

ISCHE: SWG “Touching Bodies in the School”

Call for Papers for ISCHE 40 (August 29th- September 1st 2018), Berlin/ Germany

Touching bodies and Nature

Convenors: Diana Vidal (University of Sao Paulo), Inés Dussel (DIE/CINVESTAV, Mexico), Marcelo Caruso (Humboldt University/Berlin).

In the education of bodies, nature has been attached with ambivalent meanings. It has been considered as part of an integral education of the body and soul of the child; as a haven from the urban society and its sins, as Rousseau argued; as a subject of study in science classrooms or a didactic resource for object lessons in 19th century; as the ideal environment for freedom and authentic experience for children in the New School movement. Less visibly, it has also appeared as part of the call for teaching in female educators in kindergartens and primary schools, or as support for laws that obliged them to remain single and celibate in many countries. It has discursively framed gender boundaries in school; justified racist contents and hierarchies of knowledge in school curricula; legitimated school failure and success of individuals based on gender or race.

How did school bodies “touch” nature? Was touching other people’s bodies perceived as natural or socially constructed? How was this boundary defined? Were children taught to caress animals and plants? How did school excursions and fieldtrips promoted a contact with nature? How were the different senses involved in these contacts? All these problematics can be addressed in our panels, making it clear that nature has never been just a topic developed by teachers in class, but a substrate, limen or boundary that has been constitute of educational processes.

Also, in recognition of the ISCHE 2018 Education and Nature theme, the ISCHE Touching Bodies in School SWG and the Objects, Senses and the Material World of Schooling SWG plan joint panels that will take up historical questions concerning distinctions and interplay between the Human and Nonhuman, as well as the Animate and Inanimate. We seek papers that examine materializations in pedagogy, classrooms and other educational practices of the intersections between “bodies” and “objects”. Possible topics include educational histories of classroom pets, didactic specimens, plant care, gardening, bacteria, germs, and school meals. The intent of these jointly convened panels is to surface issues arising as “bodies” and “objects” come into contact with, and are mediated by, one another. The SWG organizers particularly wish to foreground the ways that distinctions between Human and Nonhuman, living and non-living have historically played out in educational practice.

The SWG on Touching Bodies wants to make a special Call for Papers for those interested in discussing the materiality and immateriality of contacts between bodies with and across nature.

Deadline: January 31, 2018. Please submit your abstract (max. 500 words) including title, name, institutional affiliation, conceptual approach, historical sources and main discussion points to: dvidal@usp.br
idussel@gmail.com