

The elements/dimensions of social exclusion/inclusion as applied to “squeegee” youth

Whether we regard social inclusion as a process, an outcome or both, there are five dimensions of social inclusion or ‘spaces’ in which social inclusion and exclusion occur.

“Squeegee” Street Youth

Economic.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Material deprivation; poverty/economic well being ▪ Economic security/insecurity ▪ Economic distance/ proximity (inequality/equality) | <p>Homeless or “under-housed” (“apt size of bathtub”); need our “spare change” to survive</p> <p>Barriers to welfare if under 18 (Bill 142) – forced out of school; no \$\$ for aspirations/dreams</p> <p>Can’t hold down a job when living on the street (clothes, hygiene)</p> <p>“if you can’t spare a quarter for human life, you’re in a different world than I’m in” (The Star)</p> |
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Spatial.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public space ▪ Private space ▪ Physical location ▪ Geographic proximity/distance | <p>Barriers to earning \$\$ in public places – legislation to outlaw squeegeeing</p> <p>Little to no privacy on street – issue of exposure to violence</p> <p>Streets, rooftops, parks, bridges, exposed to weather, squatting, couch-surfing, no stable place</p> <p>Being “chased underground” into deviant subcultures (drugs, crime, prostitution)</p> |
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Relational.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social proximity/distance ▪ Emotional connectedness ▪ Recognition ▪ Solidarity | <p>Public fear of aggressive youth – leading to police harassment; “treated like shit – hurt”</p> <p>“Kicked out of house” – family abuse leads to streets</p> <p>No official identification (Raven – fear of identification); outlawing their means of survival</p> <p>Street youth hang out together for protection and mutual support</p> |
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Functional

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capabilities • Developmental capacities, assets and liabilities • Valued social role/status • Productive role | <p>Capable but little formal education, few job skills; resilient survivors – “above and beyond everything, they’re still <i>alive!</i>”</p> <p>Intelligent and motivated, but not supported and even unfairly excluded from education - “special exception” for collection of welfare while in school needed; “You can’t be a squeegee kid and go to school.” – demonstrated by success of SWYM program</p> <p>Criminalized for trying to earn money to survive; “should just get a job”</p> <p>“Inventive” action for earning money delegitimated</p> |
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Participation, empowerment (political)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation ▪ Agency/freedom ▪ Civic engagement ▪ Empowerment/power | <p>“Negotiate, don’t legislate”</p> <p>Unrepresented before decision-makers</p> <p>Eric involved in advocating for saving SWYM program the next year</p> <p>“They (the City Councillors) should work with us”</p> |
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(Adapted from Laidlaw Foundation, Oct. 2001)