

YOUTH & POLICY

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**Youth, Recreation and Play: History, Sociology,
Evolutionary Biology**

Guest editors: Mary Clare Martin and John A. Smith

**Introduction: Youth, Recreation and Play: Interdisciplinary
perspectives**

**Roman Catholic Girl Guiding in Sussex, 1912-1919: Origins,
Ideology, Practice**

**Direct, Indirect and Relational: Social Class Manifestations in
Teenage Students' Accounts**

**The construction of childhood, learning and play: an evolutionary
and ecological revision**

Identity, youth and post-modern social landscapes

**THINKING SPACE: The Future of Targeted Youth Support as
Second Class Social Work**

OBITUARY: Michael Butterfield – 1926-2013

Reviews

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About *Youth & Policy*

Youth & Policy Journal was founded in 1982 to offer a critical space for the discussion of youth policy and youth work theory and practice.

The editorial group have subsequently expanded activities to include the organisation of related conferences, research and book publication. Regular activities include the bi-annual 'History of Community and Youth Work' and the 'Thinking Seriously' conferences.

The *Youth & Policy* editorial group works in partnership with a range of local and national voluntary and statutory organisations who have complementary purposes. These have included UK Youth, YMCA, Muslim Youth Council and Durham University.

All members of the *Youth & Policy* editorial group are involved in education, professional practice and research in the field of informal education, community work and youth work.

The journal is run on a not-for-profit basis. Editors and Associate Editors all work in a voluntary and unpaid capacity.

Contents



Introduction: Youth, Recreation and Play: Interdisciplinary perspectives <i>Mary Clare Martin and John A. Smith</i>	1	➤
Roman Catholic Girl Guiding in Sussex, 1912-1919: Origins, Ideology, Practice <i>Mary Clare Martin</i>	5	➤
Direct, Indirect and Relational: Social Class Manifestations in Teenage Students' Accounts <i>Maria Papapolydorou</i>	25	➤
The construction of childhood, learning and play: an evolutionary and ecological revision <i>John A. Smith</i>	44	➤
Identity, youth and post-modern social landscapes <i>Ewa Sidorenko</i>	58	➤
THINKING SPACE: The Future of Targeted Youth Support as Second Class Social Work <i>Kirsten Hall</i>	77	➤
OBITUARY: Michael Butterfield – 1926-2013 <i>Tony Jeffs</i>	82	➤
Reviews	85	➤

Contributors

Kirsten Hall is a Senior Practitioner at a National Children's Charity performing a dual role of practice and management in a small Targeted Youth Project working with missing and sexually exploited young people.

Tony Jeffs is a member of the Editorial Board of *Youth & Policy*.

Mary Clare Martin is Head of the Centre for the Study of Play and Recreation, Department of Education and Community Studies University of Greenwich. She researches international perspectives on the history of children and religion, children's illness, and youth movements, from 1700-2000.

Maria Papapolydorou is Senior Lecturer in Education and Childhood Studies, University of Greenwich. Her research interests include the identities and network formation of students.

Ewa Sidorenko is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education and Community Studies at the University of Greenwich. Her interests include sociology of childhood, participatory research with children, ethnography, identity, education, post-modernity, evolutionary theory, post-communist Poland, nationalism, Nazi concentration and labour camps.

John A. Smith is Programme Leader for Education Studies University of Greenwich. His interests include the relationships between biology, psychology and sociology and their ecological interactions. He has published extensively in this field.

Introduction

Youth, Recreation and Play: Interdisciplinary perspectives

Mary Clare Martin and John A. Smith

WHILE IT IS frequently admitted that twenty-first century young people are demonised or unfairly targeted by the mass media, it is also acknowledged that contemporary Britain provides little support for the transition to adulthood, in comparison with many previous societies. This special issue aims to enhance the understanding of issues regarding young people's opportunities for, and experience of, recreation and play, and their intersection with the transition to adulthood. Historical perspectives illustrate ways in which young people's needs have been addressed in the past. New theoretical insights into the interpretation of childhood and youth challenge existing models. Contemporary research with young people illuminates issues of class and belonging within school and friendship groups

These articles thus engage with theory, the views of contemporary young people, and the history of youth, recreation and play. Such perspectives not only provide fresh insights into this emergent field, but also show the potential for further inter – and multi-disciplinary work. The volume addresses key disciplinary issues: the split between sociology and psychology which is increasingly perceived as unhelpful in the study of youth; the neglect of social class within sociology in recent decades and of research with young people on this topic; the limits of social constructionism and the outright hostility between sociology and evolutionary biology.

The research explored here indicates that class, religion, and gender might be markers of identity rather than age. Martin's essay shows how religion (in this instance, Roman Catholicism) promoted a cross-class, all-age, form of identity within an international youth organisation (the Girl Guides Association) which still claims to meet the needs of young females within a single-sex social space. Papapolydorou's exploration of young people's attitudes towards social class raises uncomfortable issues about social cohesion within an age group which might be thought to share common attitudes towards fashion and leisure activities. Indeed, the argument that class might supersede the bonds of age challenges the conventional wisdom that generation is a primary marker of identity.

The theoretical perspectives developed by Smith and Sidorenko further call into question many of the current binaries in youth research. Sidorenko draws on Robert Kegan's claim that post-modern

cultural demands on individual development of flexibility and complexity in the organisation of experience need to be incorporated into sociological work on patterns of inequality. Thus, differential experiences of community support for developmental identity work that young people receive, could offer further insight into the process of reproduction of social inequalities. That would mean not only incorporating constructivist developmental psychology into sociology but also moving beyond the purely constructivist paradigm in social analysis. Consequently, youth, as well as childhood, would have to be recognised as not just social constructions but as ontologically embodied, developmentally real and generating its own type of need.

Smith's experimental piece critiques social constructionism as a paradigm and suggests a way forward in understanding play and recreation in the context of evolutionary-or eco psychology and biology. He argues that, despite recognition of the importance of play in cognitive and social development, there is still a persistent, if not dominant view of play as something humans do – and which appears very costly, irrational or wasteful in evolutionary terms. However evolutionary biology shows that play is widespread in the animal kingdom and is only reduced by severe deprivation of resources. If play is an evolutionary stable strategy then it is mistaken to think it is superfluous and confined to humans. Our view, not play itself, is the questionable phenomenon.

This structural concept of play challenges the widespread view that childhood(s) are socially constructed, or at least proposes limits to plasticity. This echoes E.O. Wilson's work on sociobiology and the need to work toward consilience between the social, the psychological and the physical sciences, including the recognition that sociality as a survival strategy is not exclusively human. Nor is the perceived excess or superfluity of play a phenomenon of childhood. It may be seen instead as an essential characteristic of social communication and solidarity.

Martin's essay on Roman Catholic Girl Guides emphasises the allegedly inclusive nature of early Girl Guiding, challenging the view that this was a conservative and anti-feminist organisation. Instead, it shows how the Roman Catholic church appropriated what had initially seemed like a threatening new movement. Their rhetoric emphasised more radical aspects of female identity such as rock climbing and fording rivers, associated with missionary nuns. By the 1920s, Catholics had formed their own auxiliary, or associated organisation, with appropriate insignia, under the umbrella of the Catholic Women's League. However, after this was incorporated into a mixed-sex Catholic Scout and Guide Council numbers fell, and by 1949 the last company closed. Thus, in the supposedly anti-feminist interwar years, Catholic Guiding permitted the formation of international networks among young people and adult women through the international youth organisation as well as through the Roman Catholic church.

The articles draw on a range of complementary research methodologies. Martin uses archival and printed sources, such as Girl Guide magazines, which included letters sent in by Guides and Guide

newsletters produced in Sussex which are still kept with the local Company. A Sussex Guider's scrapbook has provided evidence through visual imagery: photographs and newspaper cuttings. Martin's case study thus illustrates the importance of ephemera. Papapolydorou's interviews were conducted with young people in 2010 using active participatory research approaches involving socio-graph as a method. Sidorenko's and Smith's papers stress the importance of rethinking the inter-disciplinary, theoretical base that has the potential to inform new methodologies. The essays therefore use different approaches and sources to raise significant issues about young people, play and recreation in contemporary Britain, and point the way for future practice, as they provide insights for practitioners as well as academics.

The Centre for the Study of Play and Recreation (CSPR) (www.gre.ac.uk/cspr)

These articles were presented originally as papers at a conference entitled: 'Youth, Recreation and Play', at the University of Greenwich in June 2012. This multi-disciplinary event, which attracted practitioners as well as academics, and where schoolchildren also presented their work on citizenship, was the fifth conference organised by the CSPR, which was officially launched in May 2011. Others included 'Rethinking the History of Childhood' (January 2012) which was followed by the launch of the London Network for the History of Childhood in May 2012. 'Children and the Law' (January 2013) brought together practitioners, students, and a former homeless young person, exploring concepts and experiences of risk and disability, and launched a new strand of that name. 'Multi-cultural Toys', an exhibition and conference in June 2013, organised jointly with the Pollock's Toy Museum Trust, demonstrated the global nature of toys in the past and the present, and the ideologies which they reflect (ed) and promote(d), with a view to developing more inclusive play objects in mainstream commercial outlets and researching children's perspectives in the future.

This issue of *Youth & Policy* serves two purposes. It brings together work on the conference theme from a multi-disciplinary perspective. It also showcases the research of staff from the Department of Education and Community Studies in the Faculty of Education and Health at the University of Greenwich. We anticipate that it will be a useful resource for the many practitioners who participate in our Centre and for a wider public interested in youth issues. As the Centre is a multi-disciplinary initiative aimed at the academic development of the field of play and recreation and the promotion of research-informed practice, its component disciplines are emergent fields: Childhood Studies, Education Studies, Youth and Community Studies. In turn these are informed by the 'foundational' disciplines of History, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy, and crucially, the policy field related both nationally and internationally to childhood, education and young people. This poses two immediate problems for both research and professional practice.

The first is the extent to which, common to many professions, the content of good practice and ultimately understanding is determined by government policy and legislation. The past century has seen an unprecedented degree of intervention in the fields of education, childhood and youth and community on the part of the state. Consequently, a particularly constructivist form of sociology tends to dominate discussion because it suggests a priori that education and childhood are primarily matters of social construction, so underwriting such interventions as primarily matters of socio-political choice, whether 'right' or 'left'.

The second is consequent: given such an intellectual-political atmosphere it is difficult to argue that there is any kind of reasonable, defensible, let alone, objective centre. Truly this is the condition of postmodernity. Part of the character of this condition is a lack of attention to any kind of limit described by enterprises such as psychologies of emergence and development, historical or even statistical evidence gathering. To the extent that the condition tends to the postmodern it also tends toward the post-evidential, even the post-scientific.

In this sense part of the remit of the Centre is to *restore* inter-disciplinarity by giving more serious consideration to many promising if neglected discourses within a more structural conception of education and childhood. These would specifically include historical perspectives, developmental and social psychology, life cycle theory, ecological and systems models of social interaction. All of these provide both theoretical and evidential bases for informing professional practice and invite outreach or consultation with stakeholders and impact as key aspects of our remit.

Roman Catholic Girl Guiding in Sussex, 1912-1919: Origins, Ideology, Practice

Mary Clare Martin

Abstract

This article has significance for the history of youth movements, and for religious and feminist history. It shows how the Roman Catholic Church adopted the Baden-Powell Girl Guide movement, at first almost by default, but then as a means of outreach to attract young women into the church. In the English context this demonstrates how a minority religious organisation could be incorporated into the Scout movement yet retain a distinctive identity. Roman Catholicism fostered the development of another form of internationalism, enabling English Catholic Guides to meet and share in religious rituals with their 'sisters' in France and elsewhere. Iconic female figures, notably St Joan of Arc, and adventurous female missionaries were promoted as role-models, thus calling into question the view that the primary ideal of Guiding was domesticated femininity.

Key words: Girl Guides, Roman Catholic, feminism, Sussex

DESPITE ITS status as an international movement, and the phenomenal numbers it attracted in its early years, the Girl Guides have received comparatively little attention from historians, despite their recent centenary.¹ Roman Catholic Girl Guides have been not only neglected, but invisible.² Yet the Catholic Guides provide a particularly useful vantage point from which to view the relationship between a youth movement linked to a minority religious denomination with international links, and the parent body. Moreover, the integration of English, Scottish and Welsh Roman Catholic Girl Guides within the national movement, unlike in Ireland, Belgium or France, where Protestant and Catholic Scouts and Guides formed separate organisations, has important implications for understanding English Catholic identity.³

This article will argue that Roman Catholic Girl Guide companies enabled girls to practise their religion freely, separately from Protestants, initially under the umbrella of an all-female Catholic women's organisation, the Catholic Women's League (CWL). Nevertheless, they were not confined within a Catholic ghetto,⁴ or 'fortress church',⁵ but had a place within an international, inter-denominational, youth movement. I will also interrogate the characterisation of Guiding as primarily intended to produce good wives and mothers.⁶ Guiding developed a subculture of both older and younger women which had an impact on their local communities as well as on society as a whole. It might include young women of all social classes, some already engaged in paid

work, others at school. Activities included training in a range of skills, from domestic to survival, including sports and games, which often gave Guides a public profile, and might prepare them for employment. As such, Guiding made an important contribution to the discourse and practice of 'active female citizenship' in the inter-war years, even before full female suffrage in 1928.⁷

The focus on Sussex makes it possible to map Guide activities in greater detail than in a broader study. The period 1912 to 1929 spans the period between the founding of the first Roman Catholic Girl Guide company in 1912, the retirement of some of its first initiators in 1924, and the transfer of control from the CWL to the Catholic Scout and Guide Advisory Council in 1929. The county of Sussex was important for Guiding in general and Roman Catholic Girl Guides in particular, being the first to be organised into districts and divisions, like the Scouts, under the direction of Olave Baden-Powell.⁸ A number of high-profile Catholic Guiders also stimulated the development of the fledgling Catholic Women's League Girl Guides (CWLGG). The county of Sussex, which includes coastal and inland rural areas, as well as small and large towns, provides a much-needed counterbalance to existing studies of adolescent leisure. Many of these have focused on the industrial North, especially Manchester, and London, the authors claiming that working-class girls preferred the dance-hall and cinema to youth organisations.⁹

Most data has been taken from published sources, such as the *Catholic Women's League Magazine*, the *Girl Guide Gazette*, founded in 1914, and *The Guide*, which was targeted at Guides rather than Guiders from 1919. The reports of local company news in these volumes purported to be written by the Guides themselves, though they had to be approved by the Captain.¹⁰ Local Sussex companies produced their own newsletters and ephemera, some printed. Guide memoirs, notably May Hollist's manuscript scrapbook, provide invaluable information about reporting in the local press, as well as photographs and recording of events. Prescriptive literature includes Flora Lucy Freeman's published advice book for Catholic Guides, but also pamphlets of the speeches of key clergy and lay people, which provide insights into approved behaviour.

Origins

The founding of the Girl Guide movement is usually dated from 1909, when groups of girls turned up at Crystal Palace demanding to be inspected like the Scouts. Baden-Powell quickly founded a separate organisation under his sister Agnes, who published the first handbook in 1912.¹¹ Roman Catholic Guide companies were in existence from 1912 at least.¹² About 1919 the Girl Guides Association invited the CWL to form a kindred society to be attached to the main movement, following the previous affiliation of the YWCA, Girls' Friendly Society and others.¹³ The Standing Committee was formed in 1920, chaired by Lady Margaret Macrae, and approval was given by prominent ecclesiastics, including Cardinal Bourne, the Archbishop of Westminster, and the

Pope.¹⁴ The hope was expressed that Catholic Guides belonging to other companies would join up with their co-religionists, and that existing Catholic companies would re-register with the CWL.¹⁵ By 1919, 19 companies had registered. CWL companies had their own standard and could sew a CWL name-tape onto their uniform.¹⁶

While Catholics were far more numerous in northern cities such as Liverpool, parts of Sussex, such as Arundel, the Midhurst district and Brighton had a long history of Catholicism,¹⁷ and new types of Catholic organisation for women were quickly adopted there. The Catholic League for Women's Suffrage, founded in 1911, had three provincial branches outside London in 1913, two in Sussex and one in Liverpool.¹⁸ A branch of the CWL, founded in 1906, which promoted a range of initiatives for women, was launched in Brighton in December 1908.¹⁹ Catholicism in Sussex benefited from gentry patronage, the Duke of Norfolk being 'a sort of lay head of the English Catholic community'.²⁰

In October 1917, Olave Baden-Powell estimated there were 83 Guide companies in Sussex, almost double the 46 in existence the previous year.²¹ In 1918 the number of companies (117) was the fifth highest in the country, after London, south-east Lancashire, Norfolk and the West Riding of Yorkshire.²² Sussex also claimed they were the first county to have their own magazine, started in January 1917.²³ CWL Sussex companies comprised a high proportion of those formed nationally. The first recorded Sussex Catholic company, the 1st St Leonards, was formed in 1912, and registered in 1913.²⁴ By 1919 there were eight Catholic Guide companies in Sussex, and one Brownie Pack. The large numbers of residential, usually fee-paying schools and institutions in Sussex would seem to have boosted the numbers considerably,²⁵ including those of Catholics.²⁶ Two Sussex CWL companies were attached to residential institutions, the Convent of Mercy (Midhurst) and the orphanage at Nazareth House, Bexhill, both of which were for poor children.²⁷ Of the eight companies affiliated to the CWL in May 1920, four were from Sussex, the others being from Portsmouth (two companies), one from Preston and one at St Philip's Settlement, Mile End, London.²⁸ By 1924 there were 71 Guide companies and Brownie Packs registered, eight from Sussex.²⁹

While Roman Catholic Guides formed only a tiny proportion of the total number of Sussex Guides, (nine companies out of 175 in 1919³⁰), some leaders (including converts) had a high profile within the CWL, and the Guide movement as a whole. Flora Lucy Freeman (circa 1869-1960), a former Anglo-Catholic, and author of widely circulated advice books for organisers of working-girls' clubs, had created an inter-denominational infrastructure to support working-girls' clubs, the Brighton Girls' Club Union, by 1906. By 1916, she had been converted to Catholicism.³¹ In March that year she founded the 11th Brighton, in 1917 the 6th Hove, and in May 1919 the 23rd Brighton.³² In 1921 she published the first handbook for Catholic Guides.³³

May Hollist (d. 1947), from an Anglican family, lived in Lodsworth house, Lodsworth, with her father Colonel Hollist (1838-1924) until his death in 1924. She was not only the Secretary for CWL Guides nationally from 1920, and by 1923 Area Director,³⁴ but also played an active role in village life, her imminent departure from Lodsworth due to her father's death in 1924 being deplored by the local vicar.³⁵ From 1919 she was Captain both of the CWL 2nd Midhurst (Convent of Mercy) and of the first Lodsworth (non-Catholic) Village Company, and from 1920 was Captain and Brown Owl of the 1st Lodsworth Brownies.³⁶ She also organized camps, both non-denominational and for the CWL, in England and abroad. She was Commandant of the first CWL camp in La Capelle, near Boulogne in 1923, and by 1929 was leading a camp in Malta.³⁷ The 1st Arundel, 'Lady Rachel's Own' (founded in 1919) was named after the daughter of the Catholic Duke of Norfolk, Lady Rachel Fitzalan-Howard, who was a Divisional Commissioner by 1928 and County President by 1948.³⁸ Her mother the Duchess (d.1946), was the Hon. Secretary of the CWL in 1920 and on the Guide Council from 1916.³⁹ As County President, she presided over a number of important county Guide events reported in the local press.⁴⁰

The CWL provided opportunities for women to hold positions of authority, each branch having a Chair, Hon. Secretary, and Treasurer.⁴¹ While the regulations of CWL Guides stated that Guiders in companies attached to churches should be approved by the clergy,⁴² local records show that clergy could play a facilitating rather than merely a controlling role, providing resources, support and expertise. In 1929 the CWL Standing Committee was dissolved as a new Catholic Scout and Guide Advisory Council had come into being two years previously and it was felt the work would prosper best under them. Miss Hollist was the Treasurer of the new Council, and Miss Warrender, chair of the CWL and former District Commissioner for Rye and Peaseborough, was Vice-Chair of the new body. By then there were 5,000 Catholic Guides nationally.⁴³

Ideology

Roman Catholics, both clergy and lay women, incorporated Baden-Powell's ideology of citizenship and service, self-sufficiency and the value of outdoor activities⁴⁴ into a framework which emphasised the distinctiveness of Roman Catholic religious identity and the potential of Guides to attract new or lapsed members into the church. The movement thus developed particular aspects of female spirituality. Catholic Guides had as their patron saints the Virgin Mary and St Joan of Arc who was canonised in 1920.⁴⁵ By 1925 they had adopted as their own 'Our Lady, Guide of the Way' from a Byzantine picture of 450AD later found in a church in Messina.⁴⁶ The rhetoric about Catholic Guides reflects both assertive and defensive positions regarding religious worship and gender roles. There was a huge fear of the corrupting influence of allowing Catholic Guides to worship with non-Catholics, and also that Guiding would make girls unwomanly. The counter-arguments were that Catholics needed to move with the times, or lose out, and that the

discipline and practical training would be of positive benefit to the task of evangelisation, as well as to future mothers and colonisers.

At the opening rally in 1920 Monsignor Jackman, private secretary to Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, argued that 'Catholic girls are today the hope of the world. From having been a refining influence they can be more a directing influence'.⁴⁷ His argument was for the importance of seizing opportunities which Catholics had missed in the past, to their detriment, as in the organisation of schools. The woman question was the most important of the day. Catholics might not have liked women in uniform in public places, but they were there to stay. Interestingly he did not so much recommend Girl Guides as a means of inculcating piety and goodness, which he argued could be done by the home and confraternities, or sodalities, but for their 'efficiency, organisation, practical sewing', as regards domestic responsibilities. His response to the criticism that 'it makes them tomboys' was to argue that 'a tomboy is a good girl rather than a flapper'.⁴⁸ As Proctor noted, the notion of Guiding as an antidote to flapperdom had become 'a common accolade' by the end of World War One, and was not specific to Catholics.⁴⁹

Similar themes were developed by the Hon. Mrs Walter Roch at the same rally. Significantly, the religious justification was only listed third. The first was to give women an outlet, as 'working girls and women had suffered from dullness in the past'. The second was to promote efficiency and training of character: 'Each little unit was made to realise by co-operation and comradeship that she had her duties and responsibilities to others as well as herself'. The third was religious: Catholic Guide corps were often the means for attracting girls back to the church.⁵⁰

Flora Lucy Freeman's handbook (1921), targeted at the Guides themselves, was structured to show how each section of the Guide Law should be interpreted. She urged girls to remember they were Catholic Guides at all times, to stand up for their faith, even if it involved persecution, and to resist the temptation to attend non-Catholic services and prayers, even when told this was a kind of 'united Guide service'.⁵¹ Patrol leaders should look after their patrols. All should remember 'A Guide is a Friend to all and a sister to all other Guides, no matter to what social class the other belongs'; 'I hope no Guide would look down on any of her sisters because they happen to be in service'.⁵² Neatness and tidiness were important: 'A girl never looks better than in uniform... but an untidy Guide is a pitiable object'.⁵³ She also urged Catholic Guides to pray for the conversion of England, and presented the Irish as exemplars for 'holding fast to the old faith'.⁵⁴

Local clergy might reinforce such messages. In July 1921 Monsignor Ottley, to whom one of Freeman's books was dedicated, gave a talk to the 6th Hove emphasising the following. Uniform was a better dress than the usual fashion. They should not attend non-Catholic services. He then referred to 'the knot he could tie that could not be undone', a reference to current Catholic opposition to the Divorce Bill, and an example of how the Guide movement could be used to

promote Catholic policies.⁵⁵

In later editions of his address, Jackman further developed the theme of the need for women to be equipped with the practical skills required for a frontier life. In the Catholic context, which still valued celibacy in comparison with marriage and motherhood, the image of the nun and missionary had particular power. 'We know of brave women missionaries in the wilds of Australasia struggling with elemental Nature, crossing torrents on a single plank bridge, scaling rocky precipices to visit the lonely sick. There is one nun at least in South Africa an expert in shoeing the convent oxen'.⁵⁶

Catholic women developed these themes. An article in *The Catholic Woman's Outlook* of 1925 justified Catholic Guides as crucial in the transition to adulthood. On the one hand, 'sodalities provide no outlet for the high spirits and energies of the livelier girls'. Nor did they include in their aims practical efficiency and physical fitness.⁵⁷ Moreover, in practice, there was no conflict of interest; 'we often find our best patrol leaders are among the Children of Mary'. Since Guiding covered the age-range between secondary school and starting work, the Guide network could provide practical assistance in helping Guides entering employment, especially those who had come to a new place, to find 'sister-guides'. Arranging church parades and corporate communions was an important way of helping them to maintain contact with their faith.⁵⁸ By 1930, Mrs Walter Roch was highlighting the religious rationale even more strongly, emphasising that the first part of the Guide promise was 'I promise to love my God'. Since many Catholics had only had a nominal religious upbringing, at home or at school, the Guide movement could provide the place for the real development of a girl's faith.⁵⁹

Practice

A reviewer of *On the Right Trail* commented that Freeman 'admirably links up the Guide spirit and the Catholic spirit',⁶⁰ and arguably the ability to do this contributed to the appeal of Catholic Guides. Whereas Catholic literature emphasised the importance of preserving a separate identity, the Girl Guide magazines tend to gloss over such differences. The first reference found in the *Girl Guides' Gazette* to Roman Catholic Guides, was to the church parade on October 13th, of the 1st and 2nd Bournemouth companies. This observed that, 'During the service the Roman Catholic members of the Troop guarded the Colours in the porch', without openly stating that they were not allowed to join the service.⁶¹ Olave Baden-Powell's list of Brighton companies in 1916, including Congregationalists, Presbyterians, two YWCA companies, and one Girls' Friendly Society, shows how Roman Catholics comprised one denomination amongst many.⁶² *On the Right Trail* was sympathetically reviewed in the *Girl Guide Gazette* of January 1922 as of interest to all Guides.⁶³ This section will show how Catholic Guides were integrated within the main organisation, yet maintained a separate religious identity, due in large part to the involvement of priests and Catholic

laywomen. Pomfret, Warren and Collins have claimed that sporting and leisure facilities for girls were much less exciting than those available for boys in the first half of the twentieth century.⁶⁴ Catholic Guiding, like the main movement, provided opportunities for a range of leisure activities, including sports and the development of physical and survival skills. It encompassed war work, badges, entertainments, physical activities, rallies and camping.

Catholics were involved in the war effort, like many other Guides.⁶⁵ From November 1914 the 1st St Leonards were thanked for making socks, helmets, stocking-legs, ration-bags, cuffs and scarves for the soldiers.⁶⁶ In July 1915, the 1st St Leonards had been 'helping daily for some months at the VAD hospital and at Hastings House Temporary Hospital for the Wounded, running errands and assisting the nurses'.⁶⁷ Leisure activities were a problem for soldiers in the Brighton area, and on February 9th and 11th, 1918, the 11th Brighton 'gave performances of 'Beauty and the Beast', and a varied entertainment in aid of a new soldiers' club just started in Brighton. 'The dresses were extremely pretty and the girls were complimented on their clear enunciation'.⁶⁸

While the last statement emphasised the femininity of the performers, examination of the badges gained indicates the complexity of making judgments about gender bias. Guiding involved a series of 'targets': first attaining 'tenderfoot' status, then second class, then first class. There was a wide range of proficiency badges which had to be worked for. While some were for domestic skills, there were many others which encouraged adventure and self-sufficiency, such as rifle, war service, surveying, pioneering, geology and Special Service Corps.⁶⁹ The most popular badges nationally in 1916 were 'laundress', (8102 awarded), 'child nurse' (7,056), 'ambulance' (5,772), 'knitter' (5,076), then 'thrift'(4,812).⁷⁰

Records of the badges attained in Sussex CWL companies show the co-existence of domestic and more active skills. In January 1917 the newly-formed 11th Brighton reported: 'Seventeen Guides have passed their second class test. Mabel Ray has gained the St John's Ambulance Certificate for First Aid, and Alice Simmonds won Second Prize for the 40 yards' race in the Elementary schools' Athletic competitions'.⁷¹ The latter statement indicates that at least some of the members were not from privileged backgrounds. In 1918, the 11th Brighton recorded that '11 Guides have passed their test for fire brigade work and 12 for laundry'.⁷² In October 1921, badges were awarded to members of the 23rd Brighton; five domestic service, one cyclist, one needlewoman.⁷³ In June 1923, '15 of the 2nd Midhurst have lately passed their ambulance test, and several hope shortly to get their first class badges'.⁷⁴

While in 1918, the Guides were addressed (on cheerfulness) by Lady Day, the 'mother' of the company, and President of the Brighton CWL branch, the procedures of inspection, enrolment and badge-giving were in principle the same for Catholic and non-Catholic Guides, who shared the same Divisional and District Commissioners. Thus, in May 12th 1920, 'Mrs Jennings, the

(Divisional) Commissioner for Brighton paid a visit to the 23rd Brighton company and enrolled 4 girls. She presented Service Stars to some Patrol Leaders and Second Class Badges to the girls'. Clergy might also have a role: on this occasion, Rev Fr Newton, from St John the Baptist, Bristol Road, (this company's local church) was present.⁷⁵ Clergy were recorded as awarding badges, as in the case of Monsignor Ottley, who in 1921 also gave a piece of church land for cultivation to the 6th Hove.⁷⁶

Catholic Guides participated in competitions and rallies with other Guide companies, the *CWL Magazine* noting the winning of prizes at such events. The 23rd Brighton, 35 in number by 1924, was particularly successful: 'The Guides had had three inspections, and won the East Brighton District Shield, gaining 93 marks out of a possible 100'.⁷⁷ They also won a tent in a District tent-making competition in 1922.⁷⁸ The 2nd Midhurst were another very successful company, winning the fourth highest number of badges (40) nationally in 1924 (of CWL Guides) as well as numerous prizes, in local inter-denominational competitions, from handicrafts, to fire-lighting to signalling.⁷⁹

Events and competitions were also held with non-Guides. In 1924, Guide Nellie Trill (of 6th Hove) won the beginners' race in the Hove and District swimming competitions.⁸⁰ In December 1924 there was an exhibition at Brighton Town Hall of Hobbies and Handicrafts for Guides and other organisations affiliated to the Juvenile Welfare Committee. On this occasion, Nellie Trill won the first prize for 'Millinery'. 'Their Royal Highnesses opened the exhibitions...there were over 1000 Guides present, all the 6th Hove being there except for two who were unable to get away from business'.⁸¹ Again, this indicates how some Guides had paid jobs.

Whereas the *CWL Magazine* presented Guide news for the benefit of an all-age all-Catholic female audience, many accounts from the local press represent Guide activities as central to their local communities. In December 1921, a sale was held at the New Inn Assembly Hall, Midhurst, by the Midhurst District Association (including Catholics and non-Catholics) at which all the Christmas presents had been made by the Guides. It was attended by the Duchess of Norfolk and Lady Rachel Fitzalan-Howard, who was dressed as a Girl Guide.⁸² A similar event was held in November 1924. Whereas the proceeds of such Guide events went to company funds, or occasionally other charities, the proceeds of CWL Guide events frequently funded local churches.⁸³ In 1923, the 1st St Leonards reported a plan for a grand 'Soirée bizarre' (the suggestion of the priest), to reduce the debt on the Concordia Hall.⁸⁴

Rallies, which involved the assembling of large numbers of Guides for inspection, at local, county or national level, played an important part in bringing Guide companies together. The military language used to describe these is noteworthy, as is the criticism of feminine attire, jewellery and expensive clothes. Thus, at a rally of about 130 Guides (seven companies and one Lone Patrol) held on Saturday afternoon in 1919 at the Cowdray ruins in Midhurst, where the Boy Scouts had

lapsed, the reporter noted how the Guides afforded an ample demonstration of their 'keenness, virility and efficiency'. 'The marching was excellent, and the onlookers were evidently impressed by the neat and well turned out appearance of the girls, and the evidence they gave of discipline and efficiency'... in the competitions the 2nd Midhurst (Miss Hollist's Catholic Company) 'gave evidence of their dexterity at knot-tying, which is not popularly supposed to be a feminine accomplishment'. There was a firelighting display, and then sports, such as an obstacle race. 'Miss Godman expressed...her delight at finding no jewellery worn'.⁸⁵

A much larger rally was reported on June 30th 1920, a 'Brilliant Carnival of Youth-Hove August 1920' at Sussex County Cricket ground, presided over by the Duchess of Norfolk, with over 1000 Guides. 'It was an inspiring sight ... all those girls and young women in spirited marching order, eyes right when they came to the royal standard, the officers raising their hands in such excellent style to the salute'. Again, the issue of dress was raised: 'the uniforms generally looked neat and serviceable rather than costly'. Recruits were from all classes of society ... 'quite poor people were there'.⁸⁶

Catholic Guides formed Guards of Honour to accompany well-known people at gatherings with non-Catholics, such as escorting the princesses to the handicrafts exhibition in 1924, or in Catholic contexts. Thus, when Cardinal Bourne came to chair Father Bede Jarrett's lecture at the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, in 1923, all the parish organisations were represented and Scouts and Guides formed a Guard of Honour. This event was reported in the *Brighton Herald*, and *Sussex Daily News*.⁸⁷ Catholic Guides might also perform special roles within their own religious communities. Thus, the 23rd Brighton formed a choir at Midnight Mass in their church, St John's Kemp Town, in 1921.⁸⁸ However, as Catholics were not allowed to participate in the church services of other denominations, they would have been absent from some of the major events of the Guiding year. Annual church parades were held in the Brighton District attracting large numbers: in October 9th, 1921, at All Saints, Hove, over 700 Guides attended.⁸⁹ On October 1923, the annual Church Parade was attended by Miss Godman, County Commissioner, and her two daughters, an estimated 2,000 were present. Indeed, it was reported that often new recruits were gained after such events.⁹⁰ Instead Catholic rallies were staged. The first at the London Scottish Drill Hall in November 1920, was attended by Lady Helen Whitaker, Guide in charge of kindred societies.⁹¹ On the afternoon of May 25th 1924, a church parade in Westminster Cathedral, attended by the 23rd Brighton (amongst others),⁹² took place at the same time as an inter-denominational service at Wembley. Cardinal Bourne asked for strength for Guides in Protestant countries to resist the temptation to attend non-Catholic services and prayers.⁹³ Services were also arranged at local level which reflected Scout and Guide themes, and could include entertainment. Thus, in 1923, the 2nd Midhurst had a Church Parade on the eve of St George's Day, the day when Scouts renewed their Promise. Father William spoke of the advantages of Catholic camps for Guides, and after Mass the hymn to St George was sung. In the afternoon, the Company 'had a delightful picnic tea in the beautiful garden of their

Commissioner'.⁹⁴

Camping, the apogee of the Guide year,⁹⁵ provided holidays for some young people who might not normally have had them.⁹⁶ These could include short breaks, even one-day trips. Many 'camps' involved sleeping in barns rather than tents. The *Girl Guide Gazette* of 1918 stated that the 11th Brighton had their first experience of camping, sleeping in a large barn at the foot of Wolstonebury Beacon, Hurst. The report focused on the improvement in cooking skills, and acquisition of the knowledge of wildlife.⁹⁷ While Catholics might camp with non-Catholics (and indeed May Hollist hosted such camps in the grounds of Lodsworth House),⁹⁸ CWL camps provided greater opportunities for communal religious activity, as well as outreach. Thus, in 1924, the 23rd Brighton Guides camped at Amberley and 'thoroughly enjoyed it'. They 'gave a concert to the villagers and gave over £2 to Father Ellis who allowed us to use the schoolrooms etc. There were several river trips and parties and one young girl was baptised a Roman Catholic before we left'.⁹⁹ Twelve of the 1st St Leonards troop and their captain and two helpers camped in Winchelsea and heard Mass in Rye on the Feast of the Assumption. They also had an excellent report from the camp inspector.¹⁰⁰ It was reported that during the first camp in France in 1923, 'Monsieur le Cure' kept the church open in the evenings 'so we could go there to say our night prayers'. When attending Mass they were slightly startled by the notice that 'les jeunes filles anglaises' would sing Benediction, and they were also told to say the rosary in English.¹⁰¹ Such foreign holidays reversed the Guides' usual experience of being a minority religious group in England, and enabled them to experience their membership of an international religious community. Camps also provided opportunities to develop awareness of their Catholic heritage within England. In 1927, when about half the Guides camping at Lodsworth were Catholics, special arrangements were made to take them to Midhurst by taxi for Sunday Mass. One day they were taken to Chichester to the tombs of the Norfolks, 'buried there when the Cathedral was still Catholic'.¹⁰²

Conclusion

By 1920, Catholic Girl Guides were embraced by leading clergy and laywomen as a safe means for preparing girls for the new world of emancipated women which followed the granting of limited female suffrage in 1918 and the turmoil of World War I. The 'dangerous' period between childhood and adolescence could be filled by participation in a system of military-style discipline and training in leadership. Girls were expected to be smart and neat but avoid jewellery or expensive clothes. Almost uniquely for a Catholic female youth organisation the uniforms emphasised citizenship and facilitated the diminution of differences between rich and poor. From feeling obliged in 1920 to protest that tomboys were preferable to flappers, by 1924 Monsignor Jackman praised the practical skills which the movement fostered as a positive and necessary adjunct to overseas and domestic missionary endeavour. The promotion of Guiding within Roman Catholicism was indubitably

viewed as a means to attract young people into the church. It also provided opportunities for Catholic worship outside formal church services, at Guide meetings, or at camp. The development of ‘secular’ activities such as rallies and competitions, from the early 1900s, made it easier for Catholic Guides to join in with non-Catholics. Such rallies and entertainments occupied an important place in town and village life, facilitated in Sussex by the prominent public profile of female Catholic Guiders. Nevertheless, it was not an unequivocal success story. Although numbers of companies doubled between 1923-4, by 1924, the 4th CWLGG Annual Report pointed out how Guiders often had to struggle with very small numbers, and the difficulty of providing activities for a very wide age range.¹⁰³ By 1929, a number of companies had folded because of lack of Guiders.¹⁰⁴ Of all the Catholic companies listed in Sussex, none were in existence after 1955, and most were disbanded earlier.¹⁰⁵ This calls in question whether the establishment of a mixed-sex leadership, in the form of the Catholic Scout and Guide Council (in 1929), was the best way to promote the interests of a female-initiated organisation.

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Direct, Indirect and Relational: Social Class Manifestations in Teenage Students' Accounts

Maria Papapolydorou

Abstract

This article discusses the various ways in which teenage students conceptualise social class with reference to their everyday lives and their interactions with others. Three types of class manifestations emerge from the accounts of this study's participants, namely the indirect, the direct and the relational manifestations. Despite some considerable variety in the conceptualisation and discussion of social class it is important to note that teenage students acknowledge and recognise class as a concept pertinent to their lives. Bourdieuan elaborations of social class are employed throughout this article.

Key words: Social class, teenage students, Bourdieu, identities, class understandings

SOCIAL CLASS identity is an issue widely discussed by sociologists (see Giddens, 1990; Devine, 1992; Savage et al., 2001; Savage, 2007). There is, however, no consensus among various researchers about the existence, nature and function of social class identities in contemporary societies. On the one hand, some writers (Bauman, 1982; Giddens, 1990; Pakulski and Waters, 1996) showcase evidence which suggests that adults no longer define themselves in class terms and argue, in turn, that class identities are obsolete. On the other hand, writers, such as Devine (1992), argue that people are still class aware, hence, class identities are very much alive and relevant in today's society. Finally, a third group of writers (Goldthorpe, 1996; Savage et al., 2001; Savage, 2007) take a middle stance, accepting that class identities exist but arguing, at the same time, that these identities are fragmented and ambivalent in nature.¹ Ainley (1993) suggests that this ambiguity is a result of the changing structure of social class, which in turn encourages the blending of old class categories with new, not fully sedimented ones. By the same token, Wright (1979, 1982) argues that individuals in today's society occupy contradictory class locations – on the basis of their profession – in which they share attributes of the classes both above and below them.

As this research typically focuses predominantly on adults, we know considerably less about the way younger people, such as teenagers, understand social class and talk about it. Some relevant questions are therefore likely to arise as a result of this relative paucity in the literature: Are class

boundaries readily visible by teenagers or are they indiscernible? How do teenagers understand the concept of social class and how does this concept resonate with their experiences? What kind of vocabulary do teenagers use, if any, to talk about and/or allude to social class issues? Such questions are particularly relevant in the current era of austerity when young people are faced with the increasing effects of economic uncertainty, in relation to both their education and their employment prospects (Allen and Ainley, 2010). Focusing on the way teenagers make sense of and talk about social class issues is important because, a) it will shed light on the extent to which teenagers' perspectives echo or deviate from the adult ones and b) it might reflect the way the next generation conceptualises their place and role within a classed society as well as their potential mobilisation with reference to political organisation and action (Goldthorpe, 1996).

In light of this, this article discusses the ways in which teenage students understand and talk about social class with particular reference to themselves and their friends within and outside the school. Focusing on teenage students situated within educational contexts presents the research analysis with considerable advantages. First, school communities often mirror the inequalities of the society within which they are situated. Therefore, focusing on participants of this context can yield interesting insights into the way(s) in which class issues are realised and talked about in this micro-level. Second, students spend a considerable part of their time at school and they are, consequently, familiar with this context due to their everyday experiences in it. As Bourdieu maintained '... social agents use as their reference points in establishing social positions the figures typical of a position in social space with which they are familiar' (1987:10). Hence, a focus on the school spaces would present students with ample opportunities to talk about possible social class issues that might be pertinent to their lives.

The first part of the article discusses the theoretical frameworks upon which this analysis draws. In particular, Bourdieuan sociological understandings that underpin the multi-faceted nature of social class are used. In addition, a critical realist approach, which situates participants' understandings of class within a particular place in social reality, is adopted. The second part outlines the methodological approach of the research on which this article draws, describing the sample and discussing the nature of the interviews and other relevant methodological issues. The third part discusses the findings of this research focusing on the different ways students understand and talk about social class. Three main patterns are identified and discussed with relevant examples: (a) the direct manifestations of social class; (b) the indirect; and (c) the relational ones. Finally, the article ends with some concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

Theorising class conceptualisations

This article attempts to tease out the ways in which school students conceptualise social class

and talk about it in relation to themselves and their friends. In order to effectively engage in the process of understanding if and how social class operates as a recognisable context, I perceive social class as a dynamic and multi-level entity that plays out in economic, material, social, cultural, emotional and symbolic ways. Bourdieu's work is very relevant here (1984, 1986, 1987, Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991) as well as the more recent work of British sociologists, who drew from Bourdieu, such as Reay (2004, 2005) and Skeggs (2004). Drawing on these conceptual frameworks enables an understanding of contemporary class perceptions as not simply attached to economic elements of the classed self but also to cultural, social and symbolic dimensions of the way in which class operates in various fields (Bourdieu, 1986). In addition, class identities are indispensably linked to 'psychic' elements of everyday life ('thinking and feeling') (Reay, 2005) which are in turn manifested through various explicit and verbalised or implicit and silent ways. For instance, the embodiment of social class (see Bourdieu's bodily hexis [1984]) is one of the silent yet salient modes in which class is exhibited – consciously or subconsciously – by showcasing one's class locale through language, posture, clothing, etc. The acknowledgement of these multiple dimensions and manifestations of class is of paramount importance for an in-depth comprehension of students' class conceptualisations.

I adopt a critical realist paradigm (Bhaskar, 1978) which adheres to a realist ontology and a relativist epistemology. Critical realism suggests that there is a reality which exists independently of people's understandings (transitive side of knowledge) but that people cannot possibly capture this reality fully (intransitive side of knowledge). In line with that, I accept that class hierarchies exist and shape people's lives in an objective way through particular mechanisms and structures. At the same time, however, I accept that different individuals – *inter alia* the researchers – might understand and experience their particular positioning in the class hierarchy in different ways. Students' making sense of class – as it becomes evident through their discussions about this topic – is positioned within a stratified reality.² In other words, while I do not reduce the reality of the existence of class hierarchy to the understandings of a group of individuals – and on this occasion to the participants of this study – I do argue for the importance of valuing the perspectives and voices of people on the matter as these per se comprise an important part of the reality of the class hierarchy. This stance resonates with Bourdieuan conceptualisations of social class, as they recognise social class as an entity with both an objective and a subjective nature (Bourdieu, 1987).

Methodology

This research draws on data derived from in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups with 75 sixth-form students. The research was conducted in four London state secondary schools. The participants were aged between 16 and 17 years and were in Year 12 of the educational system, therefore studying at the sixth form of their school. The participants were recruited in three

different ways. The predominant recruitment method was through the sixth form administrators and the heads of the school's sociology department, who helped with the practical arrangements of my research within their schools. I originally carried out brief discussions with sixth form administrators and heads of sociology departments to explain the characteristics of the sample I was interested in, such as a balance between genders, ethnic backgrounds and programmes of study. Students were then approached on my behalf and asked if they would be happy to participate in my research. An interview appointment was then made at their convenience. The second recruitment method was a result of snow-balling via interviewed students and the third one was a result of self-proposed students who approached me to express an interest in participating in my research. The overall research sample comprised a balanced number of female and male participants, a good representation of students from different ethnic groups and social class backgrounds as well as students following a range of subject combinations.

Friendship-based socio-graphs were used as an incorporated activity within the interviews and served well in prompting discussions and encouraging students to engage in the interview process. In particular, students were asked to draw a socio-graph which included their close friends. A discussion then followed about various topics that related to their friendships. One of the discussed topics was the social class and/or socio-economic background of the friends included in the socio-graph. As the interviews were semi-structured in nature and the socio-graphs were used predominantly as a way to encourage interaction and rapport between myself and the research participants, the discussions often evolved and touched upon a range of other topics not strictly confined within the original interview questions posed. For instance, students would occasionally start commenting on their close – hence included in the socio-graph – friends but would then go on to discuss other people, both within and outside their school, who would not count as their friends but as mere acquaintances.

The social class background of participants was defined through their response to a question about their parents' occupation. Their responses were then categorised against the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) categories (Office for National Statistics, 2008) using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) documentation (Office for National Statistics, 2000a; Office for National Statistics, 2000b) as introduced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The anonymity and confidentiality of the research was made clear and it was explained to participants that there would be no possibility of their information being tracked back in any way. All data gathered from them was treated with confidentiality and according to the Data Protection Act 1998. The real name of all interviewed students was replaced by a pseudonym that students chose themselves at the end of each interview. Even though this was only a small prerogative given to students, they seemed to be satisfied with this option which served somewhat as a reassurance

that their anonymity and confidentiality would be respected. The schools' names, as well as other names mentioned in the interviews, such as those of teachers, head-teachers and students were also changed.

Finally, all interviewed students were involved in this study as 'active participants' (Alderson, 2005:30). This gave students some power over the interview processes and enabled them to express themselves relatively freely. According to Alderson there are advantages when including research subjects as 'active participants' in the research process. Firstly, 'they may enjoy the research process more' and secondly 'the findings may more accurately report their own views and experiences' (2005:30). In general, the young people who participated in this research responded positively to the interviews, were particularly talkative and seemed to enjoy the overall process.

Findings

Overall, the teenage students who participated in this study, appeared to recognise social class differentials well, particularly in relation to the way they were mirrored in the lives of people of their own age. Students' perceptions of themselves and others, in class terms, showcased their social-class awareness, to at least a certain extent. The manifestations of social class in students' accounts were not, however, identical. On the contrary, different students talked about issues related to social class in different ways and emphasised different class elements. On the one hand, some referred to social class, as a concept, by using explicit social class terminology. On the other hand, class perceptions were also portrayed in indirect and implicit ways. In the latter accounts, class was alluded to even though it was not explicitly named as such. Social class conceptualisations were, then direct or indirect. I argue, here, that both occasions of class conceptualisations (direct and named, indirect and unnamed) – and not just the former one – call for an acknowledgement and a careful analysis, as they might denote different kinds of class awareness. In addition, the analysis revealed a third pattern in the data which justifies the discussion of students' accounts of class in relation to a different category/theme, namely that of relational manifestations of class. A number of participants discussed understandings of class that were relational in nature, that is they were constructed in relation to others' characteristics and were fluid and changing in nature. So, this section discusses students' understandings of social class as they were manifested in three different ways: direct, indirect and relational.³

i. Direct manifestations of social class

There were 20 students whose accounts fell under the 'direct manifestations of social class' category. These students made direct references to social class, by explicitly naming it in their discussions. Jasmine's, India's and James' extracts below are representative examples that illustrate the way in which social class was named and understood.

INDIA: *I am middle class but all of my friends are working class, I don't know why, I just... I don't know I get on with working class people. (She pauses a little bit to think) Except I've got one friend who's from a similar background as me.*

RESEARCHER: *How about these friends here?(I point at her socio-graph)*

INDIA: *No, they are both working class.*

RESEARCHER: *How do you know they are working class?*

INDIA: *Well, I don't know, it's kind of like hard to define these things. I would say she, Anna, her mum has an unskilled job, if you see what I mean. She is a nanny, a babysitter, and she claims benefits and stuff like that. So in terms of money they would be considered to be working class. And also in terms of family values and stuff they are quite stereotypically working class.*

RESEARCHER: *Like what kind of values?*

INDIA: *(They have) more of an interest in popular culture and stuff like that.*

(India, White British, middle-class student)

India uses the concept of social class in an explicit way; she names social class in order to describe her own background and the background of her friends. When asked to elaborate her understanding of class, she admits that this process is not an easy one but then goes on to justify the use of the class categories in a very articulate manner. India's use of this combination of indicators to explicate her making sense of social class, namely occupational classification, income and cultural interests, implies a comprehensive and rigorous understanding of social class. The latter indicator ('interest in popular culture'), which can be perceived as a symbolic signifier of class (Bourdieu, 1984) and is equated by her with working-classness, speaks to Bourdieuan elaborations of class. According to Bourdieu (1984), different social classes exhibit different tastes and preferences to cultural processes, with middle-class people being more inclined toward refined and high culture and working-class people being more inclined toward popular culture.

As said by India, Anna and her family appear to value popular culture, which is a characteristic of the working classes. Even though not verbalised as such, the reference to this working-class taste for popular culture inevitably and implicitly entails an underlying juxtaposition to something else, something different, namely a middle-class taste for higher culture. The distinction between class tastes is strongly present here. Ultimately, as Bourdieu argues, 'taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier' (1984: 6) and India's conceptualisation of class characteristics seems to stem from this very classification.

Like India, other students too understood social class as an entity manifested on more than one level. Jasmine, for instance, used a different set of indicators to justify the allocation of her friends to class categories.

(Jasmine had previously made explicit reference to the concepts of 'working class' and 'middle class' background in relation to her friends)

RESEARCHER: *How do you know they belong to this social class?*

JASMINE: *Well I do because I have known them for quite a few time. Therefore you tend to know.*

RESEARCHER: *How can you tell this?*

JASMINE: *Because Rania's mum is a single mother, so you tend to know, Dora has a big seven bedroom house, so you tend to know that (laughs). And Kiran is always getting expensive clothes and watches therefore you can tell.*

(Jasmine, Indian, middle-class student)

First of all Jasmine's discussion of class in relation to her friends' background is telling of the ease and confidence with which a number of students mobilised a range of signifiers to assign class categories to their friends. Jasmine had, in previous parts of the interview, described her friend Rania as a working-class person, while her friends Dora and Kiran were characterised as middle-class people. It might be argued that Rania's categorisation as a working-class individual solely on the basis of her living on a single-parent household might be somewhat oversimplified and perhaps imprecise. Nevertheless, as Jasmine asserts, she has known her friends for a long time so it is likely that what is implied here about Rania's class background is a lack of economic latitude, which might be seen as associated with her lone-parent family.⁴ With regards to Dora's background, it seems to be ownership of a big house that determined her classification as a middle-class individual by Jasmine. This indicator was used by a number of other students when speaking about their friends' backgrounds. House ownership, especially a big house, was often put forward as a marker of middle-classness, whereas rented accommodation, and especially council housing, was seen as a signifier of working-classness. Finally, Kiran's dressing style, ie with expensive clothes and watches, demonstrates, according to Jasmine, a signifier of middle-classness. This was particularly common in many other student accounts. The fashion consumption of students was seen as a particularly classed attribute, with middle-class students being often described as wearing 'expensive', 'posh' or branded clothes as opposed to working-class students who were defined by the absence of the former. This classification, which is consistent with other studies on the topic (eg Elliott and Leonard, 2004), might appear to be a rather crude dichotomy, as not all middle-class students choose to wear expensive and branded clothes. Likewise, research evidence suggests that working-class students would often wear branded clothes, in order, for instance, to avoid stigmatisation (Hamilton, 2012). Yet, while students might not always use precise indicators and they might instead replicate some common stereotypes (Elliott and Leonard, 2004), it is important to acknowledge that their understanding of fashion consumption as being classed in nature is valid (Pilcher, 2011).

In discussing the multiplicity of class levels it would be fair to add here that the economic elements

of social class, as highlighted by Jasmine above as well as by other students, would often imply a symbolic value (Skeggs, 2004), additional to the economic one, embedded in class groups. The ownership of a big house and the expensive dressing, just like the various cultural tastes argued above, are symbolically charged and infer a dichotomy between working – and middle-class people. For instance, students' drawing on styles of clothing or other personal possessions (accessories, gadgets etc.) could be seen as an identification of the embodied symbolic capital which characterises the bearer of the possessions. Eventually, this 'bodily hexis' (Bourdieu, 1984) serves as a signifier of social class.

If for India and Jasmine class conceptualisation was expressed as a number of observations and juxtapositions about different students' characteristics, for James it was a result of his own lived experience; an experience that he perceived to not only be differential but also unfair.

JAMES: Because I'm working class and... (he pauses and thinks) I just don't see the point: there is this pub that just opened up and I went in there with my brother for his birthday and like... because we are working class... We were talking and having a laugh and that. And they kicked us out. And we were like 'you are kicking us out because we were talking'. And they said 'you were too loud'. And we knew... and we knew it was because of where we came from (area).

(James, White British, working-class student)

James identifies himself as a working-class individual in an assertive way – he mentions this twice in this extract, once in relation to himself alone and once in relation to both himself and his brother. He also implies a connection between his social-class background and his area of residence. Indeed, James had mentioned elsewhere in the interview that he lived in a council house, which was situated in a disadvantaged area with high crime rates (eg drug trafficking). The description of the pub incident reveals James' belief that he had been discriminated against on the basis of his social-class background and further suggests a level of embitterment. Over the course of the interview, James appeared to be very sensitive to issues of class inequalities and to class-related stereotypes. He expressed similar emotions of embitterment and even anger in other parts of the interview, talking about cases where he experienced stereotyping and/or deprecation as a result of his working-classness. This extract underpins, not only the confident and explicit way in which some students identified themselves in class terms, but also the complex emotional and 'psychic' elements (Reay, 2005) that might be implicated in such identities and relevant experiences. The recognition of class as a quality of the self would be to interpret everyday experiences and interactions in a class-acknowledging way. The engagement in such a process, as has been seen in James' case, might generate an array of emotions that emphatically shape the way individuals view their position within a social context.

Other participants did not mention social class in an explicit way in their accounts. They did, however, imply an awareness of social class by indirectly referring to social class issues.

ii. Indirect manifestations of social class

Fifty student accounts included 'indirect manifestations of social class'. This category comprises those students who did not name social class in their accounts, by using explicit class vocabulary such as 'working class', 'middle class', 'social class', yet made reference to social class signifiers thus implying some level of social class awareness. Even though students falling under this category differed from the students falling into the previous one in that they did not explicitly name social class, they also shared a similarity with them, in that they used equivalent and sometimes identical signifiers. For instance, James' description of the socio-economic background of his friends is very similar to the social class descriptors that Jasmine and India employed above.

JAMES: *Ah ...! Probably (my friends are) about the same (as me).*

RESEARCHER: *How can you tell, is that a guess or ...?*

JAMES: *Through their house, their parents' jobs. If they get the EMA.*

(James, White British, middle-class student)

For James, his friends' similarity with him was defined by their house, their parents' job and whether they received the EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) or not.⁵ This description bears a great resemblance to Jasmine's and India's elaboration of social class that included references to the house and the parental occupation of their friends. In addition, James adds that the EMA would be a good way of defining someone's socio-economic background. Clearly, eligibility for EMA would signify a low-income household and would therefore render its receiver an individual from a lower socio-economic background.

Different students highlighted different elements of class. Louise emphasised economic capital in order to compare herself to her friends. Coming from a poor, working-class family, she seemed to be effortlessly recognising the financial differences evident within her friendship circle.

LOUISE: *Most of them (friends in the socio-graph) are richer than ... (she thinks for a bit) No, they are all richer than me actually.*

RESEARCHER: *How can you tell this?*

LOUISE: *For example if there is a school trip or something I have to ask for my parents to give me the money or pay for it myself whereas my friends don't have a problem with that.*

(Louise, White British, working-class student)

As Louise argues, things such as paying for school trips could easily reveal students' economic background. She had mentioned elsewhere that her family was very poor and that she could not

ask them for money easily. This contrasts with her friends' experiences.

Louise's and James' extracts suggest a clear relevance to notions of social class. Indeed the characteristics they discuss have often been used as constituents or proxies of social class. On some other occasions, however, students' manifestations of class were very well concealed as they were inferred through a discussion of other issues seemingly independent from class. Nevertheless such discussions were often alluding to social class issues. Malcolm's extract below comprises an illustrative example of the 'between-the-lines' manifestation of class.

MALCOLM: I would say that a majority of them (fellow students) want to just get in... I mean some of them want to just get in and do their work and get good grades. But some of them I think are here just for friends. Because their friends come here.

RESEARCHER: Really?

MALCOLM: Yeah. I think they are nice people, they just... some of them don't want to learn. They are just here for the sake of it or just to get the EMA.

(Malcolm, Black African, middle-class student)

Malcolm's discussion of his fellow students, albeit not intending to portray social class issues in an intentional way, is pervaded by social class connotations. At first Malcolm does not allude to social class but uses instead social class euphemisms. He juxtaposes those students who do their work and get good grades to those who just attend school to be with their friends, implying thus that the latter do not study and do not get good grades, unlike the former students. This suggestion already proposes the existence of a dichotomy in students' education/study ethics. He then goes on to say that the latter students 'don't want to learn', denoting therefore a personal responsibility for their possible educational failure. The importance of social class and the inferred class dichotomies (working-classness versus middle-classness) are underlying yet vividly evident in these phrases. The implicit reference to a group of people who don't study, are not interested in learning and get poor grades can be seen as euphemisms for working-classness. This is in line with Reay's participants who referred to 'inner city', 'rough elements' and 'children from families who don't care' (1998:268) to denote a working-class background. Malcolm's final connection between the students who don't want to learn and the students who receive the EMA, confirms the denotation of social class in this framework. These kinds of understandings reflect commonly employed class pathologies that assume educational underachievement to be the responsibility (fault) of individuals and their families that have been widely exposed and critiqued by sociological research in the area of education (eg Crozier, 1997; Gillies, 2005). Moreover, Malcolm's indirect manifestation of class suggests that social class understandings are not just reliant on material and economic indicators but are also 'deeply felt' and 'emotionally structured by mutual disdain' (Evans, 2006: 28).

iii. Relational manifestations of social class

Ten student accounts fell under the ‘relational manifestations of social class’ category. These were characterised by lack of fixity and were, instead, fluid and flexible in nature. These relational class manifestations appeared to be shaped by contextual factors and therefore varied according to the context in question. It is worth mentioning at this point, that there is an overlap between the accounts examined here and those examined in the previous two sections. Indeed, the accounts examined in this section can be seen in relation to either the ‘direct’ or the ‘indirect manifestations of social class’ category. Yet, they warrant a consideration as a separate category, as I argue that they are neither random nor empty of meaning. Instead, they comprise a meaningful category with important implications.

Ryan’s extract below comprises a good example of the way students perceived class in relational terms.

RYAN: *I’m not trying to ... I’m not trying to say ‘Oh yeah, I’m really rich’ but I’m kind of really well off. I’m not bragging around to others saying ‘oh, I’m a rich guy’ but except from Mike, because he is really, really, really rich I’m richer than the other people. Cause I’ve got like a lot of property, so... Yeah, we’ve got a lot of property.*

RESEARCHER: *How about the rest of your friends?*

RYAN: *Mike and Tony are really well off. [...] The girls are just normal, Jane is normal, Nora is normal. Yeah! No one is really from a poor background. They are all from middle class I’d say. No middle class, there is no class. Just the medium. They’ve just got enough money to go and buy anything spare. None of them are broke, if you get what I mean.*

(Ryan, White British, middle-class student)

This extract is interesting in two different ways. First, within a short period of time the notion of class is (a) introduced in a direct way (‘direct manifestation of class’); (b) rejected altogether, and (c) re-introduced in an implicit way (‘indirect manifestation of class’). Ryan initially draws on economic capital and property ownership to talk about class and classify himself and his friends as middle class. He then, however, rejects the concept of middle-classness, arguing that class does not exist. This is consistent with other studies which suggest that many people do not easily acknowledge the presence of social class in their lives (Reay, 1998; Savage et al., 2001) and might instead adhere to the irrelevance of social class. On this occasion, however, the notion of class is re-introduced implicitly when Ryan states that his friends are in ‘the medium’ and that they have ‘enough money to go and buy anything spare’. The latter suggests a comfortable financial position that resonates with a middle-class experience. Second, despite Ryan’s debunking of social class, his account introduces the notion of the reference point. In the overall description of his and his friends’ background, he seems to acknowledge the existence of within-class differences, and their positioning in class terms is in turn shaped in relation and with reference to each other’s

positioning. So, even though they are all located within the middle-class (or the ‘middle’) category, there exist some visible financial differences between them. Ryan distinguishes between the ordinary (‘normal’) middle-class people and those who are more well-off than the ordinary, like Tony, then himself (‘richer than other people’) and then Mike (‘really, really, really rich’). The acknowledgment of heterogeneity within class fractions (Ball et al., 2004) in this instance, appears to lead to a relational understanding of the self and of others within a hierarchical context.

Likewise, other students’ class perceptions of the self were often infused with and shaped by a classed understanding of others and vice versa. As a result, class was not always seen as a fixed characteristic but as a subjective and context-sensitive one. A similar relational understanding of class is exhibited in Isabella’s extract.

ISABELLA: *Most of these people I would say they are about the same but some of them are not as well off as me. Most of them are about the same but ... They all call me rich (laughs). (That is true – from another interview they do consider her rich).*

RESEARCHER: *Why do they think that?*

ISABELLA : *Because I go on holidays with my family a lot so ... that’s funny (laughs).*

RESEARCHER: *Right. But what do you think? Do you not think you are (rich)?*

ISABELLA: *Not really, because family friends outside this school ... My mum and dad’s friends... their children all go to private schools and are really rich. So I think I’m so poor compared to them. But then compared to my friends here I say I’m not poor, I’m rich.*

(Isabella, White British, middle-class student)

The context has an overarching role in the understanding of the class position here. Of course context might also compromise class understandings as people only compare themselves with people they know. The existence of more than one reference point appears to be dynamically altering the way Isabella sees herself in class-related terms. At first she states that she is viewed by other students as being very rich. This is indeed true as Isabella’s rich and middle-class background was brought up in other students’ interviews. She initially attempts to decline this characteristic, arguing that she is in fact poor when compared to some of her family friends. Yet, in the end she admits that she is rich when compared to her school friends. To copy from Bourdieu ‘because an operation of classification depends on the practical function it fulfils, it can be based on different criteria, depending on the situation, and it can yield highly variable taxonomies’ (1987:10). Isabella, therefore, sees herself through different sets of lenses, defining herself as both rich and poor, depending on the situation and the ensuing reference point.

This relational vision is not random. The choice of the particular reference point and the subsequent articulation of a relational vision of the classed self can be seen as yet another class-infused action. On this occasion, the choice of Isabella’s original reference point, namely her family friends, allows

for her similarities with her school friends to be emphasised. Her identity, as a state-school student as opposed to a private-school student serves in conceding to her ‘normality’ (Papapolydorou, forthcoming) and ‘ordinariness’ (Savage et al., 2001) by reducing her own privilege (Stuber, 2006). This places the relational manifestation of class within a context of power relations. The flexibility suggested by relational manifestations of class is, in certain cases, dynamically implicated in power negotiations that feature the symbolic notions of class hierarchy. In the same vein, the relational vision of the classed self and of classed ‘Others’ is informed by other social identities that are involved in power processes and played out within a system of hierarchies. ‘Race’ identities, for instance, are strongly interlocked with and shape the understandings of social class. The two extracts below designate the complex yet systematic ways in which notions of class are informed by issues of ‘race’.

TOM: I've gone to people's houses and been shocked like... Cause you think they're not like that and their house is massive, like Luke (he points at one of his socio-graph friends). Like, he lives in (he names a neighbourhood) which is a high up area, and he is Black. And you wouldn't expect him to have a mansion basically. And he took us to his house and everyone was like 'Oh!' (surprise tone).

RESEARCHER: How come? Why would you not expect him to have a mansion?

TOM: I don't know. Cause he is just... Like, I don't know any other Black people who have massive houses so... I was just wasn't expecting it.

(Tom, White British, middle-class student)

(In a discussion about racism)

TASHELL: I had a couple of bad experiences. I was on the train and I was sitting in first class and a man came up to me and he was like 'Oh, do you know that this is first class?' and was like 'yes, I do' and he, was like 'Oh, we don't have many Black people in first class'.

RESEARCHER: So was that a person who was working there?

TASHELL: No, just a person sitting down. [...] I think he was White British.

(Tashell, Black African, working-class student)

The account of Tashell's train experience and Tom's visit to his friend's house emphatically suggest that some individuals' manifestations of class are relational in nature as a response to their readings of 'race'. Tom's surprise with his Black friend's big house and Tashell's fellow traveller's surprise with her presence at the first class compartment exemplify the 'race'-relational way in which class might be interpreted. Both the ownership of a big house and the purchase of a first class train ticket are signifiers associated with traditional notions of social class. Yet, here they are equated with 'race' notions. Of course, Tom's account of his false expectations of his friend's house suggests that such relational understandings of class can easily be distorted, as they are not based on sound class signifiers but on essentialisms. It further suggests, as does Tashell's account

of her own experience, that these kinds of relational class manifestations can be highly offensive and discriminatory.

Both incidents illustrate that Blackness can be perceived as by default working-classness and in turn as incompatible with middle-class spaces. This denotes the underlying assumption of an overlap between middle-classness and White-Britishness as well as the implicit discriminatory denial of the possibility of non-White British individuals occupying middle-class positions. This denial is problematized by Tashell, who perceives it as a bad experience and as a form of racism. On the other hand, it is rationalised by Tom on the grounds of the uniqueness of the case ('I don't know any other Black people who have massive houses'), reproducing therefore unconsciously and inadvertently racial stereotypes. Tom's rationale comprises a good example of the way class understandings might be limited, as a result of individuals' relational vision of and experience within a context.

My intention here is not to argue for the predominance of class over 'race' as an analytical category or the opposite but rather to stress that the vigorous way in which class intersects with 'race' (Anthias, 2007; Moore, 2008; Preston and Bhopal, 2011) and informs in turn the way class is conceptualised. When oppressed identities such as that of working-classness and Blackness coincide and/or are believed – sometimes mistakenly – to coincide, the reference point that determines the classed understandings ceases to be only class-related but instead becomes related to the particular juncture of class and 'race'.

All in all, class understandings that are articulated in relational terms suggest that identity perceptions are not fixed but flexible, shifting and organically attached to contexts. In addition, they suggest that this flexibility of perceptions might hide some important power relations evident within the class hierarchy and/or other kinds of hierarchies.

Conclusion

In this article I have demonstrated that students' conceptualisations of social class are diverse, as they were manifested in direct, indirect and relational ways. Most students articulated their social class understandings in an indirect way, using a tacit and less overt class vocabulary but drawing instead on class proxies and signifiers. A smaller number of students exhibited direct manifestations of social class using explicit references to social class terminology – ie by naming themselves and/or others as either working class or middle class. Yet, on both occasions the acknowledgement of social class was evident and the elaboration of its conceptualisation was mostly done in a studious and reflective way. Students exhibited an impressive mastery of social class proxies and indicators, such as occupation, income, ownership of cultural dispositions, symbolic connotations inscribed in

various individual manifestations (ie educational engagement, embodied status, etc.) that showcase a strong awareness of social class issues and an effective association. Furthermore, a group of students formed relational class understandings suggesting therefore that their class perceptions were not fixed and static but context-dependent. These very relational manifestations were often placed within broader contexts of power relations and were informed by relevant hierarchies.

The fact that significantly fewer students used direct manifestations of social class than indirect manifestations of social class might be explained by Savage et al's (2001) arguments about the difficulty and ambivalence with which people define their social class background. It is nevertheless important to note that despite the lack of a large number of direct manifestations of social class, students' accounts still seem to suggest that they recognise and understand social class characteristics in relation to themselves and to others. So the lack of use of an explicit class vocabulary does not necessarily appear to suggest lack of class awareness. On the contrary, overall, students appeared to hold well-informed conceptualisations of social class and of the complex yet prominent ways in which social class is evident in their everyday, mundane interactions within and outside the school.

To conclude, I suggest that despite a degree of variation in students' manifestations of class understandings it is important to acknowledge and examine them as (a) they demonstrate that class is still recognised by young people; (b) they reveal that class or class-related characteristics do matter as a quality of the self; and (c) they suggest their sensitivity to existing power relations. Future research can investigate the possible reasons that might drive the type of class manifestations in students' accounts. For instance, what factors might render a student more likely to employ direct manifestations of social class as opposed to indirect ones?⁶ Another question for further research is whether students' class conceptualisations are accompanied by an understanding of the way class operates to impact them and others. For instance, when students talk about social class in a direct or indirect way are they aware of the way(s) in which class processes influence their educational trajectories? Do they think that class matters, or do they believe that it is a characteristic of the self with no particular influence on their lives? While this research has generated some data suggesting that some students might be aware of the functions of class, a more systematic collection of data is required for this purpose. Having already established that class is a recognisable part of one's identity already rejects arguments that suggest the irrelevance of class in the way people perceive themselves. We do, however, need to know more about whether these perceptions come with a relevant awareness of social class *modus operandi*. This research question as well as the findings of this paper would be germane to the current era, where students who are now asked to pay higher fees than ever before to study at university, might be facing very precarious employment prospects, and in turn be part of a society with a more polarised class structure.

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Notes

- 1 For a more comprehensive literature review on the relevance of social class identities see Savage et al. (2001: 876-878).
- 2 Essential to critical realism is the notion of multiple layers of reality. Reality in critical realism is stratified in three layers: the Empirical, the Actual and the Real. The Empirical relates to how we understand certain events/actions through our senses, the Actual represents the actual events/actions as they take place in space and time – irrespective of whether we realise them or not – and finally the Real depicts the causes, mechanisms and procedures that generate the events (Actual). So whereas in essence the Real exists first followed by the Actual and then by the Empirical, in practice we begin by the Empirical to realise the Actual and investigate – attempt to understand – the Real. Yet, the understanding of the Real (intransitive world) can only be fallible (transitive view) as there is never one mechanism or process causing the Actual but in fact multiple mechanisms are taking place at the same time, combining their power or even neutralising each other's power. As a result, individual understandings and experiences comprise an important part of social reality but do not capture the ultimate reality fully (fallibilism).
- 3 An important point to make at this point is that, as any socially developed category, the categories employed here are not perfect and discrete, in a mathematical sense of the words. In fact, various accounts of students could fall into more than just one of the abovementioned categories, suggesting, therefore, an element of overlap. This, however, should be seen as an inevitable result of the process of analysing social phenomena, as 'it is impossible to find, in the real world, clear-cut discontinuities' (Bourdieu, 1987:2). Despite some extent of overlap and category-boundary fusion, the breaking down of class manifestations in different categories – from an analytical point of view – serves well in facilitating a better comprehension of the way class is understood and discussed.
- 4 This would be corroborated by recent statistical evidence that suggests that 'children in lone-parent families were more likely to live in low-income households and households experiencing low income and material deprivation than those in families with two adults' (DWP, 2012: 92)
- 5 Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was a bursary given to students between the age of 16 and 19 who remained in education after the end of compulsory education and whose household income was below £33,950. The EMA was abolished under the Coalition

government which was formed in 2010.

- 6 A hypothesis would be that students undertaking Sociology, as a subject at school, might be more likely to use direct manifestations of class in their accounts, as they are exposed to class terminology. Studying Sociology might indeed help develop a class vocabulary. Yet, this factor alone cannot fully explain the distinctions between the different types of class manifestations, as a number of students who did not study Sociology employed direct manifestations of class and many students who studied Sociology employed indirect manifestations of class.

The construction of childhood, learning and play: an evolutionary and ecological revision

John A. Smith

Abstract

This article provides a critique of the simpler forms of social constructionism as a paradigm for understanding play and suggests that an interdisciplinary combination of social construction and evolutionary psychology and biology is necessary. Despite recognition of the importance of play in cognitive and social development there is still a persistent view of play as something humans do – and which appears irrational or wasteful in evolutionary terms: a surplus to be minimised. However evolutionary biology shows that play is widespread in the animal kingdom. If play is an evolutionary stable strategy then it is mistaken to think it is superfluous and confined to humans. Nor is play a phenomenon of childhood. It may be seen instead as an essential characteristic of social communication, invention and solidarity. This echoes E.O. Wilson's work on sociobiology and the need for consilience between the social, the psychological and the physical sciences.

Key words: evolutionary psychology, sociobiology, post-natal plasticity.

The limits of social construction as a paradigm

THE SOCIOLOGY of childhood is apt to contrast its constructivist or interpretive perspectives on childhood with biological, psychological or structurally-oriented formulations. In common with many radicalisms, it may therefore be in danger of being defined by what it opposes and by a formulation of that opposition from a position of externality, or ignorance and hostility sufficient to make it untenable. This, I argue, is the current condition of the insistence on the 'social construction of childhood'. However, whilst insisting that this is a question of degree: the social construction of childhood is not itself unreasonable; it is simply not sufficient as a causal ground. Of course, constructionists will admit to the biological, physical or 'natural' dimensions of childhood. But to admit is not to theorise; the charge of possible neglect remains open.

Constructivism cannot itself be gainsaid. It is a central proposition of many disciplines, appearing if not entirely independently then at least distinctively in, for example, philosophy, evolutionary theory, cognitive biology, cybernetics, biosemiotics, the theoretical branches of the physical sciences and mathematics. Each of these disciplines concedes in its own way the traditional and ancient distinction between the construction of representations (especially representations to

oneself as humans, organisms or communities) and ‘quasi-externality’ to which they refer. So far as a ‘solution’ to that quasi-externality cannot be authenticated, construction is a permanent condition and constructivism is a permanent requirement. But this is itself a condition, not a construct. Put differently, it is an imperative demanded by reason. This does not stop unreasonable positions being taken, indeed they may be necessary to human survival; but neither does it give exemptions. Moreover it points to an important issue in the cross-disciplinary conceptions of constructivism: whereas the sociological version tends to dwell on groups’ and communities’ habitual perceptions, evolutionary and biological versions tend to stress the ecological sufficiency of ‘perceptions’ for survival. Put sharply, where the sociological version stresses at least plasticity and at most conventionality, the more ecologically-oriented constructivisms are about necessity and survival. No doubt this is due to sociology’s emphasis on humans and social phenomena. The question remains: is this over-humanistic and therefore a misplaced emphasis? Conversely, would a more inclusive conception of humanity-within-the-biosphere be illuminating or still met with suspicion?

The ability to model social phenomena as *sui-generic* in the strictest sense arguably begins with Durkheim: ‘Social facts do not differ from psychological facts in quality only; they have a different substratum; they evolve in a different milieu; and they depend on different conditions’ (1964: 31).

The discussion must at this point leave ‘childhood’ and confront the more general domain of social phenomena. Surely Durkheim is right at least to some degree? Arguing from the perspectives of ecology and complexity theory, I propose that Durkheim is right to a degree and therefore also, to a degree mistaken. Note that we do not present this as a difference of paradigms but as an intrinsic and unacceptable limitation that must be overcome. The model is too simple, too uniform, too restricted to the assumed ontological priority of the social.

A complexity based or ecological model would differ in two crucial respects. The first is the concept of path-dependency. This position asserts that however different the new milieu (in this case the social) it is path-dependent upon a preceding substratum. This would not simply be ‘human psychology’ or biology, but mammalian ethology, as a generalised phenomenon, its causes, history and functions. The ‘ecology’, so to speak is not a social event but an altogether more extensive series of phenomena. They evolve in a *different milieu*? No, in *different milieux*, in time frames far older; in evolution as an all-embracing concept. Put more radically, social phenomena cannot be *sui generic* in the strict sense because nothing is ‘singularly’ *sui generic*. The concept of self-organisation in complexity theory is radically ecological: self-organisation with respect to others and with results compatible, robust, probable with respect to others.

Citing Morin (2002) this can be called *auto-eco-organisation*. This is a *qualitative* matter: neither the ‘eco’ nor the ‘auto’ component can be indeterminate if ‘self’ organisation is to emerge. Differently put this is a fundamentally ecological concept; there is no place in that ecology for a

'member' of arbitrary constitution. There must be a 'quality' of sorts, a propensity, a direction, at least a positive or negative valuation. In this sense, the status of social phenomena, I concede, is very much a second-order or *emergent* phenomenon. But second-order status should not be seen as a diminution but rather as an acceptance of the fundamentally ecological character of emergent self-organisation. Path dependency implies sets of 'good reasons' and advantages; that is, momenta towards ecologically stable outcomes that are, by definition more likely than others. This cannot stand simply on the basis of communal human preference. Where 'social constructs' persist such that they command members to respond (an entirely Durkheimian position) their 'probability' (or robustness) stands in contradiction to the notion that they 'could have been otherwise'. Path dependency, auto-*eco*-organisation and conventionality are opposed principles.

Consequently: auto-eco-organisation and path dependency require different concepts of possibility and probability. We can now emphasise that unlike Durkheim (given our radical reading) and certainly unlike postmodern theory, ecological complexity theory has a completely different concept of possibility and probability. For modern and postmodern, both humanist through and through, probability is thought in terms of human invention, relatively free from previous constraint; hence the enormous importance of both conventionality/normality and its discontents. But order of any kind, dynamic or fixed, normative or highly individualised cannot arise from indeterminacy or the absence of propensity. There must be propensity or indeterminacy will endure! And we as humans are part of, inheritors of that propensity. Certainly, we are resourceful, inventive manipulative but that is far from self-invention. The concept of probability in complexity theory is not one of authorship (given a blank slate) but rather a question of viability in a landscape that already precedes our 'creativity' and adaptation. True, the genius of our restless species lies in modifying that landscape – the lived-in environment – to suit our purposes but only insofar as we recognise and manipulate its material character. It cannot be successfully managed as a phantasm, a fiction. And part of that lived-in environment is our fellow humans.

Where humanisms of the Durkheimian, modern or postmodern kinds emphasise human autonomy, complexity theory has the much more modest notion of a degree of post-natal plasticity. This is derived from evolutionary psychology, in particular, Tooby and Cosmides (1992). The suggestion that we are less free than we think, or more radically, that our social structures, including those that constrain us, have more robust roots than the actions of privileged human ruling groups is, I admit, disappointing to a (post)modern intellectual culture reared on two centuries of promised emancipation. The counterbalance, the 'hope' lies in a rather different concept of creativity. Echoing the idea that self-organisation is not simply confined to the human and social, Kaufmann (2008) suggests that creativity itself belongs to the general properties of self-organisation: that dynamic phenomena through auto-catalytic processes are *disposed* to occupy, take up or 'explore' the 'next adjacent possible' form. This is clearly a form of dynamic path dependency. It is a defining characteristic of all phenomena that are not strictly bounded but on the contrary are able to ground

‘new’ or emergent phenomena. Ecologies, human or not are exclusive examples; so are physical dynamics, climate systems, markets, technologies, cultures, moral systems.

I propose then that the *sui generis* status of social phenomena is more accurately conceptualised as having a strong relation to evolution and ‘exaptation’. The classic biological example of exaptation (sometimes called pre-adaptation) is the evolution of feathers. Fundamentally a form of insulation, they have been exapted to the functions of flight. A more subtle but contextually appropriate example is the exaptation of human mouthparts to generate verbal language. None of these is a limitation, for none of the developments are possible without their respective antecedents.

The problem that limits social theory by *oversimplifying* its phenomena is the assertion that they are uniquely, wholly and entirely ‘social’. The implication is that they create their own ground. Not only does this neglect the ecology of competing social dynamics but authors as a matter of habit, the neglect of questions of ‘archaeology’ or evolution. This is so entrenched that the very mention of evolution invokes suspicions of far-right claims to fixed natures. This is a total misunderstanding. With this simple replacement of terms we at once ally sociological with biological accounts of path-dependent evolutionary dynamics. Nothing is lost: the human social preserves its salience in exactly the same way that other species do. Nothing is lost in conceding the human animal, except prejudice. No principled limitation is given to our creativity, except that it is grounded, not *sui generis*.

I can take the point further. In each of the examples cited above, the original function of the antecedent is conserved, despite its ‘development’. The more neutral term is ‘emergence’. That term should be understood chronologically. No sense of improvement is intended. If we concede the functionality of the antecedent (feathers as insulation) there is no implication that the later exaptation (feathers for flight) is more or less functional. It is simply an ecological possibility – and we should conclude from the success of birds, that it is an ecologically robust outcome. Similarly the exaptation of mouthparts for speech in humans presents an ecologically robust development. It may be (if we sufficiently pollute the planet) that our ‘success’ is short-lived. Short of our extinction, then, language represents an emergent increase in fitness or adaptation. This insight in no way limits the complexity of language: on that score, language can speak for itself. It does however, place language-as-game(s) with the emphasis on conventionality and arbitrariness in the wasteland. The *ecology* of language then moves in to the foreground.

Before progressing to further considerations, let us revisit the social constructionist perspective. Remember that forms of constructionism can be found in many disciplines. However, for most scientific enterprises, construction – especially the construction of information ‘about’ the physical and biological environment – is the outcome of predispositions or ‘qualities’ in materials, interactions or sensory systems. So, the *outcome* information generated by, say, a cat hunting

prey is premised on a previous genetic ‘information’ system encoded and realised in the cat’s ontology. If social construction is *sui generis* or conventional in the strict sense then outcomes are primarily matters of chance. Put in more familiar terms, this is a direct, if unacknowledged echo of a *tabula rasa*. How then do characteristic patterns arise? Presumably by routines, habits, recurrences, repeated iterations. That is, the environment – all that lies outside the ‘individual’ – is the source of the way the *tabula rasa* gets patterns, lumps, characteristics. This is a staggeringly passive conception of so-called ‘construction’.

It is not uncommon, however, in constructivist versions of the operation of power. The sociology of education is full of remarkably passive working class and ethnic minority pupils who are ‘failed’ by the education system, teachers, middle class ideology, or whatever. Similarly the perpetrators of these discriminatory or controlling practices are themselves acting in a semi-automatic manner. This is the implication of ‘institutionalised’ discrimination, or Foucauldian notions of governmentality, or the more functionalist forms of socialisation. Remember also that there is no ‘drive’ proposed other than randomness.

If we translate the matter into computational terms the full absurdity can be grasped. Imagine a computer that is completely blank. The simpler forms of constructionism imply a ridiculous scenario where the computer ‘acquires’ a word processing programme because, by chance, there are lots of words in the environment, which the computer can somehow ‘sense’. But that could have been otherwise. Of course we all know that the ‘programme’ is actually created and put in by another rational agent. This leads to the radical proposition that constructionism that involves a *tabula rasa* to any degree is simply an agnostic or degenerated form of creationism, not enriched by knowledge of the sciences of emergence.

Evolutionary Psychology as an alternative

An exact parallel can be found in the understanding of play. The simpler forms of sociology understand play – and creativity – as something literally created by and unique to humans. Should the claim be more modest? Is play more like the phenomena (socio)biologists understand as the extended phenotype, something more like ‘behaviours’ exhibited by social insects, beavers, the higher social animals?

Both positions have their advantages and disadvantages. Unbounded creativity promises freedom but at the grave expense of conventionality. Anything is possible; anything could have been otherwise; nothing has virtue over and above anything else. In this sense the murder of Jamie Bulger was ‘play’. If that disturbs or revolts you, then you implicitly refer to limits. If those limits are only themselves creations then they too are insufficient to function as limits. If, instead, we

think of limitations as part of the human behaviours necessary to survival, then an ethics grounded in the biosphere rather than the narrower sense of elected human habit becomes possible. The clear cost is the limitation of human freedom to something akin to post natal plasticity, the raising of the terrifying question of what counts as ethically 'natural' human behaviour.

We have to move to a conception of ontogeny, whether human or not whose ancestral origins and processes belong to what Durkheim ruled out: an intimate relation between the (human) organism and its entire adaptive environment. This relation is the missing 'agent' of emergent orders. As Bjorklund and Pelegrini (2000: 1690) put it:

Counter to some misconceptions, evolved psychological mechanisms exist in transactional relations with environmental factors. Believing that certain behaviours are under the influence of evolved psychological mechanisms does not imply that aspects of the physical and social environment do not play a critical role in the development or form of behaviour. In fact quite the opposite is true; most evolved mechanisms are quite sensitive to variations in environments and are expressed differently according to one's surroundings.

However, the point can be sharpened. The living is better understood as an emergent possibility of the non-living environment that immediately precedes it. That is the upshot of Lovelock's *Ghaia* (1988) and Kauffmann's 'next adjacent possible'. It is also far from the 'estrangement' of human consciousness from its environment premised in Descartes, Kant and contemporary phenomenology. More precisely, if the living is seen as an event, a next adjacent possible, for a particular non-living environment then we must understand that this is a direct process of conversion. Maturana and Varela's (1980) influential concept of *autopoiesis*, virtually unknown in education and social theory, captures this. Autopoiesis means self-structuring. In the context of the living it means obtaining the necessary 'materials' from a given environment to 'convert' into the structures of the organism. Whilst this is genetically organised such that a persistent separation appears between organism and environment, it is necessarily also 'structurally coupled' to that environment. Crucially, the organism's structure 'organises' that coupling. Again citing Morin (2002) this can be termed auto-exo-reference. We are not speaking of standards of truth here but ecological viability: the thing in itself in Kant's sense is wholly irrelevant. Nor is this confined to the simpler animals: an understanding of trees 'in themselves' is irrelevant to beavers, birds, or human wood-based technologies.

I cannot pursue this in detail here but see Smith and Jenks (2006) and Hayles (1991, 1999) for a fuller discussion. However the outcome of auto-exo-reference is that humans are the inheritors of 'informational' strategies of relationship to and survival in the biosphere. These strategies include instinct and emotion shared with other species as well as the 'uniquely' human qualities of highly-developed intelligence, symbol-usage and verbal language. Where sociology, philosophy

and education tend to emphasise, or better, *assert* human uniqueness, evolutionary psychology emphasises relationships and inheritance with the physical environment and the biosphere.

Far from being a *tabula rasa*, evolutionary psychology sees the human mind as a complex anatomy of component parts that have been ‘tested’ across many species but also as the extreme development of intelligence, eusociality, communication and technology. There is lively debate about how ‘modular’ and domain/task specific these components are and whether domain-specific or domain-general attributes confer evolutionary advantage (see Tooby and Cosmides, 1992; Burgess and MacDonald, 2005; Pinker, 1997). The claim for the former is that they, so to speak, are ready to act; they simply need activation, rehearsal or ‘play’. The claim for the latter is increased post-natal plasticity. Both ‘have a point’. I am inclined to use the fall-back of true ‘to a degree’. However I also want to stress an equally ‘tangled’ relationship of integration and insulation. For example, instinctive responses (such as fear) are hard-wired and immediate; in evolutionary terms they are resource efficient. Intelligent perusal – perhaps after the fact of fear – is resource-expensive and crucially, much slower. It is essential that both systems interact but also that they preserve their own specific qualities (for a fuller discussion for relationships between instinct, emotion and conscious deliberation see Plotkin, 2003 and TenHouten, 2007).

Modularity also implies constraint (Bjorklund and Pellegrini, 2000) or at least predisposition. Regions of animal and human brains show specific adaptations to certain kinds of relation and response to an environment. The discussion above on the *tabula rasa* indicates that such constraints, adaptations and predispositions are not to be viewed negatively but rather as the foundations of human possibility. Post-structuralism is wrong to see that as a threat: an adapted, evolved domain-specific conception of mind is far more positive than one shaped by chance and conventionality.

Play and developmental stage theory

Many animals play. Those with the most developed intelligence tend to play most, ‘and the two traits have probably co-evolved’ (Konner, 2010:500). This again underscores the evolutionary basis of play in the biosphere, rather than simply in human culture. As Konner notes play ‘combining as it does great energy expenditure and risk with apparent pointlessness is a central paradox of evolutionary biology’ (ibid.) However, there seems to be a reasonable consensus that play enables the development of motor and social skills and promotes skill development in interaction with the environment. Konner also mentions pleasure derived in play, between mother and infant interaction, peer interaction and individual ‘practice’. Lack of play is also seen to limit development but also play itself is reduced in conditions of adversity and scarcity. Play is clearly central to human development but on the other hand, the amount of time devoted to maturation in humans points toward the paradox of risk and expenditure. There is no apparent resolution, except perhaps to

emphasise that pleasure and satisfaction itself may be part of the cost-benefit equation. Another key dimension is that 'risk' and associated energy expenditures are necessary to learning and maturation and the 'management' of risk through the simulacra of play is a 'rational' evolutionary strategy. There seems little doubt however, given our extraordinary success as a species, that the costs of prolonged immaturity generates benefits, if deferred.

I propose to concentrate on a rather tautological answer to why human maturation takes so long: because nature cannot do it any faster (see, for example, Burgess and MacDonald, 2005). There is a physical dimension to this, which is by no means exclusively human. That is the relationship between head size and the female pelvis. The more important dimension is related to the maturation of the adult brain. Again this is not unique but is particularly significant in humans. The idea that capabilities, for example language, have to be activated, rehearsed, developed, especially at critical developmental points is well known. An implied but not well-developed idea, certainly not in popular academic consciousness, is the importance of parallel processing in functioning consciousness (for a fuller discussion see Dennett, 1991; 2003; Smith and Jenks, 2006). These are in turn crucially active in humans as an intelligent, adaptive and eusocial species.

I do not propose to develop the first of these here. I merely want to stress that the activation of any faculty or capability in any species in relation to its actual environment is crucial to survival. Unlike the Utopian simplicity of social construction *ex nihilo* without limit and implicitly without risk, the outcome of this co-construction could be negative, disastrous, even fatal. Taken further, this underscores both the necessity and risk of embodied and adapted cognition. Contemporary learning theory (Illeris, 2009; Jarvis and Parker, 2005) aided by cognitive science points to the maximisation of adaptive synapse production and connection in childhood, especially from birth to five. At the same time there is redundancy and elimination: repetition reinforces 'hard wiring' whilst its absence induces selective pruning. This is clearly risk laden: the development of cognitive adaptation to one environment may preclude or produce obstacles to the successful adaptation to a different environment. The concept of (human) play that follows from this is one of building motor, sensory, emotional and social expertise. Illeris (2009) and Jarvis and Parker (2005) characterise this stage as active but acquisitive, very much learning about. Perhaps one could say that the 'exo' dimension is maximised and necessarily so, since the young child is very much 'learning to be'. Whilst 'active' in the sense of needing performance and engagement there is a sense of autonomy, or drive, or imperative in the concept of play and learning at this stage: adaptation to an environment is, in a sense, 'demanded'. Following Alexander (1989), Burgess and MacDonald (2005) also propose that the predominant factor, indeed the greatest threat, to modern humans is other humans. This, it is argued, is the involuntary drive behind the need to ratchet up human intelligence (see Burgess and MacDonald, 2005:88).

For later adolescence, (Stein, 2005) the situation is somewhat different. Where early childhood

is characterised by synapse production and ‘pruning’ occurs as a sort of natural wastage – the elimination of the insignificant or non-repetitive, post-puberty, the pruning process is radical and pro-active. The question of social identity formation with respect to peers becomes dominant. One might say that given auto-exo-reference, now the ‘auto’ pole is expressed as the dominant one. Differently put, this is work on one’s social identity, the sharpening of highly specific adaptation. As Durkheim’s concept of organic solidarity or TenHouten’s work on the emotional structure of social relations teaches us, this role-formation is necessary. It is the construction of a socio-ecological ‘niche’. But any emphasis on the ‘auto’ rather than the ‘exo’ is also risk-maximising. An identity tightly formed in childhood or adolescence in one environment may turn out to be dysfunctional in another. Could this be why many of the commitments of youth culture are seen as chaotic from the outside?

To conclude this section, I now propose that the natural or normal form of human behaviour occurs within or around an attractor shaped by key ancestral evolutionary forces of survival: intelligence, adaptability, eusociality but also by the actual contemporary social and technological environment of survival. This is why sociology and the social ‘construct’ must recognise the agency of ancestral adaptation and become an interdisciplinary concept.

The I/me relationship and parallel processing

The constructionist perspective reasserts itself with vengeance in the I/me relationship, which is arguably most fully developed and expressed in humans (though of course its forms must be ancestrally present in species-specific forms in social animals). The problem, simply is that I, as I appear to myself and ‘me’, as the object of another’ perception, remains my perception. Whilst this perception is necessarily interactive and has strong elements of reciprocal influence the facts of guesswork, hypotheses, prediction and self-signalling are central. I/me is better understood as a continuum or what Dennett (2003) saliently terms a smear: identity is this smear. Perhaps this allows us some insight into the paradoxical length of time spent – or squandered – on play: it is a necessarily open process of signalling, interpreting, concluding, repositioning that knows no end. Perhaps we could compare it to linguistic ‘competence’ which is in one sense a contradiction since it is without limit. This is not rare in the biosphere or human culture: basic levels of competence or the ability to perform a behaviour without major risk by no means rule out constant elaboration. In this sense we may be mistaken in thinking that the play stage is surprisingly long in humans. Rather the play stage is rarely, if ever complete. It simply transforms itself into adolescent and adult stages, informed by their own cultural milieu. This why we think of music making as ‘playing’ something, or the arts as creativity and at the same time continue to ‘reserve the right’ to regard them as superfluous, excess. Without stretching the imagination too far, a hugely significant proportion of human activities could be regarded (mistakenly) as instances of excess when they

might be better understood as exploration of the next adjacent possible.

Parallel processing is almost never discussed in this context. Indeed any consideration is rare except for arcane technical discussion. Dennett (1991, 2003), has been active in bringing it into philosophy or non-specialist consideration. Put simply ‘wetware’ or biological information processing systems, especially the human brain are utterly unlike hardware/software in computers. The former exhibit massively parallel processing, the latter, despite sophisticated development remains massively serial. The functionality of serial processing depends on carrying out specific instructions or iterations one at a time but with fantastic rapidity. The economic production of serial units is for example, present in ‘ordinary’ family cars with, say, anti-lock systems; the adverts routinely claim ‘millions of calculations a second’. The term ‘components’ is apt and echoing the discussion above, they are highly modular.

The discussion here must be extremely abbreviated but several dimensions should be mentioned. First, the human brain shares a history of development with other species. Certain parts of the brain as an anatomical complex are far older in evolutionary terms than others. Second, there is clearly a degree of modularity. Humans uniquely have a ‘module’ that makes symbolic language possible. At the same time there is debate, as indicated above, how domain specific or domain general these modules are. This, in effect, raises the third dimension which I want to consider here as the degree of integration between or insulation of the modules is evident. Fourth, there is the related question of levels of consciousness, of intended or ‘automatic’ responses. Fifth (you may usefully compare this with the car) is the ability of individuals to adapt and exploit differentially and so influence their status now and for both natural and cultural ‘offspring’. The list is of course merely indicative and we are only in a position to consider some implications, no ‘answers’.

If we propose that both domain specificity and domain generality are true to a degree and that there must be some level of integration between older, simpler and newer more complex, it sounds like an evasion, possibly necessary at this stage but certainly not without profound implications. Given this proposition then, we can reduce our five dimensions, I propose, to three: Un/subconscious processing, conscious end-directed behaviours, but also something between the two. This dimension is rarely addressed and has no accepted name. Dennett (2003) refers to them as expert routines. I prefer to stress that they are so rehearsed, practised, *played with*; they do not demand fully conscious deliberation, indeed at times they may be subconscious.

Unconscious systems, such as the immune, respiratory and digestive systems, in evolutionary terms, precede, and do not require ‘completion’ by conscious deliberation, though malfunctions may induce consciously experienced symptoms. Conscious manipulation and deliberation are everyday experiences we take for granted. Those ‘in between’ pose more problems. It is obvious that learning to walk requires conscious deliberation but, in time, becomes such an expert routine

that it demands little conscious deliberation. Those with leg injuries may, however, need to re-deliberate in order to recover. From personal experience of a relatively minor injury that takes time, practice and considerable cost. However, most of us have forgotten learning to walk – which rather underscores the point. Moreover, there are many activities we have learned and forgotten: learning to read for example. Learning to drive, however, is often within recall. Remember the level of deliberation needed? Recall the urge to look at the foot-pedals? How much careful thought did road positioning take? After a considerable amount of rehearsal, driving becomes almost subconscious – but, with the interesting revision that it can be brought instantly to full consciousness when decisions need to be made or where adverse conditions threaten. This is the characteristic of expert routines – one can literally forget to drive when one becomes expert but instant recall is at your disposal.

It also underlines the particular character of parallel processing. You may be listening to the radio or thinking about a problem, minding the children in the car, participating in a conversation, but the expert routine is there, just below the process you are conscious of, just below consciousness itself, yet active, skilful and open to immediate recall. Perhaps this ability of expert routines to run almost but not entirely automatically is what demands such long periods of rehearsal. Now put this in the context of learning to speak, learning to read, learning what is socially necessary, mastering the co-ordination of the body and it becomes much more comprehensible that play and learning take so much time. This ‘repetition’ amounts to the automatising of behavioural repertoires such that parallel processing is possible. Indeed, having spent a great deal of time trying to help ‘serious’ non/poor readers (with modest success) it is very clear that the inability to make fairly automatic, and so ‘expert’, some basic aspects of literacy has huge implications. The poor reader, like the raw learner-driver has to consciously deliberate everything; there is no take-for-granted foundation. But if you can assist in the synthesis of such a foundation, progress becomes possible.

It is not simply that skill acquisition takes time – bird flight, for example is massively impressive yet accomplished quickly. It is rather that play, rehearsal and learning particularly in humans has to create a massive and varied repertoire that is both integrated and isolated to the ‘correct’ degree. All of that too, must be integrated/isolated with other humans. We may, then, be ‘theoretically’ surprised by the time devoted to play and the slow pace of maturation, but in practice it is the prodigy who accomplishes things at remarkable speed that is the rarity and the true surprise.

In place of a conclusion

It seems presumptuous to offer any sort of conclusion when, in fact, I am proposing the opening, or at least the redevelopment of a field of study. We are, frankly, just at the outset. However some broad implications are clear.

1. Play is not confined to human children but on the contrary is widespread amongst the larger-brained species.
2. The idea that play is superfluous is flatly contradicted by being widespread across species. In humans it is clearly a persistent evolutionary stable strategy. That completely refutes any notation of excess. That is a mistake comparable with saying that birds, butterflies or flowers would be more 'economical' if they were less 'excessively' coloured. Nevertheless the idea that play is a waste of time is strongly embedded in British education; a fine example of a social construct that is palpably false.
3. Play is not confined to human *children*, nor does it decline with age. The argument that it simply changes its form in adolescence and adulthood is at least plausible. Again related to the excess thesis or surplus value doctrine in Marxism, behavioural repertoires in human collectives that appear to have no direct, positive cost-benefit outcome are widespread. That does not mean that there is no benefit but rather that we misunderstand it. Given the sheer volume and variety of resource expenditure we devote to what the parsimonious might call unnecessary, this too must be a social construction that has become not only derelict but an obstacle to understanding.
4. There is fascinating work on the relationships of emotion to social action (Tenhouten, 2007; Tracy, Robins and Tangney, 2007) and closely related (if not acknowledged) study with behavioural economics (Loewenstein, 2008; Ariely, 2009) on what appears to be irrational human behaviour in cost-benefit terms.
5. We *must* lose our phobia about evolutionary psychology. The perversions of eugenics and racism cannot be grounds for the illusion of self-creation. Would the term *ecological* psychology be more acceptable?
6. Evolution and self-organisation are closely allied theories. They are thoroughly neglected in the humanities, sociology and education. They provide our best chance of some sort of consilience with the sciences. They cannot be ignored.
7. Understanding that the brain is not analogous with a serial computer but is rather a cluster of parallel processing systems is essential. There is the beginning of an attempt to provide a holistic version of past and contemporary learning theory that is not ashamed of evolution, biology or ecology (Kahn and Kellert, 2002; Jarvis and Parker, 2005; Illeris, 2009). Modern developments in neurobiology are acknowledged in this work, together with the sobering fact that our understanding of the brain and learning is in its infancy.

Darwin gave us the founding tautology of the survival of the fittest. Put differently, that which can survive, will survive; that which can happen, may happen even if only a fraction of possibility is made actual. We must embrace the consequence: a discipline founded on the ontologically possible, robust emergence, without preconceptions based on older systems of belief or preference.

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Identity, youth and post-modern social landscapes

Ewa Sidorenko

Abstract

This article explores contemporary cultural expectations of identity development. It draws on the work of constructivist developmental psychologist Robert Kegan to demonstrate a conceptually relevant link between a sociological characterisation of contemporary society and a focus on psychological processes involved in adolescence. This makes it possible to ask new kinds of questions about inequality and to create a theoretically sound rationale for political interventions into the lives of the young.

Key words: Kegan, constructive developmentalism, identity, self, post-modernity.

‘Where there is no vision, the people perish’.

[Proverbs 29:18]

CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY celebrates ideas of change, readiness for challenges ahead, flexibility, and self-reliance. These attitudes form part of a landscape of expectations and attributes of contemporary adulthood. How is the changing culture affecting young people’s sense of self? Is there a class dimension to growing up without modern cultural and institutional ‘certainties’?

The ‘discovery of childhood’ first, during the seventeenth century (Aries, 1962) and then its gradual construction as a field of interdisciplinary knowledge has given us insight into diverse and fascinating phenomena of childhood and youth. As a field, childhood studies incorporates interest in adolescence and youth, but its upper age boundary seems robustly indeterminate and slowly shifting upwards. At what age do we become adult, or rather: what does it mean to be adult? Whilst developmental psychology has given us a well defined area of interest in child development, our understanding of the developmental processes involved in ‘reaching adulthood’ which take place during adolescence remain less well understood. Or, to be more precise, they remain less well understood in terms of their relevance for educational policies aimed at youth. Yet, educational policy is driven by the idea of ‘outcomes’; a set of qualifications, skills and attitudes which act both as a kind of passport to future life choices, and a normative standard of adulthood or adulthood.

To say that the world is constantly changing is tantamount to banality. It is not however immediately obvious, that the character of adulthood is just as much a social construction as is childhood and thus subject to social change. Put this way, it becomes obvious that what 'being adult' involves is different (to a degree) at different historical periods. Yet, we do not often think about adulthood both factually and normatively as being determined by changing cultural expectations. This may be, because since its emergence in modernity (Elias, 1994), the category of adulthood has been in binary relationship with its other: childhood. They travel locked, to an extent, in that binary opposition, through time. Therefore, whilst we are busy problematising childhood, we forget to problematise adulthood. However, Lee (2001) draws our attention to the important problematic, established in modernity, the binary relationship between stable human being (adult) and unstable human becoming (child). He demonstrates that the very binary opposition is now becoming obsolete by the changes in the character of adulthood, which, in the age of uncertainty is becoming gradually re-defined as incomplete and becoming. What then, constitutes adulthood today? And what has this got to do with adolescence? To tease out contemporary expectations of adulthood I suggest we briefly remind ourselves of the idea of 'the self'.

Identity, subjectivity and 'self'

Sociological and cultural studies and psychological literature refer to identities, subjectivities and the self interchangeably. Yet these concepts have different meanings for different disciplines and for particular theorists. Both one's identity and subjectivity or the 'self' could be thought of as instrumental in the way in which individuals interpret reality and act on it. In other words, both the socially constructed identity, and the self as a 'symbolic project' (Elliott, 2008) on which individuals embark, it could be argued, affect social action. Yet, sociological and psychological traditions tend to focus on different aspects. In sociology, the focus tends to be on more or less un/stable sources of belonging on the one hand, and difference on the other. Seen in this way, identity is an analytical tool for understanding issues of power, structure and inequality in society. In psychology, on the other hand, identity, subjectivity and self may be studied as aspects of being and making sense as, an individual. Is there a link, a relationship between these different readings of identity, and the self? Below I suggest that the sociological perspective on social identity in terms of its discursive content, construction and the psychological perspective on meaning making can be seen as intrinsically linked. In order to demonstrate the connection between the sociological and psychological interest in the self, I turn to some post-modern characterisations of the changing character of 'the self'.

Post-modern 'self' in sociological and cultural studies

In the last decades sociological and cultural studies literature has provided us with a plethora of

characterisations of what has been contested as post-modern social and cultural landscapes. Post-structuralist and post-modern writers who seemingly embraced liberation from the universalist and rationalist project of modernity celebrated, albeit with some ambivalence, new freedoms. Lyotard (1979) welcomes the death of meta-narratives and wants them replaced with diverse local language games which constitute the subject. Butler (1990) declares the self, like everything else, a product of performativity. In 2005 Butler asserts the limits to self-knowledge and bound with it, a reconstruction of ethics. In a radical rejection of the modernist conception of the self, Deleuze and Guattari (1977) celebrate the schizophrenic self as creative and revolutionary. More pessimistically, Baudrillard (1983) sees the self as disempowered by the surface constructions of hi-tech media communications, in which it becomes just a passive, bored spectator of hyper-reality.

On the other hand, there are writers who do not take up the post-structuralist position on the post-modern turn but rather see it as a reconstructed reflexive or late modernity. Giddens (1991) outlines the reflexive subject engaged in an ongoing project of reflexivity and the ‘necessity’ of choice by the subject who needs ‘ontological security’ in order to be reflexive; whilst Bauman (1993) seeks to find new foundations for ethics within a modernity without illusions in ‘the solitude of the moral subject’ (Bauman, 1993: 53). Like Giddens, Bauman a sociologist to the core, shows our ‘post-modern’ reality to be liquid and hyper-flexible in which to thrive one must act out individualism and readiness to deny one’s binding social ties and that the same liquid modernity (Bauman, 2000) generates vast numbers of wasted lives (Bauman, 2004). Bauman does not agree that post-modern conditions herald a departure away from the modern concept of self. Instead, modern and post-modern strategies of identity co-exist in contemporary culture. Thus the modern self which is concerned with the rational project of constructing certainties is frustrated by the unsettling landscape of fluidity and demands for flexibility: ‘The hub of post-modern life strategy is not making identity stand – but the avoidance of being fixed’ (Bauman, 1993: 87). What Bauman is suggesting is that the post-modern conditions complicate the project of self-construction but do not, as some readings of post-modernity, proclaim the death of the subject (Elliott, 2008).

Both Bauman and Giddens highlight difficulties with which individuals have to contend in the project of the construction of the self. Both identify return to the marketplace in response to the ‘no choice but to choose’ dilemmas – either in terms of constructing social identity or making moral choices. These decisions in which the self is a privatised project are seen with ambivalence, and characterised by anxiety. This is a reading quite remote from that of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1977) celebration of the political radicalism of schizophrenia.

The question which remains in this characterisation of contemporary self is the question of emotional cost which individuals pay for living in a fluid social universe. Psychoanalysis has been the one line of theory which has consistently provided a link between psychology and social theory. It has demonstrated that the self, far from being a rational whole, needs to be considered

to be split, and permanently fractured into the conscious and the unconscious. It reveals the world devoid of meaning, of shattered experience, of inner turmoil and points to a failure of contemporary culture to provide adequate forms of emotional containment (Elliott, 2008). However, despite the rich tradition developed since Freud of theorising the relationships between the self and culture, psychoanalytical writing consistently talks about 'the self' as if it was a socially homogeneous phenomenon. In other words 'the self', which may be repressed or narcissistic, seems socially de-contextualised. It lacks the sociological dimension. Or, to be more precise, it does not seem to be a socially patterned phenomenon. Contemporary culture, as in the writings of Lasch (1979) is now presented as one challenging to the process of (healthy) self-development but this tradition talks about the culture 'in general' and the self 'in general'. And even with the corrective to the pessimism of such characterisations coming from Castoriadis' (1987) writings in which he posits the creative and active aspects of the psyche (Elliott, 2008), there is still a missing ingredient. What all these positions miss is the social and dynamic character of self-construction, and the resulting social patterns. Though the post-modern symbolic landscape is a background for identity construction it does not follow that the process of identity construction can be taken for granted. Instead, we need to consider how identity is constructed, what the process involves and whether there are important social patterns in the outcomes of such processes. Whilst the post-modern literature has pointed out the fragmentation of stable modern identities, and the explosion of different types of identities available, what is not clear from that literature is how, given the plethora of identities, they are actually taken up, and what flexibility and having fluid identity actually means. Post-modern and post-structural literature provides a useful sketch of the landscape but it does not explain how it is experienced, and how individuals interact with it; it remains incomplete.

Identity, 'the self' and subjectivity in Kegan's developmental psychology

To explore the relationship between the post-modern landscape of identity and the inner experience of the self, I turn to the constructivist developmental psychologist, Robert Kegan. In his two major theoretical works Kegan (1982, 1994) claims that there is a gap between the mental demands that our contemporary culture expects of ourselves, and what we actually accomplish. In other words, the above characterisations of the contemporary cultural landscape is what our culture 'wants' of us, or needs of us given its social and economic complexity. The reality however, is that such accomplishment is gradual and contingent, thus not necessarily achieved. This is confirmed by current learning theory which stresses the importance of ontological security for reflexive change, to take place within identity (Illeris, 2007). What follows is that this framework lends itself to an examination of patterns of difference along entirely new lines within social science: access to psychologically meaningful support structures. However, we need to first explain what Kegan means by the development of the self. Kegan's (1994) take on identity development is

psychological in orientation; it isn't the content of socially generated discourses that he examines. Instead, his understanding of the development of the self is in terms of the organisation of experience within the growing complexity of the mind within each individual's lifetime. This is crucial for understanding the character of agency and is particularly relevant to understanding the particularity of adolescence. This psychological take on 'the self' will be explained in the next section.

Unlike other developmental psychologists, Kegan is more interested in processes occurring during adulthood than in children's and adolescents' development. However, for this article I am going to examine the relevance of his theory for adolescence. Kegan (1994) refers to cultural expectations as the 'hidden curriculum of youth'. The curriculum is hidden, not like the implicit controlling institutional agenda of schooling in the sociology of education but in the developmental perspective in which a young person cannot truly share the perspectives of older people which involve sets of different principles of organising experience. Thus the hidden curriculum, for Kegan (1994) is 'the complexity of mind that contemporary culture unrecognizably asks us to possess through its many claims and expectations – the mental demands of modern life' (Kegan, 1994:34). In other words, becoming adult and developing through adulthood involves complex transformations of mind in the way in which we organise our thought, which are invisible to us yet which alter the way in which we approach relationships and our position in relation to the world outside.

According to Kegan (1994), the character of selfhood as described by post/late modern social theory corresponds to an accomplishment which few people in our society can or do in fact achieve. This is a revealing difference; whilst the constructivist developmental approach views the self as evolving and thus in a rich interplay with its developmental social context, social theory outlines the post/late/modern self discursively as if it was an actual articulation, albeit *fluid*. From Kegan's perspective, it could be argued that post-structuralist social theory confuses the developmental demands of culture with individuals' actual development, or in other words, an architectural drawing for a building, with the actual building. One could take this further and suggest that from this developmental position we can see the creationist tendency in post-structuralist confusion of 'the word' with reality.

How does development then unfold, according to Kegan? For him, development, from birth right throughout life takes place in stages. In this, Kegan follows previous developmental psychology from Piaget, Erickson, Kohlberg who see cognitive, moral and social development as unfolding through reaching qualitatively different stages (Schaffer, 2004). These stages are similar to those identified by his predecessors but Kegan is specifically interested in development throughout adulthood. Kegan is a constructive developmental psychologist. From constructivism he takes the idea that human beings create the world through sense making, and by acting upon it. Kegan's constructive developmental psychology then is a fusion of those two traditions and his particular

interest is in outlining how consciousness, our mental organisation of experience, thought and emotion evolves through our lifetime.

A crucial aspect of this theory is that development is not an automatic, biologically determined process but rather dependent and intimately linked to the social environment; it can be facilitated or hindered. This key premise to his approach to the evolving self can have enormous consequences for social theory and sociology in general. The latter, since its anti-positivist shift, has turned its theoretical back to developments within psychology seeing it as determinist. Yet it is itself oblivious to a gradual paradigm shift within current genetics, psychology, as well as neuroscience which have moved beyond the nature/nurture dichotomy to a contemporary recognition of the essential links between organisms' biology and its environments. Thus, whilst disciplines such as psychology have now rendered the nature/nurture debate obsolete (Pinker, 2002) sociology, particularly in the guise of post-structuralism is stuck in the nurture side.

Kegan's theory of evolving self

Thus despite similarities in the sociological concept of the self, this psychological perspective understands the self as mind; as consciousness responsible for (individual) meaning-making. In addition, the self changes throughout life. It evolves. In his two theoretical works Kegan (1982, 1994) outlined the process of development of orders of consciousness or self, understood as the principles organising thought and experience. These principles undergo a gradual process of increasing complexity which can manifest in different behaviours (in children, young people and adults) but importantly, it is not just behaviour, but underlying attitudes and ways of understanding that undergo qualitative change in the developmental process. How does Kegan talk about the evolving mind? His concept of the self consists in a relationship of temporary equilibrium between the subject and object. The self undergoes evolution in stages and any stage of development corresponds to what, at that point, is subject and what is object. Subject is that (ability of the self) which can reflect and control object. In infancy, for instance, the subject is the impulses and object is sensation. Gradually the young child acquires control of the impulses, and acting on them is then subject to his/her will. Impulse has moved from the status of subject to the status of object. The child is no longer captive to impulse. This process, of movement from subject to object is at the heart of Kegan's theory of the self. As we grow and develop, we become less subject to our perceptions of the world; we become more objective and more able to entertain multiple points of view. Development then is about moving more and more things in our perception from subject to object in three lines of development: cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal. The more in our lives we take as object, the more complex our world view because things as object can be reflected and acted upon. Subject, on the other hand, captivates us. Development then can be thought about as differentiation of the self from objects in those three areas: cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal.

Kegan (1994) identifies five stages, or orders of consciousness which are understood as qualitatively different ways of knowing the world (Kegan, 2009). Each stage of development is more complex than the previous one, yet the development:

is not about how smart you are in the ordinary sense of the word. It is not about how high your IQ is. It is not about developing more and more abstract, abstruse apprehensions of the world, as if 'most complex' means finally being able to understand a physicist's blackboard filled with complex equations. (Kegan, 2009:16)

Unlike his predecessors, notably Piaget, Kohlberg, Vygotsky, Kegan is more interested in stages of adult development. The first two stages refer to child development. Stage one, lasts approximately to age six has an underlying atomistic, single point structure in which fantasy and impulses are part of subject whereas movement and sensation are object. Stage two which takes children up to the beginning of adolescence (puberty) has, as its underlying structure durable categories. Kegan then provides a detailed characterisation of stages three, four and five. Stage three is called Traditionalism, four is called Modernism and five is called Post-Modernism. I now turn to a more detailed characterisation of the last three stages as they represent developmental stages occurring towards and during adulthood.

The socialised mind or traditionalism

During the long period of adolescence, from around the onset of puberty, young people begin a process of transformation between stages two and three. This process, argues Kegan (1994), takes years and may be achieved before age 20 but it may take longer. In his writings, Kegan rarely mentions age as the process of development depends on social context and individual circumstances. It is however important to emphasise that the transformation of consciousness from durable category to the socialized mind is gradual and it takes a long time. The transformation of consciousness also takes place in three areas: cognitive, interpersonal, intrapersonal. It is also the case that individual adolescents will develop different areas at different rates. What is the socialised mind for Kegan?

The socialised mind is what it says on the tin – a person who has internalised values, dominant ways of thinking originating in a particular ideology, and often devoted to them (Kegan, 1994). The change from the previous stage is that the socialized mind no longer sees other people as a means to an end, and it now can subordinate its own self-interest and desires to the needs of others, a group, or a cause. This signifies not just a change in behaviour, as a younger child can act obediently, to the same effect; this signifies a change in attitude governed by a restructuring of the mind. An example given by Kegan (1994) is an adolescent's inability to keep in mind his

parents' anxiety when he returns home hours past his curfew. The boy's main concern is not to get caught when he comes late or if he does, that the consequences will not be too harsh; he cannot subordinate his interest to theirs. The reason for this is because in stage two of development, a child or a young person's subject is still merged with the durable category of self; in other words his or her experience is organised around his (durable category) point of view. In the third order of consciousness, the durable category can be reflected upon as the new organising principle is the cross-categorical meaning making. These are part of his subject. 'Cross-categorical meaning making (not concreteness but abstraction; not the ultimacy of self-interest but its subordination to a relationship) becomes the new subject of experiencing acting upon or regulating what has become object' (Kegan, 1994: 32). In stage three, the socialized mind has moved the durable category of self-interest to being object; something which can be reflected upon and which can be under control of the subject. This gives the socialized mind an ability to be self-reflective about one's own and others' actions in relation to the overarching ideology or relationships (as opposed to self-interest). Their loyalty to ideologies and institutions to which they are socialized (religion, political party, cause) is particularly strong at this time. They may not even have a sense of what they might like outside of others' expectations or societal roles' (Kegan, 1994). Kegan also shows that when faced with a conflict between important others, the person at this stage of mental complexity feels torn and finds making a decision difficult. In his later work about institutions and organisation, Kegan (2009) provides a characterisation of the socialised mind as an employee who is loyal and obedient to authority and sensitive to what is expected of them which, Kegan also explains, does not mean that they get it right.

The self-authoring mind or modernism

The process of further differentiation of the self, which is described as the self-authoring mind was, described by Kegan (1994) as achieved by about fifty percent of the population by around middle age. In other words, as stated before this is not a deterministic, hard-wired biological path which takes us all towards the next stage. Instead, this is a process which originates in the social context as it demands such more complex mental skills. This will be discussed later.

The self-authoring mind has now moved the internalised ideology from subject to object. It is therefore now able to examine such ideologies, as well as opinions and wishes of others in the light of this transformation. In effect, this self now exists outside of its relationship to others (Kegan, 1994). This also means that the self-authoring mind does not feel torn apart by the conflicts of those around them as they now have their own internal set of rules (a self-governing system) for mediating conflicts. They can stand apart from systems of ideology and mediate between them. At this stage, employees and individuals are self-motivated, own their work, are self-evaluative. Kegan (2009) reminds us that the characterisation of the greater complexity of mind is not to be

understood as a judgement on either greater cognitive capacity or moral worth. Thus, in this stage of the evolving self:

I have a direction, an agenda, a stance, a strategy, an analysis of what is needed, a priori context from which my communication arises. My direction or plan may be an excellent one, or it may be riddled with blind spots. I may be masterful or inept at recruiting others to invest themselves in this direction. [...] But mental complexity strongly influences whether my information sending is oriented toward getting behind the wheel in order to drive (the self-authoring mind) or getting myself included in the car so I can be driven (the socialised mind). (Kegan, 2009:19)

The self-transforming mind or postmodernism

The final stage of the evolving self is the self-transforming mind. The organising principle of the meaning making is dialectical, trans-ideological, it is a complex trans-system. This means that the post-modern mind knows the limits of inner systems and can reflect on this limitation (Kegan, 1994). It can now see across other self-authored systems and synthesise their commonalities; this way of processing information and experiences tends to move away from dichotomous perceptions in general (Kegan, 1994). More recently Kegan has elaborated the characterisation in the orders of mind in more detail and in relation to organisational contexts in which communication is crucial. The self-transforming mind then ‘both values and is wary about any one stance, analysis of agenda [within organisations]. It is mindful that, powerful though a given design [system] might be this design almost inevitably leaves something out’ (Kegan, 2009:20).

This stage is rarely achieved before middle age, and it is also achieved by few people. During the thirty years since Kegan first published in 1992 *The Evolving Self*, he has not changed that particular estimation; that only a minority of the population ever reaches that stage. To make this claim, Kegan draws on his consultancy experience as well as statistical data from a number of studies conducted over the last 20 years to assess mental complexity which show that 58 per cent participants in those studies have not reached the self-authoring mind, the percentage of people who have reached the final, self-transforming mind is just a few per cent. This evidence also shows that most employers consider school leavers ill prepared for the demands of the knowledge economy (2005). Kegan writes:

The gap between what we now expect of people’s minds (including our own minds) and what our minds are actually like is quite large. We expect most workers to be self-authoring, but most are not. We expect most leaders to be more complex than self-authoring, and very few are (2009: 28).

In other words, Kegan identifies a gap between the demands of contemporary society and our ability to meet these demands. As he explains:

We've said that 'complexity' is really a story about the relationship between the complex demands and arrangements of the world and our own complexity of mind [...] our own mental complexity lags behind the complexity of the world's demands (2009:30).

However, the issue in this paper is not to confirm or otherwise Kegan's evidence or to interrogate his methods but to consider his model of development and the impact of this framework on our understanding of the process of growing up in our times.

Discussion

Before returning to the main question in this article about the process of growing up in the context of post-modern cultural demands, I will briefly attend to the emerging theoretical conclusions about the character of the development of the self. What is important in Kegan's characterisation of the developmental processes is the explicit social character of development. It is the social ecology (Smith, 2006); the social environment that demands development from individuals. The organisation of mental complexity develops within the individual, and is rooted in biological maturity but it cannot happen without or outside the social context. This is the most interesting and revealing aspect of Kegan's theory. It sheds light on sociological literature which has attended to the historically changing character of the individual e.g. Durkheim's (1984) emerging modern individual based on specialisation; the changing habitus, (psychic structure) for Bourdieu and Elias (1994) or Foucault's concept of governmentality. Kegan makes an explicit reference to the different demands of adults and adulthood in different historical periods: thus, the socialised mind would have been an adequate adult accomplishment required in traditional societies, in which loyalty to the group, stability, traditional authority were the organising principle for the individual and group life. The self-authoring mind would be demanded in modern societies characterised by mobility, increased social diversity, a domination of grand narratives and authority of reason. The self-transforming mind is, apparently needed in post-modernity; following the rejection of grand narratives, fragmentation of identities, further individualisation, and the new liquid and flexible character of social reality.

What we see here is an explicit link between 'social structures' in general and the character of the individual self, involved in constructing their social universe. Development is neither purely biologically driven nor socially arbitrary. Like in Piaget's, Erikson's and Kohlberg's theories, development follows a certain order (Schaffer, 2004). Like for Vygotsky, it is a socially sensitive process. Societal demands initiate the process in which support is crucial: 'the bridge needs to

be well anchored on either side' (Kegan, 1994:37). Development then happens in a particular sequence, when the previous level has been attained, and, importantly, it takes place in response to the societal demand and the presence of the support from others and structure itself. The link between social identity and Kegan's orders of consciousness is postulated here in the following dynamic: the taking up of social identity enables the self (in the second order) to begin to separate from the durable category which then moves to object. Social identity is part of the mechanism of development itself. Seen in this way, human development is social and biological¹ in character; it links biological maturing with societal ecology, and transcends the obsolete dichotomous 'either/or' of the nature/nurture debate.

Kegan's most recent writings have turned towards applied and consultancy work aimed at issues of leadership, management and transformation of institutional cultures in which a competitive environment demands that the employee develop the mental complexity necessary for adaptive challenges (orders four and five in Kegan's typology). My interest, in this article however, is to ask about the cultural landscape of growing up as a backdrop of transformation of young people's order of consciousness towards the third level of consciousness.

According to Kegan, the third order of consciousness, traditionalism, is what our culture demands, in its 'hidden curriculum of youth' (Kegan, 1994) from adolescents, which, in contemporary educational systems, takes place during young people's secondary education. Thus, our culture expects a level of maturity as soon as young people enter secondary education; increased independence in mobility, an expectation of greater levels of self-organisation, time management, working towards future goals, loyalty towards significant groups. Kegan argues (writing about US culture in the early 1990s) that our culture successfully sets high expectations of young people promoting the development of the third order of consciousness. However, for the process of development to take place, challenge is not enough; support is crucial:

People grow best where they continuously experience an ingenious blend of support and challenge [...]; environments that are weighted too heavily in the direction of challenge without adequate support are toxic; they promote defensiveness and constriction. Those weighted too heavily toward support without adequate challenge are ultimately boring; they promote devitalisation (Kegan, 1994:42).

The transition from the second to the third order of consciousness involves a dislocation of the durable category (of the ultimacy of self-interest) and the ability to reflect on the interests of others, and see one's own self-interest as object. This then enables individuals not just to behave in certain, expected ways, but to organise their experience in a new way which will enable them to see their durable category as one of many, and gain insight into the needs of others. They will have differentiated the durable category and moved it to object.

What support systems then exist for young people to develop that way of organising their experience which is an accomplishment of the socialized mind? The process of transformation takes many years and the supporting structures have traditionally been such social institutions which would command loyalty, strong sets of beliefs, common purpose such as traditional structures of schools, family, religious and youth organisations but also sports teams, clubs, political organisations, and, indeed, peer groups and youth cultures. It is important then to acknowledge, that the above list of ‘traditional structures’ is problematical in contemporary society. These institutions, with the exception of peer groups and youth cultures have been subject to radical social change and their traditional authority questioned as part of the general post/late/modern fragmentation of authority.

How can this cultural landscape support the development of ‘socialised mind’ when immediate and local structures are weak? What about those young people, who are marginalised and excluded from such support systems and who are perhaps excluded even from societal demands? If there is no school where young people feel they belong, religion, sports team, youth organisation with which a young person can genuinely identify, what is there for them to identify with? What happens to their development? Although, according to Kegan, very few adults present with the second stage of development indicating that such cases are in some way linked to mental health problems, he also cites examples of young, ‘deviant’ adolescents who in different ways need institutional support because of their anti-social behaviours. This clearly is one manifestation of a failure to be properly ‘socialised’, and the criminal justice system is one organisational site ‘dealing’ with such failures. Classically, sociology has tended to treat the socialisation failure as ‘deviance’; contemporary sociology talks about exclusion and marginalization broadly as a problem of poverty. What this article is concerned with is with understanding processes involved in successful, or unsuccessful development in order to examine socially meaningful patterns of inequality. This could help develop a theoretically sound focus on inequality and therefore, intervention.

What we learn from constructivist developmental psychology is that both demand and support constitute an ecologically crucial context for adolescent development; a context which can, if we are to follow Kegan’s model, help or, conversely, hinder development, and thus create a risk of serious emotional and social costs.

What’s on, where to go?

It would be naïve to suggest that in the absence of traditional structures (such as those mentioned above) young people are left floating unattached to any social groups. On the contrary, the developmental ecology is a lot more complex and nuanced. Traditional structures do exist, and they are not the (deliberate) agency of exclusion or marginalisation. Schools, churches, youth organisations are at pains to make themselves attractive to young people, to help them or win

them over. What is new in our contemporary society is that these traditional structures are no longer 'obligatory' as moral authority, but are related to what the German professor of pedagogy, Ziehe (2009) identifies as preference. For him, the whole contemporary symbolic context of growing up is no longer norm-regulated but preference-related. As society is comprehensively de-traditionalised with an expansion in freedom and individual choice, young people experience, what he calls, a 'strain on orientation'. Ziehe, also known as belonging to the third generation Frankfurt School, critical of mass society, observes the changing position of 'high culture' in the symbolic landscape. From being a single point of orientation, 'a symbolic roof of society to which people had to relate' (Ziehe, 2009:187) it is now a matter of choice; one among very many other lifestyle options. Moreover, as in post-modern societies no overarching normative judgements or values can exist, democratic markets elevate popular culture into a paradoxically hegemonic position.

Consistent with his Frankfurt School origins, Ziehe is particularly concerned about the place of high culture in this new symbolic landscape but it is the mechanism which turns obligation into choice which is of importance here. The loss of a symbolic societal 'roof', or 'content horizons' is a well recognised aspect of post-modernity but examined from the vantage point of a developmental process it presents some particular problems that need to be considered.

Post-modern society, with its symbolic fracture already diagnosed by Bell (1976) sends schizophrenic expectations to the postmodern subject: a Protestant ethic in work and hedonist attitudes in consumption and leisure. Whilst adults tend to cope relatively well with such contradictory expectations it may be different for children and young people. School today is the only social space which systematically demands 'work' and thus a work ethic from students. Yet for some, where 'work' is not part of their immediate community, popular culture with its standards of excitement, exaltation, pleasure and attraction are the preferred choice. For Ziehe, the problem is that contemporary school has lost cultural backing in the general sense; at least backing visible to young people who are no longer bound by normative status of pathways or values:

The symbolic backing of the school, which existed and did not have to be created and maintained all the time, provided a supply of content horizons, social forms and subjective motives anyway (Ziehe, 2008: 191).

The phenomenon has been identified previously by writers such as Bell (1976), or as the culture of narcissism (Lasch, 1979), as life in a newly emerging age of diminishing expectations. These observations were not made directly about the impact on young people's perception of their worlds yet they seem highly relevant today when, in the West, the media exposure of consumerism, hedonism, the landscape of endless leisure is relentless.

In the context of the present discussion we can then see the optionality affecting the legitimacy

of aspects of schooling. It also can affect all kinds of other traditional sources of developmental support, such as youth, religious and political organisations. This is because the consequence of the loss of the cultural backing is that ‘the world is not so much observed through glasses which make visible the increased options. Much more, it is increased objects of avoidance and uneasiness that catch the eye’ (Ziehe, 2008:190). Avoidance (of learning, joining, taking part, etc.) then is one of the valid choices available for young people; avoidance is part of the freedom of choice and it is consistent with our contemporary culture. Ziehe suggests that new habits of attention and enjoyment are now taken up by young people. Given then, that the institutional backing for the process of development is reduced greatly to the increasingly privatised family the experience of support of young people in relation to both schooling and development of the third order of consciousness might show a growing pattern of inequality.

Ziehe’s contribution to this discussion is in formulating a useful concept: avoidance, as a valid choice, a viable strategy. Yet, we also know, from developmental psychology that identity development is the key aspect of adolescence (Illeris, 2007). In other words, attaching oneself to a group or groups of significant others is crucial in this stage of life. Given, that contemporary adolescents have a greater freedom of choice in this described cultural landscape, what exactly is, from their point of view, worth identifying with? Ziehe (2007) claims it is popular culture which wins the contest with traditional forms. For Ziehe, as well as for many others today, this means consumer and market led popular culture and peer groups identified with the former.

What we see from the above is that many contemporary traditional institutions which would have been a bedrock of identity construction for young people have now become optional. This might suggest a problem for identity work. Identification with a group, an ideology, religion is the basis for developing a sense of self. What attachments are available for young people who are subject to processes of social exclusion? If young people cannot identify with traditional sources of identity and support, what opportunities for identity construction do they have? This article is not considering remedial provision in the form of informal education or youth work, which, when available, can certainly offer this alternative. Instead, this article is interested in identifying, as much as possible, how social change is affecting identity construction.

Neo-tribalism

An interesting new characterisation of the contemporary symbolic landscape comes from Maffesoli (1996) who challenges the prevailing notions of excessive individualism and narcissism as characteristic of associability in post-modernity. For him fragmentation and individualism are not the right descriptors; instead, he observes a new type of social fabric of attachments which he calls neo-tribalism. Neo-tribalism is about an impermanent, fluid, fragile yet emotionally satisfying

form of togetherness. In it individuals move about from one neo-tribe to another experiencing a sense of belonging, and emotional connectedness based on ‘warmth’. These neo-tribes are ‘fragile but for that very instant the object of significant emotional investment’ (1996: 76). Maffesoli (1996) contrasts neo-tribalism with a modern basis for belonging based on shared interests in which reason, individualism and organic solidarity would have dominated. Post-modernity generates a kind of return to mechanical forms of solidarity based on community and ritual. One example of a neo-tribe is the ghetto with its shared territory, small group, familiarity, language, ritual which makes life bearable, and importantly, provides emotional ambience. Other examples include catchphrase, fashion, leisure and gangs. The logic of neo-tribalism is not modern; no overarching unified system of values exists – emotionality and ‘warmth seeking’ is what generates fluid micro-groups. Maffesoli argues that affect in social life is not based on logic or consciousness; small groups ‘have no vision of what should constitute the absolutes of a society. Each group is its own absolute’ (Maffesoli, 1996:89); fluid membership of neo-tribes provides temporary belonging, for example, a gang member might describe their group as ‘family’. Belonging, even only temporary, is an end in itself. Could this kind of belonging fill the gap in traditional support structures for adolescence which seems to be a particularly sociable ‘stage’ of life?

In his characterisation of the post-modern landscape of neo-tribalism Maffesoli then shows that in their pursuit of belonging, young people today are not limited to formal modern organisational structures but instead have real alternatives in the form of neo-tribes. Formal, adult led structures of education, high culture, work, leisure, religion and family – are not the only opportunities for identity work. There are other places to belong, other values to affirm as tribes seem to require little individual effort. Neo-tribes are voluntary, based on similarity of existing values, require little commitment; and for a little while, they do offer a real sense of belonging. Tribes as emotionally supportive networks validate any preference, any lifestyle choice or taste; they are a judgment-free opt out clause of a relativised world with no signposting and no overarching authority; a life which can in some micro-groups be characterised by the reversal of the civilizing process (Elias, 1994) where the modern values are considerably relaxed.

From the point of view of identity development the existence of neo-tribalism is surely good news. Could any groups, even neo-tribes provide the sense of belonging crucial for young people’s identity development and support their move to the third order of consciousness in which they will be able to integrate different perspectives? The question arises whether such groups are demanding enough to challenge the second order of consciousness by requiring group identity and solidarity, and structurally solid enough to provide the needed support. This question needs an empirical study to be answered. All we can do here is to conclude that given that group membership is crucial for identity development, if all that is available are peer groups and ‘neo-tribes’, young people will turn to them irrespective of whether they are considered desirable by adult communities or not.

The problem is that the postmodern landscape, stripped of any clear pathways (symbolic signposting) creates a very unequal world for growing up. Young people who have around them traditional support structures are shielded from the uncertainty of post-modern culture. These support systems provide a sense of direction and an anchor for identity construction; a solid base for ontological security. On the other hand not being shielded from uncertainty, not knowing where to go and how to get there, means neo-tribes can fulfil urgent needs.

A picture of a highly divided world is emerging: contemporary society ultimately demands from us greater levels of complexity in terms of our consciousness and self-regulation. This, however, can only be achieved given the right social circumstances of challenge and high levels of community support (Kegan, 1994). Whilst traditional and modern support systems exist for some young people, there are many others living in communities where uncertainty and instability are a common setting for their growing up. We could postulate that the absence of modern institutions in those young people's lives, are constitutive of some forms of exclusion and marginalisation. Post-modern characterisations of contemporary society as either already, or about to be, freed from modern institutional structures seem to be insensitive to the developmental needs of young people. Fluidity, flexibility, reflexivity are attributes and achievements of adulthood which are accomplished within ontological security (Illeris, 2007). What Kegan's model shows, is that, children and young people, first need to develop traditional, and only later, modern forms of identity. For their identity development and for the increasing complexity of the third order of consciousness, social structures are needed: dependency, protection and 'being held'. The presence, or absence, of support structures can be responsible for a successful shift towards the socialised mind. In other words, we could argue that the adolescent identity work which begins with forming attachment to a group, ideology, or significant others with whom young people identify, is a pre-condition for the development of the third order of consciousness. It is the gradual displacement of the second order durable category from the self, as a consequence of attachment, which enables the growth in complexity. The process is then later repeated as the self, through more exposure to alternative systems of thought, is able to then detach from the ideology or the group to become even more complex.

Conclusion

In conclusion, what this article set out to examine is the link between the socially and discursively constructed identity and the psychological process of development of the self. Post-modern characterisations of the symbolic landscape of identity have been found incomplete because of their focus on the final accomplishment without recognition that identity construction is a gradual process of increasing complexity. This recognition highlights the importance of social support systems in the evolution of the self which takes place within social ecology consisting of complex

and contradictory demands and messages on the one hand and support systems (or their absence) on the other.

This article has suggested that Kegan's theory of the growing complexity of self as situated within changing culture provides a useful inter-disciplinary bridge between psychological and sociological traditions of the concept of identity. This suggests that the process of identity development should be understood as essentially both biological and social. This means it cannot be reduced to discourse analysis except if all we want to know is the cultural content of any particular identity. It also means it cannot be reduced to an individualised biological mechanism determined by a clock ticking irrespective of social context. On the contrary, the dynamic link between culture and the individual self becomes explicit here: contemporary social landscapes need a greater degree of complexity from their populations yet development is contingent; not all young people are supported adequately as traditional institutions are not universally available at the age of the development of the third order of consciousness. What the link between psychology and sociology gives us here is potential for a more nuanced examination of social and psychological factors generating inequality, exclusion or marginalisation in (educational and other) outcomes for young people.

Finally, this article has consequences for the debates around young people's agency and competence. According to Kegan's model, what young (or indeed, 'grown up') people can see, and respond to, is contingent on which order of consciousness they currently occupy. Their agency, understood as their ability to reflect and their ability to be 'objective' therefore, increases with their development. This goes contrary to some of the current thinking about children and young people, re-defined through new sociology of childhood as competent beings, as opposed to emerging becomings (Lee, 2001). A recognition of the sensitivity of the process of development of social identity as a platform for learning and for further growth of complexity would mean re-examination of the role of adults, culture and social institutions in the lives of young people.

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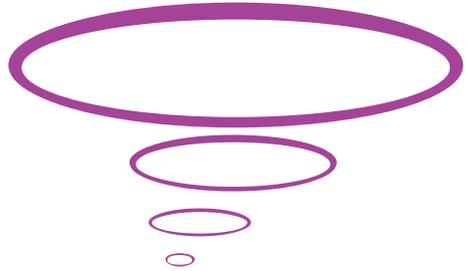
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Note

- 1 See also Flinn (2005) who argues for a reconciliation of the biology and culture gap from the evolutionary perspective that human development and long childhood period are linked to the essentially social character of humans; and Stein (2005) who shows that human brain, the most complex organised structure in the universe, is the product of the interaction between the genetic information and the environment.

THINKING SPACE



The Future of Targeted Youth Support as Second Class Social Work

Kirsten Hall

THIS ARTICLE explores whether The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is changing the work of Targeted Youth Support (TYS) into a form of pseudo Social Work. It is written from a TYS practitioner's perspective and draws on five years' experience in a small voluntary project working with young people who go missing and/or are being sexually exploited.

Young people voluntarily choose whether or not they work with us. Relationship-building is therefore vital, and regular face-to-face contact is the means to achieving this. Values are an important part of the work. Workers always seek to use a persistent and consistent approach, to be accessible to young people both physically and emotionally, to be independent and to respect confidentiality wherever possible. The Care Management Model, dominant within Social Services that has led many social workers to become case managers practising via the medium of computer and telephone, and tied up with client record systems, care-plans and arranging other services to visit their clients for them (see Hamer, 2006), is not one that is utilised by the project. Instead it has focused on creating a mode of intervention which directly responds to young people.

Nevertheless the project works closely with Social Care agencies that refer young people to it for a service, whilst the project in turn makes safeguarding referrals to such agencies with regards to child protection concerns. At any given time the project will be working with a proportion of young people who are open to Social Care. When the project started in 2007, young people were either known to Social Care or not. Good practice dictated multi-agency working regardless. However there was no formal mechanism for this if Social Care were not already involved. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) existed but was not widely used and there was no pressure from the local authority to complete CAF. By the end of 2009 that situation had changed and the local authority created a CAF team in order to encourage all professionals, including those in the project,

working with children and families, to comply.

The aim of CAF has been defined as, ‘to help practitioners assess children’s additional needs for services earlier and more effectively, develop a common understanding of those needs and agree a process of working together to meet them’ with an emphasis on ‘a drive to multi-agency working by embedding a shared process’ (Brandon, M et al, 2006: 14). The purpose was also to identify, where needed, further services to meet needs highlighted by the process. It could therefore be seen as an Assessment Framework for non-complex needs (Tiers Two and Three) that had attached to it related prescriptive paperwork for meetings and reviews. It should be noted that the CAF is not meant to be done in isolation from children and families, and should be completed with their full input and consent.

We decided as a project to embrace CAF (even though we already did our own assessments and plans in conjunction with young people), and to offer them to any young person and family with whom we were working in Tier Two or Tier Three. The consequences of doing this have been mixed. There have been some positive experiences. However we were able to observe wider implications for the principles and values of youth work even when such work is already targeted. It quickly became apparent that other agencies were not only in some cases unwilling to complete CAF but also were often unaware of how the process worked. This meant that most of the CAFs we identified as needed (and wanted), were also completed by us, which inevitably meant we became the Lead Professional. As Lead Professional, co-ordination, accountability and assessment became part of the practitioner’s role. It therefore became immediately obvious to the project staff that there were Case Managers being created below the threshold of Social Care involvement, and therefore the project worker’s role in that child’s life changed whether this became immediately apparent or not. Within the project we have encountered anxiety from practitioners who felt they were losing the relationship with the young person because of how they are now being perceived. For example, there have been instances where the Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings have not been positive experiences for either young people or families. Frequently this has been as a consequence of education professionals using these meetings as an opportunity to go over the past misdemeanours of the young person in the school setting. Given that it is the project that has convened the meeting, inevitably it becomes associated with practice that does not reflect our value base. When this occurs we take steps to move away from the prescriptive processes to retain or rebuild relationships, but this usually happens after the damage has been done.

Over time our relationship with Social Care has altered. Since the push for CAF, this is notable especially with regards to where we sit in terms of our independence from the local authority. For it is now common practice for a Duty Social Worker to instruct a practitioner from another discipline or sector to complete a CAF. This usually occurs after a safeguarding referral has failed to meet the threshold required for Social Care intervention. The request for CAF can be followed-up by

the local authority's CAF team so that a practitioner can expect weekly phone calls following-up on that instruction from someone who has no jurisdiction to manage that practitioner's actions. This situation can sometimes occur through a different process. For example if a school expresses concern about a young person, and Social Care practitioners are aware that we have met that young person through the Return Interview process (a one-off intervention sometimes followed up by longer term work) then a request for us to complete a CAF will be forthcoming (and is turned down).

In addition to this practice of pseudo management, a recent local OFSTED inspection of Social Care included looking at CAFs completed by outside agencies. The preparation for OFSTED involved the CAF Team staff clarifying details on CAFs completed by ourselves, or where we were named on CAFs. It was also explained that visits from OFSTED to the project may now be possible. This process implies that a local authority's success in terms of an OFSTED rating in some way relies on the compliance of agencies and projects over which Social Care has no formal authority. Therefore the decision to embrace CAFs has had far reaching consequences, not all of which were anticipated by agencies such as ourselves.

Although this article aims to suggest that TYWs are potentially, through CAF and other reforms, being obliged to perform the role of social workers, there remain significant differences between the two practices. A core tenet of the CAF is that it should accurately capture the views of a child or young person and their parent or carer. Achieving this entails TYS workers spending time with both parties independently and sometimes consulting in depth other agencies such as schools. This information is then written up and the brought back to all involved to be signed off. A social worker however writes *their* assessment and requires no input or final say from the people it describes. There are similar inconsistencies with regards to other related processes; for example the arrangement of meetings and consultations that result in the preparation of the CAF are becoming far more time consuming for workers than our previous internal Assessment Framework. This expectation on the part of local authorities that non-statutory workers will assess and lead, and thereby increase their workload is a growing trend in many localities. Currently a new system to identify and respond to Vulnerable Young People is being introduced by our local authority, and others, for use within Social Care. However the expectations of non-statutory workers relating to the CAFs, involving meetings, checklists and referrals that are needed in order to make this work again, implies and pre-scripts a case management approach. There are obvious reasons for this trend, not least a combination of cuts in local authority budgets and growing need, but TYS workers and projects must challenge this 'hidden' transfer of workload if they are to hold onto the value base of their practice and retain their independence.

In many areas, including our own, the Windscreen Model has been adopted to ascertain the level of need of a child or young person; this ranges from Universal Need (1) to Complex Needs (4). To

promote objectivity in how a young person is assessed our local authority has produced a document providing numerous examples of behaviours and concerns that fit into all of the respective tiers. Where a child or young person is experiencing Complex Needs, Social Care agencies have a duty to investigate that case. However in practice the presence of CAF can sometimes skew this process. There are various ways this can materialise. A recent example involved two sisters who were referred to our project from Social Care. One of the concerns raised was that the girls were spending time with another young person known for risk-taking behaviours. That third young person was also already involved with our service but had a CAF completed by us. Logically using the Windscreen Model that young person should also have been deemed Tier Four but Social Care were clear that would not be happening. Therefore it is difficult not to conclude that the presence of CAF was a factor in that decision. There have also been cases where CAF is not working but there is no action taken. A large family where there are concerns about neglect, non-school attendance and emotional abuse were open to CAF but were not engaging with the process. No progress could be observed and concerns were growing amongst professionals about the well-being of the children. Social Care would not put this case into a statutory arena and hid behind the CAF as an 'action' in itself rather than a potential 'means for action'. The implications here are that mass compliance with CAF could potentially harm children as its existence leads them to be overlooked and youth work professionals stagger along as second class social workers with no real powers, but holding all the risk.

Information sharing, we are officially informed, is the bedrock of Child Protection wherein the 'key principle ... is that children's needs and their families' circumstances will require inter-agency collaborations to ensure full understanding of what is happening and to ensure effective service response' (DoH, 1999: 63). When the project completes a CAF it is submitted to the CAF Team who, in turn, work closely with Social Care. Social Care is therefore well aware regarding which young people and families we are leading on. Yet we, and others, can cite examples where, post completion of a CAF, we have made a safeguarding referral which has resulted in Social Care opening the case. At which point in time it has transpired that Social Care had had previous involvement with the family due to concerns that included sexual abuse and domestic violence. This means that as TYS workers we were leading on cases, taking the co-ordinator role, but functioning on a superficial level with only the information that the family have told us at our disposal. Overwhelmingly the 'duty' to share information appears to be one way. As the title of this article suggests we are operating as a kind of second class social worker, good enough to do the job but not good enough to be trusted with the information.

There have been other matters regarding information sharing that are problematic regarding CAF. Confidentiality policies are different across agencies and there are many that will only share information with statutory workers. An obvious example is drugs services for adults which will share information with a local authority social worker but not with a TYS worker. If this is an issue

identified on a CAF then that Lead Professional will most likely be performing the role without all of the information required to make an informed judgement relating to future progress. Perhaps the answer is to extend the number of agencies able to be given confidential information; however any moves towards this would have serious implications for the identity, and again, the practice base of any workers operating outside of the local authority Social Care sector.

This article has sought to provide a snapshot of some of the implications for TYS Workers regarding CAF and the related policy trends, nationally and locally. The apparent solution may be to simply reject these processes, and not engage with the wider world. However the reality of financial constraints may mean that some level of commitment to these systems is required in order to access some of the current funding streams, such as Early Intervention Grants. In addition there is presently a mood of accountability, and often blame, attached to all workers in contact with children or young people that serves to make a position of isolation difficult to maintain or justify. The recent Serious Case Review into the events pre-dating extensive convictions for child sexual abuse in Rochdale, was clear that the voluntary sector was at fault for not pursuing their contacts with Social Care at a higher level, even in light of the fact that these were being ignored.

As a project we have come to a position where we no longer routinely complete CAFs as we once did because of some of the negative impacts previously discussed, and instead we use professional discretion about when we think a CAF could genuinely ‘add’ some benefit to a young person. By regularly talking about CAF and other processes, in relation to our values, we hope that we are embracing the contemporary environment while maintaining our integrity.

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Obituary

Michael Butterfield – 1926-2013

Tony Jeffs

SINCE THE last edition of *Youth & Policy* the death has occurred, at the age of 86, of Michael Butterfield. Michael was a longstanding contributor to the journal and regularly attended our conferences where his sagacious contributions, ready laughter and generosity of spirit made him an ever welcome companion. A major presence within youth work for approaching six decades, he will perhaps best be remembered as an innovative and reforming General Secretary of the National Association of Youth Clubs (NAYC – now UK Youth) from 1976 to 1986. During his decade in that office he championed a slew of pioneering projects that collectively did so much to change for the better the style, focus and content of youth work in Britain.

Michael's grandmother and father were manufacturers' agents in the Leeds wool trade. Leaving school in 1943 he entered Leeds University to read for a degree in textiles. Typically, although he could have deferred entry into the military until he had completed his studies, he decided that doing so when others of his age were being conscripted was not the right thing to do. So he reported for duty with the army after only completing one year of the degree, fully intending to resume his studies once the war had ended. In 1944 after basic training, he was sent by the army to India where he served during the period immediately prior to Independence. De-mobbed in 1947 he returned to Leeds University but never settled and soon afterwards left to join the family firm of John Butterfield and Co.

Aged 16 he was a founding member of his local church youth club, St. Michael's, Headingley. This was at time when youth clubs were in their infancy. Mixed clubs, many of which, like St Michael's, were formed and managed by their young members, proved enormously popular and by the end of the decade they had begun to surpass the long established boys' and girls' clubs in terms of membership. Michael, as would have been expected, progressed in the decade that followed from member to assistant leader before taking on the mantle of club leader. By the 1950s his talents as a club worker led to him being recruited by Edward Patey, Youth Chaplain to the Bishop of Durham, to help run exchange programmes and conferences on behalf of the World Council of Churches. It was also during this period of time that Michael helped develop a number of innovative ecumenical youth work programmes. Encouraged by Patey and others, in 1956 Michael enrolled on the two year part-time training course in Youth Leadership re-launched the previous year by the NAYC. Initially the course, which at the time was one of the few qualifications available, was largely run by a trio of remarkable women educators – Madeline Shipp, Josephine Macalister Brew and Lesley

Sewell. Brew died in 1957 and for the next few years Sewell became *de facto* tutor-in-charge. Sewell, who herself was to become General Secretary of the NAYC, recognized and nurtured Michael's talents for youth leadership and did much to convince him that henceforth his future lay in youth work rather than textiles. In later years he frequently extolled the virtues of Sewell who he often singled out as the most inspirational youth worker he had encountered. His admiration for her achievements never waned, nor did his gratitude for her support and encouragement

In 1958 Edward Patey, himself a charismatic youth worker and prominent supporter of the NAYC, moved from Durham to Coventry, where as a Canon he was centrally involved in the building of the new Cathedral. Central to that endeavour was the intention to build within its shadow an ecumenical residential youth centre large enough to serve alike the local community and the Cathedral's mission of reconciliation. Once the decision to proceed with this project was confirmed Patey contacted Michael and persuaded him and his wife Mary to leave Leeds and the family firm and re-locate to Coventry to help plan and run this new centre when it was completed. In 1965 the John F. Kennedy Centre opened, with Michael as its first Warden. There he organized training programmes for part-time youth workers and ran courses, exchanges, residentials and work-camps for young people from around the world. In 1964, Patey was appointed Dean of Liverpool Cathedral, where besides his clerical duties he was an active member of the Liverpool Council of Social Services. When in 1968 the Council sought to appoint a Head of Youth and Community Services it was perhaps inevitable that once more Patey persuaded his protégé to accept the post. Michael was to remain in Liverpool for seven years during which time he gained a reputation as an able administrator and sound committee man. He also proved to be a shrewd champion of the voluntary sector during those difficult years when the local government youth service was growing apace and in many localities squeezing out the voluntary sector. His skills as a negotiator helped, against the odds, not only to sustain but to expand a vibrant voluntary youth work presence in the city. Throughout his time in both Coventry and Liverpool he remained active at a local and national level within the NAYC. Having first held office in his local youth association over 30 years earlier, by the mid-1970s he had demonstrated a long and unbroken commitment to the NAYC.

In 1975 the post of General Secretary of the NAYC became vacant and Michael was encouraged to apply by his old tutor Leslie Sewell. The story goes that Stevenson, who chaired the interview panel after the second interview was convinced that Michael was the best candidate. However Michael's somewhat disheveled appearance worried some colleagues on the panel so it was decided that Stevenson should invite Michael and Mary to dinner. Fortunately Michael appeared both on time and immaculately groomed to the relief of his host. Shortly afterwards his appointment was confirmed.

Michael's sense of humour, abiding faith in the fundamental goodness of people and sharp intelligence made him both an exceptional youth worker and outstanding General Secretary. Never

afraid to employ clever, even abrasive individuals, the NAYC during his tenure became a place where new ideas and initiatives were encouraged. Outstanding staff were recruited and given their head. The result was an amazing decade when the NAYC did so much to take youth work in new directions. Feminist work with young women, radical political education programmes, and work with gay and lesbian young people were all awarded the space to flourish within the organization. Simultaneously he championed fresh initiatives in relation to detached work, work with homeless young people, 'immigrants' and member participation. From the outside it sometimes appeared all a little chaotic and a sometimes fractious place in which to work but you also knew it was the most exciting of places; the institution that was then setting the agenda within youth work. Michael was the perfect person to keep the NAYC on an even keel. Guided as he was by a deep-rooted Christian faith and blessed with an affable nature, sharp eye for the absurd and impeccable manners it was difficult not to love the man. Even if you were at times uncertain as to the wisdom of his thinking one always knew his motives were of the highest order and that he was never driven by self-interest or narrow ambition. A natural listener he was never over-awed by status nor easily diverted from what he believed to be the right path. During his time in post the staffing complement grew until it once again reached levels that had not been known since wartime. Much of the expansion was funded via time-limited governmental grants and when these inevitably came to an end the coffers were replenished by the shrewd sale of property. Sadly though, despite his rich array of achievements, he never managed to solve the NAYC's long-running financial problems; problems that then stretched back for more than half-a-century. Consequently some of the cherished projects he did so much to launch and sustain did not for long survive his departure.

Retiring in 1986, he spent a brief period in the United States as a youth work consultant working in tandem with his friend Bill Treanor. Later he wrote a history of St Michael's Youth Club, collected and preserved material relating to the history of the NAYC, and remained active in local community groups almost to the very end of his life. Retirement also allowed him to devote more time to his lifelong passions for opera, railways, and reading as well as contributing to the life of his local parish. Michael is survived by two daughters, Helen and Pam, a son David and four grandchildren. One son Peter and his wife Mary pre-deceased him.

Reviews

Tom Cockburn

Rethinking Children's Citizenship

Palgrave Macmillan 2013

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£ 55.00 (hbk)

pp.272

Dod Forrest

THIS BOOK provides a panoramic view of children's lives and the emergence of various forms of citizenship in the context of a history of Western philosophy, industrialisation and the emergence of global capitalism. Cockburn traces the ideas of the thinkers who have theorised the concepts of citizenship, governance and rights, outlining the key elements of this evolution of ideas from the Classical period of Greek and Roman times, to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, through to contemporary perspectives of neo liberalism, feminism and socialism. This is an ambitious project seeking to locate the child, and the place of children in European world history. He argues for,

... a rethinking of citizenship away from liberal individual notions to one that emphasises social interdependence and calls for concomitant re-evaluations of our public spaces to enable the intersectionality of children's identities and a safe and constructive way for the dialogue of dialectics of generation to be facilitated (p.17).

Cockburn has illuminated a stark reality. The child, in all societies around the world today, is excluded from the formal political process. The child is devoid of citizenship. The state defines the child as 'not ready' to participate in decision making and certainly not ready to vote. Relations of power between parent and child, between welfare, health and education worker and child, are unequal, sometimes abusive. Generally the relationship is not participatory or sharing, and where this does occur it is tokenistic, especially in the nursery and the school and many homes.

The book is packed with detail and covers a huge range of literature on citizenship, the state, the family and children, all embedded within an interesting framework of radical/socialist feminist theories of patriarchy, empowerment, care and justice. These theoretical arguments are threaded together to create a new perspective on children's citizenship. The 21 pages of references identifying almost 500 sources of material provide one indicator of the breadth and depth of the analysis that Cockburn has undertaken. This bibliography alone provides a substantial resource

for further study. This is a broad brush approach and at times the reader can feel overwhelmed by the density of the argument and frustrated by the unavoidable conciseness of the range of ideas explored. However the structure of the book provides a stopping point at intervals where welcome summaries are provided at the end of all sections.

Cockburn structures his account of citizenship within turning points in history. He argues that it is during periods of revolution, citing the French and American revolutions, where incremental shifts were made in terms of welfare and social rights for children alongside women and slaves, albeit the 'rights of man' were the initial primary focus. The author also traces how ideas and roles changed when societal conditions were ruptured by technological change in the form of the industrial revolution, spawning radical new ideas that led to the development of a more inclusive citizenship, particularly in terms of women's suffrage and welfare reforms for children.

Cockburn identifies the internationalisation of rights as a key element in the contemporary period and argues for a form of citizenship that recognises differences of culture, gender, race, disability and class while striving to search for mutual interests that encapsulate a citizenship of care, rights and justice. This rethinking of citizenship signposts a way forward for children where interdependence is the norm, arguing that there is an increasing need and recognition of mutual care and aid as opposed to naked self-interest. The notion of participation is central to this rethinking as he outlines: 'Rights may attempt to provide the glue of citizenship belonging, but active citizenship is something beyond the claiming of rights and involves participation' (p.175).

Cockburn has created a substantial and important rethinking of the prevailing view of citizenship and in the process has reconceptualised a citizenship that, if granted by the state and introduced into family and community life, should become oriented around social change – encouraging agency, social action, participation and justice underpinned by care. This perspective is, crucially, set within a framework that acknowledges the existence of powerful vested interests, and an inequality of resources. He points a way ahead for a more participative citizenship focussed on social action for justice in an international context.

These perspectives may herald a shift in the relations between children and the state. Children have been part of the great social movements that have emerged in the opening decades of the 21st century. School children walked out of school and went on strike in their opposition to the Iraq war and were central to the Stop the War movement. In Scotland the campaign to welcome refugees and protect asylum seekers has been led at times by school children, alongside 'show racism the red card' initiatives in schools and community centres.

If there is one criticism of Cockburn it is that he does not interrogate the weaknesses of many so-called participatory and empowering initiatives. In an important early contribution to these debates

Baistow (1994) analyses the paradox of empowerment identifying both liberationist and regulative practices that flow from the concept. These ideas are contested concepts, open to manipulation by the powerful. A recent in-depth study of participation in this journal (Farthing, 2012) identifies a need for 'deeper critical reflection...about why we 'do' participation (p.97).

However Cockburn's social action for justice is a starting point for the self-organisation of children and will be a major contribution to the challenges that face all sections of society in the years ahead. It is possible that children will be at the forefront of the contemporary movements for radical social change that are emerging in all forms of protest across the world. Cockburn's book can assist this process.

A less expensive paperback edition will assist enormously and in the meantime all libraries, where possible, should prioritise the purchase of this book from their diminishing budgets and threats of closure. After all, in towns and villages across the country a growing number of children are joining the marches to oppose these cuts to library services.

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Dod Forrest was involved in the development and delivery of the Goldsmiths College Citizen's Rights Courses as a community and youth work student in the early 1970s. He initiated one of Scotland's first Welfare Rights Projects, at St Katherine's Centre in Aberdeen.

Ruth Gilchrist, Tony Jeffs, Jean Spence, Naomi Stanton, Aylssa Cowell, Joyce Walker and Tom Wylie (eds.)

Reappraisals: Essays in the history of youth and community work

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pp. 181

Lucy McMahon

THIS VOLUME presents historical snapshots of late nineteenth and twentieth century youth work,

tracing trends in gender dynamics, community development, criminology and political resistance. It is a collection of papers presented at the bi-annual *History of Youth and Community Work Conference*, which explains the lack of any overall trends or connections between articles, in a realistic depiction of the diversity (and often disjointedness) of youth work, youth workers, and institutions. The title *Reappraisals* points to the authors' desire for readers to see the essays as tools to reappraise contemporary research and practice.

The volume is therefore an enriching accompaniment to youth work research. Contributions are largely from the UK, but Juha Nieminen writes on Finnish youth work (Chapter 5) and Judith Metz on professionalisation in the Netherlands (Chapter 7). The articles range from historical documentary to political analysis and a particular asset of the collection is its focus on the local without losing the wider historical political context. For example, Dod Forrest's in-depth analysis of youth work in the Northfield Estate in Aberdeen (Chapter 9) is used to make a case for participatory youth work more generally, and is rooted in the slowly growing political radicalism of 1950s youth work.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 have a particular focus on gender dynamics in youth work. In Chapter 1, Helen Jones offers a detailed history of the first decade of Leeds Association of Girls Clubs, with a central focus on its female founders. Jones' short biographies of these founders provides an interesting angle from which to understand the initially 'apolitical' stance of the association and the emphasis on creating well behaved maids and obedient daughters. This chapter feeds well into Chapter 2, which continues the discussion of gendered and classed role-creation in youth work, this time with a focus on youth deviance. Naomi Stanton and Aniela Wenham characterise perceptions of working class youth as either 'fallen women' or 'artful dodgers', and illuminate the domination of the middle classes in constructing morality through stringent gender norms, stressing the contemporary prevalence of such norms. One particularly interesting observation is the authors' assertion that 'Popular representations of the "at risk" girl remain couched in terms of their "failure" to make a successful transition to adulthood' (p.33). This male governance of the child-adult transition has long been a topic of concern in feminist research since Mary Wollstonecraft's claim that a fundamental barrier to sexual equality in the eighteenth century was women's 'perpetual babyism' (see Field 2011: 200). Stanton and Wenham demonstrate the contribution of class position and poverty towards oppressive gender stereotyping. The authors' analysis of 'fallen women' is more successful, I suggest, than their approach to 'artful dodgers'. The authors pay little attention to masculinity per se, but rather comment generally about 'dangerous youth'. This sets up a distinction between femininity, which needs special gendered attention, and masculinity, which represents standard, neutral 'youth'.

In Chapter 3, Tony Jeffs adds complexity to this gender binary by analysing groups with the more radical feminist approaches to youth work of the militaristic Womens' Volunteer Reserve, launched

by suffragettes, which was ‘designed to offer girl workers roughly what the Boy Scouts movement had long been doing for their schoolboy brothers (p.40). At times, it is difficult to identify Jeff’s perception of, or arguments surrounding, his subject matter, for example he describes the blame placed on ‘foolish’ women for the ‘spread of VD amongst troops’ with little analysis of the sexual power dynamics embedded in such allegations, particularly the associations of female sexuality with disease and disorder. It is hard to tell what Jeff thinks about suffragette forms of radical youth work and what resonance he believes those movements should have for today’s practice, if any.

Chapter 4 is Tom Wylie’s history of Scouting in Belfast, which continues the technique used by Helen Jones of reading history via biographies of individual youth workers and organisers, in this case Judge William Johnson. This is an interesting way to encourage youth worker readers to relate the extracts to their own practice, but also to relate a history of political turmoil (in this case of Belfast) through individual experience. Like Chapter 4, Juha Nieminen’s outline of the theoretical underpinnings of Finnish youth work in Chapter 5 emphasises the significance of state policy and ideology in forming youth work practice and rhetoric. Although his paper highlights interesting general trends in perceptions of youth work, I was left wondering why Nieminen makes no mention of the significant division between ‘white’ and ‘red’ children after the 1918 civil war, as a result of which, as Mirja Satka (2003) has shown, the ‘red’ children of communist dissidents were treated as second class citizens.

Chapter 6 is a brief history of the Cambridgeshire Village College, reminding the reader of previous links between schools and youth work organizations in which the community focus of the latter inspired changes in the former for a brief period of British history. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 introduce key trends or buzz words in youth work: professionalisation, community development and participatory youth work, all of which have intense relevance to contemporary research and practice. It is mainly left to the reader to make links between the articles and their contemporary relevance; although Judith Metz calls for a redefinition in the role of the youth worker in Chapter 7, she does not have space to outline what this might mean in practice. Similarly, Dod Forrest asserts that participatory youth work is a ‘vital educational service’ in Chapter 9 but does not have space to justify this claim with relation to contemporary social and political changes. Keith Popple’s chapter on community development (Chapter 8) segues well into Bernard Davies and Tony Taylor’s final chapter on the Albemarle Settlement, as both chapters provide detailed histories of the development of British youth work and its intersection with changing racial politics and economic contexts. Again the papers allowed only for brief references to contemporary politics with little close analysis of how to ‘reappraise’ current practice. The authors loosely tied the concerns about a ‘permissive society’ that was supposed to have resulted from the ending of National Service in 1958 to David Cameron’s ‘broken Britain’, but provided little analysis of the significance of this link (p.166).

The volume effectively provides a ‘taster’ of different historical trends in youth work. There is a

general tendency towards description of historical contexts over critical analysis, but readers are provided with rich historical detail about under-researched trends and institutions. An introduction that tied together the themes in the papers and identified the relevance of each to a contemporary 'reappraisal' in more detail might have more successfully justified the title of the collection. At the same time, the diversity of contributions and approaches are a good representation of the field of youth work and provide important insights into its origins, structures and individual pioneers.

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Lucy McMahon, Centre of Development Studies, University of Cambridge

Marina Hahn-Bleibtreu and Marc Molgat (eds.)

Youth Policy in a Changing World: From Theory to Practice

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pp.328

Alexander Fink

WITH *YOUTH Policy in a Changing World*, editors Bleibtreu and Molgat make a valuable contribution to the still nascent disciplinary field of international youth policy. Bringing together scholars and practitioners from the United States, Latin America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Asia, this volume represents a global perspective on the challenges of making effective policy for young people in the 21st century. While old strategies for youth policy involve mainly references to other policy fields that affect young people (education, job training, etc.), this volume identifies youth policy as a distinct arena, grappling with a wide assortment of issues that affect young people and sharing two key concepts: (1) the idea that young people should be considered as active citizens, capable of shaping (rather than only being shaped by) social institutions and (2) the belief that public policy can support young people as 'social actors, in their life experiences and their transitions to adulthood' (p.11). The book explores national policies that influence the lives of young people through this shared lens. It is divided into three sections, each enumerating

an important dimension of the policy process: policy development, the effects of policy, and perspectives on policy. Chapters range from local and practical ('Challenges in youth transitions to parenthood in Bulgaria') to the philosophical ('Changing time experience, changing biographies and new youth values').

With this range of shared concepts and dimensions in mind, *Youth Policy in a Changing World* examines many important elements of global youth policy: identity, citizenship, transitions, development, employment and career growth, education and training, migrant workers, and suicide. This diversity of topics points to this volume's primary strength and weakness: while providing a multidimensional cartography of global youth policy, the text simultaneously feels wandering and disconnected. The editors could have solidified the volume by having each paper suggest implications for youth policy on the basis of their research. Shared implications, or better yet, guiding questions would go a long way to providing future directions for researchers and policy makers. Also absent are strong connections to the fields of public policy and political science that one might expect from a policy text. Utilising the frameworks developed in those fields would help make space for young people as an addition to or modification of existing public policy and political science frameworks. Drawing from these disciplines would strengthen this text by integrating a large history of research and study into the field of youth policy. That said, this disparate range of topics, research methodologies (which range from case studies to secondary data analysis to national surveys), and conclusions implicitly offers a guidebook for scholars of youth policy, who could place relevant studies in dialogue with circumstances in their own national or international contexts.

Perhaps because the book covers such a wide range of topics, it feels like there are some perspectives missing. Where, for example, is an analysis of the ways the impact of policy is affected by sexuality and race? Do child welfare systems factor into youth policy? Changing policies around the world are also affecting the institutions working with young people. Two examples from the United States are the movement of funds from community centres to after-school programs and the professionalisation of the role of youth workers by advocates for core competencies. As a youth worker and scholar in the United States, where these policy-level discussions are at the fore of our professional dialogues (and knowing these discussions are happening elsewhere too), I feel like these are missing dimensions to a comprehensive review of global youth policy.

The book concludes by making an important distinction between two differing perspectives implicit in its chapters. The first views young people as in need of help to develop skills and personal characteristics needed to 'be successful'. This is referred to as the 'adaptation' perspective, 'geared toward fostering the adaptation of young people to society, to labor and housing market conditions, [...] and to a host of social and psychological prescriptions concerning the prevention of risk behaviors' (p.309). The second sees young people as social agents able to create social change. In

this latter perspective, the role of policy is to support these young people in navigating or changing structural obstacles to their success. These perspectives reflect a tension within youth studies as a broader discipline and it seems reasonable that they would appear here as well.

On the whole, conclusions of greater significance were contained between the covers of this volume, but unfortunately went largely unnamed. Primarily, I think preliminary implications or framing questions for the field in understanding youth policy on a variety of topics would strengthen this book's contribution to the discipline. Making these explicit would go much further in providing definition to a field still in its own youth.

**Alexander Fink (@alexfink), Ph.D. Student, School of Social Work, and Instructor,
Leadership Education and Development, University of Minnesota**

Sue Heath and Charlie Walker

Innovations in Youth Research

Palgrave Macmillan Publishers 2011

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£57.50 (hbk)

pp.281

Rodolfo Leyva

INNOVATIONS IN Youth Research brings together a collection of 12 articles, focusing on their unique methodological approaches and corresponding ethical concerns. Writing in response to the recent wave of critiques of traditional qualitative methods (interview and ethnographic approaches), the editors argue that the book offers a plethora of innovative techniques that demonstrate how qualitative research can be updated and recharged to better gauge and document the complexities of modern young people.

When I first opened the book, I was immediately impressed and in agreement with the editors' lucid and convincing argument that research on young people needs to adopt a more holistic use of varied methods that complement each other in order to generate uniquely different data that is otherwise inaccessible via the use of traditional qualitative methods. Indeed, reading through the contents page, I was delighted to see in the chapter titles phrases like, 'music elicitation', 'the use of mental maps', and 'mixed methods', expecting maybe to read about the use of psychological priming tests on young people. Unfortunately, as I read each chapter, I was a bit disappointed with the content. This is not to suggest that the book is not insightful or well written. In fact, I agree with just about all of the different authors' major conclusions and lessons, and to be certain the methods used in the studies described were innovative, at least in the strict Oxford English Dictionary sense of the word. Chapter 3 for example, describes an ethnographic study on young

people's attachment to their neighborhoods, where the researchers added neighbourhood car rides with their participants to their methodological toolkit.

However, I felt that the title and to some extent the introductory chapter are somewhat misleading. The book should really be titled 'Qualitative Methodological Innovations In Youth Identity Research', since there is no article that describes the use of quantitative methods. Chapter 5 was equally deceptive in its use of 'mixed methods', and could have been titled 'Triangulation in Narrative Research', as it is a fine example of using multiple qualitative methods to triangulate a specific research exploration. Still, and this could just be my subjective interpretation, but at least from anecdotal accounts, the term 'mixed methods' is reserved for the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

As for the innovations (and with the exception of chapter 2, which describes the use of music elicitation on metal fans that likely generated higher quality data than would simple interview questions), I was not convinced that most of the methods described in these studies were particularly necessary. Take for example, the use of mental maps described in chapter 4 where the authors had participants draw out geographical maps of their communities in order to elicit thicker descriptions that can better elucidate their participants' affective attachment to space and place. Likewise the study in chapter 6 describes how youth participants in India were given cameras to take pictures of the buildings and locations that had meaning to them. While these methodological additions certainly complemented the use of standard ethnographic methods, I do not see how they helped to add anything uniquely different that could not have been captured via the use of carefully crafted semi-structured or open-ended interview questions. Contrary to the editors, I take the position that multiple methods should be used to validate, and not merely complement, each other.

In other instances, a few articles, whilst insightful, seemed out of place for a book dedicated to innovations in methods. Chapter 12 for example, concerns an account whereby the author discusses some of the major issues of conducting research in cross-cultural settings (eg. preparing for fieldwork, negotiating access). The actual methods used, however, were only briefly mentioned as simply ethnographic. Meanwhile chapter 13 describes a conversation between a researcher and his former PhD supervisor talking about issues of reflexivity and the representation of participants that can occur after the ethnographic collection of data.

Nonetheless, this book is a great example of the literature of qualitative studies on youth identities and subjectivities, and anyone interested in this line of research can definitely pick up some pointers from this book. Yet given that the major lesson and conclusion to most of these types of studies is always predetermined by some permutation of the argument that 'young people actively construct their identities around the competing socio-cultural discourses and physical locations available to them', why bother with innovative methods at all?

I get it. Identities are fluid and young people have an affective attachment to their respective local cultures and proximate geography. Do we really need participatory photographic and self-portrait methods to once again document this now overly documented sociological law?

Let's move on from this, and let's implement a creative methodology to match.

Rodolfo Leyva is a visiting lecturer on sociology and research methods at King's College London

Ken Ogilvie

Roots and Wings: A History of Outdoor Education and Outdoor Learning in the UK

Russell House 2012

ISBN: 978-1-905541-84-3

£39.95 (pbk)

pp.792

Richard McHugh

OUTDOOR AND environmental education and learning have been a longstanding aspect of the associated fields of youth and community work, teaching, social and probation services. Many books have covered the specific interests of professional training for outdoor instructors and those who incorporate technical outdoor pursuits such as climbing, mountaineering and canoeing into their educative programmes (for example, see Langmuir, 2001; Grant, 1997; Hill and Johnston, 2002; Long, 2004; Peter, 2004). Yet little attention has been paid to the genealogy of outdoor education and learning, again in spite of peripheral works on the specifics of the history of mountaineering and climbing (cf. Wells, 2001). Notwithstanding discipline specific histories and technical training manuals, Ken Ogilvie's offering is a much needed attempt to fill a gap in outdoor education and learning literature.

Roots and Wings in this sense has promise, just as it has potential at a telephone directory proportioned 792 pages, as a point of aid to step up to the first moves on Supa Dupa Dupont (Chapel Head Scar), or as a second belay anchor on the loose topped Castle Naze crag. Climber's jokes aside, *Roots and Wings* provides a useful overview of the history of outdoor education in the UK, doing what it says in the title. Ogilvie begins at the umbilical cord of the human race in the pursuit of tracing the seeds of education and learning in the outdoors, taking the starting point of ten million years ago; this starting point is given as a means of locating outdoor learning (and the earliest forms of education) as not being an independent recently occurring phenomenon.

From such early beginnings Ogilvie sketches out a précis of (pre) history, making links in the

earliest forms of what might be described as co-operative living, experiential learning in the form of tool development and understanding of the properties of materials, through to what would today be described as commuting. This though is a sketching out and précis, as the detail and rigour in supporting this aspect of the chronology are sparse. Herein rests a problem for the initial chapters of the book. In one respect it is attempting historical analysis, and in another it is attempting to draw links between the actions of the founders of humanity and the present of outdoor education and learning as a life enriching activity and commodity. At points, in particular early on in the book, this dual purpose feels strained. With this said, there is an illuminating reference in the first chapter to an article by J.A. Peddiwell which should be a warning to all who are involved in any form of education (pp.7 – 8).

Unfortunately there are a small number of issues which could be open to a preliminary deconstruction and may cause at least an eyebrow to be raised, these being a casual use of colonial stained language and extensive use of the exclamation mark. It may be that these points seem petty. However, as the book is aimed at youth and community workers, teachers, students and their associated fields, I would hope that most readers may question the use of terms such as ‘Red Indians’ (p.13).

As the book meanders through history on a whirlwind temporal tour of key points in education policy, historic referents in the patchwork of outdoor learning (in relation to said policy) and more broadly still, macro historic events such as war, youth cultures and social change, the reader begins to gain a sense of rhythm to the book. This is interesting in that it is reflexive of the rhythms that are discussed: for example, social change, war (Boer), loss, governmental intervention, charismatic (civilian) leadership (Baden Powell), and social change. This is not too dissimilar to Bear Grylls involvement in the scouting movement today, although this is not referred to in the latter part of the book that focuses on the present of outdoor learning and education.

Of significant interest not only to practitioners with specialist technical roles associated with outdoor education and learning, but also to those who may be conducting non-technical and ungoverned field trips in the outdoors, are the sections examining the discourse of risk. This is one of the areas of the book where Ogilvie shines through as having an in-depth expert knowledge of the subject matter; as is the case in the sections dealing with the establishment of National Governing Bodies such as Mountain Leader Training Board and licensing of providers via the establishment of the Adventure Activities Licencing Authority.

Roots and Wings is potentially a valuable resource to practitioners working or interested in working with learning and education in the outdoors. For a youth and community worker or teacher this value may be in the reminder that there is significant potential in utilising outdoor experiential learning, be it related to specific curriculum subjects, as a means to think afresh through play, or

to reflect in environments other than a class room or youth centre. For the instructor or coach it may be that the value comes as a means of linking broader education policy and policy change to the demands placed on their profession in everyday practice. For students studying on outdoor education, teaching and youth and community courses the same value is evident, yet it should be said that in this case the book should be treated as a signpost to more specific texts in all relevant directions depending on interest.

There is only one obvious gap in the book, albeit in some ways a large one, this being that it solely focuses on outdoor education in rural and coastal areas and through the lens of learning and education as exclusively professional domains (with the exception of the forays into the pre-historic). No mention is given to spontaneous adventure activity in the work of detached youth and play work, informal coaching and mentoring in skate parks or dirt jump trails, apprenticeships in locating street sports and technical coaching for Parkour practitioners, street BMX'ers and graffiti artists. Not to mention street debates and learning through experience for groups of young people inhabiting urban spaces. Perhaps this omission is symptomatic of the elite or cure paradigms in which outdoor education and learning discourse exist, or perhaps it is the future of the discourse to come; either way, a more critical analysis could have considered these as at least a question of what may be.

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Richard McHugh is an Informal Educator.

Stuart Waiton

Snobs' Law: Criminalising Football Fans in an Age of Intolerance

Take a Liberty 2012

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£11.95 (pbk)

pp.80

Brian Belton

IN THIS BOOK Waiton attempts to deconstruct what he understands to be the widely perceived bigotry of football fans and sectarianism in Scotland. In doing this he highlights what he sees as hypocrisy among politicians, the police, and the media who for him have traditionally seen the football fan in a negative light.

Waiton questions the influence of the Scottish National Party's Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Act (2012) (from hereon referred to as the 'Act'), in particular how it might negatively impact on the fundamental human right of freedom of expression, as Scottish football fans become more subjected to regulation and surveillance than many other sections of society. According to Waiton (of Abertay University) 'At a time when British politicians are lecturing Vladimir Putin about freedoms abroad, they are increasingly denying them at home'.

The book starts out by discussing the Act which makes it possible for supporters to be incarcerated for up to five years for giving voice to banned songs and chants. Politicians initially insisted that the purpose of the Act was to oppose sectarianism at matches between Celtic and Rangers. However, the scope of the Act extended to include a range of songs and chants that individuals and groups might find offensive.

In the chapter, 'The New Sectarianism', Waiton discusses what he sees as a new and increasing trend; particular groups of 'Old Firm' supporters expressing offence at attitudes and chants they had, for generations, tolerated. Waiton argues that this inclination has intensified sectarian rivalry, but has also formalised it (it has been encoded into law and legal processes). Supporters of both sides are able to invoke the new law, reporting opposing fans to the authorities. This has in effect granted a sort of licence for 'grassing'.

Waiton (in the chapter that reflects the title of his book) contests that urban elites led the way for the Act and its accompanying moral attitudes towards soccer support; these are his 'snobs', who can hardly camouflage their disdain for the working-class football fan. Reversing what he portrays the prevalent perspective, Waiton homes in not on the behaviour of supporters but the activity of politicians, who for him understand supporters as a problem that requires addressing rather than fellow stake holders in society. These political tsars are for Waiton unable to understand

that actions and words used by fans during football matches have a different quality or character than the same actions or words used beyond the sporting arena. This, for Waiton, has ignited an exponential catalogue of regulations, rules and controls applied to, and increasing surveillance of what supporters say or do. This amounts to a criminalisation of ‘communications’.

For Waiton, the tsunami of sententiousness engulfing soccer fans has resulted in the criminalisation of words, the consequence of which is supporters being placed in custody, sometimes at the cost of their employment and future careers. This, and the broader social impact of the Act, Waiton argues, should be laid squarely at the door of the Scottish National Party (SNP) together with groups of social elites who object to what the fans of the Old Firm teams sing or chant. This distaste (which is portrayed by Waiton as close to a form of discrimination in itself) has, for Waiton, been taken as adequate justification to legislate against what he presents as vocal traditions. He sees this as a victory of the snobbery of the chattering classes, over the traditionally working class realm of football fandom. However, this position is really an attempt to create a sort of perpetual motion logic rather than a robust enquiry into the nature of human rights, something called ‘working class traditions’ and football.

Probably before the 1970s footballers seeking to bring their peers to ‘justice’ for verbal abuse of one type or another were as rare as supporters being arrested and punished for giving voice to offensive chants or songs. That said, I was ejected from Upton Park some time in the late-60s for singing ‘F, F.U., F.U.C. me walking down the street...’ I got no further with my homage to Dionne Warwick’s ‘Walk on By’ as PC 247 escorted me out into Green Street. A couple of weeks later he did much the same thing as I sang ‘247, 247, Wonderful Radio One!’ (a jingo for the station of that era).

However, back across the mists of history to now, the contemporary regulations and laws vilifying of such behaviour in and around the game are, for Waiton, understood as progressive and expressions of tolerance.

Snobs’ Law was initially generated via an analysis of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communication (Scotland) Bill, and starts out by looking back to the 1980s and the policing of supporters during that period. This was a time when fans were literally herded into and caged in grounds, treatment that was responsible for a number of largely unheralded small tragedies and incidents before the death toll at Hillsborough in 1989 brought conditions into the headlines.

For Waiton, this ‘old regime’ and the unspoken solidarity of supporters in tolerance of one another’s intolerance has been replaced by modern mechanisms of control, the product of a sort of loose association of elitist groups and sectional interests, which collectively effect psychic and physical control. As such, *Snobs’ Law* is concerned with prejudices, myths and odium that encompass the

support of football. It posits the rise of a form of ‘nouveau-sectarianism’ generated by the authority élites, premised on people being encultured or at least persuaded to take forms of profound offence and enticed or obliged to inform those taken or labelled as perpetrators, from the perspective of the book rival supporters, to a relevant or any authority.

Overall, Waiton asserts what is in reality an elaborate and widespread system of surveillance, judgemental attitudes, and inquisitorial responses that give rise to a nexus of disapproval, threat and punishment, undermining free speech and expression in the Scottish context, in the process threatening the liberty of the whole population. According to Waiton this situation embodies the growingly censorious and intolerant character of Scottish attitudes, while the nation outwardly portrays itself as being distinguished by its tolerance.

Waiton’s argument is seductive in its simple logic – it replicates football with its ‘them and us’ emphasis that straightforwardly gives the green light to what are clearly forms of bigotry. It attacks groups of what he sees as élites but effectively promotes the views of other groups that make up the dominant classes north of the border, what one Celtic fan called the ‘brown brogue wearing dignity’.

As such Waiton’s arguments are flawed because they appeal only to a basic analysis, while claiming there is no difference between singing about being up to one’s knees in ‘Fenian blood’ and Manchester United supporters taunting Liverpool fans with chants about ‘loadsa money’. This would be laughable if were not so utterly repugnant. It’s not unlike proclaiming that Billie Holiday’s ‘Strange Fruit’ has the same impact as ‘Cotton-eyed Joe’.

The book in short equates to; ‘Free speech should be allowed no matter what’, but nestling religious bigotry as legitimate within this – in essence making a case to put this beyond legislation in the context of soccer (and so by association perhaps all sporting contests) – is clearly conflating ‘free speech’ with ‘licensed offence’. Perhaps some basic historical knowledge of sectarianism in football given its head is required, maybe starting in Belfast on Boxing Day 1948 at the annual Linfield – Belfast Celtic game at Windsor Park. This started a process which concluded with the competitive disappearance of ‘The Grand Old Team’ before 1950.

Waiton’s opposition to the Act effectively supports the continuance of religious bigotry; racists and bigots being, in practice, protected. His argument, that the Act is a ‘Snob’s Law’, forced on the feeble working class that he sees football support being primarily made up of, is a painfully patronising and simplistic exercise in stereotyping. But at the same time he is asking me (and perhaps you) as a football fan to live with and tolerate bigotry, at least in one form, although as soon as we accept it in one form it logically opens the way for other incarnations of the same putrid thoughtlessness: racism, sexism, homophobia etc. And all because we are (apparently for Waiton anyway) some species of affable proles, taking delight in being encased in the non-changing slum

that he regards as customary football supporting practice, complete with flat cap, bottle of stout and half-smoked Woodbine perhaps, devoid of diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture, race, class or gender; ‘the way it should be’ free of the prawn sandwich brigade of ‘cultural elitists’ that Waiton asserts dominate the cultural response of the game.

But a surface reading of *Snob's Law* might incline an audience to take it as a straightforward defence of free speech and expression, perhaps reclaiming the concept of tolerance. For Waiton, it seems that the SNP and their politically correct allies have stripped tolerance of its essential meaning as a verification of freedom; this ‘anti-football-tradition’ pack being guilty of reducing tolerance to a kind of civil propriety and / or demand for decorum.

The positive (or naive?) reader might take it that the book aims to challenge this mainstream view, and as such it should perhaps be welcomed along with Waiton’s adamant censure of those leading what he portrays as the criminalisation of football fans and players, which does ask the questions few openly air: why should disapproval of what football supporters and professional players say / sing / chant be turned into grounds for criminal proceedings?

It may be true that if tolerance is taken simply as being pleasant to each other, there is a risk that it will transmogrify into prejudice against those who are labelled as offensive (those who do not agree or comply with being civil to everybody all of the time just for the sake of it). And as words and songs that are considered impolite and nasty become subject to censorship and criminalisation under the Act, Waiton is probably right to argue that in Scotland (and elsewhere) those who pressurise most for the prohibition of songs, control of behaviour and policing thought, not unusually see and sometimes describe themselves (in one way or another, word and / or deed) as ‘of the left’, secular and open-minded. This for Waiton gives rise to a peculiar situation wherein what he understands as the intolerant and illiberal management of football supporters (and professionals) is camouflaged in the oratory of liberal tolerance.

Certainly, it is hard for the reader to doubt Waiton’s sincerity in his concern about the failure of intelligent and liberal people, to grasp the new censorious environment as a perilous assault on free speech / expression. However, while it might be hard not to support the well-known quote from the work of Evelyn Beatrice Hall (1906, p.188): ‘I may detest what you say but will defend to the death your right to say it’, it is perhaps iniquitous to move from this to seeing the banning of the use of bigoted and / or racist language as our collective failure to hold on to or uphold the ethics of the precious liberty of free speech. However tolerance is not acceptance. Someone can tolerate something up to a point where they won’t (or can’t) tolerate it any more; being tolerated is a type of patronisation from this perspective. But maybe we can accept that we are able to tolerate people and words that we don’t like, although not liking is not the same as being hurt or injured by the meaning of words and the way they are used.

Waiton's apparent failure to understand the latter probably shows him to be more of the 'chattering classes' he vilifies than he might be conscious of. The days when football sectarianism and racism reflected everyday life have long gone (thank goodness). The truth is that the type of language, abuse and insult that Waiton apparently wants to resuscitate as a 'tradition', perhaps some wild mythical working class equivalent to Highland dancing or tossing the caber, is itself a gross and in practice vile caricature of my (working class) culture. Just as football played is a universe away from the Celtic World Club game revisited in my own book *The Battle of Montevideo* (2008), so the behaviour, demeanour, class and growingly ethnic and gender profile of football support has also changed.

While writing the biography of West Ham and England's first Black footballer, I was told by the Hammers' John Charles; 'Yeah, fans shouted out things, sang songs. Once, when I was playing, my mum was sitting behind this feller that called me a 'black bastard'. She went mad at him. She said, 'He's not a bastard! I was married to his dad!' I can tell many stories of this type; we have not always tolerated insults as 'tradition'. In fact, in the main I would argue we have not tolerated them; we have lived shamefully with them. To our credit we have largely stopped them in football grounds, although events in the last few years, particularly in parts of Europe, demonstrate that it would be foolhardy to rest on our successes – there is still a long way to go. This is why we cannot let Waiton and any allies he has win this argument.

Waiton calls today's tolerant 'intolerant of the prejudiced', which seems an appeal to reason although if you think about it, it is about as logical as saying the prejudiced are the tolerant group. This is the trick that Waiton comes close to pulling off; but it is sleight of hand, or giving him the benefit of the doubt, a bit of a daft mistake.

As it stands Waiton is inviting football stadiums to be a pestilent vestige of the 'bad old days' of the game, a time when terraces were dangerous places, sometimes running with piss (once in desperation, not being able to get through the crowd for the factory farm like crush, someone took a shit right behind me) and firetraps, where every big game invited a mass squash that too often in football history has ended in multiple death and injury. I was there, as a boy and a young man, pulled into the arms of football hooliganism gangdom – it has to be said in part by repulsion to what was being offered in youth clubs, although I was repeatedly rejected by them for my non-compliance (or their intolerance?). In that atmosphere men (there were few women attending matches in those days) pulled vitriol out of their guts and aimed at their class fellows while the actual generators of that fury, the rich shareholder who stole their labour, watched impassively in the comforting knowledge that religious differences continued to play their part in the divide and rule ethic so important to class domination (I analyse the beginnings of this in *Founded on Iron*, 2003).

That's where these song and chants came from – that is their root and branch; their 'tradition'. Bringing that back is a sort of Frankenstein ambition – with Waiton proclaiming Kenneth Branagh like; 'It lives!'; a dark and frightening vision.

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Brian Belton, Lecturer, YMCA George Williams College

M.G.Khan

Young Muslims, Pedagogy and Islam: Contexts and Concepts

Policy Press 2013

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£19.99 (pbk)

pp.214

Paul Thomas

AS I WAS reviewing this book, a (supposedly 'Liberal') Coalition government minister resuscitated calls for the full force of British law to be used against the small minority of Muslims, themselves a small societal minority, who wear the Niqab, or full face covering. Both France and Belgium, the latter a national government who can agree on virtually nothing else, have passed such laws. This gives some small sense of the Islamophobic climate in western countries in recent years that has cast young Muslims as the 'modern folk devils' and which provides the frame for this fascinating and compelling book. M.G. Khan highlights how this external gaze, and forms of 'purist' internal Muslim community responses to it, force young Muslims to actively consider faith and its place in their 'identity':

Muslim young people are caught between two ideological discourses; a discourse that sees no good on the one hand (Islamophobia), and on the other, a protestation of the 'beauty of Islam' that sees no bad, and young people end up living the ugly side of both (p.81).

Khan's response to this reality is a book that seeks to develop a theoretical, pedagogical framework for 'Muslim youth work' and which justifies the need for it as a form of anti-oppressive practice. Here, he takes an approach that both works with and against internal and external norms of 'being

a Muslim', as Yasmin Gunaratnam (2003) describes the difficult balancing act of working with, but not essentialising or reifying specific, lived identities. Such tensions are illustrated by Khan's thoughtful consideration of the considerable role for youth work within Britain's 'Prevent' counter-terrorism programme – this has enabled and funded more space for work with Muslim young people on a faith-identity basis, but also led to the 'ghettoisation' of both Muslim professionals and the young people themselves simply as 'Muslims', rather than as people with complex and multi-faceted identifications. The result of such analysis is a thought-provoking, educative book that should be read by anyone concerned with the pedagogical and ethical basis for modern youth work, whether Muslim or Non-Muslim, faith adherent or atheist. At first sight, the book's title and significant quoting from, and consideration of, key concepts of the Qur'an, such as the much-misused 'jihad', are challenging for a non-believer. However, they are both educative in the face of ignorance about a much-maligned faith and are used to develop more universal consideration of what is 'good' youth work pedagogy and of the importance of relationship-building.

The fact that it is not an easy book to categorise indicates the strength and depth of the writing – at times the book moves between theorisation of youth work pedagogy, Islamic theological interpretation and explanation, analysis of controversial social policies and reflection on what it is to be human, all underpinned by a very significant range of sources but without letting those other sources get in the way of Khan's very personal direction and voice. This complexity reflects Khan's varied involvements, not only as a professional youth work practitioner and University-based educator, but as someone who has been a key figure in the creation of the Muslim Youth Work Foundation and in the 'Young Muslims Consultative (the government-directed re-naming to 'Advisory' is one of a number of insightful policy analyses in the book) Group' developed in the early stages of 'Prevent' programme. The extremely honest and hard-edged reflection in a chapter titled 'On anthros and pimps' on internal and external researchers and the gate-keepers who facilitate their access to 'marginalised' groups such as Muslim youth reflects Khan's experiences of engagement in these highly contested policies. Khan highlights the significant responsibility of youth workers as 'border pedagogues' in accessing, and enabling access to, marginalised young people in pursuit of both policy goals and associated research, arguably professional/ethical issues that we have not discussed enough as a profession as state-funded youth work in Britain has found itself directed more and more overtly in support of wider policy agendas, whether 'reducing teenage pregnancy' or Prevent.

As someone who has researched the impact of Prevent on both society and youth work, I found such reflections and insights illuminating. For that reason, I was somewhat disappointed that the negative connotations similarly applied to policies of community cohesion were not developed in the same way. My own experience is that ground-level youth work community cohesion practice is significantly more positive, and we certainly need more youth work-based discussion of such policies and their impacts on the ground.

The number of books focussed on youth work has thankfully grown substantially in recent years, with many of the text-books very helpful in use with youth work students. This is a different type of book though, a genuinely philosophical and theoretical discussion of youth work's pedagogical purpose and approach that also provides hard-edged critique of societal attitudes towards young Muslims and policies aimed at them, while written in an accessible and engaging style. As such, it deserves a broad audience, having much to say to experienced youth work practitioners and trainers, as well as trainee professionals ready to engage in 'deep' pedagogical consideration.

Reference

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[Back to Contents](#) 



Youth & Policy Journal was founded in 1982 to offer a critical space for the discussion of youth policy and youth work theory and practice.

The editorial group have subsequently expanded activities to include the organisation of related conferences, research and book publication. Regular activities include the bi-annual 'History of Community and Youth Work' and the 'Thinking Seriously' conferences.

The *Youth & Policy* editorial group works in partnership with a range of local and national voluntary and statutory organisations who have complementary purposes. These have included UK Youth, YMCA, Muslim Youth Council and Durham University.

All members of the *Youth & Policy* editorial group are involved in education, professional practice and research in the field of informal education, community work and youth work.

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