

# **‘How other people see you it’s like nothing that’s inside’: the impact of processes of disidentification and disavowal on young people’s subjectivities**

YHRMP ID

14

Author(s)

Valentine, Gill and Sporton, Deborah

## **Aims**

To explore narratives of identity among young Somali refugees and asylum seekers in the context of complex histories of mobility. The paper focuses on how processes of disidentification or disavowal impact on young people’s subjectivities and are lived out in particular spaces.

Research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

## **Methodology**

Multi-method qualitative research: 50 Somali children and the majority of their parent[s] or guardians were recruited for interview as a result of snowballing through a school survey, homework clubs and a range of contacts and organisations; in-depth interviews with key stakeholders [representatives from local bodies dealing with asylum issues and various Somali education and community projects]; participant observation was carried out in local Somali community spaces, such as homework clubs. Interviews took place in Sheffield, United Kingdom.

## **Key issues**

Young people’s experiences of having their claims to be British denied, of disidentifying as black, and having to negotiate the complex ambiguities of being positioned as Somali in the UK but British in Somalia.

## **Conclusions**

The authors reflect on the importance of the young people’s emotional investment in the subject position of Muslim as an explanation for why they prioritise their faith above their racial, gender or ethno-national identities in their narratives of the self.

Web Link

[Details of how to get hold of this report are available from this external web ...](#)

[Migrant Group](#)

[Asylum seekers](#)

[Refugees](#)

Topic  
Children and young people  
Children  
Somali  
Unaccompanied children  
Place  
Sheffield  
Year  
2009  
Resource Type  
Journal article  
Resource  
Sociology  
Publisher  
SAGE Publications  
Volume  
43  
Number  
4  
Pages  
735-751

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/research-entry/how-other-people-see-you-its-nothing-thats-inside-impact-processes-disidentification>