YOUNG & RESILIENT RESEARCH CENTRE

Y&R 2026 SEMINAR SERIES

13 May: Dr Genevieve Ritchie

Lecturer in Youth Work, Western Sydney University

The political economy of youth and migration: Precarity and promise

Drawing from feminist and antiracist methodologies, Dr Ritchie's research layers the lived experiences of young adult refugees with a critical analysis of how the youth-NGO sector orients young peoples' engagement with work, education, and civic participation.



Dr Genevieve Ritchie, Lecturer in Youth Work, Western Sydney University

While each research participant (n=38) narrates a unique migration journey out of the Middle East or North Africa, all of the interviewees share a historical juncture marked by protracted wars, the economic restructuring of their homelands, and the eruption of global protests beginning in 2011. Civil society's response to the historical juncture has been to grow the number of NGOs that provide programming for young migrants.

By mapping the NGOs that young adult refugees come into contract with, Dr Ritchie has been able to identify a web of ideas, concepts, and institutionalised frameworks that orient and underpin the opportunities that young refugees are presented with. She terms this web of ideas and practices "the youth complex".

While the youth complex offers young people a chance at social and geographic mobility, it simultaneously cements a neoliberal vision of young people and the future of society. Importantly, a critical assessment of the youth complex also creates the conceptual space to think about alternative pathways to support young refugees' civic participation, activism, and flourishing.

Biography

Dr. Genevieve Ritchie is a Lecturer in Youth Work at Western Sydney University. Her monograph, "The political economy of youth and migration: Precarity and promise", will be published with Routledge in 2026.

13 May, 12:00 to 1:00 PM

Parramatta South EZ.1.51 & online

Lunch will be provided