

Preface

In this book, we will discuss how childhood studies needs to, and might, develop in the future. Since the 1990s, empirical and theoretical work coming out of the „new social studies of childhood” have been the catalyst for a diversity of empirical research, for policy analysis, and for the development of professional practice. This has especially been the case in the field of children’s rights and well-being but perhaps less so in other key fields. In addition, we need to critically address the question of whether we need alternative conceptualisations of children and childhood in late modernity/late capitalism? Or is it enough to connect the key assumptions and positions of the „new social studies of childhood“ with the heterogeneous and complex constructions of childhood via interdisciplinary approaches whilst retaining the critical considerations that childhood studies offer?

In regards to these question, we propose the following main topics for the contributions:

- *the social and cultural character of childhood in relation to the generational order – change or continuity?*
- *the social construction of childhood and children’s agency – critical challenges or critiques?*
- *the role of new technologies in the cultural and social construction of childhood – revolution or intensification?*
- *interdisciplinarity – new knowledge or just more knowledge?*
- *synthesing social theory, social policy and empirical findings of social science research – conformism or expansion?*
- *and children’s rights – technologies of the self or routes to (roots of) politicisation?*