcome of specific contextual productions and interactions. At least eight key features about this strategy can be noted:

- It emphasises the cultural-historical situatedness of the emergence of particular forms of knowledge and practice (as a specific challenge to the timelessness of scientistic psychology)
- It embeds a particular disciplinary practice within wider contexts and so disrupts its specialist claims
- It deconstructs the high/low culture binary of expert vs. popular/layperson by highlighting the circularity of underlying conceptual models, cultural assumptions and political preoccupations
- It undermines the position of psychology as neutral, value-free, detached etc
- It challenges the authority of the psychologist (or other 'child expert')

5. As a small indication of such reversals in traditional gender categories, this transformation has even entered the supposedly macho arena of war, with the British secret service recruitment promotions now cast in terms of 'people skills' ('There are three strangers in the room that you need on your side, How do you get them to warm to you?', M16 SIS www.mi6officers.co.uk). Now, in the aftermath of the 'nanny state', it seems that it is big sister who is watching us all., while MI5 have (since early October 2008) been advertising for recruits for the British Intelligence services on Facebook and other social networking websites.

- It draws attention to the role of the theorist/story-teller in their theory/story
- In doing all this, it renders their account more contestable

Lest this should imply only the rather distant analysis of already existing, contemporary or historical texts, there is a further point:

- It incites attention to the production of attributions of knowledge about, or to, children, including destabilising claims to 'give voice' to children (Stainton Rogers, & Stainton Rogers, 1998; Alldred & Burman, 2005; Jackson & Mazzei, 2009).

In particular, I have been preoccupied with the affective investment in childhood, in terms of the grip that images of childhood seem to have on the northern cultural imaginary. This forms a further rationale for focusing on analyses of psychologisation and feminisation in terms of how representations of childhood connect with calls to memory, attachment, self-hood, interiority.

Methodologically speaking, this concern with the practices and tactics of psychologisation also affords a warrant for some latitude in the selection of materials for analysis. The proliferation and saturation of the domain of the 'psychological' brings into focus everyday, widely circulating materials, rather than only specialist policy or technical texts. Unlike other kinds of analysis, the challenge around conceptualisations of childhood is to find ways of making sense and critically engaging with texts that are obvious and over-determined. While the kind of analytic practice undertaken below is probably anathema to cultural analysts, moving across diverse media which merit particular attention to questions of genre, history and material conditions of production (which are largely overlooked here), I suggest that these texts in wider circulation are worthy of attention precisely because of their banality. They provide clues about the shaping of assumptions that quickly become normalised into absence; or what might be described as the contours of the contemporary Euro-US cultural unconscious. Like banal nationalism and racism (Billig, 1995), banal developmentalism needs to be identified and analysed, rather than being overlooked or excused.

There is also something particularly apt about treating childhood as text. In the northern cultural imaginary, from the nineteenth century onwards, the child has come to signify the self, the innermost, precious core of subjectivity, within us all. Carolyn Steedman's (1995) historical analysis traces its emergence at the fateful confluence of the early origins of cell theory, romantic philosophy and psychoanalysis to configure the child as the quintessential modern subject.

The idea of the child was the figure that provided the largest number of people living in the recent past of Western societies with the means for thinking about and creating a self: something grasped and understood: a shape, moving in the body ... something inside: an interiority. (p. 20)

This self – whether lost or regained – circulates as a significant cultural trope that combines notions of memory and fantasy, while most significantly its ambiguities and varieties are anchored by invocations of childhood. This equation between self and child helps to explain some of the ambiguities and mobility, as well as persistence, of the commitment to a particular notion of childhood, despite these being obviously (and increasingly) inadequate and untenable (Burman, 2002). The child appears as both topic and text; being both what is written and onto which is written a wider societal story. The rest of this article therefore analyses various contemporary everyday UK texts about childhood to highlight mutual tensions between these competing representations, and implications for the ways in which children of the South figure and are configured. The theme of hygiene turns out to be an intertextual link across the various images I will be discussing. This is predictable if we bear in mind how social order and disorder have historically connected the bodies of women and children with the 'body politic' of the nation state. More surprising, perhaps, is just how literal are the links between moral and physical hygiene within these contemporary representations. And this seems to extend even to a societal imperative to clean up our memories... So let us turn to the texts.

6. What's (not) on TV:
'embracing the nemesis'

My first text arrived on my doorstep as a supplement to the 2-9th August 2008 edition of '*What's On TV*', the UK's best selling (and cheapest) weekly television listings magazine. Entitled '*What's [Not] on TV*' it publicised the washing powder 'Persil's current marketing campaign, which runs under the slogan 'Dirt is good!' Here it is important to note that 'Persil' is the multinational company Unilever's premium UK brand. As the first commercially available laundry detergent (invented in 1907), and the first to mount TV advertising campaigns (in the 1950s), it is positioned at the cutting edge of capitalist strategy. Moreover in the UK it is synonymous with middle class (aspirational) status, from its earlier slogan 'washes whiter', to the current (2006 onwards) poster and television campaign 'Dirt is good!'.[6]

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6. The brand name for the washing powder 'Persil' is derived from combining the names of two of its principle ingredients (perborate and silicone). However the name is not used internationally as it is hard to pronounce in some languages, with local names being 'le Chat', 'Dixan' and 'Wipp' (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persil (accessed 29/09/08). Although taken for analysis here because of my need to find some suitable text for this paper, it turns out to be uncannily apposite on at least five grounds:) (1) As noted, it is Unilever's premium UK brand (retailing in Canada under the distribution of its German co-manufacturer Henkel at around $40 a box as the recommended detergent for its Miele washing machines, and also available only through speciality importers in the US) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persil, accessed 29/09/08); (2) Political economy. According to the report produced by Collaborative Research on Corporations (2008) Unilever is the world's second largest food business (after Nestle), even creating its own internet company to enable its leadership in e-commerce. As one of the major Multinational Corporations, it exerts pressure on World Bank and UNDP (e.g. in relation to its position promoting GM foods) and using bullying tactics to regulate its price: 'In the mid 80's, when the Indian tea price started to rise, Unilever and other corporations acted to bring it down by temporarily boycotting Indian tea. When the Indian government tried to set a minimum export price, the multinationals collectively withdrew from the market, forcing the government to retreat, and slash the price' (see http://www.crocodyl.org/wiki/unilever, p.7 of 13, accessed 29/09/2008). (3) Bad employment practices. In India, Unilever and its Indian subsidiary Hindustan Lever Ltd has been documented as perpetrating some major employer abuses including smashing unions by intimidating workers and violating their rights to unionise (in July 2007 in Assam) and attempting to break collective bargaining power by transferring production to arenas where there are bigger tax concessions (in Mumbai in 2007). Similar initiatives to undermine workers' rights have been reported in the Phillipines (in July 2008), while the casualisation of recruitment at the Unilever tea factory in the Punjab (Pakistan) – where 97% of the labour is casual – has (as of 2 September 2008) led to the closure of the Lipton factory and complete outsourcing of production (ibid. p. 8); (4) Ecological issues. Unilever has been accused of dumping several tons of toxic mercury in the densely populated area of Kodaikanal, near the nature reserve of Pambar Shola in Tamilnadu. The mercury was used in a thermometer factory. No protection was offered to workers, nor any precautions taken in disposing of the waste despite the known highly harmful effects of exposure to mercury to the nervous system and kidneys; (5) Child labour. Finally in terms of children, in the early years of the twenty first century, Unilever has been accused of being involved with bonded child labour in cotton seed production in Andhra Pradesh, with very low wages, long hours, no protection from the health hazards of pesticides and insecticides. Venkateswarlu's studies report children as young as 6 years, the majority girls, working in cottonseed production. Though the numbers of child labourers involved in Andhra Pradesh are reported to be declining, this may be attributed to production being moved to other parts of India (http://www.powerset.com/explore/semhtml/Child_Labour_Issues_of_Unilever_in_India, accessed 28/09/2008). It should be noted that Unilever is at no point directly involved in these practices, rather they occur through its subsidiary companies and their joint venturers. Nevertheless: 'Various studies by Davuluri Venkateswalu reveal a clear linkage between procurement prices and employment of child labour in cottonseed production. Even though companies obtain a huge profit margin, they do not seem to be making any rational calculation about the cost of cultivation while fixing the procurement prices to be paid to their seed companies. With the procurement prices of companies willing to pay, seed farmers cannot afford to pay better wages to labourers and still make reasonable profits Unless better wages are paid, farmers would not be in a position to attract adult labourers to work in their fields in sufficient numbers.' (ibid. p. 4 of 5)

'D.I.G.' in its double meaning (as both acronym and verb) thus emphasises the importance of agentic, self-directed activity. The message here is that we shouldn't stop children from doing things merely because they make a mess. Getting dirty, the message goes, is natural. It's good for children.[7]

This is all of a piece of contemporary parenting and childcare advice. While contemporary pedagogies are (as we shall see) contradictory, nevertheless parents, especially mothers, are often as circumscribed as children in the modes of interaction and play prescribed by psychological theory for their children. Child-centred discourses of 'sensitive mothering' and 'authoritative parenting' not only socialise children (in gender-normative ways), they also regulate mothers (Walkerdine & Lucey, 1989). While post second world war social policies looked to psychological models of anti-authoritarian parenting as the route towards promoting democracy and social harmony (and, significantly, efficiency) (and actively promoted by such key figures of developmental psychology as Piaget and Gesell – see Piaget, 1933; Gesell, 1950), the discourse of sensitive mothering remains highly class-coded and culturally encrypted to privilege white, 'authoritative parenting' do more than socialise children (in gender normative ways), for they also regulate mothers.[8]

'Dirt is good!' addresses the contemporary paradoxes facing parents and families. Beyond the need to keep a tidy, clean house (surely a concern coded as working class) is that of engendering a developmentally creative and supportive environment. As the marketing blurb suggests, the brand made the daring move to 'embraces its nemesis to examine the developmental and psychological benefits of getting dirty' http://www.brandrepublic.com/Campaign/News/518811/ (accessed 28 September 2008). There is a key dynamic of negation that maintains what it repudiates. 'Dirt is good!' for children, and in this collaboration with '*What's On TV*', so is watching television. Or at least the paradoxes generate attention (which is success enough in marketing). Through the '*What's [Not] on TV*' supplement, both companies are perhaps offsetting their otherwise presumed role in keeping children passive...either on the grounds of staying clean or of being pacified by watching television. Here it is important to note how, this initiative coincided with increasing public and political concern, both about childhood obesity and the impact of television/media images on (and of) children (notwithstanding the much more nuanced academic and popular accounts, Buckingham, 2007; Messenger Davies, 1989).

In this eight page free supplement to the

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7. This shift from whiteness to dirt was considered a significant shift in the marketing world: 'Then, after half a century of washing whiter, Persil embarked on a radical new approach: new creative treatments showing the reality of family life – dirt and all – replace the brand's trademark pristine white imagery. This approach goes way beyond traditional soapbox advertising as Persil embraces its nemesis to examine the developmental and psychological benefits of getting dirty. Straplines such as "It's not mess, it's curiosity" and "It's not mess, it's imagination" capture the vibrant spirit behind a child's paint splattered T-shirt or grass-stained dungarees. Persil's current campaign takes this thinking a step further. Through inspiring music and thought-provoking imagery, it positions dirt as an essential part of a child's development. From images of a young boy getting covered in marmalade as he makes breakfast for his parents to an old man battling with a fish on a muddy riverbank, the campaign explores the value of dirt and shows how Persil gives families freedom to live life to the full.'. (Ganczakowski, 'ITV 50 Years of Fame: Private View – Persil', http://www.brandrepublic.com/Campaign/News/518811/ (accessed 28 September 2008)

8. The early 1990s (a period of economic recession in Britain, now being seen as equivalent to the contemporary economic crisis) saw a revival in marketing attention to the working class fear of being found to be dirty or smelly, a fear that is necessarily class-structured via dominant images. Thus along with the new generation of plug-in de-oderisers for offices and bathrooms, the washing powder 'Radion' appeared, explicitly targeting and reviving these anxieties.

magazine there is an overdetermined focus on 'free play' – mobilising the discourse of freedom and emancipation central to the anti-authoritarian self-image of liberal democracies. Hence a (free) promotion 'not' to watch TV works since it offsets supposed claims that children are being socialised or otherwise culturally pressured to spend their leisure time engaged in 'un-childlike' inactivity. (It also endows the 'free' supplement with a moral rather than monetary surplus value). Given the presumed class differences audience and access between the website and *What's On TV*, it is of some minor interest to note that there is a slightly different arrangement (order of 'rights') and simpler language is used in the paper text as opposed to the Persil website, although the main materials are similar. One feature of the supplement is the way it opens by adopting a vernacular narrative style: 'Today, experts are worried that our kids' childhoods are being lost, with them spending too much time in front of a screen or with every moment structured or spoken for.' This strangely constructed statement betrays the slippage between child and attributed or remembered childhood: for how can 'kids' 'lose' their childhoods?[9] But its looseness of phraseology presumably is intended to convey informality and proximity.[10] It works to soften the way into the much more authoritative and didactic claim that succeeds it, expressed in the timeless, context-free, present tense that conveys factuality or truth: 'It stops children learning how to make their own decisions, deal with the unexpected and make friendships on their own terms'.

Reiterating current advertising practice, there is even a competition at the end, whose answer, within the well known genre of such 'promotions',

is contained in the accompanying text. Its question 'Free Play focuses on how many areas of development? a) 1, b) 3, or c) 5?' arguably suggests more about the banality and vacuity of developmental psychology, as well as the structure of power relations that surround it (parents as subjects, children as objects, psychologists and other 'experts' as authorities), than all other critiques of developmentalism put together. As competent readers, we know that we should look through the leaflet and count up the five areas identified, in order to send off for the chance to win a 'Center Parcs UK' holiday (Center Parcs are family-oriented holiday arenas, with lots of facilities for children). The very fact that there are numerous areas of development (more than five) mentioned within the text (one inset box lists nine 'rights': to... be a child, play, explore, use their imagination, express themselves, join in, discover their own world, be spontaneous, experience life for themselves), paradoxically emphasises how arbitrary such apparently incontestable 'areas' in fact are.

7. (Not) Capitalism: democracy through consumption

These marketing interventions seem to rely on a motif of negation that precisely reinstates that which it denies. So, there is little mention of the product, the commercial transaction, of the embodied practices of buying a washing aid, cleaning up mess or even watching TV. This is of a piece with mobilising consumption as the route for social intervention, of a new, 'caring' capitalism that looks after, rather than exploits, us and is seemingly only incidentally interested in making us

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9. This misattribution of agency here of course betrays the dominant victim-blaming ethos of contemporary voluntaristic approaches that also marks the collusion between child-centred approaches and neoliberalism (Avis, 1991).

10. This device is also echoed by the definition of 'free play' offered in the second paragraph of the press release, a formal 'educational' definition followed by the more informal 'stuff like...': 'By free play we mean play that gets children thinking, exploring and imagining so not video games or organised fun, but more unstructured play, stuff like climbing trees, building dens, playing pretend games/role playing, using their imagination and exploring.' (www.persil.com)

part with our money, or with how much money we have (i.e. our class position). The high sentiments invoked distract from the rather mundane business of merely occupying children during school holidays, or going out shopping to buy a washing powder, and elevates these into moral practices of good parenthood that rely upon a double reading between the child depicted as the offspring of the viewer and their earlier, or fantasised earlier, self. Notwithstanding the explicit injunctions to, and visual images of, exteriority (the natural outdoors, exercise, activity, the other), the structure of subjectivity that is installed by such materials is one of self-preoccupation, of interiority. It assumes the desire to get children's development right; indeed it explicitly addresses the reader in this way: It thus reflects a new mode of democracy through consumption, with a self-regulating subject who exercises their freedom through the choice of 'goods' they buy, with the good life of riches now acquiring a moral surplus and mobilising the moral status of work through associating childcare prescriptions with specific products. Here we see the logical conclusion of the commodification of childhood – alongside the injunction to turn parenthood into work – that paradoxically reinstates the adult-child opposition: for you can set your child free to play by doing the correct parent work – so even your family life, that haven in a heartless world, even 'child's play' becomes an arena of production devoid of time away from market pressure (Lafargue, 1883).

Indeed, aside from the pages specifically concerned with cleaning, the only visual reminder on both the website (Persil.com) and in the supplement about Persil as a soap powder is the small but constant image of little bottles (in the sketchy line drawing genre associated with children's books) on the left hand of the page with the header 'Try Persil, small and mighty', which is positioned more or less (in a just sufficiently 'child-like' awry style), on the right hand side which asks: 'How often does your child play outside?', with four options: Never; 1-3 times a week; 3-5 times a week; 6-7 times a week. The reader is (bizarrely) invited to 'Vote!' on this (rather than respond, or enter their own answer), so shifting from a genre of self-help/magazine pedagogical questionnaire to one of pseudo-democratic audience participation.

Overall, the D.I.G.! campaign is in line with the debates happening in the UK over claims of the emergence of *Toxic Childhood* (Palmer, 2006). This portrays (even as it decries) the presumption of a northern industrialised childhood that is seen as having lost touch with 'nature' and so produces children who are both contaminated and contaminating, illustrating how combining the register of child and environmental concern can shift quickly from being *for* children to *against* them. As indicated above, this also works in turn to marginalise and trivialise adult and children's involvement with sustainable agricultural practices via their association with 'play'. And from here we see the romantic and nostalgic associations of childhood migrate from fictional or real histories onto contemporary disparities in children's lives and livelihoods across the planet.

8. Intertextual moment #1: 'No Job Too Dirty'

cleans quietly and efficiently
This is the kind of work Farida does 17 hours a day, 7 days a week. It could be worse. In parts of the world, children as young as 6 are being sold into prostitution or hazardous work. All because they are desperately poor and desperately vulnerable.

UNICEF is working to end the exploitation of children. With your help we can make sure they get a proper education. We can help their families to earn an income. And we can lobby governments to protect them by law.

CHILDREN LIKE FARIDA CAN'T ASK YOU FOR HELP, SO WE ARE. PLEASE, SEND AS MUCH AS YOU CAN TODAY
(UNICEF, advertisement appearing in *Guardian* – 6/2/2003)

'Farida' brings us more directly to questions of hygiene. 'Persil' (as its earlier slogan put it) 'washes whiter' (admitting its racialised as well as classed partialities)[11], and girls (like women) do washing. UNICEF's advertisement attempts some subversion. The genre of washing machine powder, as a product that can be purchased, is ironically applied to the 'miraculous' labour of 'Farida'. Like the washing machine (that 'liberates' northern, richer women so that they too can enter the waged labour market, Hardyment, 1995), she 'cleans quietly and efficiently'. Her attributes are likened to the marketing qualities of a new brand, because she is not 'priceless' but rather her labour power is sold. She does not complain, because – the reader is told – 'it could be worse', alluding to how we could be faced with a 'worse' image – presumably of child prostitution or other obviously hazardous work. So, in a way, the guilt of the viewer is invited to be attached to a sense of relief that s/he is not seeing something 'worse', but perhaps exacerbated because of the luxury of their viewing position as not being so 'desperately poor and desperately vulnerable', as to be in a subjectless position akin to a disposable, dispensable washing agent.

What remains unclear, moreover, is the extent to which the text resists or merely reiterates prevailing representations of childhood. In particular, how discretionary or mandatory the measures being advocated are, the significance of the portrayal of a girlchild as the quintessential (deserving?) victim, and the kind of relationships between donor and recipient(s) elaborated (which I address in more detail elsewhere, Burman, 2008a; Burman & Maclure, 2005). Not least of these concerns the kind of appropriate childhoods, family and state relations that are implied.

Moreover what we see reiterated here are prevailing cultural discourses of work and play (Sutton Smith, 1997; Sutton Smith & Kelly-Byrne, 1984), with play seen as the 'work' done by properly developing northern children (so also suppressing the ways in which such children in fact also work, even if this work is generally rather differently structured, Mizen et al, 1999).

While child labour incites controversy, the UNICEF text skillfully sidesteps this by maintaining some ambiguity over whether all working children are exploited. Yet we should note the further work done by representing poverty through this image of domestic labour done by a girlchild. This is an infantilisation of the wider problem of north-south economic inequalities which is contagious, not only qualifying children but all those who subscribe to and consume such representations. Hutnyk (2004) in his impassioned analysis (which includes explicitly discussion of UNICEF's 'Farida') discusses the commodification of poverty characterising images of children of the south in relation to wider practices of willful de-politicisation. He links this 'trinketisation', the selective abstraction and decontextualised engagement that is exemplified by the conventional use of images of children (including aid and development campaigns), with an affective and economic modality that he describes as infantilisation. While this infantilisation is, within dominant imagery, attributed to the south, it in fact characterizes the northern subject.

I will return to the links between children and souvenirs in the discussion of memory later. Right now we might recall Pupavac's (1998, 2002) analyses of 'the international child rights regime' become relevant here in this marketing for the 'nanny state', with a diminished political subjectivity

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11. 'The first TV ad in 1955 features a juxtaposition of media. It shows a billboard poster being pasted up as a dapper broadcaster asks the audience to guess the brand. The poster features an aspirational image of two attractive young women in pristine white dresses with the simple slogan: "Persil washes whiter - that means cleaner." It was the start of 50 years of TV heritage with whiteness right at the very core of Persil's personality and success.' (Ganczakowski, 'ITV 50 Years of Fame: Private View – Persil', http://www.brandrepublic.com/Campaign/News/518811/ (accessed 28 September 2008)

and (economic and political) activity accorded mothers as much as children. Yet in these days of increasing pressure and political rhetoric associated with women's participation in the waged labour market, the images and text seem curiously anachronistic. Perhaps this is a clue.

9. Intertextual moment #2: Fit or fat?

As already noted, the 'DIG!' campaign coincided with recent British policy concern around rising rates of obesity, linked with poor diet and ill health. Indeed, apparently crematoria have now started to be built bigger furnaces to accommodate the larger corpses (*The Week*, 22 August 2008). Almost on the very day of Persil's play day (August 8th, which despite its hype did not appear to generate much public attention, even on its own website[12]), a British government report was published announcing that schools will be mandated to send letters to parents of overweight children (5 August 2008, p.4). The image accompanying the news in the liberal/left newspaper *The Guardian* offered a middle class window onto the perception of *which* children this concerns. An overdetermination of 'raced' and classed assumptions was encapsulated in the image of the toes of the podgy child on scales, encased in white socks striped by the red St George's cross. Hence the classed nationalism of the St George's cross – which, by virtue of its links with nationalist 'tradition', was once seen as fascist but is now associated with the England football team (that is, a relatively benign, but classed, form

of nationalism) – is mobilized to designate which children are presumed to have problematic weight, diet and exercise issues. Via such signifiers, and notwithstanding the overt lack of physical indications of racialised status (since the feet are in fact covered – and so prevent any actual visual cues – of racialised background for example – that might generate criticism), the fat children are configured as being white and working class.[13]

Naturally, no such explicit comments were made in the written report, and indeed any claim regarding such implications could specifically be denied as being in the mind of the reader rather than in the text. Rather, press comment focused on the decision that use of the word 'obese' was proscribed. This covert deference to, plus ridicule of, parental rights and sensibilities was widely hailed as an obvious 'sop' to the 'political correctness' brigade, posing the problem in terms of the 'nanny state' duty of intervention vs. individual (parental) privacy rights. But, far from telling parents what to do Ivan Lewis, then the Health Minister, claimed this as a matter of 'information' for parents: 'This important move isn't about pointing the finger and telling parents that their children are overweight. Instead it's about equipping parents with the information they need to help their children to lead healthier lives.' Under the psychological complex (Rose, 1985, 1990), where regulation happens through self-regulation, 'information' codes for responsibility (with the implication that if you fail to fulfill your responsibilities then you are no longer deemed suitable to exercise them...). Here we see the discretionary character of neoliberalism – you have

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12. However, the self-identified child-centred blog 'netmums' reproduced the claims of the 'whitepaper' and discussed them (favourably).

13. Here are two indicative examples. The 'England flag', as it is now known, has recently acquired the status of being the informal sign of a roadside mobile snack bar, of the kind typically used by truck drivers (serving cheap, fast food). Further, the British Asian mayor of the (sometimes troubled, racially very diverse) city of Bradford provoked some controversy during the local elections of 2006 by flying the England (St George's Cross) flag on his car. He claimed this was an expression of his football affiliation, but it could also be interpreted as appropriating a traditionally white and potentially racist symbol to thereby also asserting his own Englishness, and correspondingly fitness to hold civic position.

to make the 'right' choices or else the state will step in and shame/punish you.

10. Intertextual moment #3: Indulging the precocious (consuming, technological, boy) child:

If children are largely only indirectly addressed within the 'D.I.G.!' materials, notwithstanding the incitement to be active and agentic, they are still represented within a very traditional, romantic, European model of childhood innocence, swathed in the golden leaves[14] of nostalgia. It was also particularly ironic to see the sunny gardens, playgrounds, meadows, woodlands and beaches on which children are depicted as playing, since August 2008 (including the 8th, the 'Play Day') turned out to be the wettest and dullest for 100 years (indicative also of the direction of the effect of global warming in Britain), and so real, embodied children were particularly unlikely to have engaged in anything like these activities. But while changing childhoods are not necessarily to be mourned or resisted (for that would be to institute nostalgia for times past that were perhaps just as arduous and unequal), discernible directions regarding children's development widely attract critical attention; blaming the children for coveting the products they are manipulated to desire, and even attracting some unwilling admiration for their facility and ability with the new forms of (technological) engagement that adults struggle to achieve.

But here too the romance of the child is maintained even as it is updated. In late 2006 an item in the 'funny slot' (at the bottom of the frontpage) of a British 'quality' newspaper carried the story of a three-year old Lincolnshire[15] boy who had used his parents' computer password to purchase a vintage car on the internet shopping site 'e-Bay'. Significantly, this was presented as an action whose contractual obligations could be discounted precisely because it was entered into by a child. Indeed the child's own intentionality, whilst clearly documented ('The following morning Jack woke up and told his parents "I've bought a car"'), is dismissed: 'She [his mother] said: "Jack's a whizz on the PC and just pressed all the right buttons"'. The story is marked as 'non-serious' by virtue of its spatial location in the newspaper, but this also is reinforced by the child status of the protagonist. In accounting for how he did not press for the realisation of the purchase of the 'Barbie-pink' 1.0 litre Nissan Figaro,[16] the 'owner and co-director of Worcester Road Motors, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire' mobilised the following normalising statements about children.

'"as soon as I heard it was a young boy who had done it by mistake I cancelled the bid ... He must have good taste in cars. We've all got children and they do silly things at times, so it was no problem." (c.f. 'Boy aged three buys £9,000 car on internet', *Guardian,* 26/9/06)

The predication of indulgence on assumptions of incompetence (but appropriate aspiration) is what marks this story as one originating from the global north. Elsewhere such notions of triviality and irresponsibility might not have been so easily deployed, while the responsibilities typically assumed by the poorer children of the south became part of what stigmatises and pathologises them. Among many other matters, this is a document of the shaping of consumer desires, minimized and naturalised by this story of childlike rehearsal for a future role (which also overlooks or occludes how children now are exerting their own market pressures, via their 'pester power' over their parents). More 'serious', perhaps, are the

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14. 'Autumn Leaves' is an iconic image of Victorian childhood – intertextual relation with p2 of 'What's [Not] On TV', 'Set your kids free'/'What can parents do to help?'.

15. Lincolnshire is a rural county in the east of England, which connotes parochiality.

16. The 'Barbie-pink' designation works to emphasise how young the boy is, and so also his feminised status, since he is portrayed as oblivious to the 'obvious' gender-coding that would typically generate antipathy in older boys.

moral evaluations attending such consumer desires, including intra-familial divisions produced through efforts to embed the generalised gesture of humanitarian assistance within a specified local context, 'individualising' relationships of care and support through institutions such as child sponsorship (Bornstein, 2001).

11. Childhood as memory

The final theme I want to draw attention to concerns the role of recourse to memory in childhood. This is the trope that links the child of the present, with that of the future, but also with the past of the adult who cares for them. The 'right to be a child' collaboration (between *What's [Not] On TV* and 'Persil') deploys all of these and more, suggesting how memory may be implicated in the too easy shifts made between rights and developmental claims.

First, we have the adult past: 'Remember when you were a child? Plenty of scraped knees climbing trees and muddy hands from making mud pies' (*What's [Not] On TV*) that is mobilised to warrant the more 'serious' and 'abstract' voice of the expert in the sentence that follows: 'Today experts are worried that our kids' childhoods are being lost...' (ibid.). The wider associations of simplicity, proximity to nature and therefore as being more natural, offer not only a contrast but also the warrant of authenticity. The effect is a mutual strengthening of each claim, with such links both conferring and being conferred, greater legitimacy by the 'expert' opinion.

Secondly, there is an address to the adult that the child will become. The desire of the parent/mother is central to this transition between past and present: 'We understand mothers want their children to grow up having a variety of stimulating experiences' (ibid.)

As I discuss more elsewhere (Burman, in press) 'Persil' invokes, via its conflation of children's rights with developmental statements, a strange hybrid model of childhood as state and childhood as futurity. The key point here is that childhood is, unsurprisingly, presented as both (privileged) state and stepping point: 'There's nothing more precious than childhood: it's a time of wonder, discovery and exploration...' along with a sense of its proper (natural) temporality that, precisely because of its transience, confers greater poignant value upon it: 'children today seem to grow up faster' (Persil.com). But it is this 'seem', this trace of the viewing, desiring adult that perhaps offers a different route to ward off the developmental imperative. '"Faster" than whom?', we should be asking. And the answer of course is us, we who 'remember' ourselves *as* children:

If the child-figure's embodiment is so often utterly material, its materiality is also always the (im)materiality of a sign, with its endless chain of significations. Interest, desire, and knowledge are part of what constitutes – realizes – bodies, and part of what bodies realize in turn. (Castaňeda, 2002 p. 81)

Thus we arrive at a further layer in its meanings: childhood as memory. The child becomes the emblem of memory, detached from who it is who is doing the remembering. Even this is complicated, with subtle exchanges and substitutions of identification (Burman, 1996/7; Burman, 1998/2008b). The first is, as we have seen, that of the childhood remembered, or wished as remembered, by the parent. But the second focuses on shaping the childhood that you, as your child's parent, would want her to be able to remember: '...helping you give your children a childhood to remember', 'to encourage Mums and kids to keep a record of summer play time', 'get out there, have fun and make some fantastic memories' (Persil.com and *What's [Not] On TV*). Of course, we might note, this presumes that (unlike most remembered childhoods) these memories are positive, precisely through the equation of childhood and nostalgia.

But Persil.com's installation of desire, the desire for the parent to confirm they are being a good parent through the generation of (good) memories of childhood, is taken a step further. And in so doing it returns to pedagogical/

developmental mode. For it proposes that, as an activity with your child you should record such 'memories in a 'virtual scrapbook': 'To start things off we've made a virtual scrapbook to encourage Mums and kids to keep a record of summer play time, whatever shape or form it takes!' One cannot escape the irony here that the injunction to active, outdoors play is here converted into one of inside, desk-based work, of precisely the (adult-directed) kind that 'Roboboy' (the subject of the promotional video on the website) was supposed to be being liberated from. Once again, in the name of 'helping' 'mums', it addresses them as developmental subjects too, in need of education (to become child-centred parents) with 'inspiration', 'ideas', to 'help' secure their own Roboboy's transformation into a 'real' (human) through his own activity and contact with 'nature'.[17]

So we have come full circle, as the childhood memories of adults are tidied up and, albeit perhaps reparatively, pinned onto the anticipation and manipulation of children's remembered childhoods. Such 'souvenirs', like the travel variety discussed by Hutnyk (2004), function performatively; simultaneously acknowledging, but in that very process fixing, the various instabilities and ambiguities set in play by representations of childhood as a (non-developmental) state associated with time past (but whose?); vs. what this childhood is for (developmental) (but whose?). What fills in these gaps to enable such fixing, is rendered (as psychotherapists would say) concrete or material in the 'scrapbook'. This 'record' of fantasy and reality must surely alert us to how the backwards reach towards the past is shaped by present demands, and how memory and childhood mobilise complex identifications formed of adults' projections and including also, perhaps necessarily, children's identifications with these.

12. Conclusion

In this article I have outlined some methodological strategies and presuppositions to inform attempts to 'unthink' or deconstruct developmental discourses as they link child development to economic development, and in which – under contemporary neoliberal conditions – I suggest – tropes of psychologisation and feminization centrally feature. Through analysis of a key dominant text, alongside some intertextual materials, I have attempted to indicate how both in their proliferation and via their juxtaposition, prevailing discourses around childhood and child development can be installed within a narrative of critique. It could be argued that such materials do not merit such close scrutiny, as mere marketing, or passing news trivia, nevertheless this paper has attempted to indicate how their focus (on very particular, normalised models of childhood, play, activity) as well as occlusions (gendered, classed and racialised, familial organisation and wider political practices) offer access to significant cultural themes that connect childhood to wider political and affective economies. Given the abstraction with which childhood is often overtly treated, this is important. In particular, the treatment here has attempted to identify and reflect upon two key elements currently inflecting childhood: first, the contemporary discourse of political participation enacted and modelled through consumption; and second, how a new mode of moral-affective engagement is installed through particular inflections of the temporal matrix associated with childhood and memory.

Clearly such interventions involve epistemological and ethical reflections on the alliances and antagonisms of inter- and cross-disciplinary approaches to childhood, and their contributions to

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17. The advertising website http://www.visit4info.com/advert/Persil-Dirt-is-Good-Persil-Range/61597 (accessed 28 September, 2008) provides a description of the video as follows: 'A small robot in a hall cupboard is splashed with dirt by a dog shaking itself after coming in from the garden, and starts to move slowly outdoors. Walking through the fallen leaves its mechanical feet become human, as do its hands when picking up a worm. Rain falls, and splashing around in a muddy pool the robot evolves into a young boy, as the narrator says that every child has a right to get dirty and the right to be a child - 'Dirt is Good' she concludes.'

challenging wider development discourses. In elaborating these ideas, and drawing on the undisciplined methodological approaches I outlined at the beginning, I hope my intervention achieves at least two things. Firstly, to deconstruct the opposition between popular cultural and expert (developmental psychological) knowledges, in order to mediate their mutual elaboration and (de)legitimation. Secondly, that this sample of available representations of childhood situates developmental psychology in its (culturally and historically limited) place – so indicating not only its hegemony and contiguity with dominant strategies of capital, including the variable and intersecting tensions between children and women's interests, but also some limits to its reach.

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Ανατρέποντας τη θεώρηση των παιδιών στην ανάπτυξη: Μια πρόταση της αντιαναπτυξιακής ψυχολογίας από το βρετανικό Βορρά

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Στην εργασία αυτή σκιαγραφείται μια φεμινιστική αντιψυχολογική προσέγγιση ανάλυσης εκδοχών της παιδικής ηλικίας. Με σημείο εκκίνησης το χαρακτηρισμό του φεμινισμού ως αντιψυχολογίας από την Squire (1990), η εργασία αναλύει την ανάπτυξη του παιδιού ως κείμενο. Παρατίθενται παραδείγματα από ένα εύρος θεσμικών πρακτικών και ειδών, με στόχο να αναδειχθούν κάποιες ανατροπές των σύγχρονων τρόπων έκφρασης της φυσιολογικοποιημένης παιδικής ηλικίας, που αναδύθηκαν πρόσφατα στο βρετανικό Βορρά. Δεν προκαλεί, ενδεχομένως, έκπληξη το γεγονός ότι οι πρόσφατες αποκλίσεις από το ορθολογικό, αυτόνομο, ενιαίο υποκείμενο της μοντέρνας αναπτυξιακής ψυχολογίας (βλ. Henriques et al, 1984. Burman 1994, 2008a) προδίδουν πολιτικές συνέχειες με παλαιότερες διατυπώσεις (ειδικά σε σχέση με τον οικογενειοκεντρισμό. Παρότι η εποχή μας έχει χαρακτηριστεί συχνά ως ευέλικτη, θα υποστηριχθεί ότι οι λανθάνουσες συνέχειες που διέπουν τις εμφανείς αλλαγές –κυρίως όσον αφορά τη διαμόρφωση έμφυλων και φυλετικά χρωματισμένων αναπαραστάσεων– αναδεικνύουν κάποια θεμελιώδη παγιωμένα στοιχεία, μολονότι τους αποδίδεται τώρα μια «δημοκρατική» χροιά. Υποστηρίζεται ότι μέσω της εξάπλωσής τους αλλά και της μεταξύ τους αντιπαράθεσης αυτά τα ποικίλα κείμενα μπορούν να τεθούν στην υπηρεσία μιας κριτικής αφήγησης. Αυτή η πολιτική-μεθοδολογική παρέμβαση λειτουργεί, πρώτον, ώστε να αποδομήσει την αντίθεση ανάμεσα στη δημοφιλή πολιτισμικά γνώση και στην ειδική γνώση (της αναπτυξιακής ψυχολογίας) και να καταδείξει την αμοιβαία υποστήριξη και νομιμοποίησή τους. Δεύτερον, μέσω αυτού του δείγματος διαθέσιμων αναπαραστάσεων της παιδικής ηλικίας αναδεικνύεται μια θεμελιώδης στρατηγική (όπως περιέγραψε και η Richards, 1998) τοποθέτησης της ψυχολογίας στην περιορισμένη (πολιτισμικά και ιστορικά) θέση της. Η εργασία τελειώνει με κάποιες γενικότερες επιστημολογικές και δεοντολογικές σκέψεις, που αφορούν τις συμμαχίες και τους ανταγωνισμούς ανάμεσα σε διεπιστημονικές προσεγγίσεις της παιδικής ηλικίας, και τη συμβολή τους στην αμφισβήτηση ευρύτερων αναπτυξιακών συστημάτων λόγου.

Λέξεις κλειδιά: Αντιαναπτυξιακή ψυχολογία, Φεμινιστική θεωρία, Φεμινιστική αντιψυχολογική προσέγγιση, Ανάλυση κειμένου.

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