

**School Journey as a Third Place; Theories, Methods and Experiences
Around the World. London, New York 2023: Anthem Press.**

**Edited by Zoe Moody, Ayuko Berchtold-Sedooka, Sara Camponovo,
Philip D. Jaffé & Frédéric Darbellay**

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Abstract

Book review of “School Journey as a Third Place; Theories, Methods and Experiences Around the World”, edited by Zoe Moody, Ayuko Berchtold-Sedooka, Sara Camponovo, Philip D. Jaffé and Frédéric Darbellay, London, New York 2023: Anthem Press.

Keywords

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“School Journey as a Third Place; Theories, Methods and Experiences around the World” is a book focusing on the topic of journey of children between home and school. The book underlines that the way between school and home can be perceived as the “third place” (term firstly used by sociologist Oldenburg, 1999), as a transition space, potentially having an impact on the children’s experience, wellbeing, feelings and development. The book also presents the impact of various aspects, such as spatial design, safety, disability and parents’ fears on the choice of the mode of travel and the experiences of children. The authors focus on the social, cultural, psychological and educational aspects of being in the third place. They argue that the way between home and school can be a space, where children find their independency and create relationships with the environment. Sometimes it can be a positive experience, enriching the growth of the child, however, it can also be a space of fear and danger.

The book is divided into two sections - the first of them focuses more on the theory and original research methods. The second section presents empirical examples of international studies on children’s experiences on their journey. The publication consists of 11 chapters, written by different authors. The authors in an interdisciplinary and international approach, analyze and present the topic of the way between home and school, using different methodologies.

The first Chapter of the book “The Multidimensionality of the Way to and from School: A Third Place for Children?” by Ayuko Berchtold-Sedooka, Zoe Moody, Sara Camponovo, Philip D. Jaffé and Frédéric Darbellay, concerns the results of research on experiences of children going to and from school and their way of interacting with the local environment. The research was conducted in Switzerland with the participation of children attending 9 different primary schools. The way to school is presented as a place in which children can i.a. socialize and be creative.

The second Chapter of the book “Walking through Mundane Landscapes: Children’s Experience of Place during the School Journey” by Sofia Cele, focuses on children walking to school, who are not accompanied by adults. The Chapter is based on fieldwork executed in Stockholm, Sweden and touches upon the concept of children having relationships with the local environment – they are having encounters and interactions which might seem not important to adults, however they are a sign and result of autonomy of children and have a positive impact on their well-being.

The authors of the third Chapter of the book -“ Dangers in the Third Place: Walking, Public Transport and the Experiences of Young Girls in Cape Town and Abuja” - Claire Elisabeth Dungey, Hadiza Ahmad, Joseph Mshelia Yahaya, Fatima Adamu, Plangsat Bitrus Dayil, Ariane De Lannoy and Gina Porter, discuss the experience of children, with the focus on girls aged 10-17, on their way between home, school or after-school club. The third place (Oldenburg 1999) can be a source of dangers, such as rape, kidnaping and sexual harassment. The girls often need to organize their journey in a specific way, dictated by their safety, using strategies to overcome the abovementioned dangers.

The fourth Chapter of the book “The (Im-)possibility of Spatial Autonomy for Young City Dwellers” by Nadja Monnet, discusses the decreasing number of young people visible on the streets independently and the reasons of this decrease. The Chapter also reviews some of the methodologies of performing research with children, taking into account their experiences of traveling between home and school and being outdoors.

The Chapter no. 5 “The Quality of the Way to School Lies in the Design Details” by Sonia Curnier, being the last Chapter of the First Section of the book, concerns the connection between

the spatial shaping of the way to school and children's experiences. The author shows the importance of designer's decisions on children and their experience in the third place in various aspects i.a. safety, having fun and learning.

Chapter no. 6, which is the first chapter of the second Part of the Book, written by Penelope Carroll and Karen Witten, is entitled "Children's Experiences and Affective Connections with Place in Their Independent Mobility". This Chapter concerns children's experience while spending time in neighborhoods, being their third place and discusses two projects conducted in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand. The importance of the impact of "third places" on children well-being is also underlined.

The 7th Chapter "Parental Concerns and Perceptions Related to Children's Independent Travel to School: A Case Study in Germany" by Joachim Scheiner and Stefan Lohmüller regards concerns and fears of parents, as well as their own impressions of their children's journeys without any adult supervision. The authors present various researches and studies, which examine the subject of parents' fears and describe that fear is subjective. They present results of a study executed in Lünen, Germany.

Chapter no. 8 of the book, entitled "How Does Family's Daily Mobility between Home and School Change with the Trotibus, a Walking School Bus programme in Quebec, Canada?" by Marie-Soleil Cloutier, Sylvanie Godillon and Johanne Charbonneau, discusses the initiative organized to encourage walking to school by the Canadian Cancer Society, namely the walking school bus. The authors examine the impact of this idea by presenting a research conducted in a mixed-method methodology.

The 9th Chapter is entitled "The Spatial Distribution of the Walking School Bus: An Interactionist approach, Environment-Family" and written by Eléonore Pigalle. It discusses the subject of the impact of the walking school bus, on a basis of a thesis work and a project. It presents a field survey conducted in Lausanne (Switzerland). The author touches upon the subject of communication strategies in relation to implementing public policies.

Chapter 10 of the Book "Incorporating the Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour in a School Travel Mode Choice Model: A Case Study of Shaoxing, China" by Jing Peng, Wang Jing, Chen Long and Zha Qi-Fen includes the theory of planned behaviour, in order to discuss i.a. the understanding of children's school travel behaviour. This Chapter presents the case study in Shaoxing, China.

The eleventh Chapter "Thinking about Ableism and Third Place to Understand and Improve the School Journeys of Disabled Children and Their Families" by Tim Ross and Ron Buliung discusses the concept of the third place in relation to children, who have disabilities and their families. It also focuses on ableism in the aspect of the children with disabilities travelling to school and shows potential challenges that are faced by them and their families.

To sum up, the book presents various aspects of the way that children make between home and school – from behavioural dimensions to spatial design - and their impact on the overall experience of children, as well as on the choice of the mode of travel. It is crucial that geographical diversity has been considered while choosing the topics of chapters, it can prove to be very enlightening and inclusive.