



Unfolding Lives: Youth, gender and change

Rachel Thomson

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The process of becoming an adult in contemporary times is fragmented and unequal, shaped by chance, choice and timing. "Unfolding lives" presents a unique approach to understanding the changing face of youth transitions, addressing the question of how gender identities are constituted in late modern culture.

The book follows individual lives over time, enabling the reader to witness gender identities in the making and breathing new life into static analytic models. At the heart of the book are vivid in-depth accounts of four young lives, emblematic of broader biographical trends. They reveal how inequalities and privileges are made in new and unexpected ways, through practices such as falling in love, coming out, acting out and religious conversion. A focus on temporal processes and changing meanings captures what it *feels* like to be young and shows the creative ways that young people navigate the conflicting and changing demands of personal relationships, schooling, work and play. "Unfolding lives" is also a demonstration of a method-in-practice, describing how longitudinal material can be analysed and animated to realise the relationship between personal and social change.

Written in an accessible style that breaks the conventional academic mould, "Unfolding lives" is a compelling and provocative read. The book will be an essential text for students and academics involved in youth and gender studies as well as those interested in new directions in qualitative research methods and writing.

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