

INTER-GENERATIONAL HOUSING INEQUALITIES

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Discourse of Inter-Generational Inequalities

Jilted Generation: How Britain Bankrupted Its Youth

– Howker & Malik (2010)

The Pinch: How Baby Boomers Took Their Children's Future – And Why They Should Give it Back

– Willetts (2010)

Inter-Generational Inequalities

Baby Boomers (51-71)

- Strong post-war welfare state
- Investment in social housing
- Right-to-Buy
- Tax breaks on mortgages
- Rising affluence among many households

Millenials (16-35)

- Globalisation and neoliberalism
- Erosion of public services and rise of private sector
- Weak youth labour market & 2008 financial crisis
- 'Generation Rent'

Why Not 'Cohorts'?

- Cohort: 'people within a delineated population who experience the same significant event within a given period of time' (Pilcher, 1994: 483)
- Cohorts are objectively defined groups
- A social generation is a dialectical concept (relationship between objective and subjective) (Mannheim, 1952)
- Woodman & Wyn (2015): Millennials have a 'cleft habitus'

The Research

Paper draws on qualitative data from 2 projects:

1. *The Housing Aspirations of the People of Scotland* – Scottish Government
 - McKee, Crawford
 - Baby Boomer data
2. *Mind the (Housing) Wealth Gap* – Leverhulme Trust
 - McKee, Moore, Soaita, McLoughlin
 - Millennial data

Sample

Tenure at time of study	Baby Boomers (n=49)	Millenials (n=62)
Homeowner	63%	24%
Private renting	10%	45%
Social renting	23%	5%
Living with relative/parent	4%	21%
Shared ownership	-	3%
Homeless	-	2%

Socio-Historical Location of the Millennials

For my parent's generation it was quite easy, to just leave school and get a job and work your way up a ladder within a business [...] whereas I really feel like now even if you have a degree, to get any job is quite hard [...] So a lot of people I know finish their degree and have to go on benefits while they try and find a job. (Emily, 24, Private renter)

I just feel so sorry for people today. I mean I was lucky, really lucky. It's just impossible, certainly not to get the housing you would really like [...] I mean if you take my day, my day I could have got a job anywhere, but now.... (Patrick, 65+, Homeowner)

Parental Support

It's like I said, my family members have offered to lend us money and things like that but I'd want them to enjoy their money that they've worked hard for in their life, that's their money for their security. (Naomi, 26, Private renter)

[My parents] were able to buy a house, they could afford it, they could gradually work their way up the housing ladder and I don't think they needed to rely on their parents at all. (Katie, 26, Private renter)

The Political 'Villains'

Whether they [politicians] really understand the problems that [we] face or are actually keen on helping [us], I'm not sure. They're probably quite far removed from the issue and so understanding the problem it's a bit of an intellectual exercise for them rather than really emotionally understanding. (Tom, 35, Homeowner)

Concluding Arguments

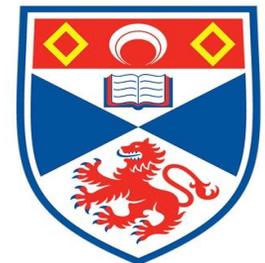
- Discourses of inter-generational inequalities are very valuable as they rightly highlight the multiple disadvantages that many young people face today in comparison to their Baby Boomer (grand)parents
- But narratives of inter-generational *conflict* are misleading: they place the blame on the Baby Boomers and divert attention away from the underpinning political structures that have created these inequalities
- Young people are aware of these inequalities but do not point the finger at the Baby Boomers, they point the finger at government for being 'removed' from their situations

Thank You



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