

'A Rite of Passage'? National Citizen Service and the Geographies of Youth Citizenship

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This research seminar explores the imaginative and institutional geographies of 'learning to be a citizen' through the example of a state-funded youth programme in the UK: National Citizen Service (NCS). It examines how diffuse ideas about community cohesion and social inclusion were part of the rationale for the scheme, championed by the Conservative Government prior to the 2010 General Election and now reaching tens of thousands of 15-17 year olds in England and Northern Ireland. The paper makes two arguments, drawing on original fieldwork from an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded project. First, that the scales of youth citizenship embedded in NCS promote political engagement at the local and national scale, whilst the global is curiously absent. Second, that discourses of youth citizenship are increasingly mobilised alongside ideas about Britishness and transitions to adulthood. Overall, the paper sits at the confluence of three broader conceptual debates about being/becoming *citizens*, being/becoming *adults*, and being/becoming *political*.

Date: 30 September 2016, Friday

Time: 3.30pm - 5.00pm

Venue: Ventus Evans Room

**Seminar chaired by
A/P Tracey Skelton,
Dept of Geography, NUS**

**All are welcome!
Light lunch will be provided.**

**Register at
<https://goo.gl/forms/EKvDNlc2yhAiC6RH2>
by 29 September 2016.**

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr Sarah Mills is a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at Loughborough University. Her research explores the geographies of youth citizenship, informal education and volunteering. She is the co-editor of '*Politics, Citizenship & Rights*' (Springer, 2016) and '*Informal Education, Childhood & Youth: Geographies, Histories, Practices*' (Palgrave, 2014). She currently holds an ESRC Future Research Leader award and is Chair of the Royal Geographical Society's Research Group on 'Geographies of Children, Youth and Families'.