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- informing, advising and helping those who work with young people in a variety of settings;
- influencing and shaping youth policy and improving youth services nationally and locally; and
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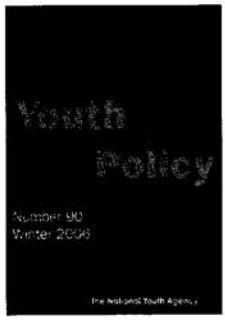

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Encountering 'Izzat' in Asian Communities – A Reflection on Youth Work Practice

Sangeeta Soni

This article is based on my reflections as a Youth and Community Worker within the Asian communities of Bradford and Birmingham. I trained as a Youth and Community Worker in Yorkshire and have worked as a practitioner in the inner-city areas of Birmingham for many years. Reflections on my practice, with Asian young people in particular, has led me to consider the recurring importance of izzat (personal and family honour) in their lives and its implications for youth and community workers working within Asian communities. As an Asian woman, and therefore often as an 'insider' within these communities, I found my encounters challenging and uncomfortable. The article seeks to explore some of the issues related to this discomfort in relation to the concept of izzat.

Keywords: izzat, honour, sharam, shame, Asian , youth work.

Youth and community work, as a process of informal education which engages young people and members of the community and which promotes active participation, enables these groups to make informed choices, contributing to their empowerment. The approach is one which uses 'the familiar critically in order to further learning' (Jeffs and Smith, 1990: 2) This process is oppositional to an important cultural concept, that of *izzat*, which shapes the lives and behaviour of many people in Asian communities both on the Indian subcontinent and in Britain.

Izzat is usually translated simply as personal or family honour and pride by those who have researched Asian communities. However this translation does little or no justice to the complexity and nuance of meaning that can be ascribed to the concept. I believe that it is an underpinning force that plays a part in regulating life in all Asian and Middle Eastern communities. In this article, I will explore the complex nature of the concept, examine some of the aspects of community life in which *izzat* plays an important part, particularly in the lives of young Asians, and then consider its relationship to youth work in general.

Understanding izzat

Izzat is an Urdu word. This suggests that the term has origins in the Islamic cultures and communities of the northern regions of the Indian subcontinent (Wilson, 1978). Over time it has clearly been adopted by and influenced by the cultures which have co-existed with the Islamic communities of that region. The concept is now understood and used in the

communities of the Indian subcontinent in general. In Punjabi the concept is known as *ijat*, and for Sikhs it has meanings concerned with pride, status and honour. It is interesting, however, that in Hindi and in Bengali, the other two main languages of the northern Indian subcontinent communities, the word *lajjaa* is considered an equivalent. *Lajjaa* means shame and the inter-relationship between honour and shame is enshrined in the usage of corresponding words in the languages of these cultures. My experience as a Youth and Community Worker within the three main religious Asian communities of Britain (Muslim, Sikh and Hindu) indicates that the word *izzat* is accepted, as is the Urdu and Punjabi equivalent for shame – *sharam*. The concept is implicitly understood, and is alive in all three communities.

Izzat is important for Asians because it is a force or phenomenon which confers status on individuals and their families. It sustains a family's good name, standing and reputation within the Asian community. Status can be affirmed through approved conduct, and earned through acts that are considered by the community to be meritorious. The process of affirmation of *izzat* helps to establish and sustain a hierarchy within communities which is based on a complex network of relationships and factors such as kinship, caste, regional and national associations. A good position in the hierarchy of families that is established over time is considered advantageous because it ensures that members of that family find themselves in a position of relative privilege. An example of the potential benefits of such a position of privilege includes having a greater choice when the family is seeking spouses for its dependents of marriageable age (Wilson, 1978; Bachu, 1985). The quest for *izzat* is therefore desirable and ties every family into a complex network of relationships within the community from which it is very difficult to escape, and within which the behaviour of its members is regulated through an implicit understanding of *izzat*, and the fear of a loss of *izzat* or of attracting *sharam*.

My experience indicates that *izzat* cannot be understood fully without *sharam* and indeed that *sharam*, shame, is the bedrock of *izzat*. *Izzat* is a pro-active force actively instrumental in conferring status, whereas *sharam* can be a constraining force concerned with maintaining conformity. *Sharam* therefore goes hand in hand with *izzat* because it is the proscriptive force that plays a large part in determining how much *izzat* an individual possesses. As Wilson (1978) points out:

> *In a sense 'sharam' is the complement of 'izzat'. It is common in one form or other to all Indo-Pakistani cultures. Its affects can vary from never looking a man in the eye or never arguing with a man, to wearing a 'Burkha'.* (p. 99)

In all three Asian communities women seem to be more susceptible to *sharam*, and men seem to be more involved in the process of *izzat*-gaining. Women bear the brunt of sharam, because moral responsibility lies more heavily on women than on men (Wilson, 1978; Ballard, 1979; Bachu, 1985; Shaw 1988 and 2000; Werbner, 1990; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane, 1990; Modood et al, 1994; Anwar 1998). The reason for this may be the relatively weaker position of women in Asian cultures which are patriarchal, assigning importance to patrilineal descent, and practising patrilocal marriage (Dahya, 1972-3, Desai, 1963; Khan, 1979).

Researchers have asserted that Asians, across the three main religious groups in Britain, regard religion as being fundamentally important, not only as a basis for identification, but also for providing guidelines and a structure for moral living (Wilson 1978; Modood et al, 1994; Modood et al, 1997; Ghuman, 1994; Anwar, 1998). If this is generally accepted then *izzat* becomes the means by which these rules are observed and implemented within the community. Religion, and by extension *izzat*, helps to determine the 'right' behaviour, thus establishing the norms of behaviour within a community. Ballard (1994), when discussing first generation settlers, captures the importance of religion and religious institutions in the development of what he calls *izzat*-competition. He says,

> *The rapid establishment of religious institutions, and the growing vigour for izzat-competition, had a major impact on the settlers, who found themselves under growing pressure to conform (or at least give the appearance of conforming) to the ideal norms of their own particular group. Former pleasures -- such as smoking, drinking and occasional adventures with white women -- were now perceived as shameful and dishonourable. Sikhs began to re-grow their hair and re-adopt the turban, Muslims forswear alcohol and many Hindus become more strictly vegetarian* (p 18).

In an alien context perhaps it is natural that particular aspects associated with the place of origin are emphasised or expressed in order to maintain a sense of identity. *Izzat* clearly helps in this process. The pressure to conform to particular, acceptable norms of behaviour continues over time to be important, and is now well ingrained within the patterns of community life. As Modood et al (1994) point out, when discussing their second generation respondents, 'Religion was also important in laying down a code of behaviour concerning food and drink, dress and socialising' (p 51).

This means that if rules are broken, and this becomes known, then sanctions are imposed on the culprits by the family in the first instance, and also by the community at large. The breaking of rules is seen as shameful behaviour, which in turn results in a loss of *izzat*. Family and community pressure on the whole ensures that the cultural and religious rules are observed (Werbner,1990; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane, 1990; Modood et al, 1994; Anwar, 1998), particularly as the threat of the possible sanctions for straying from the correct behaviour are ever-present, through examples from within the community, and through stories within family histories. The existence of rules, guidelines and codes of behaviour, and the fear of sanctions, stigma and shame help to encourage and sustain behaviour that is considered to be acceptable within the community. This combination means that *izzat* can therefore help to determine an individual's place in relation to other relationships around him/her, for example within the family, or as a family within the caste or community. It is not surprising therefore that Modood et al (1994) found that, 'Most second generation Asians were cautious about engaging in relationships that would take them and their children away from their cultural roots' (p. 80).

Although religion provides the underlying rules and guidelines for conduct, and the fear of sanctions and *sharam* helps maintain acceptable conduct, the connected idea of reputation is the other force by which conformity is achieved. Wilson (1978) describes it as, '...a tremendous, conservative force, controlling, to different extents, everyone in Asian societies' (p.104). A damaged reputation, whatever the causal action, lingers within a community,

making it difficult for individuals and families to regain lost ground. Reputation is immensely important in ensuring that the individual behaves in the approved manner.

Izzat and the Youth and Community Worker

It is inevitable that the loss of *izzat* or the stigma of *sharam*, leads to the loss of honour and prestige, which affects not only the individual concerned, but potentially his/her family too. This in turn can lead to alienation of the individual from the family in the first instance, and then from the community, and in extreme cases, where the individual's family also becomes implicated, it can lead to the ostracisation of a family from the community. Often therefore, if an individual is perceived to have 'stepped out of line', the immediate family will respond by publicly disowning the individual, in order to overtly disassociate the family from the individual's shameful behaviour, and hopefully save the family as a whole from censure of the community. In such cases, the individual's social exclusion from his/her family and the community is complete, leading to the loss of support structures and networks on which the individual may have hitherto been reliant. Examples from my practice where disowning might arise include instances when young men and women have had relationships with individuals who they know would be disapproved of by their families on the grounds of caste, race and religion, when young people have wanted to leave home against the knowledge and wishes of their families, and when young women became pregnant out of wedlock.

The network of reciprocities, both material and emotional, ties the individual into relationships and into patterns of behaviour, from which it is very difficult to escape. As such, obligations and reciprocities are important in developing what I would call a 'net of conformity', which is maintained by the quest for a good reputation, and the fear of gaining a bad one. The examples given above are clearly instances whereby potentially reputations could be and sometimes were damaged, and this affected both the individuals and their families. As a practitioner I often had to walk the 'tightrope' of supporting individuals and working to limit the damage to their reputations, usually by making effort to conceal the perceived misdemeanour.

My experiences as a member of the Asian community, and as a youth and community work practitioner (and therefore an informal educator), working with Asian communities in Britain, as well as my review of research on Asian communities, has revealed the differential in the expectations and the treatment of women and men in the Asian communities (Wilson, 1978; Bachu, 1985; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane, 1990; Modood et al, 1994; Anwar, 1998). The realm of *izzat* is implicated in this differential, with *izzat* being fundamentally instrumental in determining the differing expectations and therefore the resultant behaviour of men and women. This in turn leads to a community consensus and agreement on the parameters of acceptable behaviour for men and women, and therefore regulates gender relations within the community as a whole.

In the Muslim, Sikh and Hindu communities, there are unwritten, implied rules or codes determining gender relations and the differential treatment of men and women. There is a preference for the separateness of men and women, especially before marriage, and

the rules of kinship association help to further determine the nature of proprieties after marriage. Although there may be variations between Asian communities, especially with regard to how rigidly particular rules are observed, the implicitly understood codes of conduct exist nevertheless. My general experience, observations, and the existing research show that the 'codes' determining gender relations can be broadly applied to two areas of concern. The first is to do with the family's expectations of young men and young women, and includes rules about dress, modesty, relative freedom, career and employment choice, education and social contacts. The second is to do with marriage and spouse selection (Wilson, 1978; Bachu, 1985; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane, 1990; Modood et al, 1994; Anwar, 1998).

Youth Workers need to be conscious of the complex network of reciprocities in which the young men and women with whom they work are involved. Practitioners may then become alert to the existing ties of obligation, as well as to the potential for liaisons with people outside of the 'approved' circles to attract *sharam*, and therefore serious sanctions for the young people concerned (Modood et al, 1994). The realm of gender relations is an obvious example of this. As such, it may be wise to consider carefully the merits of mixed-gender work within a predominantly Asian community. I am not suggesting that mixed gender youth work can never be possible, but it would clearly need careful planning, consultation with the young people and above all, transparency for the community.

Wilson (1978) asserts strongly that *izzat* is crucially instrumental in the control exerted on women by the men in Asian communities. She believes that the rules that determine women's conduct – for example with regard to their association with men outside the family, and the appropriate dress codes for women are implemented through what she describes as '... the sensitive and many-faceted male identity which can change as the situation demands it – from family pride to honour to self respect, and sometimes to pure male ego' (p. 31). Thus, for example, Asian women may be constrained from working in environments where 'strange' men, those outside the family, may be present, and they may struggle to continue with their education because of the lack of single sex formal and informal educational facilities (Wilson, 1978; Modood et al, 1994, 1997; Anwar, 1998). The implications of this for youth work in single sex and mixed settings can be huge, and only a deeper understanding of the intricate nature of gender relations within Asian communities, and therefore an understanding of the role played by *izzat* within this, can contribute to appropriately meeting the needs of members of Asian communities. More fundamentally, such an understanding can help to prevent the base, simplistic, stereotypical perceptions and allegations of sexism, and ideas about the 'passiveness' of Asian communities and women, which in my experience seem to abound especially amongst practitioners who work within Asian communities, but are not themselves Asian.[1]

Other researchers (Bachu 1985; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane, 1990; Modood et al, 1994; Anwar, 1998) clearly acknowledge that there are differences within Asian communities in regard to the expectations of men and women, and that on the whole women are subjected to far greater moral scrutiny, Wilson (1978) asserts that *izzat* is the domain of men, but which has 'reflected responsibility' for women. As such *izzat* becomes a controller and oppressor of women, and those women who endanger the family's honour, and therefore the honour of the male members of the family, by breaking the codes of dress,

modesty and/or cross-gender associations, pay a heavy price through the loss of honour, or by bringing shame on the family as a whole. This in turn brings isolation and humiliation for the individual, and is a cause of family conflict. As Wilson (1978) points out:

> *As a result the women suffer; they are made the scapegoats of damaged 'izzat'. It is they, after all, who have always been the symbols of their culture and traditionally it is at their slightest touch that the delicate flower of 'izzat' can shrivel* (p. 32).

A more recent study funded by the NHS executive in Derby (Gilbert et al, 2003), to see how *izzat* affects both the mental well being and the use of mental health services by Asian women, confirms the continued social control exerted by *izzat* on the lives of Asian women. Jasvinder Sanghera, a worker from Karma Nirvana, an Asian women's project in Derby that helped with the study, is quoted as saying,

> *The research demonstrated that the young and middle aged viewed shame as a form of social control*
>
> and
>
> *However, all generations agreed that maintaining the good name of the family was essential. And if they ignored izzat, they knew they would suffer the consequences of being cast out and disowned. It governed their lives.* (The *Guardian*, January 23rd, 2002, Guardian Society: 127)

Izzat as an underlying force in communities can drive people to behave in ways that can only be described as extreme. Women are often, although not exclusively the victims of such force. As mentioned earlier, because women embody the ideal moral virtue within communities, they can be harshly punished when this is threatened or tainted. The British press has often focused on the bewildering cultural aspect of the force with which a family or a community reacts to a display of individual behaviour outside the acceptable norms of the community. As such, from time to time, stories emerge detailing, for example, the ostracization and brutal treatment of a runaway girl, who is often escaping a forced marriage. Women have been killed by relatives when they have been considered to be in disreputable relationships (Wilson, 1978; Sen, 2001). Wilson (1978) accuses the British press of not understanding the true reasons for such passions, and for explaining them away in terms of 'culture'. As she explains, '...parents have a much more easily understandable reason for their reaction – fear. Fear not of God, but of the deeply conservative institutions within Asian society' (p. 109).

Izzat therefore acts as one of those implicitly understood, intangible institutions, whose force is certainly tangible. Mala Sen's (2001) journalistic account, 'Death by Fire', of 'Sati, Dowry Death and Female Infanticide in Modern India', draws a chilling picture of how the pressure of conformity underpinned by *izzat*, becomes an unstoppable force.

There is a danger in all this that in focusing on extreme incidents, the press encourages perceptions within mainstream society of Asian communities as being brutal and insensitive. This can lead to the social and cultural exclusion from mainstream society of individual

members of Asian communities and, in fact, of Asian communities as a whole. As the focus is more often than not on the situation of women in Asian societies, it can also encourage the stereotyping of women in these communities as being perpetually oppressed, while at the same time inciting feelings of pity for the victims who suffer at the hands of their uncaring and even ruthless families. The case of Shafilea Ahmed, a young women found dead and presumed by the press to have been killed by her family, in what is described as an 'honour killing', (because she was fighting against being forced into a marriage), is a very recent example of this (see, for example, *The Independent*, 9th February, 2004). For those professionals, including Youth and Community Workers practising within Asian communities, this can result in unhelpful, ill informed attitudes of pity and patronage towards their Asian 'clients'. As a trainer of Youth, Community and Play workers I have found these stereotyped perceptions and attitudes all too pervasive amongst non Asian students.

The position of those people, often also women, fighting and resisting such a force within Asian communities is also very compelling, as they have to understand and balance their actions in the face of such force. It makes their circumstances perhaps as precarious and marginalized as those of the victims. Social activists and others involved in the business of empowerment, change and development carry out an intricate balancing act of supporting the unfortunate victims, because they understand the enormity of the personal injustice they have faced, while comprehending the risk that they undertake as catalysts, as a consequence of their association with the victims. Those who intervene can potentially have the blame laid at their own door (Sen, 2001).

My experience as a youth and community worker, working with Asian young people, has often placed me in such a complicated and precarious position. I have encountered a number of instances where young Asian women have been raped or become pregnant before marriage. In such instances the balancing act has been very difficult. I have had to meet the needs of these young women, while fully understanding the consequences for both the young women and myself, of their family or the community at large becoming aware of the individual's 'shameful' behaviour, and of my role. The commitment to my professional ethics, which clearly side with the individual, and my knowledge and experience of Asian communities makes the balancing act difficult, uncomfortable and, most importantly, risky. Here the worker, in siding with the individual, potentially faces exclusion or worse, from the very community within which s/he works. Ironically, there is also the possibility of facing censure and criticism from fellow non-Asian workers if s/he is seen as being unsympathetic to the individual young person's needs, by articulating the community's position, and thus potentially being perceived as siding with the community. However what it also means is that as an Asian worker, and therefore an 'insider', I am truly in a position to engage with the individual in a much deeper way about the consequences of his/her actions. This means that I can help them to really make appropriate, informed choices, because I am aware of the full picture. It is possible to conjecture that a non Asian worker who is perhaps less familiar with the concept of *izzat* and its impact on the lives of Asians, may engage in the same process of enabling the individual to make informed decisions, but without the 'whole picture'. The possible consequences of this could potentially be damaging for the individual young person in the long run, because decisions will not be made on an informed basis.

Although I acknowledge and have witnessed the pressures that *izzat* (and *sharam*) can exert on women, and also understand that there are clearly differences in the relative positions and attitudes towards women and men in Asian communities, I believe that the pressures on men are merely different. They have a privileged position, and are subject to lesser moral scrutiny, but their relatively privileged position does come with responsibilities. I remember an older male Asian social worker once saying to me, as a novice youth and community worker:

> *Sangeeta, I know you keep talking about the needs of women in our communities, but the people in real crisis are the men – especially the older men, who are crumbling under the pressure to meet the needs of their families, and to be successful. Many of them come and complain to me.*

Bachu's (1985) account of the changes in attitude towards men provides an interesting insight into both the potential pressures on men, and the corresponding cultural shifts with regard to '*izzat* earning' behaviour. She details how over time the emphasis and focus is being placed on personal, individual attributes, (especially in the case of potential grooms). Therefore, education, the profession/work and the acquisition of personal property, are being considered to be more valuable than the family background and family assets, although these nevertheless remain important as vehicles for gaining *izzat*. This is also corroborated by Werbner's (1990) work. In a British context such a shift perhaps mirrors the more individualistic focus of the host society, showing that Asian communities and cultures can and are adapting to incorporate the demands and expectations of the host society but with consequences for their own cultural perspectives. As Modood et al (1994) point out:

> *If the first generation views strongly reflected the ethos of the family and religious ethnicity, the characteristic theme of the second generation views was individualism* (p. 71).

This shift requires not only changes in the behaviour of individuals, for example in the pursuit of acquiring personal assets that are considered valuable by the community (Bachu, 1985), but also in the perceptions, expectations and acceptance of their families and communities, who are instrumental in identifying and recognising such attributes as valuable, and thus affirming them and conferring status on them, and so on their acquirers. The continued threat of censure helps to keep a check on individualistic desires and behaviours, so that only those acts that confer status within the margins of acceptable behaviour are approved and escape censure. Thus the acquisition of property and employment as an individual act gains approval, whereas an act outside the accepted boundaries, such as a mixed marriage, would 'evoke censure and a loss of honour and respect for the family of the defiant individual' (Modood et al, 1994: 73–74).

As Asian communities become established in Britain, and as religious and cultural organisations emerge to meet the communities' needs, the pattern of community life develops to mirror the religious and cultural vibrancy on the Indian subcontinent, and at the same time engenders the flexibility to adapt to life in a British context. Another example of this adaptability is the growing flexibility with regard to spouse selection within all three Asian communities, which now allows dependents of marriageable age to meet and even

to reject a potential match (Bachu, 1985; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane, 1990; Modood et al, 1994; Anwar, 1998). My experiences within the Hindu Punjabi community have given me access to the 'marriageables' list that my mother receives each month, and because my mother's house is regarded by the extended family as a 'neutral territory', I have been invited by aunts and uncles to attend numerous potential meetings between the two families, and therefore the man and woman who are hoping to find spouses.

The growing stability of the communities, in terms of the length of time that they have been in Britain, and their continued geographical concentration in particular areas, as well as their increased financial security has meant that significant life-cycle events and rituals, (such as births, weddings and deaths), can now be celebrated and marked with the same enthusiasm and propriety as on the subcontinent (Werbner, 1990; Ballard, 1994). This is important not only for the social and emotional well being of the communities as a whole, but with regard to *izzat*, it provides an arena within which social behaviour and interaction can be sustained, observed and regulated. It also means that through the celebrations, people have the chance to publicly show their material well being. As Ballard (1994) points out:

> *And besides the fact that they are joyful events, the elaborateness with which they were celebrated had always been the central means whereby families competed to secure and advance their relative izzat ... in every community rituals have grown larger and more complex, and the scale of gift-giving larger* (p. 18).

Bachu (1985) and Werbner (1990), provide detailed accounts of well-established South Asian communities, with a particular emphasis on the elaborate processes of gift exchange for marriage in particular. While Bacchu (1985) emphasises the importance of the *daaj* (dowry) amongst the East African Sikh community in Britain, Werbner (1990) focuses in great detail on the complex nature of *lena-dena* ('receiving-giving'). Neither of these accounts identify the potential for what I would describe as social exclusion which takes place within the community. They emphasise instead the very competitive nature of gift exchange which provides the individual and family with the opportunity to overtly display its material assets and to affirm its kinship and friendship networks, thereby utilising an opportunity to gain *izzat* through status conferring objects and symbolic acts of giving and receiving. However, if this process helps to affirm the close kinship and friendship networks, then it also enables the active exclusion of individuals from the process. Thus when individuals are singled out for not receiving gifts which should be rightfully theirs, and if a gift received is explicitly rejected, it signifies the social exclusion and marginalisation of that individual from the family, and possibly from the community. It sends out a very stark message to all those who implicitly understand the process.

The fact that material well being helps to bestow status on the family, and on the individual within it, means that the quest for wealth and therefore better standing within the community, acts as an important spur. It also means that the material objects and other means by which material betterment can be and is sought, is changeable and influenced by external factors. As Ballard (1994) suggests:

> *... 'izzat' emerges not as something fixed and permanent, but as a matter of relative*

> *standing which generates constant competition, both between individuals and even more between closely related families. It follows that as soon as competition for 'izzat' takes off, there can be no escape: anyone who fails to play the game will by definition lose face* (p. 15).

On the whole, men within the community as the accepted centre of the family, bear the brunt of the pressure to succeed, and to make others in their families conform to the cultural norms. This is a huge responsibility, and one that also takes its toll, especially in a society where there has been a clear rise in Islamaphobia over the last decade (Runnymede Trust, 1997), and where unemployment amongst young Asians is higher than amongst white young people. Anwar (1998), Modood et al (1994) and Samad and Eade (2002) have highlighted the fact that racism is a significant factor in the higher rate of unemployment amongst both young Asian men and women. They assert that this affects young Bangladeshi and Pakistani men disproportionately. The social exclusion of these young men from mainstream society on the grounds of employment is obvious, and the racism is compounded by the rise in Islamaphobia.

The role that *izzat* may play in this is perhaps less obvious. However, given that status and respect is most commonly gained through success in education, employment and the acquisition of personal assets (such as house ownership), then the failure to succeed in these spheres can lead to a loss of face and *izzat*. It is not surprising therefore, that Asian young men perhaps turn to 'alternative' means in an effort to succeed, when more conventional routes are unavailable. Their social exclusion from mainstream society becomes complete as they find other means to success. Asian youth workers, including myself are not surprised when headlines such as 'Al-Qaeda trained hundreds from UK' appear in the press (The *Observer*, 24 February, 2002), or when we find Asian young men involved in drugs related turf wars (see the *Observer*, 14th July, 2002). The social exclusion of young Asian men in particular, seems complete, but perhaps what is not clear are the less obvious reasons for this. *Izzat* plays its part in this.

Izzat therefore is a concept which requires a public arena within which it can be realised and affirmed, but also has a private aspect that relies on individual action that gains negative or positive value through censure or affirmation in the public arena. This public/private relationship that *izzat* brings into play inevitably encourages personal rivalry. The balancing act therefore of individuals seeking public affirmation for a particular act, is a difficult one, because they may find themselves in a position whereby such affirmation is given either grudgingly, or not at all. As an example Ballard (1994) relates this to the subject of leadership amongst the Sikh community:

> *In a context where the ruling assumption is that every man is as good as the next, it follows that anyone who gets ahead and attains a position of leadership or even of public respect will start to overshadow all his close and nominally equal-associates. With their honour and autonomy consequently threatened, all those with whom that person is involved may well be tempted to challenge rather than accept the leader's role, if only to preserve their own 'izzat'* (p. 91).

This illustrates the fact that *izzat* is in fact an ever-present, dynamic force that regulates and

pushes the margins of community life, relying on a complex relationship between private, individual or family-based actions, and the public arena of the community at large. Such dynamism perhaps goes some way to explaining the relative success, in economic terms, of Asian individuals who have prospered and thus are featured in publications usually for an Asian clientele, such as the Asian Voice, and in TV programmes such as Eastern Eye. However, the converse can also be true, so that where members of a community have fallen by the wayside, in this highly charged, competitive environment, they may find other ways of being successful and being part of an equally *izzat* driven world. The fact that young Pakistani men, who are relatively less successful with their education and employment (Modood et al, 1994; Anwar, 1998; Samad and Eade, 2002), become involved in the drugs industry is an example of this. Paul Harris and Burhan Wazir, in a special investigation for the *Observer* (14th July, 2002), explored the world of the Asian drugs gangs, which, 'emerge wherever there is poverty, unemployment and social exclusion'. In this cut throat world where competition remains important, it is not surprising that, 'The culture of "saving face" among drug gangs can lead to the slightest perceived insult being punished with horrific violence' (p.8).

Echoes of the competitive nature and force of *izzat* are therefore very much present in this alternative, lawless world. Youth and Community Workers are often cognizant about this world, and apart from my own experiences in the field, I have witnessed a number of students struggling to fully understand the quagmire of often drugs related violence within the inner-city, Asian communities in which they work. An understanding of the shame attached to a lack of conventionally attained success and the search for *izzat*-gaining alternatives in a world where conventional success is hard to come by, may help to lift the veil of confusion and help to build a clearer picture of motivations and the reasons for certain actions.

Conclusion

Izzat plays a differing but important role in the lives of Asian men and women. In all, *izzat* can be seen as a force that helps to feed the ego of the individual, and by association, of the family, and of the community to which individuals of standing belong. This in turn can lead to the establishment of family pride in the first instance, and also to community pride. This collective sense of pride helps to sustain a community, and it can also be enhanced or damaged not only by individual actions, but also by beneficial or subjugating experiences, of the community as a whole, in relation to other communities, and especially with regard to the host, Western society. The experience of racism , therefore, is one example whereby the internal organisation and resolve of a community is strengthened, in opposition to the host society which is perceived to be intolerant, insensitive and prejudiced. As such the interaction between Asian communities and the host, British society, helps to invigorate the dynamism of *izzat*. As Wilson (1978) states:

> *But 'izzat', with its centuries long history, its emotional pull towards India and Pakistan, is not so easily dealt with...British society serves in fact to keep 'izzat' alive. The contempt for Asian culture, the constant shadow of racial hostility and the disregard for family and group identity provide an atmosphere in which 'izzat' is constantly charged and re-charged* (p. 32).

As a Youth and Community Worker I found the impact of *izzat* difficult to pinpoint and to fathom. It has required much reflection to reach a point where I believe that I can start to see the influence and hold of *izzat* on both my own life, (personally and professionally), and on the lives of those Asians with whom I work. It affects individuals, their families and the communities to which they belong, and holds people in an intricate web of relationships within their communities, and also influences their relationships with others outside. It has potentially far reaching implications for what is commonly described as 'culturally sensitive practice', in a politically charged environment and in an era concerned with issues of community cohesion.

As individual Youth and Community Workers, and as a Youth and Community Service, I believe that if young Asians are to benefit fully from youth provision, then we owe it to them and their communities to have some understanding of the intricacies of community life, and therefore of concepts such as *izzat* and *sharam*, which play such a vital role in their lives. In this article I have begun to explore these implications.

On many occasions I have worked to explain *izzat* to people who are not from an Asian background. In one such discussion, a colleague listened attentively, and then said, 'The way you explain it, it almost seems like the air we breathe'. It is a description that struck a chord, because it captures the subtlety of *izzat*, the way that it is implicitly understood and therefore used; a fluid, intangible force which has the power to confer very tangible outcomes, having a huge influence on the lives of people in its grasp.

Notes

1 The term 'Asian' refers to the communities settled in Britain, who originate from the Indian sub-continent. In this instance it includes communities originating from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

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Reaching socially excluded young people

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Innovation in Youth Work? Young People and Mental Well-being

Sarah Banks and Dean Bartlett

This article explores the role of youth work in working with young people on the theme of mental well-being. It uses case studies from projects supported by The National Youth Agency's Partners in Innovation programme to highlight the positive role that can be played by youth work projects and by youth workers in multi-agency professional settings. Youth work and youth workers can offer support that is non-stigmatising, holistic and less formal than more traditional mental health services. Some of the challenges of partnership working between youth work and mental health services are also highlighted.

Keywords: young people, mental health, youth work.

Work with young people specifically on mental health-related issues has not traditionally been regarded as part of the youth work role. However, as concern and awareness grow about mental health difficulties faced by young people, and the shortcomings of the specialist health services are acknowledged, then alternative or complementary approaches are increasingly being explored. This article draws on a small study undertaken for The National Youth Agency to examine the lessons learnt from the experience of five locally-delivered projects funded through its Partners in Innovation programme. This programme disburses small grants to fund innovative projects working with young people. During 2003-4 'young people and mental health' was one of the themes chosen for funding, and in June 2004 a conference was held in Cambridge to disseminate and share ideas from the projects, drawing participants from a range of statutory and voluntary youth and health agencies. The authors of this article attended and noted issues from focused workshops at the conference, held semi-structured interviews with project leaders, consulted written documentation from each project and conducted a focus group after the conference with project workers. The focus groups allowed us to check out our emergent understandings of the salient issues and also permitted an exploration of the issues and tensions in partnership working from the multiple perspectives of the relevant stakeholder groups (see Banks and Bartlett, 2004 for a more detailed account of the conference). It is important to stress that in this article we are offering an overview of these five projects from the perspective of the professionals (especially youth workers) involved. Our aim was not to undertake a detailed evaluation of each project, which would have involved interviews with young people and observations of work.

This article will first discuss the background to the increasing concern about young people's

mental health and the current policy context before briefly outlining the work of the five projects and drawing out some of the advantages and challenges of a youth work role in this field.

Young people and mental health

Concern about young people's mental health and the range and appropriateness of services available has been increasing over the last decade (see, for example, Aggleton, Hurry and Warwick, 2000). Estimates of the extent of 'mental health problems' experienced by children and young people vary from 10% to 20% depending on the age range and definitions used. Cook (2004: 17) quotes an Office of National Statistics study (Meltzer and Gatward, 2000) which estimates that 11 per cent of 10-15 year-olds have 'a significant mental health disorder'. Whilst Cole (2003: 20) estimates the prevalence of mental health problems in children and young people to be as high as 20 per cent – taking such 'problems' to include depression, significant distress, eating disorders or obsessive compulsive disorders. A broad definition of 'mental health problems' in relation to children and young people is given by the Department of Health (2000: 25):

> *Mental health problems in children and young people are broadly defined as disorders of emotions, behaviour or social relationships sufficiently marked or prolonged to cause suffering or risk to optimal development in the child, or distress or disturbance in the family or community.*

This raises the question of how 'mental health problems' are constructed by professionals and policy-makers and the extent to which there is an increasing tendency to problematise and medicalise young people's attitudes and behaviour. We need to be aware of the danger of stigmatising young people and initiating excessive professional intervention in their lives to ensure that their behaviour fits within ever-tighter definitions of what counts as 'normal' or acceptable (Davies, 2000: 23-33). The same trends are apparent in the context of criminal and anti-social behaviour – although in mental health interventions the focus is more on the welfare of young people than on social control. This creates a dilemma for theorists, policy-makers and practitioners who are concerned about increasing surveillance, control and labelling of young people; indeed, it is a classic dilemma for radical practitioners (Jeffs and Banks, 1999). Campaigning for the recognition of previously ignored or hidden problems and resourcing of appropriate services (in areas such as child abuse, domestic violence or youth homelessness) is part of the role of committed social welfare practitioners. Yet there is often a fine line (or, indeed, no line) between ensuring that those young people who experience distress can access support, and contributing to a 'moral panic' or unnecessarily turning young people into 'welfare clients'.

This is where youth work can play a role as a less professionalised or medicalised option, working with young people in informal settings in a more holistic and less stigmatising fashion. But if youth work is to play a distinctive and complementary role, it needs to hold on to its core values of working within an informal educational framework towards collective participation and empowerment (Banks, 1999; Smith, 2003) and resist taking on the characteristics of health or social care provision.

The limitations of traditional mental health services

Research suggests that many young people find it hard to access user-friendly services to support them through some of their mental health difficulties. A number of studies have focussed on listening to children and young people's views of their needs and how they regard the services being offered. These suggest that family and friends are often the most used source of support, with more informal projects or services being preferred to the formal. Young people stress the importance of being treated with respect by professionals who are trustworthy, approachable and flexible (see, for example, Ahmad et al., 2003: 67-8; Armstrong, Hill and Secker, 2000: 20; Leon and Smith, 2001: 22; Smalley et al., 2004: 6-7). Youth Access, the national membership organisation for young people's information, advice and counselling services, undertook research as part of its 'breaking down the barriers' project (Youth Access, 2001). This work identified a number of barriers in mental health service delivery to young people, including difficulties faced by young people's information, advice and counselling services in getting help for 16-18 year olds from the statutory mental health services; the mismatch between the needs of 16-25 year olds and the services available; professional value conflicts with the statutory sector; a lack of resources and inadequate and patchy services (Youth Access, 2002: 7).

The potential for youth work

Responses to the need to improve services are developing. The Department of Health funded twenty four Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Innovation Projects, which promoted new partnerships and ways of working with local authorities and voluntary sector organisations. Interestingly, an account of the initial learning from the projects (Kurtz, 2001) does not specifically highlight the contribution of the Youth Service or youth work.

However, in the context of this increasing concern about developing accessible services for young people, the potential of youth work as an informal and flexible approach is beginning to be more widely recognised. Multi-disciplinary projects may employ youth workers as part of their team. For example, the Insight project in Plymouth comprises two youth workers alongside a social worker, occupational therapist and psychiatrist (Cook, 2004). The much longer established 42nd Street in Manchester was founded nearly 25 years ago with a team comprising a youth worker, psychiatric social worker and a counsellor, in recognition that 'youth work values and approaches were essential to welcoming and engaging distressed young people' (Davies, 2000: 39). Some of the projects funded by The National Youth Agency Partners in Innovation programme, however, are going a step further, with Youth Services or youth work projects employing mental health workers. A good example of this is the 'Thinking about thinking' project led by Essex Youth Service, which employed a psychiatric nurse to work with young people and with youth workers.

As the Director of Youth Access commented at the Partners in Innovation conference held in Cambridge: 'until recently mental health was not thought to be the business of youth workers' (Rayment, 2004). There is little focus on this area in youth work training; youth workers are very aware that they are not counsellors; and they are also wary of contributing

towards the stigmatisation of young people. However, findings from the research mentioned above and the current policy context discussed below suggest that there is an important role for youth work in this field. Findings of a survey of 131 youth workers employed in a range of voluntary and statutory settings indicated that issues relating to 'the workings of the mind' arose during their work for 74% of respondents (Banks, Burlison and Shakespeare, 2001/2). These came up in the context of daily work with young people and related to the use of drugs, medication and the need for referral for counselling or other specialist mental health support.

National developments in policy in relation to children and young people are providing a favourable climate within which to develop community-based projects and services for young people on the theme of mental health. The green paper, *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003) which forms the basis of the Children Act (2004), advocates a holistic approach to children and young people in the wider context of their families and communities and includes increased investment in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. The *National Service Framework for Children* (2003) includes the objective of developing effective partnership working so that the needs of the child are always considered and recommends multi-agency involvement in local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Development Strategies. Specifically in relation to youth work, the *Transforming Youth Work* modernisation programme (DfEE, 2001; DfES, 2002) sets out the government's commitment to working with local authorities to ensure delivery of a high quality youth service – recognising the contribution of youth work to keeping young people in 'good shape'. Although the term 'mental health' is not used, reference is made to ensuring young people's good health and preventing the causes of disaffection and exclusion. These approaches are reinforced and extended in the recent green paper, *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005), which aims to create coherent youth support services, including providing more intensive personalised support for young people who have serious problems.

The projects

We will now offer a brief outline of the five locally delivered projects in the eastern region of England funded through The NYA Partners in Innovation programme. These accounts provide a flavour of the types of work that are beginning to take place in both statutory and voluntary sector settings and also shed light on some of the tensions and challenges which arise through working in partnership with health services. There was a sixth funded project which was a national piece of work conducted by Youth Access to develop tools to improve the assessment and referral process between voluntary and statutory services in relation to young people's mental health. Some of the valuable insights and information offered by Youth Access in the workshops and focus group have been included in the article, but we have not described the project itself, as it was designed to develop guidelines rather than undertake direct work with young people (see Banks and Bartlett, 2004 for an account of the project).

1. Thinking about Thinking, Essex Youth Service

This project is operated in partnership with South Essex Mental Health Authority, running as a pilot project in Basildon within a broader 'Alternative Education' scheme for Year 11

pupils in schools in Essex. The Alternative Education scheme has been running for several years as a partnership led by the Youth Service for young people who are excluded from school or are at high risk of exclusion. Recently young people with more challenging and demanding behaviour were being referred to the scheme. This led to the idea for the pilot project, which involves a mental health practitioner offering one 90 minute session a week with a group of about 10-12 young people who are participating in the scheme. The facilitator works on developing young people's cognitive skills (developing their capacity to 'think about thinking'). The mental health practitioner (a qualified psychiatric nurse) also facilitates meetings with the youth workers involved in the scheme to help them develop their confidence and skills in responding to the mental health needs of the young people. The innovative aspect of the project is identified as the inclusion of a mental health professional in a youth work team. Outcomes are reported as improved attendance and retention of young people on the alternative education programme and comparatively higher achievements than in groups in previous years. Young people have completed several self-assessments, which demonstrate a growth in self-awareness and that they are beginning to think about their behaviour and attitude more seriously. Youth workers are more confident in using the group and its processes to explore issues with young people. Issues arising during the project included initial suspicion and hostility on the part of the young people (which later turned to cooperation and problem solving), a lack of clarity from the youth workers' perspective about their roles in relation to the mental health worker and some suspicion of the mental health worker (however, in time those involved in the scheme moved from being 'sceptics to champions').

2. PRAM (Positive Response to Anger and Misery), Peterborough Youth Service

PRAM is operated in partnership with the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The motivation behind the scheme arose from the fact that the mental health service was receiving a large number of referrals of young men who were perceived by adults as in need of 'anger management'. A youth work intervention which encouraged the expression of negative emotions such as anger and misery through expressive/creative arts could prevent the need for these young men to receive anger management sessions with CAMHS, thereby avoiding the cost and stigmatising effect of engaging with this formal service provision. The project adopted two different approaches: one used creative workshops with young men using masks to help develop emotion-related communication skills, while another group of young people produced a short film exploring mental health. The project had some difficulty with initial staff recruitment, but an experienced and appropriately trained individual was subsequently identified and appointed under the supervision of the CAMHS. The project also encountered some degree of tension in the partnership between the youth work side and the mental health side. This was attributed to differences in culture and expectations when it came to actually operationalising the project, necessitating that the first film that was made should be re-shot from the mental health service professionals' point of view. Workers reported feeling that there was a 'clashing of cultures' between the highly regulated, structured and professionalized world of the mental health practitioner and the occasionally less-structured activities of youth work practitioners. The film was subsequently re-shot and its focus was changed from exploring 'What is mental health?' to exploring 'How do you cope?' with mental health problems. The project also acted as a trouble-shooting pilot for the involvement of a mental health worker with the Connexions service which was due to take place independently of this project.

3. Cam Think Tank, Cambridgeshire County Council, Lifelong Learning
This project is conducted in partnership with a Cambridge Health Authority clinical support service known as CAMEO. The idea for the project came from the psychiatric staff at CAMEO. They felt that some of the young people they were diagnosing and treating were traumatised by being given a diagnosis of a psychotic illness, leading to the interruption of their formal education. The project therefore aims to work with these young people to help them regain lost confidence and, ultimately, return to mainstream education by providing them with an individual study programme. The programme is delivered at a local sixth form college and consists of 20 weekly two-hour sessions. The sessions are supported by a tutor who has experience of working with young people with mental health problems and computers are made available for the learners to use. Although the project is tutor-led, the content of the learning sessions is decided by the individual learners themselves and is therefore dictated by their needs and wants. The sessions have been used to research a variety of topics, including researching appropriate courses and pathways into further and higher education – although they are as much about getting the young people used to being back in an educational environment and building up their social support network as they are about the learning itself. In its first year, the project experienced some problems in terms of lack of referrals from the psychiatric service. In the spirit of piloting and refining innovative practice, it is intended to repeat the programme during the next academic year to confirm that the programme fulfils a genuine need.

4. Open Opportunities, Turning the Red Lights Green/Open Minded, Bottisham
Open Opportunities is part of the Open Minded Project, which is run by the charity, Turning the Red Lights Green, in South and East Cambridgeshire for people who have or are recovering from, mental health problems. An evaluation of the Open Minded project (aimed at people aged 16-65) revealed the lack of specialised and targeted support for young people aged 16-25 years. This led to the application to Partners in Innovation for funding for the Open Opportunities project. This project involves a mental health support worker from CAMEO (young people's mental health service) and a youth worker working together to run 12-week courses in a sports centre based on one hour of sports-based activity and one hour in a classroom (learning skills relevant to developing confidence, seeking employment, using computers, for example). Two groups have been run in Cambridge and one in Ely – with transport organised for participants living in rural areas. It is anticipated that the learning from these courses will enable more innovative responses to be made to the independent living needs of young people recovering from mental health problems. One of the issues encountered was a delayed response in young people signing up to the first course (there were seven participants rather than the expected 10). However, overall the outcomes reported by the workers include increased confidence, fitness and team spirit amongst the young participants, with useful links made back into their local communities. Accreditation is being given to all students from the first round of courses and funding to continue the courses has been confirmed from JobCentre Plus.

5. Young Fathers Support Worker, Romsey Mill Trust, Cambridge
Romsey Mill is an independent charity based in a youth and community centre in Cambridge. It was set up in 1980 by local churches to work with families, young parents and young people at risk of, or experiencing, social exclusion. The centre runs a Young Parents Project working with teenage mothers and expectant mothers. In 2002 it undertook

research on informal educational approaches to working with young fathers and launched a pilot drop in project called 'Dad's Space'. Young fathers are a difficult group to reach. They often feel alienated and marginalised and tend to have a higher incidence of mental health problems. This led to the proposal for a Young Fathers Support Worker in order to do outreach and one-to-one support work with young fathers. In November 2003 the 'Young Fathers' Initiative' was launched with the aim of developing a sustainable model of work. The Young Fathers Support Worker role is shared between two workers, who take both formal and informal referrals from a variety of sources and then follow these up with outreach work and intensive work with individual young fathers. The work is challenging, as young fathers are reluctant to seek help. The workers have noted the importance of the one-to one relationship, the need for flexibility on the part of the worker and the need for help with emotional literacy as many of the young men have poor experience of family support and education. The work is felt to be innovative to the extent that young fathers are an under-represented group in youth work and an acknowledgement that the only way to reach them is through outreach work is felt to be a significant step forward in this respect. The work is developing slowly, with the number of young fathers participating in the scheme initially quite low, but subsequently picking up as the work has become more established. Follow-on funding has been gained for the support worker and further grants are being sought to take the work forward.

The five projects described above were initiated variously by a local authority youth service, by specialist child and adolescent mental health services that identified needs that could be better met through an informal educational service and by voluntary sector agencies which have seen a need. Several involve partnerships between youth work organisations and specialist mental health services and in some cases issues arose regarding how the different professionals and agencies involved should work together. What is clear is that an element of flexibility and informality was felt to be important in setting up and running the projects, and in all cases the projects were based in settings outside the health service.

Issues for youth workers and youth work projects in working on mental health

Discussions in the workshops, focus group and interviews with project workers covered a number of themes, the most significant of which are discussed below.

Developing the role of youth work and youth workers

It was clearly felt that youth work agencies (local authority and voluntary sector) have an important and significant role to play in promoting young people's good mental health. New policies and legislation provide requirements and opportunities for developing partnership working in this area with specialist mental health agencies. In particular, the approach and expertise of youth workers as informal educators, who can work with young people on their own territory and on their own terms, was felt to be beneficial. One of the conference workshops was focused on a discussion of the youth worker's role, and it concluded that one of the most important roles for youth workers in this area consists of 'destigmatising' mental health services through offering activities in everyday settings. It was also felt that the informal education approach that is the hallmark of youth work could

include 'fun methods' whilst working on particular issues with young people, including dealing with the problems underlying aggressive behaviour, improving self-esteem and developing coping strategies.

These discussions led us to identify at least three ways in which youth work agencies and youth workers might work on mental health issues with young people, only one of which involves developing specialist youth work projects:

1. *In a generic youth work context* (a youth centre or detached project) or specialist project (focussing on housing or drugs, for example) – some of the young people participating may happen to be involved with mental health services, to be receiving counselling or other special support, or they may be facing issues causing them anxiety or stress (family, school, poverty, illness, death of a friend or relative). Youth workers will probably engage with them on these issues – and may even recommend that they receive specialist help.

2. *In a specialist youth work mental health project* – these may be specialist because they receive referrals (for example, PRAM, Cam Think Tank) or because they employ specialist mental health workers (such as Thinking about Thinking). Several of the Partners in Innovation projects developed out of generic work that identified a need for more specialist support (for example, 'Thinking about Thinking' and the Young Fathers Project at Romsey Mill).

3. *In a service or project run by a mental health agency* – where a youth worker is either seconded by a youth work agency or employed directly. The Open Opportunities project run by a voluntary sector mental health organisation falls into this category, and there are other examples elsewhere (for example, Cook, 2004; Davies, 2000).

In both the workshops and the focus group, there was a consensus that there is a need for awareness raising and training for youth workers in relation to their potential role on mental health issues in a generic youth work context. Several focus group participants suggested that there may be some degree of fear amongst youth workers in dealing with mental health and that they perceive it as a risky area of work. It was proposed that there is a need to find out youth work practitioners' perspectives on mental health – how aware they are, for example, and what their understanding is of where there can be effective partnership with statutory and health services. It was felt to be important to develop work in this area as part of mainstream provision, rather than relying on short-term project funding.

Handling partnerships: inter-agency and inter-professional working

The difficulties and tensions of agencies and professionals working together was a strong theme coming through the workshops and focus group. One focus group participant commented that some youth workers and indeed young people themselves could, on occasion, harbour a 'hatred and misunderstanding' towards mental health professionals, viewing them as 'stigmatisers'. There was some evidence that a mutual sense of fear and distrust existed between some youth workers and mental health professionals and it was generally agreed that such perceptions needed to be challenged and the barriers that they can create broken down. It was pointed out that a diagnosis from the mental health

profession can actually be useful, rather than stigmatising, for example in accessing services; it can also be of a positive benefit to the diagnosed young person themselves, reducing anxiety and alleviating self-blame.

There was some discussion around the possibility that youth workers are often somewhat disengaged from their partnerships, attributable perhaps partly to differences in the way in which the various agencies work – with youth workers, for example, placing more of an emphasis upon the empowerment of young people and giving them voice, while mental health professionals may tend to adopt more of a 'deficit'-based medical model. Such professional and cultural differences were referred to in various other ways: for example, youth workers have a focus on 'prevention', whereas mental health professionals concentrate more upon 'cure'.

These professional tensions were certainly seen as a major factor contributing to problems in partnership working between the youth services and mental health service partners. It was also felt that more outward communication directed to youth workers was needed from partners and partnerships in general. This would include crime and disorder partnerships, as well as those focussed exclusively upon mental health. Given the current emphasis upon partnership working and the increased importance of local strategic partnerships, it was agreed that more effort does need to be made in all quarters to reap the full benefits of partnership working.

Merton (2002b: 23) lists as one of the emerging lessons of innovation in a youth work context the fact that innovative work often entails an inter-agency approach, which can lead to blurring of professional boundaries and misunderstandings between staff (see also Banks, 2004:125-48). He recommends the deployment of diplomatic skills and building of trust. It is worth noting that in the Thinking about Thinking project, where a mental health professional (psychiatric nurse) was working alongside youth workers, after some initial suspicion the relationship developed into a very positive one. One of the reasons for this good working relationship seemed to be because this particular psychiatric nurse was very adept at informal working with young people and obviously shared many of the youth work values. Specific recommendations from the workshop participants in relationship to partnership working included:

- Being prepared to understand different organisational and professional cultures and values;
- Developing joint training between different agencies and professionals;
- Developing common systems and procedures;
- Developing better means of information sharing;
- Allocating more funding and staff to resource partnership working.

Terminology: 'mental health' as negative

The term 'mental health' had negative connotations for many workshop participants. This is backed up by reports from the literature on young people's uncertain understandings of the term (Armstrong et al., 2000: 69), negative feelings about it (Ahmad et al., 2003: 3; Youth Access, 2002: 15), and youth workers' comments about the fear of stigmatising young people. Several alternatives are suggested in the literature, including 'mental well-being'

or 'emotional well-being'. Certainly a focus on mental health as a positive state of being is important, rather than having a focus on problems and ill-health. Rayment (2004) offered a set of positive characteristics of mentally healthy young people in her plenary presentation at the Cambridge conference, which is listed below:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually;
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships;
- Use and enjoy solitude;
- Become aware of others and empathise with them;
- Play and learn;
- Have a sense of right and wrong;
- Face problems and setbacks and learn from them.

This may be a helpful approach for youth workers to use. However, some of the projects described earlier were taking referrals based on diagnoses of 'mental ill health'. For example, Cam Think Tank was working with young people 'recovering from psychosis' and Open Opportunities was working with young people 'recovering from mental health problems'. This links with tensions noted in the focus group between the 'medical deficit model' and a more positive 'social model' that might be more acceptable to youth workers. Davies (2000: 23-33) engages in a useful discussion of this issue in relation to the 42nd Street project. A modified version of the 42nd street 'alternative' model is outlined below:

- Respecting young people's own perceptions and evaluations of their situation;
- Emphasising structural explanations of what young people are experiencing (for example, unemployment, poor housing, poverty and discrimination);
- Assuming their potential for finding their own way to some legitimate responses;
- Seeking to integrate systematic social action strategies into the organisation's work programmes.

Young people and mental health: innovative youth work?

In being funded through the Partners in Innovation programme, these projects have automatically been classed as 'innovative'. What does this mean and is it a helpful designation? The Partners in Innovation committee commissioned three studies on the theme of innovation in youth work (Merton, 2001; Merton, 2002a and b). These studies developed a definition of innovation in youth work as work that is new in that it:

- Breaks new ground and pushes back the boundaries of professional knowledge and practice;
- Develops the capacity of young people and youth workers for original ideas and action;
- Fosters creative achievement that adds value to the quality and range of work; and
- Involves professional risk-taking, combining the freedom to experiment with the use of proven skills, knowledge and understanding. It may, for example, draw on the ideas and achievements of others so as to adapt and apply them in new ways.
  (Merton, 2002b: 2)

Surprisingly, given the projects were funded through the Partners in Innovation programme, there was virtually no discussion in the workshops and focus group about whether and why they were innovative and any issues specifically relating to innovation in this area of work. This may be due partly to the project-based model of innovation that arises through the commissioning process – where the existence of the project itself constitutes the innovation. The main innovation was the focus on mental health in a youth work setting and each project was itself a case study of this particular innovation in youth work. It is also important to recognise the elusive and transitory nature of 'innovation'. As Merton comments, the concept of innovation is relative to context – and what is new in one situation may be established practice in another. Furthermore: 'Capturing the moment when it is still innovative can be difficult. And once practice is so described and recognised it tends to lose its novelty value' (Merton, 2002a: 3-4).

There is no doubt, however, that the projects were each in their own way 'breaking new ground'. This was particularly true of the youth work projects that engaged a mental health worker (Thinking about Thinking) or began working with a 'new' client group (PRAM, Romsey Mill and Cam Think Tank). They were entering new territory and taking risks in forming new partnerships. Initial feelings of threat and uncertainty (reported by the youth workers on the Thinking about Thinking project) and difficulties in recruiting the new client group (Cam Think Tank and Romsey Mill) were not uncommon. A further way in which the projects reported here tended towards innovation concerns the extent to which a focus upon the empowerment of the young people themselves remained paramount. Consistent with the literature on user-led innovation in the provision of public services (see Dibben and Bartlett, 2001), the way in which the young people were able to influence the direction and form of the intervention (for example in specifying the content of the learning sessions in the Cam Think Tank project) meant that innovation was in some senses 'built in' to its design.

Workshop and focus group participants were unanimous in the view that there is considerable 'added value' to be gained both from using a youth work approach to work with young people on mental health issues and from engaging mental health professionals in working with youth workers to contribute specialist expertise and build youth workers' knowledge and confidence. The challenge now, as highlighted in these projects, is how to sustain and develop this value. Whilst discrete projects may be innovative in themselves, project-based approaches are unlikely to become embedded unless they are linked to wider performance management systems (Bartlett 2003). Some projects, such as Essex Youth Service's Thinking about Thinking, were initiated as an integral part of an already established programme of work and involved training youth workers on mental health issues. This makes sustainability and replication in other parts of the programme more likely. Nevertheless, regardless of whether the particular projects survive, the host organisations and partners report having learnt from the experience and may use that learning in developing further work with a focus on the mental well-being of young people. The projects had an experimental flavour – testing out the extent to which youth work approaches could complement mental health services and whether and how youth workers and mental health professionals could work together. They have certainly added to our knowledge in this area and some of the lessons will be useful in the context of the new working arrangements and possibilities that are arising in the wake of the Children Act (2004) and the 2005 green paper, *Youth Matters*.

Yet whilst these new policy agendas provide scope and encouragement for a developing youth work role in the health and social care arena, it is important to ensure that youth work is not hijacked and transformed into another form of treatment or surveillance (see Smith, 2003). If youth work is to offer a unique contribution to partnership working with health and social services (through Children and Young People's Trusts, for example), it is vital that it retains its distinctive informal educational role – as this is what young people value and it is this that is the unique contribution of youth work to any partnership.

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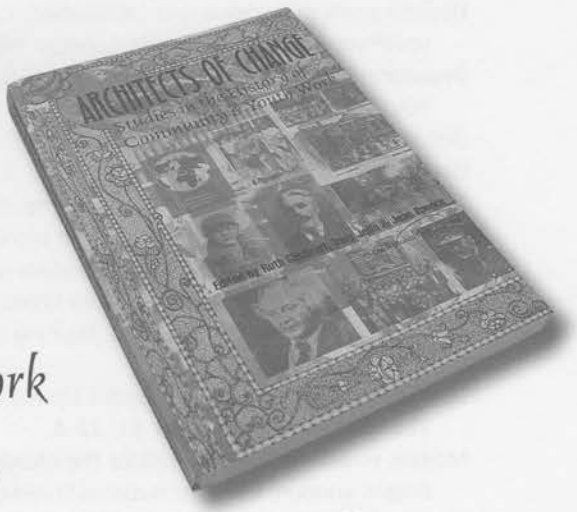

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Drug Testing in Schools: A Policy Perspective

Jenny McWhirter

This article examines the evidence for the drug testing in schools as an effective measure in drug prevention for young people and contrasts this with the growing evidence base for effective universal drug education. It also examines the policies which have led at least one head teacher of a UK state school to introduce this radical approach. The paper argues that drug testing is in line with the 'war' on drugs, which has arisen from a shift of drug policy from public health to criminal justice. This policy direction is in conflict with health and educational policy, which aims to win the hearts and minds of young people by providing a 'safe, secure and supportive learning environment' in which young people can discuss their opinions, views and attitudes towards drugs, within a Healthy School. It is also in conflict with evidence for effective drug education. The harm that this policy clash may cause to efforts to reduce the harm from drugs is outlined.

Keywords: drugs, drug testing, schools, health education.

In February 2004 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES, 2004a) launched new guidance for schools about drug education and incident management. The guidance was a result of extensive consultation amongst practitioners and gave cautious support for drug testing in schools 'where head teachers felt it was necessary'. The *News of the World* simultaneously published an interview with the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who asserted that the guidance gave head teachers new powers to carry out *random* drug tests in schools. Since then at least one head teacher has begun a programme of random drug testing in a secondary school in Kent, and many more have welcomed passive (or sniffer) dogs into schools (Bailie, 2004; Matrix MHA Research Consultancy, 2004). This article sets out to examine the evidence for drug testing in schools as an effective approach to drug prevention, the policy context from which this radical approach has emerged and the contrasting policy context within which drug testing is expected to be implemented. Above all the argument presented here is that schools are not an appropriate battle ground in which the war on drugs should be fought, but are places where young people should be able to examine attitudes to drug use, access information, support and guidance and develop the skills they need to grow up safely in a world in which drug use is common.

Drug Testing in schools

The introduction of random drug testing in schools has been represented by its supporters as a 'necessary weapon' in the prevention of drug use amongst young people (Charles Clark,

Secretary of State for the Home Office, during the second reading of the Drugs Bill, February 2005). They assert that drug testing will make it clear to parents and pupils that drugs have no place in school, and that young people should not be using drugs out of school. They also say it will deter young people from using drugs because pupils will recognise that there is a chance they will be caught and that it will enable young people to refuse drugs more easily because they might be caught. In other words the impact of drug testing in schools will rely on the fear of detection – a punitive approach.

The suggestion that such an approach is punitive is denied by the head teacher who has introduced random drug testing in his school, funded by the *News of the World*. The stated aim is to refer pupils for counselling and support, not to exclude them from school. Testing is 'voluntary' in that both parents and pupils have to give consent. Parents will be informed of any test results and will also be contacted if a pupil refuses to be tested where the parent has agreed. This may conflict with the principles outlined in the Fraser guidelines (1999) on the competence of young people to give consent. Clearly the extent to which pupils can give truly voluntary and informed consent when parents have already agreed, is dubious.

There is some concern among commentators that schools will face legal challenges if they introduce random drug testing. Schools need to give careful consideration to pupils' human rights and rights to privacy. Most testing procedures do not distinguish between prescription medicines and illegal drugs. Codeine in painkillers and poppy seeds in food products can cause a positive test for opiates. Decongestants may produce a positive test for amphetamine. One in seven pupils in UK secondary schools has asthma and many more take over-the-counter and prescription medicines. How will pupils' rights to privacy about medical conditions be maintained? It is also necessary to question whether these tests can be justified on the basis that a few young people who test positive will be offered treatment or counselling as if they are already problematic drug users, when their use may be experimental or occasional.

The country with most experience of drug testing in schools is the USA. Drug testing has been gradually introduced into a minority of schools over the last 20 years, mainly for those pupils who take part in out of school sports activities, although recently this has been extended to all out of school activities, including chess and drama clubs. Most testing is on a suspicion free basis i.e. pupils are not selected for testing on the basis of their supposed drug use. Although many claims have been made for the success of these programmes in preventing drug use amongst young people, the evidence is ambiguous and to date there have been no randomised controlled trials which would provide the best evidence for effectiveness (McKeganey, 2005; McWhirter, 2005).

Some studies do suggest that drug testing reduces drug use by young people but these are mainly small scale, and have no matched controls (see for example Du Pont, Campbell and Mazza, 2002). Such studies are also confounded by the parallel introduction of written policies, school counsellors and non-punitive approaches to drug prevention, which may have contributed to the changes recorded.

Other studies are ex post-facto (see for example, McKinney, 2004). These studies have taken a retrospective look at a number of schools which introduced drug testing, then suspended

the programme after a ruling by a State Supreme Court that the tests were unconstitutional. When this ruling was itself overturned, some schools reinstated drug testing. These retrospective studies appeared to show an increase in drug use amongst young people while testing was suspended. Measures of drug use before drug testing was introduced and during the temporary suspension were based on reports by school principals. Some of their reports were backed up by student surveys, but others were based on teacher reports or on the basis of increases in expulsions or suspensions for drug misuse.

Evidence to contradict these poorly designed studies has emerged from the Monitoring the Future study by the University of Michigan. This is a major longitudinal survey of the health of young people in the USA. The study included a standardised questionnaire data about drug use from a nationally representative sample of 76,000 Grade 8, 10 and 12 students in middle and high schools. No statistical difference was found between the prevalence of drug use amongst young people in schools with or without drug testing (Yamaguchi, Johnston and O'Malley, 2003). Most importantly, those students who might be considered least at risk of problematic drug use (athletes) and those most at risk ('experienced' marijuana smokers) were just as likely to use drugs whether they attended schools with or without testing. These results form a cross sectional study nested within the longitudinal study. A randomised controlled trial would be the best way to resolve the question. However, these data suggest strongly that drug testing in schools does not deter young people from using drugs, nor, importantly, does it help to identify those most at risk from harmful drug use.

As a universal approach to drug prevention, drug testing in schools certainly does not address the complex psychosocial factors associated with early and problematic drug use. These risk factors include poor or chaotic peer and family relationships, drug misuse amongst peers and family members, poor achievement in and out of school and low levels of general health and drug related knowledge (Crome, Ghodse, Gilvarry and McArdle, 2004). Poor attendance at school (due to truanting or exclusion) is also associated with higher illegal drug use (Mori, 2004).

We must also ask if there could be unintended consequences from the introduction of drug testing in schools. Many experts fear that pupils will simply vote with their feet and be absent when they believe testing is to be carried out, increasing the risks to their health and well being. Others think that pupils will change their pattern of drug use to something that is more harmful but less easily detected, such as alcohol or amphetamine. Drug testing is unlikely to have an effect on the use of arguably the most harmful substances: opiates. A recent study of drug testing in prisons revealed that self reported opiate use was higher than that predicted by positive testing (Singleton et al, 2005). There is also concern that random drug testing may discourage pupils from engaging with out-of-school activities that can divert young people from illegal drug use.

The role of drug education

Although a detailed review of the effectiveness of universal drug education is beyond the scope of this paper, there is growing evidence that family and parenting education,

and participatory, normative drug education do impact on young people's drug related behaviour, delaying first use and reducing harm (Botvin et al, 1995; Spoth, Redmond and Shin, 2001). A review of the international literature carried out by the Home Office has identified characteristics of effective drug education, which are being tested in a national implementation project (Blueprint) the results of which will be known in 2006-7. Effective universal drug education:

- Addresses knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Provides developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive information
- Challenges misconceptions children hold about their peers' behaviour and their friends' reactions to drug use [Young people frequently overestimate the prevalence of drug use amongst their peers and the approval of their friends for drug use]. This is known as normative drug education.
- Uses interactive teaching techniques such as discussion, small group activities and role play.
- Involves parents/ carers as part of a wider community approach. Parents should have access to information and support in talking to their children about drugs and other issues.

With so little support for drug testing in the evidence base, why has drug testing in schools become so popular with politicians and some sections of the media?

A 'war' on drugs

The UK has adopted a multi- agency, multidisciplinary approach to drug prevention (HO, DfEE and DH, 1995). The appointment of a Drugs 'Czar' in 1997 to head up a cross-department anti drugs strategy refocused the work of Drug Action Teams and facilitated cross agency working with additional funding and performance monitoring. Subsequent updates, *Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain* (Home Office, 1998); *The Updated UK Drugs Strategy* (Home Office, 2002) have underlined the importance of a shared responsibility for drug prevention . The most recent update *Changing Lives* (Home Office, 2004) has claimed successes in reducing drug related crime, increasing availability of treatment and improving drug education for children and young people. Misuse of Class A drugs by young people has stabilised and there are some signs of a fall in cannabis use by 16-24 years olds (Home Office, 2004). However, there is concern that in the development of these documents the policy focus has shifted steadily towards criminal justice and away from a public health approach to drug misuse and is characterised as a 'war' on drugs where:

> *the focus is on 'zero tolerance' messages and high investment in law enforcement – compared with education, prevention, treatment and harm reduction* (Trace, Roberts and Klein, 2004).

In this context drug testing and treatment has become increasingly common as an approach to crime reduction through Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTOs) and arrest referral schemes (Roberts, 2004 a, b). In the workplace, especially in safety critical industries and

the military, testing is becoming more widespread and can lead to dismissal if treatment is refused or is unsuccessful. While some problematic drug users welcome an opportunity to access treatment and reduce or stabilise their drug use, many are unsuccessful, either because they do not want to change their behaviour, or because the treatment they are offered is too late, or because the terms of their sentence do not allow for the relapsing pattern of drug rehabilitation (Roberts, 2004a).

This leads Roberts, and others, to argue that, as a result of this policy, drug treatment is being offered not on the basis of the needs of the drug user, but rather on the basis of the impact that drug use has on other people and that one consequence of current policy is a war on drug users, as opposed to a war on drugs themselves.

Recent statements by New Labour and Conservative politicians suggest that the next battleground in the war on drugs is indeed schools. Conservative politicians attempted to amend to the Drugs Bill (2005) to include providing funding for drug testing facilities in every Local Education Authority (Hansard, 18.01.05) and although not adopted, this amendment was not opposed by the government. However, policy development in education suggests that drug prevention should be carried out in a rather different context, where winning hearts and minds of young people is the imperative, rather than heavy handed attempts at deterrence.

Educational policy context

Since the introduction of the first drug strategy, education policy has had an important role in shaping developments and initiatives in drug prevention. Whilst sharing the aims of preventing drug use amongst young people and reducing the harm of drug use where prevention has failed, education policy and rhetoric has been at odds with the idea of a 'war on drugs'. For example the recent DfES guidance emphasises the importance of a 'safe, secure and supportive learning environment' (2004a:35) and to have an environment 'in which pupils feel able to discuss their own views, opinions, attitudes and values about drugs and to have a range of responses to drug related incidents' (2004a:73) . Both current and previous DfES guidance for schools have emphasised the importance of delivering drug education within Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) which is itself embedded within a whole school approach to health (DfEE,1995; DfES, 2004b). Charles Clark, as Secretary of State for Education and Skills launched the Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools which states that every school will be expected to be a Healthy School (DfES, 2004b). In addition, DATs have a key performance indicator which relates specifically to the number of schools achieving level 3 for drugs within Healthy Schools.

Healthy Schools is a 'settings' approach to health promotion (Weare, 2002) in which the whole milieu of an institution favours healthy lifestyles. The approach has been embraced and supported financially by the DfES and Department of Heath (DH). Being a Healthy School enables staff and pupils to consider not just the curriculum but how the policy and ethos of the school and its relationships with the wider community can deliver health related outcomes for pupils. Healthy Schools are expected to work closely with local agencies to develop policies and approaches to drugs (for example) which are based on

consultation with pupils, staff, parents, and governors. .

Currently Healthy Schools' initiatives have been targeted at areas of greatest social and economic deprivation. However, drug education (including medicines, tobacco, alcohol and illegal substances) is also part of the statutory science curriculum and is, therefore, an entitlement for every child. All schools are also expected to have a drugs policy, which includes how drug education will be delivered, as well as drug incident management, and this now forms part of the Ofsted inspection framework.

Nevertheless, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) remains outside the statutory curriculum and some schools have been slow to adopt best practice in PSHE (Ofsted, 2005a). Drug education delivered solely through the science curriculum may address issues of knowledge and understanding of the harmful effects of drugs but is unlikely to facilitate discussion of pupils' attitudes and feelings towards drug use. Neither is it likely to address other important aspects of knowledge and understanding ie. the social and economic consequences of drug misuse, or examine the impact of school policy on pupils' behaviour, all of which are more likely to appear in a PSHE lesson.

Another problem with the non- statutory nature of PSHE is that there is no requirement for drug education (or sex and relationships education) to appear in the curriculum for initial teacher education. Currently the DfES provides funding for a small number of places in each LEA for qualified teachers to obtain certification as PSHE teachers, with a focus on either drug education or sex and relationships education (SRE). Until April 1994, LEAs also received ring fenced funding for drug education. In 2003-4 this was £17m and was used to provide school drug advisors, training for teachers and resources for school based drug education. This funding was recently devolved to schools as part of DfES policy to ensure schools had more control over the education budget, thus reducing the role of LEAs in guiding and developing drug education. The loss of ring fenced funding for drug education coincided with the launch of the new DfES guidance on drugs; timing which was unfortunate, to say the very least.

So how are schools doing with respect to drug education and policy development? Not surprisingly, perhaps, some schools have been slow to develop effective approaches to drug education and reports on the quality of drug education (Ofsted, 1997, 2005b) and PSHE (Ofsted 2005a) suggest that some pupils' experience of drug education remains unsatisfactory. Some schools do not deliver PSHE at all, a position which Ofsted describes as 'untenable' despite the fact that it is not a statutory part of the curriculum. Other schools deliver PSHE mainly through a tutorial system, which has been described as the least effective method for drug education (Ofsted, 1997). However, Ofsted's most recent report on drug education (2005a) states that the quality of teaching and learning in drug education is improving especially where it is delivered by teachers with specialist training. This suggests that teachers who have the appropriate support and training can and do deliver what Ofsted, the Home Office, DfES and Department of Health all describe as effective drug education.

However, many experts are concerned that it will not be possible to deliver effective drug education in an environment where drug testing is also employed. Can a school

maintain a safe, secure and supportive learning environment where pupils are able to consider their own and others' opinions, attitudes and values with respect to drugs, whilst also implementing random drug testing? What damage might drug testing do to other aspects of PSHE which rely on the same supportive environment (e.g. sex and relationships education)?

There are some mixed messages here, then. Schools are expected to be part of the 'war' on drugs, but current educational policy, language and approach is more akin to diplomacy and to changing hearts and minds, than war. Two key government departments are working together to support a country wide implementation of Healthy Schools. Schools are encouraged, but not required, to deliver drug education within PSHE. Ofsted inspects drug education and school drug policies and DATs are charged with measuring schools' performance with respect to drugs. However, there are barriers to the implementation of these policies: teachers receive little or no training to enable them to deliver this important subject during initial teacher education. LEAs no longer have direct access to the funding they once had to support schools with drug education, although a small number of teachers in each LEA can become certificated PSHE teachers.

Conclusion

We find ourselves in a position where policies which aim to reduce the harm drugs cause to young people are contradictory, both in philosophy and practice. There is an emerging evidence base for what works in drug education and we have the commitment of two government departments for Healthy Schools. There is no evidence that random drug testing will delay or prevent drug use by young people (although introducing drug testing and then removing it may increase drug use) and there is much expert opinion that drug testing may increase the harm from drugs amongst the most vulnerable groups of young people, particularly truants and excludees.

Is the explanation for this clash simply that politicians, the media and the public lack the patience to wait until the evidence-based policies have time to take effect? Could it be that the politicians lack confidence in drug education because the claims of previous approaches to drug education such as 'shock-horror' and 'just say no' have failed to deliver the unrealistic expectation of preventing all drug use by all young people? Have teachers been given too little training and support to enable them to deliver what the current evidence suggests can delay drug use amongst young people? Will removing ring fenced funding for drugs education in LEAs turn back the clock so that schools return to 'shock and awe' approaches to drug prevention in place of more time-consuming but effective normative, participatory approaches? Changing hearts and minds takes longer than a frontal assault, but the price of impatience and underfunding may be to increase the harm drugs cause to young people.

Every war has victims. It is arguable that we are fighting the war on drugs on behalf of the most vulnerable victims: young people. Recently however, this war has taken an unusual turn, one in which the victims are to be singled out for punishment, the purpose of which is supposed to prevent them from becoming victims. Meanwhile there is a very strong

possibility that the threat of punishment will increase the chance they will continue to be victims. This could be the outcome of the head on collision of contradictory policies, which on the one hand are intended to educate young people about drugs and provide them with adult help and support, and on the other hand send out powerfully negative messages about the penalties for becoming a victim.

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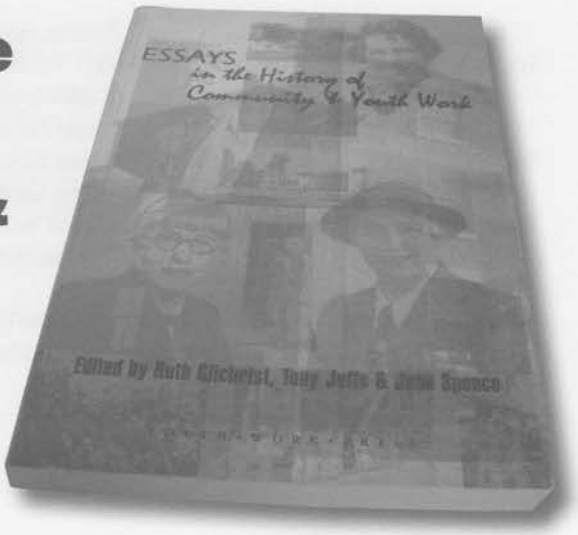
Essays in the History of Community & Youth Work



Edited by Ruth Gilchrist, Tony Jeffs & Jean Spence

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Evidence Based or Evidence Buried?

How far have the implications of the national impact study of the work of Connexions with young people at risk informed the Green Paper?

Liz Hoggarth and Malcolm Payne

The most substantial of the research projects commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills about Connexions was published in December 2004. By that stage the Department was already contributing to the formulation of the Green Paper entitled 'Youth Matters', which was to emerge in July 2005. The research on the impact of the Connexions Service with young people at risk drew on over 700 qualitative interviews with young users of the service and the adults who worked with them. This article summarises some of the main themes emerging from the research and their implications for policy. This paper also asks how far the evidence from this sizeable study and other research projects on Connexions can be seen to have informed the Green Paper. It concludes that some of the most important messages have been buried under the political imperatives of opening up youth provision to competing providers in the market, of supporting the formation of the new Children's Trusts and of maintaining the impetus of the Government's 'respect' agenda on anti-social behaviour.

Keywords: Connexions, Risk, Green Paper, Youth Policy

The purpose and design of the impact study

A major research study examining the impact of the Connexions Service with young people at risk was published by the Department for Education and Skills in December 2004 (Hoggarth and Smith, 2004). The study was a collaboration between De Montfort University, the University of Bristol and the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby. The research took place over two years, covered seven Connexions Partnerships and amassed over 700 interviews with young clients of the service and further interviews with the adults who worked with them. It contains a wealth of detailed information on where the Connexions programme works well with young people at risk and why. This article summarises some of the main themes emerging from the research and sets out some implications for policy and practice. It also asks whether this evidence and other key research on Connexions has been heeded or not in the subsequent policy development, especially the Green Paper of July 2005.

The Connexions Service was launched in England in April 2001, with the aim of helping young people make informed choices and a successful transition to adult life (DfEE, 2000; CSNU, 2002). Connexions brought together the services offered by the former Careers Service and a wide range of holistic support for all young people aged 13 to 19, enabling

them to access support according to their needs (DfES, 2001). Partnership working with other agencies was crucial to the service design. A new cadre of Personal Advisers (PAs) became the key instrument for creating impact in young people's lives and achieving the primary target of the service, which is to reduce the proportion of 16 to 18-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The study acknowledged that Connexions was still a relatively 'young' programme, only fully in operation by 2003. The fundamental changes to organisational structures and philosophical approach were still taking time to bed in. At the time the research was in the final stages of writing up, there was already considerable interest in its findings. Substantial changes to the Connexions Service were under discussion at government level and a Green Paper on provision for young people was expected. *Youth Matters* finally saw the light of day in July 2005. The period for consultation has now passed and, whatever the exact form of the Government's response, it is likely that policy and provision will now shift to create another sea change in services to young people.

The research methodology for the impact study used primarily qualitative interview methods, alongside management information from the Connexions Partnerships, within a design based on a 'realist perspective' (Pawson and Tilley, 1997), drawing also on 'theory of change' models (Connell et al, 1995). Realism is eclectic in the use of research methods: it can draw on both qualitative and quantitative methods according to what needs to be tested. It will also draw on documentary analysis and management information to seek programme theories or patterns in output and outcome data. The distinctiveness lies not in the types of data collected and used, but in the ways in which particular data are defined as relevant to the enquiry and then used to test hypotheses and further develop understanding of the social 'regularities' or 'patterns'. The realist emphasis not only on outcomes but also on context and process means a move from simply searching for 'what works' to a more nuanced description of 'what works for whom in what circumstances'. Realist, theory-driven evaluation seeks 'enlightenment' (Weiss and Bucuvalas, 1980) rather than 'pass/fail' verdicts on a programme. The end product is therefore a better understanding of the stages and processes of a programme, which can unpack the causes of particular outcomes, and offer practical insights about how a programme might be better focused and more effective.

In practical terms, the researchers interviewed 694 young people, and completed a further 161 follow up interviews from amongst this group. The sample was of young people from the two highest priority need groups as classified by Connexions and included targeted sub-samples such as young parents or carers; those with learning difficulties, disabilities, health or behavioural problems; the homeless; asylum seekers and refugees; those misusing substances; offenders; truants and school resisters; those leaving care and the NEET group. The sample was not intended to be statistically representative but to achieve a balanced picture of particular risk groups typically targeted by the service. Coding of demographic characteristics and certain categories of interview content enabled internal comparisons of different groups to be made across the sample. In addition to the young people, 444 Personal Advisers, managers and other adults working with the young people were interviewed. These adults provided crucial perspectives on how the service was working and on the intended interventions with individual young people. In order to provide comparisons on the organisational context of the work of Connexions, interviews

were conducted in a range of over 170 different settings, including secondary, special and alternative education, training providers, colleges, specialist agencies, youth projects and Connexions outlets themselves.

This article contends that the lessons from this very substantial body of evidence are still germane to policy making whatever the shape of the decisions about service structure. Indeed, the themes may have become more and not less relevant as implementation of further change is debated and progressed. The wealth of data in the research on young people's perceptions of the services intended to help them remains a crucial source of information for those seeking to make such services more responsive, if policy makers wish to use it.

Issitt and Spence have argued that practitioner and user insights from research are often downgraded within 'managerialist agendas ... to achieve concrete "outcomes"' and that legitimate findings can be distorted or even simply discarded. Coles suggests that the Green Paper is 'almost entirely an evidence free zone' (Coles, 2005), substantially ignoring not only the Connexions Impact Study but also the Joseph Rowntree Foundation research on partnership working within Connexions (Coles et al, 2004) and the Department's own research report on the Connexions Card (Rodger and Cowen, 2005). The evidence of the value of youth work approaches in reaching young people who are NEET or disenfranchised, in creating trusting relationships and in building their social capital appears to have received similarly scant attention (Merton et al, 2004; Crimmens et al, 2004, The Princes Trust, 2004; Edwards and Hatch, 2003).

Government policy statements and reviews of progress continue to place a huge emphasis on 'evidence-based practice' and the search for 'what works'. The question is whether other stronger political imperatives are driving some of this evidence underground. In the next section of this paper, we will draw out the main findings of the Connexions Impact Study to set against these new recommendations. We will then return to ask whether the Green Paper has picked up its concerns or whether they have become yet more buried evidence.

Key conceptual themes on impact with young people at risk

Four key explanatory and conceptual themes emerging from the research will be explored here, along with their implications for planning and delivery of services to young people. These central themes are:

- Understanding the working of the Connexions process;
- The need to build trust and accurate responses to young people's orientations;
- Conceptualising impact as differentiated and multi-faceted;
- Understanding 'impact leakage' – the ways in which impact is lost.

The Connexions process

It became vital to understand the intended Connexions process and the main stages in its sequence. This can be conceptualised as an extremely long chain of steps that starts with

gaining information about the youth cohort, including those at risk, from schools and other services and ends with relinquishing responsibility for contact normally when young people reach 18 or 19. The main phases of the process include pre-contact with young people and how they identify the service; first contact and interaction; second and further contacts including their frequency, regularity, continuity and intensity; assessment, prioritising and action-planning to match need and support; interventions and referrals; follow up and review; and exit strategy and closure. Protocols and service agreements with schools and other service agencies potentially apply to all these stages, with a need for continuity and coordination throughout the process.

The context for this process includes the social and structural conditions in the Partnership area, organisational arrangements for delivery, and the personal context the young person brings to their interaction with the service. It also includes the political climate around the perceptions of the service on the part of government and the targets currently set for it.

Building trust with young people and an accurate response to their 'orientation'

The interaction between the Personal Adviser and the young person was identified as the main locus for activating Connexions change mechanisms and the study sought to identify the triggers, which activated or de-activated those mechanisms in the programme. For young people at risk, a trusting relationship with the PA was usually central to impact.

The concept of the 'orientations', brought by both the young person and the worker to their interactions, emerged as a way of describing and explaining many of the qualitative accounts from the young people of why Connexions had succeeded in helping them or had failed to create any dynamic for change. A young person's 'orientation' includes both their social background, for example being black, female and unemployed in an area with few employment opportunities, and their attitudes to their circumstances and those who interact with them. Adults, including PAs, also bring their own orientations to the exchange with young people. There are numerous examples from the different risk groups of the need to listen with sensitivity to the orientations of young people and the need to negotiate 'congruence' in these orientations so that there is a shared commitment to action steps. In the relationship with the PA, the accurate response to orientation helped to build up trust.

Many young people reported their decision not to continue contact with the service because of a failure to understand their perspective or create this trust and shared goals. One 16 year-old, who lived at home with her 10 month-old baby, typified this group. She had only had one meeting with Connexions in Year 11 and was already pregnant at the time. Her experience of that contact was that it concentrated on careers advice at the expense of her other needs. After the first interview, she had not sought any further contact nor heard anything from Connexions.

> *It wasn't much help to be honest...They try to get you to have a career, get you into doing something. I thought they'd help me more than what they did. They kept saying they didn't know about this and that so ...people my age can't be bothered.*

She wrote down that I was pregnant and said not to make a big deal about it but I said, 'You have to make a big deal about it, my life is going to change'... and she said 'You could still go to sixth form.' but where is my baby going to go?... and she didn't have any idea really...'

There was also evidence of the positive impact of Connexions in the lives of young people. The interviewers encountered a number of young people at risk for whom the relationship with their Personal Adviser had been central to their progress. Typically, those relationships associated with the most positive impact were characterised by a high level of trust and by many layered and time-consuming interventions to address their complex problems. Many PAs had shown commitment and flexibility and a broad availability in order to reach and work effectively with young people at risk. The ability to create trust, respond sensitively to orientation and negotiate a way forward was very evident in their work but not always equally evidently supported by the institutional processes that surrounded it, such as management supervision or inter-agency protocols.

The nature of impact as differentiated and multi-faceted

Impact was achieved through interventions, directly made by Connexions or through referral, which changed the reasoning, resources and behaviour of young people. Positive outcomes at different levels could be identified – in the awareness of the support Connexions can provide; in post-16 transitions; in personal development and in dealing with the risk conditions and life circumstances faced by young people.

The samples included young people with various risk conditions and behaviours in their lives. Conditions included such things as being disabled or having special education needs, or being looked after by the local authority; behaviours included for example resisting or missing school or abusing drugs or alcohol. The data yielded considerable evidence of the fluidity of these risk situations in young people's lives. Between the first and the follow up research interviews, the situations of many of the young people had changed. They might have gained accommodation or been excluded from school for instance and interestingly, almost four times as many young people in the sample became NEET as moved into an EET situation between the first and second interviews. Young people's lives change rapidly and impact is correspondingly fragile and difficult to sustain. In this sample of young people regarded as at risk in some way, the striking feature was how many had inter-related risk conditions or behaviours. Approximately one third of the sample showed five or more risk conditions and the impact of particular risk factors changed over time in their lives. It is clearly necessary to make a swift assessment of emergency needs, for instance when young people present as homeless or fleeing violence. The changing conditions will however mean that it is not advisable to make a one-off assessment of whether a young person is at risk and needing intervention or not. A continuing contact and relationship is needed to respond to the developing situation.

These factors demonstrate the critical need for agency cooperation to meet the range of needs. For these risk groups, impact on employment or learning destinations was rarely achieved or sustained without prior intervention to address their urgent practical needs

and personal development issues. The young people seemed to have 'antennae' that were particularly sensitive to attempts to push them towards destinations (such as a particular course or job) for which they were not ready. They had an instinctive knowledge that there was necessary business to be dealt with first. This means that a rigid focus on destination targets can be self-defeating: a point that mirrored the views of many Personal Advisers. The evidence underlines the need to recognise 'soft' outcomes and intermediate steps, such as improved confidence, better relationships with the family or achieving stable accommodation, as essential to real progress for those with complex problems.

Young people in the follow up sample were asked to rate how much difference Connexions had made to their situation. Around two-thirds reported some positive impact, either minor or major. The 60 cases of those at the extremes, who rated the impact of Connexions as either negative or as having a major positive impact, were then examined in more detail. Of those who perceived Connexions interventions as having a negative impact, a majority felt that their needs had not been listened to, usually commenting that they had been pushed towards particular options and/or had received bad advice. Another cluster had suffered from breaks in PA contact, often unexplained, and in some cases with what were perceived as broken promises. In one example, a young woman who had recently been linked up with a new PA explained her disappointment, 'It's weird now having [him]...one time I walked all the way to see [him] in the Connexions office and found out he'd cancelled when I got there. I got no phone call. Made another appointment and he cancelled that as well.' For several with complex problems, this loss of contact had proved a severe blow. A PA who had ceased contact with a client because of a growing dependence felt that her interventions had been 'more negative than positive: it's just created another adult that she trusted and got close to that just severed their life with her just like that.'

Where young people identified a significant positive impact in their lives, the most frequent features were firstly, the relationship with the PA and the trust involved and secondly, that virtually all these young people had experienced impact in more than one area of their lives. A high proportion had seen positive benefit either in achieving training or employment or from advice on their options. Similar proportions in each case had also been helped on broader issues such as family conflict, drug misuse or school absence; and/or on personal development issues, especially anger management and self-confidence; and/or on practical matters such as accommodation or constructive activities. There was little evidence of young people even knowing of the Connexions Card, let alone feeling that it influenced their choices or contributed to positive impact. The evidence, echoed throughout the qualitative data, is that it is first rung responses and holistic support that have a marked effect on impact. As one young woman, originally homeless at 16, put it, 'I came to Connexions crying my heart out and they put me in the staff room and gave me a cup of tea.' Not only were her accommodation problems later solved but in time she completed her GCSEs, gained a college place and undertook volunteer work.

Impact leakage

The term 'impact leakage' was used to describe the ways in which potential impact is lost in the Connexions process for structural, organisational or service quality reasons. 'Leakage'

occurs, for example, when there is discontinuity in the Connexions process, when a trusting relationship within the PA relationship is not achieved, when interventions or referrals were ineffective and when follow up was neglected. The research sought to understand why impact did not occur in all circumstances with all young people at risk. It found that the Connexions process is highly complex, with numerous linked stages and the potential for discontinuity and leakage at each point.

Impact leakage arises at all stages of the Connexions process. The report shows typical stages where this loss of impact occurs, many of them underlined by the qualitative evidence from the client group, including:

- failures to identify risk early and prioritise prevention
- presentation and branding of the service that does not convey its holistic nature to young people
- a failure to deal with urgent presenting needs
- loss of contact, especially without explanation to the young person
- insensitive, intrusive or too early assessment
- a rigid focus on the NEET target and pressure on young people to take up (sometimes unsuitable) educational courses, training or employment options
- referral without complementary and continuing support
- a failure to follow up intervention
- a lack of exit strategies.

This loss of impact is compounded by factors in the history of the implementation process. Staff resistances counteracted the holistic philosophy of the new service, particularly from former Careers Service staff, who were absorbed into Connexions and had to take up Personal Adviser roles. Terms and conditions issues affected staff internally and were also felt in staff losses in some partner organisations. It has taken a long time to build constructive relationships with contributing partners, especially schools which hold a particularly powerful gate-keeping position over information on young people and access to working with them. The part of the voluntary sector in service provision was not always clear or developed to its full potential. Resources were demonstrably inadequate against the original estimates of what was required to provide an adequate service for the whole 16-19 population with tailored responses for those at risk (National Audit Office, 2004: 31–32), and the fundamental dilemma of how to balance the 'universal' need of all young people for advice and guidance on career paths and the needs for a 'targeted' service for those with complex problems and risks has never been fully resolved. As yet little strategic activity has developed in relation to the wider questions of regeneration and the patterns of local economy and employment, so essential to the ability to deliver on the aims of the service.

These four themes are closely inter-related. The study shows very clearly, especially from a service user perspective how the essential trust of a vulnerable young person can be damaged by the limitations of the institutional process and a lack of recognition of the multi-faceted nature of impact. The result is 'impact leakage' – an initiative that does not deliver all that is ideally hoped of it. Such a cycle will normally also be seen, moreover, in any other programmes that seek to make a difference to the most vulnerable and excluded. Trust with the user will be fragile but almost invariably instrumental to progress, as acknowledged in the recent government review of efforts to address social exclusion (Social

Exclusion Unit, 2004: 7). Needs will be complex and over-lapping and will require multi-level, holistic and inter-agency responses. Implementation chains will be lengthy and basic structural factors will need to be simultaneously addressed. All such processes will generate their own forms of 'leakage'. There is much to learn and translate from the experience of Connexions.

Illustrating the inter-relationship of the themes

The Connexions Impact Study provides numerous examples of these relationships at work. One example that manifested itself in numerous different ways was *the inadvertent effect of institutional targets* on young people's progress. It is clear that the origins of the service lay in the political analysis of the significance of unemployment. The current functions of Connexions are still aimed at increasing the skills of young people in order to create a flexible workforce for a healthy economy and thus reduce the social and economic costs of later adult unemployment. It still also has a remit to reduce the fragmentation of services to young people and to respond to trends in the destination patterns of the youth population. The key priority of the service is to reduce the NEET figures and every local service is monitored on its achievement against this target. The indications are that this target will pass to the Children's Trusts, perhaps with the addition of even further targets in other areas.

The effect of this target-driven culture was seen in examples of over emphasis on employment and training by some PAs at the expense of attention to immediate practical needs and a concentration on the school leaving transition rather than working more widely across the whole Connexions age range. As one young offender put it 'She's only... banging on with trying to get me into a placement' with the sadly predictable result that other significant personal issues were not disclosed. Another young man who had to see his PA at the Jobcentre every time he went to sign on felt that he could not openly discuss his housing problems because the PA was only interested in getting him into training or work and 'pressurising' him to go to college. Those who for some reason cannot work will inevitably receive less attention, as one team leader explained it:

> *They are the ones who perhaps through illness, pregnancy, caring responsibilities, other reasons, aren't actually able to be part of the employment market. So it is about saying to them 'Well we are here if you need us but at the end of the day there is not an awful lot we can offer while you are in that position.'... It's a sad fact that what gets measured gets done.*

Another clear example of these cyclical patterns is the effect of *linkage failures in the Connexions* process on the trust and confidence of vulnerable adolescents. The points where young people leave school, move schools or enter alternative education are critical stages for 'impact leakage' and handover procedures are frequently inadequate. Many young people interviewed in alternative education had known a PA in school but now had no contact with Connexions. Frequently, the weak links between school based PAs and community based PAs also contributed to loss of contact when young people left school. The same principle applies to other settings, sometimes even more acutely.

Young people leaving custody are very often 'lost on the radar', at a time in their lives of maximum vulnerability. Young people coming to the end of a formal court order will cease their obligation to attend the Youth Offending Team but are often not referred back to Connexions for continuing support. In the case of homeless young people and those leaving care, high mobility and instability of accommodation and relationships often defeat the tracking systems and here there may be something to learn from the 'softer' and somewhat more holistic targets adopted by leaving care services, which include the task of maintaining contact.

The effect in human terms can be devastating and bewildering for young people, such as the young woman who had disability issues, chronic fatigue syndrome and cerebral palsy. This service user had been positive about Connexions and started a college course but all contact with her PA had stopped abruptly. Three months later, when she had already dropped out, she had a postcard from a different PA, who said contact would be made shortly but never in fact got in touch. Now she felt the impact of the service had been detrimental to her aspirations.

The issue of *assessment of individual needs* also merits further examination. It is now common parlance in youth related programmes to talk of 'risk factors' (for example, Youth Justice Board, 2001; McCarthy et al, 2004) and the requirement to assess need. Parallel systems exist in other fields such as youth justice (Youth Justice Board, 2000 and 2003), the care of children in need (Department of Health, 2000), special educational needs and Pathway plans for care leavers. In Connexions, this became enshrined in the Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Review (APIR) system and entailed the training of Personal Advisers in carrying out assessments, and a policy impetus to raise the number completed. A Common Assessment Framework is now intended for implementation alongside the Children's Trusts (DfES, 2003; DfES, 2005a).

From the standpoint of the young people who experienced assessment, the procedure was not always helpful. It was clear that early assessments of risk in the school context quite often missed key issues such as caring responsibilities or bullying. Such needs could never be assessed by Connexions if the school had not identified the young person as in need of their intervention. Some young people such as those with language or severe learning difficulties did not understand the process. Evidence from both young people and PAs also indicated that if the assessment process was carried out insensitively or too early, positive progress was often inhibited. Many of the risk groups examined in the study, such as teenage parents, young offenders or asylum seekers, have personal and sensitive issues or fears of official agencies and the need for assessment information has to be balanced against the potential negative effect of invading personal boundaries. Cautionary notes were sounded by several young mothers for instance, one of whom said that she had found her PA too intrusive, describing her as 'going too far' and digging 'too deep'. 'Some things', she said, 'are just too personal to talk about.' Orientation had been misjudged and for this reason, she and other young women were deliberately choosing alternative support. Young people in some of the most vulnerable groups such as those leaving care were most likely to have multiple needs but also to be the subject of multiple assessments by different agencies. PAs therefore need to be allowed to take a flexible approach to judging when to complete assessment, taking sufficient time to build rapport and understand the orientations of the young person in question.

Implications for services for young people

Whatever service configuration emerges in England for the support of children and adolescents, the research provides useful pointers about the elements required to assist young people at risk most effectively. The underlying assumption of Connexions that young people flourish and develop best when they have at least one skilled and knowledgeable adult whom they can trust has been heavily underlined by the empirical evidence of the study. The building of trust and the accurate reading of young people's perceptions of the world (their orientations) are the corner stone of impact. Appropriate and effective support then needs to be provided, in a manner that responds in the round to their development needs en route to becoming well functioning adults. Holistic approaches are particularly crucial for young people, who have severe and multiple risks and are trying to cope with all the numerous issues affecting their lives simultaneously. The importance of this consistent, holistic work with a trusted adult has once again been confirmed by the most recent Social Exclusion Unit report on young adults with complex needs (SEU, 2005). Risk situations are fluid and major impact for those at risk was very rarely achieved without trust and sustained interventions addressing a range of issues over a substantial period of time. Single-track interventions that did not take account of the range of needs were less effective. Not only should the approach be holistic but the research concluded that the transition needs of young people require a particular set of skills and potential interventions that are distinct from those required by younger children. The pattern of service provision must include a properly resourced focus on young people as well as on child development and protection. Young people are not children: their physical, emotional and social development is at a different stage. The risks they face change in character with that development, with their new physical maturity, increased purchasing power, moves towards independence, and changes in the nature of adult exploitation.

The overall pattern of impact for disadvantaged young people at risk appears currently to be largely determined by the level of resource allocations to Connexions, how they are deployed and the balance struck between the universal needs of the whole cohort and the particular needs of those at risk. There is little doubt that resources are inadequate in relation to the targets of the Connexions service and this clearly puts limits on what can be achieved. For a full and proper response to the needs of young people at risk, Connexions and related services require adequate resources. The other main influence evident from the research was the quality and quantity of other service provision for young people and the local structural context. PAs cannot offer employment or high quality training opportunities to young people, where such options have not been generated in the local economy; they cannot refer drug users with complex needs to dual diagnosis or multi-agency treatment services if this provision is not available locally, and so on through many other examples. This spotlights the role of the Connexions Service in litmus testing the adequacy of responses to young people's needs, advocating for improved provision and pro-actively working with partners to achieve it in a coordinated manner. That role, mentioned in passing in the Green Paper, remains a necessity in the overall configuration of services.

The study also points up issues about 'what works' in the manner in which services for young people articulate with each other. Whatever the configuration of services to young

people, there will be a need for both universal and targeted provision. The data show that where services are concerned to provide for those at risk, there has to be a *relationship with other universal services*. Where there are sharp divisions and poor communication systems, trust is diminished and impact tends to be one-dimensional. Those in universal roles need to see it as part of the job to identify risk, refer appropriately and cooperate in follow up and reintegration. Those occupying specialist or targeted roles cannot afford to divorce themselves from the issues of organising and developing mainstream provision. The dilemmas of service provision are all inter-connected.

The key role of schools in that inter-connected web of provision needs to be recognised. Schools are the gatekeepers of much of the information on children and young people pre-16. Their work can facilitate the interventions of other services in protection or in addressing risk or it can frustrate them. Control of the processes either by schools, or by another agency external to the school, does not of itself address the problem. Pro-active cooperation both ways between schools and other agencies working with young people is needed to underpin improvements in services.

The evidence also indicated where *'impact leakage' typically occurs in services for young people and how it could be reduced*. Loss of impact occurs when the relationships between staff with a 'universal' and a 'targeted' role, or between those with a holistic role and those with a specialist role, are tense or unclear. Well-understood two-way communication is needed and a climate of mutual respect, regardless of the historical traditions of the different contributing services. The emphasis on targets for 16-18 year olds entering education, training and employment is having a detrimental effect on the efforts of PAs to build trust and the foundations of progress with those most at risk. There are discontinuities in youth provision at both ends of the age spectrum: the research found little preventive work with younger pupils at the lower end of the Connexions age range, and there was a real absence of exit strategies or handover at the upper end. Not only was there ambivalence towards 19 year-olds seeking help from the service but there was little evidence of well developed links to other agencies serving young adults to whom referral could be made for continued support. Discontinuities causing impact leakage were a significant feature of partnership working. Protocols and service level agreements are required, which should not be regarded as mere paper exercises. Inadequate follow up of young people at risk is also a key point of weakness. In the face of the evident rate of change in their lives and the acute need of many for some stable and trusting relationship, it is clear that greater attention to follow up could pay dividends in improved impact. There are dislocations in the Connexions process and other provision for young people that exacerbate this situation.

Setting the recommendations of the Green Paper against this backdrop

The main recommendations of the Green Paper (DfES, 2005b), which have been well rehearsed elsewhere, include:

- Legislating to clarify the duty of Local Authorities to secure positive activities for young people (defined as sporting activities; constructive activities in clubs, groups or classes;

volunteering; other 'enriching' experiences; and a range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time).

- Piloting 'opportunity cards' and providing an 'opportunity fund' in each Local Authority for local projects and a national capital allocation of £40 million.
- Enhancing the role of schools in offering extended services as part of the local offer and increasing sports development and residential opportunities.
- The promotion of volunteering, peer mentoring, and civic service for young people with the possibility of earning rewards.
- Clear minimum expectations for information, advice and guidance (IAG) in schools and on national websites.
- Devolving the responsibility for commissioning IAG from the Connexions Services to Local Authorities, working through Children's Trusts, schools and colleges, with the option to retain 'high-performing' Connexions Services.
- Tailored and intensive support for each young person who has 'serious problems or gets into trouble', with a nominated lead professional.
- Local Authorities working through Children's Trusts to have the 'responsibility, resources, authority and incentives' to create a single planning and commissioning process and an integrated youth support service for 'teenagers'.
- Local Authorities to take the lead on the targets for teenage pregnancy, reducing the numbers not in education, training and employment (NEET), and for reducing drug misuse and youth crime.

There are points that raise some hope here. In particular the call for integrating services for young people has been retained and a clear remit is to be given to Local Authorities for planning and commissioning. There are some new resources, albeit limited, and there is still a place for intensive support for young people at risk. There is a recognition of the importance of young people's voice in planning provision and of the need for constructive activities and safe places to go.

It is the internal contradictions and unanswered questions of the Green Paper that are more worrying. It is far from clear how the Children's Trusts will relate to schools and ensure that the needs of young people at risk receive holistic attention. Advice and guidance appears to be likely to be school-based and it is not apparent what emphasis will be given to wider advice and counselling such as on sexual health or drug misuse. The Green Paper is quiet on the subject of how the Trusts will balance the needs of the universal services against the need for tailored and intensive support and simply delegates the question to local partners (DfES, 2005, para. 274). The thrust for more activities, choice and incentives may draw the more motivated young people into provision but it begs the question of how the alienated and excluded will be reached or drawn in. There is a running refrain throughout about ensuring that in Ruth Kelly's words 'young people who do not respect the opportunities they are given, by committing crimes or behaving anti-socially' do not benefit from the same opportunities as 'the law-abiding majority.' In this 'sheep and goats' policy approach, there is a danger that activity providers will not place importance on forming long-term and trusting relationships with young people or may even be forced to exclude those who most need the interventions. We would not argue against proper boundaries for behaviour but rather that the most effective change can be created where boundaries are part of the internal learning agenda for one-to-one relationships, groups or activities with trusted adults.

The drivers for the proposals of the Green Paper appear to be those that are evident in many other areas of policy intervention and service restructuring, whether in the new National Offender Management Service (Carter, 2003), the latest proposals on school reform, new ways of setting targets for Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Authorities through Local Area Agreements, or new measures in health services. There is a familiar ring to the moves to open up choice and respond to what is popular with the consumer. There is the recognisable effort to introduce competition and contestability opening up the market to the widest possible range of providers. And there is the policy refrain of the 'respect' agenda around anti-social behaviour and credible punishment for offenders (Queen's Speech, May 2005; Millie et al, 2005).

There are real risks to services to young people if these policy imperatives drive the changes without regard to the evidence. Due in part to the delays to the Green Paper, planning for services to children has already taken centre stage and is driving local thinking, and attention to the needs of young people is lagging far behind. The cornerstone of impact with young people at risk, namely a long-term trusting relationship with a caring adult, is not a highly marketable commodity. If the Children's Trusts do manage to give attention to the needs of young people, as against the demands for the protection of children, there are still dangers that it will be easier for commissioners to concentrate on activities for more amenable young people, which will produce quantifiable outputs more readily. The voluntary sector may not have the capacity to deal with procurement processes (Senior, 2004), especially the smaller organisations which often have the local contacts and ability to reach out and create trust with excluded young people. Young people who do not conform may not only find themselves with a serious offence record more swiftly but may also be excluded from the very projects which seek to support them in changing their behaviour. Schools may remain distant from the structures for youth support, encouraged to see advice and guidance as a matter simply of careers options with little impetus to work closely with other agencies to respond to those most at risk.

Conclusion

The relevance of the Connexions Impact Study to the remit of the Green Paper is very evident but it appears that the evidence has been at best selectively used. We would argue that the study has even wider implications for most social programmes designed to address social exclusion, whether in geographically targeted regeneration schemes such as the New Deal for Communities or in the reorganisation of services to address performance and strategic priorities.

The headline messages from the findings are these. First: those who have suffered social exclusion have a fragile potential to benefit from policy interventions and the mechanism for maximising that potential often lies in a trusting relationship with a worker. Social interventions are not simple mechanical levers that can be pulled to effect change. They are complex systems mediated by individuals. Pro-active outreach is needed if the most deprived are to benefit. Attention needs to be given to the operators within the system as much as to the formal system design, including negotiations to win staff commitment and training and support around outreach, flexibility and the means of creating trust. This applies as much to

broad regeneration efforts as to interventions with individuals.

Second: the tendency to start another initiative when an earlier one shows delivery problems should be carefully scrutinised. Examination of the linkage failures in the long implementation chains of these programmes will be enlightening and will show areas which could be addressed systematically over time to great effect. Process faults in most programmes are frustrating the effort to build trust with local people suffering disadvantage. New programmes are unlikely to be automatic exceptions to this rule. Opening up provision through contestability will not remove the difficulties of making proper linkages and may even make the processes less effective in dealing with those most at risk.

Third: there is evidence in this research of certain dangers inherent in a target driven organisational culture. Such an approach can restrict flexibility, coherence and holistic approaches in reaching vulnerable individuals and may prove counterproductive. In cases where people were severely damaged by their experiences, the willingness to relate to any member of a service agency with some measure of trust could be regarded as an outcome in itself. This situation will be exacerbated by simplistic moves to remove contact and activities in response to poor behaviour. More recognition should be given to intermediate outcomes in their own right and to finding better means of recording 'distance travelled' in individual development. There is no doubting the need for priorities and targets to guide the work, and for accountability in public services. It should be possible, however, to achieve a better balance between the need for flexibility and responsiveness, and the potential and actual rigidities, which target driven cultures can create.

Fourth: continuity, cooperation and buy-in need to be achieved with the major public 'mainstream' institutions, especially those that are closed institutions or those with a quasi-independent structure such as schools, hospitals and prisons. These players hold vast amounts of information about what is happening to the socially excluded members of the population. They may of course face their own pressures of targets and public image but their work can facilitate or frustrate the interventions of other services in protecting from risk or addressing current risk factors. Change is as likely to come about from improved links to other agencies as from additional programmes.

The Connexions Service has been intensively researched in its short life. There is ample evidence of the problems and successes in its implementation. Such detailed data should not be wasted as service configurations inevitably adapt and move on. These studies would repay the attention of those who wish to improve services to young people or in a broader context to increase social justice within a healthy economy. Thus far there is slim evidence that the messages have been taken on board.

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Every Girl Matters! Young Women Matter! A Feminist Comment

Janet Batsleer

During the consultation period for the *Youth Matters* Green Paper, I was invited to join a consultation seminar organised by the YWCA. This is a slightly extended version of the paper I gave at that seminar, seeking to address the historical and theoretical roots of the case for gender specific work. Thirty years after the passing of the Sex Discrimination Act, the absence of any discussion of gender in the Green Paper is startling.

Catching the wave of organising for 'women's liberation' in the 1970s and riding it right up to the mid-1980s transformed the lives of many women who were part of the youth and community work scene, and transformed the lives of many of the girls and young women we worked with. These were girls who in the punk rock era wore tampons for earrings. They were also the girls who, by the end of the eighties, marching against Section 28 of the Local Government Act, chanted 'We're here, we're queer and we're not going shopping.' They (and we) took part in motorbike workshops, ran girls` football teams and leagues, took apprenticeships in the manual trades, set up sexual health clinics even before the AIDS epidemic made this a cruel necessity (the one in Manchester was called YWait) , created and managed more than two hundred refuges for women leaving violent relationships (there was no Women's Aid Federation at the beginning of the 'second wave'), ran cultural events, made music, films, plays, rituals, wrote stories and poems which formed an enormous resource for the movement, printed newsletters on inky machines called gestetners, networked before the term network referred to computers ... It is hard at my age not to become nostalgic.

There have been enormous transformations in gender and our understanding of gender in the last twenty five years, but there are also some persistent patterns. One of the achievements of the 'second wave' has been to make gender visible in ways in which it was invisible before. Pre-feminism, 'youth' meant boys: writing and thinking about 'youth' was thinking about boys and if, occasionally, girls were mentioned it was as a source of embarrassment and problems for group dynamics. Short sections of long studies of groupwork or experiential learning mentioned the problem of 'The girl in the club.' And, now, in the period some call 'post-feminist', the dominant reference of the word 'youth' is once more to a highly visible and troublesome population, most if not all of whom are male.

'Separate work' with women and girls and with boys and men was seen – from the period in which the YWCA and other girls organisations were founded – as natural and right. Based in the doctrine of 'separate spheres', separate youth work offered the opportunity to teach appropriate feminine virtues to girls (particularly those concerned with cooking ,cleaning

and domestic labour) and to teach appropriate masculine virtues to boys (drill, survival in the outdoors and ropework). Second wave feminists saw it differently. For us, separate work was very hotly debated. The Sex Discrimination Act had just been passed and there was a real need to challenge practices and organisations which excluded women: from the maths class onwards. It certainly did not always seem a sensible tactic to be excluding men, but the place of separate small groups as a sphere of empowerment for women, of what was called consciousness raising, was established early on. By making common cause with other women who shared our predicament, we could see our 'femininity', if you like, more clearly and open it up to change, see what needed to change. And if this made sense for us as young adult women workers, it made sense too for the young women we worked with. 'Girls Nights' and 'Girls Weekends' and 'Girls Days' opened (with much opposition) all around the country. 'What about the boys?' was the cry which greeted these initiatives. 'Don't they need something too?' The response of feminist workers was stubborn. 'Why *not* give young women the space to ask some questions about what was on offer to them, in their relationships, in their working lives, as mothers, as women from Black and minority communities? Why *not* give them the space to explore what they had in common and what divided them? To ask for themselves the question that had always been asked and answered for them: 'What do women want?' So the rationale for separate work shifted away from the idea of 'separate spheres' and became more political. Small group work with girls was about change, identifying and then changing 'what was within out grasp, and what was outside our power.'

What happened? Why did this practice disappear, as it seems to have done, from the mid-eighties? Was it discredited? There was certainly a decline in resources. There was too an attack on 'feminists' while retaining a rhetoric of equality. Or were we more successful than we realised, many of our goals achieved? Certainly some of our goals were achieved, but many patterns persist. The Family Planning Association, in its 'Beyond Barbie' work, still promotes separate advice and guidance for young women and young men as well as mixed gender work and culturally specific work in order to reach both young women and young men. The Surestart Plus evaluation of work with teenage mothers and fathers recommends separate personal advisers or 'lead professionals' for young mothers and young fathers and makes the case that this supports both the mother and the father in their negotiation of their relationship, partly because of the persistent problem of domestic violence. The Equal Opportunities Commission recommends two work experience placements for young men and young women in secondary school, at least one in a non-traditional setting, to counter the labour market segregation which results in three quarters of young women finding work in catering, cleaning, clerical, cashiering or caring employment.

However, the rationale for separate work seems to have changed, post-feminism. More often than not, separate work seems to exist because of some perceived 'lack' in girls . Lack of confidence, lack of self-esteem are mentioned a lot. Or else it is justified because of some 'risk' against which girls need special protection, particularly the 'risk' of unplanned pregnancy. It is also sometimes argued for because of some 'other' culturally specific practice which require separate meeting spaces and places for males and females. This is usually presented as a conforming to a condition of a patriarchal culture (young women and young men are not allowed to mix socially). The source of such cultural norms may not be well understood and is rarely explicitly engaged with critically or as a source of inter-

cultural learning. This explains the persistence of 'Asian girls groups' in areas where all the others have ceased to exist.

I think however the feminist case for separate work remains. I think it would look different now from the way it looked in the seventies and eighties. It would involve much more rapid changes in patterns, more permeable boundaries, the exploration of difference as much as commonality, and the investigation of masculinity as well as femininity. 'What about the boys? Don't they need something too?' If the failure to respond adequately to that challenge was understandable, tactically, in the earlier movement, it could not and would not be right to repeat that failure now. There is more openness now than there ever was then to the exploration of masculinity. Separate work with boys that isn't just about playing football is a real possibility now. And perhaps the new concern for boys – especially in relation to mental health and suicide – and the renewed crime and disorder agenda which affects boys disproportionately – can be seen not as a threat to girls but as an opportunity to press once again for a vision of work with young people that takes gender dynamics seriously and that treats boys and girls, young men and young women equally.

This is not, of course, the language of *Youth Matters*. It is striking how invisible the presence of 'difference' is , not only gender difference, but all those 'differences' which can be understood as the signs of inequality, discrimination and domination. In the language of *Youth Matters* we are already 'one nation', with but one dividing line, between those who deserve help and support and those who, as a result of their anti-social behaviour, do not. This cannot detain us for long here although it is a serious and significant matter. When pressed, the drafters of Green Papers will always acknowledge the importance of 'equality and diversity' and yet the discourses which have been developed in the last thirty years which enable both the analysis of discrimination and the challenge to it are missing from youth policy. Institutionalised racism, sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, disability discrimination: this is not the lexicon of *Youth Matters*. Still, this must not put a stop to conversation. What are the themes of *Youth Matters* that have potential for those of us who do still speak with those words?

Things to do and Places to go

Shall we say, girl-friendly places to go? Girl-friendly, girl-challenging things to do? What might this mean now, for feminists? Some themes remain from earlier times. To what extent are girls still more likely to be found in the 'private sphere', gathering in small numbers in one another's bedrooms rather than on the streets, bowling alone, or in parks and other public spaces? What sort of places to meet can offer the security and warmth of that private space? Young women in the YWCA's consultation groups emphasised the importance of clean and attractive and warm and secure and well-lit meeting places in contrast with far too much youth provision. Femininity is certainly about creating spaces and making them beautiful still – 'gilding the lily' it used to be called- so, can we expect to see girls and young women taking an active and creative part in the making of these 'places to go'? I hope so.

Places to go also need to be places where consenting adult relationships can be explored, with one another or with boys. Youth work has long had a commitment to the development

(in theory if not always in practice) of the development of safe spaces. Of course, this can be a protective move, a move to close down risk. But it can also be an empowering one: a practice that enables women and girls to name what they will and won't put up with. There was no word for sexual harassment before second wave feminism. It was called 'having a laugh.' There are words now, and young women will create new ones if they have the opportunity to do so.

'Things to do' need to be things you want to do, and things you might never have thought of doing until someone gave you a chance, and things you aren't really supposed to do but would like to try. Running around the football field still? A women only music night? Playing the bass guitar? Pointing the camera?

Opportunities

Part of the inheritance of the earlier girls work movement is the emphasis on breaking down isolation and also competitiveness between girls and women. `Better together' might have been a slogan for all our work. The image of the isolated individual wielding a credit card as he skilfully navigates the fluid opportunities of liquid modernity is a long way from either the reality or the aspirations of most young women in the poorest communities, where survival depends again and again on the quality of the network of relationships on which they can draw and to which they contribute. Youth work is about working with the strengths of peer groups and networks, the strengths that can come from association to create new opportunities for young women and for young men. Choice isn't only about being an effective consumer. The most important opportunities do not depend on having a plastic card. Choice in the feminist lexicon is about non-negotiable rights, far more than about responsibilities. Choice is created by the informing and accompanying process that informs informed consent, and it is about an inherent motivation for involvement in the negotiated processes and opportunities youth work offers. It is about raising new and greater expectations, creating opportunities where they haven't existed yet, or haven't been sustained. Youth work is about young people being creators of the future, not only inheritors of the past and two hours PE a week. Sports, arts, music, even politics are all vehicles of youth work even if the Olympic Games are the focus. If we put the word 'equal' in front of the word 'opportunities', let's hear it for dancing and aerobics, for women's football, women's cricket, women's and men's netball, and for everyone to have the chance to learn to abseil. Though perhaps it is better not to remind M.P.s of the places where abseiling has been put to good effect.

Citizenship

Citizenship has been the focus of feminist work with girls and women for many decades. After the vote was won, the National Union of Societies for Women's Suffrage became the National Union of Women's Societies for Equal Citizenship. But what is citizenship in the twenty-first century, where the tearing apart of war and the global inequalities of wealth are driving huge waves of refugees and transforming our sense of national borders? And what is women's citizenship, and how are we to talk to young women about it in a world which

makes them (still) as women far more aware of their responsibilities than of their rights? The volunteering programmes which are so important currently are very important to young women, and probably remain more attractive to them than to boys. A good woman still puts others before self. At the same time mothering and motherhood provides the stumbling block for an image of citizenship that emphasises autonomy and contribution to society through participation in the labour market . And yet it remains the 'most important thing.....', but we can never get the timing right. Too young? Or else too old? Women as mothers are also women as citizens and our image of inclusion needs to change to include the unpaid labours of love as well as the bread-winning of the labour market, whether it is men or women who undertake those labours. And equal citizenship between men and women means an equal voice for these aspects of the life of the nation and the world.

It is important to make sure that young women's voices are heard right through the processes of consultation on which Governments now depend . Gender audits of local political participation are discovering (again!) the gendered pattern of community involvement: women organising at local level, men at the strategic partnership board, male speech at meetings outweighing female speech by many times. We could start by doing a number count of young men and young women in the consultation process. And we can go beyond that to deliberately seek out the voices of young women whose experience may be particularly marginalised. I am thinking particularly of asylum seeking young women whose experiences and stories are so often demanded and then disbelieved, but there are many others. Citizenship in the twenty-first century is more and more about voice, and in the wonderful words of Arundhati Roy : `There is no such thing as the voiceless. There are only the deliberately silenced or the persistently misheard.' Our job remains that of enabling young women to break silences, particularly perhaps the self-imposed ones, to come to speech, and to participate as equals in the thousand big and small conversations which are shaping the future.

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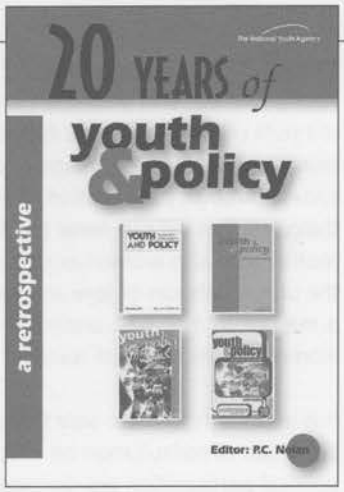

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What has G. K. Chesterton got to say about youth work? Or G.K. Chesterton, the Social Space of the Common Man, and Youth Work

Pat Turner

Michael Keith, in his book *After the Cosmopolitan?*, identifies the centrality of civic urban space in the conceptual schema of those currently pre-occupied with ways of encouraging the self-governance of the urban poor. Such concerns arise, ultimately, out of new forms of globalised risk, political and economic instability and the concomitant inability of the political class to intervene in this broader context to any real effect. In a reverse telescoping of classical political concerns, the efficient administration of the public sphere, and in particular community safety, have come to assume pre-eminence in the thinking of policy makers. As Keith points out, the state has taken on a 'new role' as 'manager of risk rather than provider of security'.

If, however, managing risk is to achieve the desired aims of greater trust, social responsibility and cohesion, and is to be sustainable in the long term, then according to current wisdom it is best devolved to individuals and communities (Keith, 2005; Halpern et al, 2004; Diamond and Giddens, 2005). Moreover, convinced that Britain's cities, post Thatcher, largely comprise ungoverned subjects occupying ungoverned spaces, 'the state reinvents the public sphere as the arena of self-regulation' (Keith, 2005; Finlayson, 2003).

Many recent youth work interventions have accordingly been framed to answer precisely this imperative. The regaining and control of social space through strategies of crime reduction have led to grass-roots community development being subordinated to local authority collaborative processes. Processes, moreover, that seek to 'inscribe the spaces of their jurisdiction in terms of a cartography of risk that marks out urban hot spots, risky spaces and places of crime and disorder' (Keith, 2005). But if contemporary forms of youth work seek to enter and gain tenancy of the spaces of the urban poor on a prospectus of risk management, surveillance and the promotion of self-regulation, what sort of spatial imaginary is thereby produced? Is the neighbourhood regarded as a resource? A place in which subjective agency is grounded and habits of democratic interchange developed? Or is it a zone of danger populated by fearful subjects passively awaiting the reassertion of state control? How do rough edges and conflict comport with a model of community seeking the elimination of deviant and impure elements both as a pre-condition of regeneration and as a technique for galvanising particular constituencies (Sennett, 1996)?

This article will approach such questions and themes indirectly via a literary excursion into the public, urban realm of G.K. Chesterton's 'Common Man'.[1] *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, Chesterton's parabolic 1904 satire narrates an imaginative opposition between an unimaginative state obsessed with rational control and a working class London neighbourhood attempting to retain and strengthen local autonomy. Chesterton poses a

relationship between nuances of geographical space and fabric, the informal lifeworlds of ordinary, extraordinary citizens, and the possibilities of active self-determination – themes developed at more length in some of his political writings (Chesterton, 1950; Chesterton, 2005). His valorisation of the common or garden and small-scale as potential sights of resistance and imaginative play – in a deliberate critique of paternalistic meliorism – narrates a prototype of community development involving a thoroughgoing immersion in the demotic particularities and histories of place. *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* provides interest, therefore, for the manner in which it speaks across time in its fictive Edwardian voice to many of the urban scenes and antagonisms of contemporary youth work.

Taking as its critical referent the centralising tendencies of state power in 1904, the novel begins by looking ahead 80 (1984) years to a time in which England has become culturally sterile and over-administered. Real power has now become so invested in the 'iron cage' of elitist, state run bureaucracy that even an anonymous official can, in a pseudo democratic ritual of 'power' rotation, be randomly elevated to the nominal status of king. The novel's central conceit concerns the division of London by the whimsical monarch into mock mediaeval city-states replete with fanfare and pageantry. The imposition of mediaeval states, originally intended as no more than a piece of absurd mischief to break the monotony, proves, however, to have serious consequences. To wit, it gives renewed vigour to the hitherto checked antagonisms of two opposing world-views: the oligarchy of state bureaucrats and businessmen, on the one hand, with their remorseless pursuit of expansion and profit and on the other the 'common sense', patriotic idealism of the 'Common Man' with his strong emotional ties to the local, the particular and the small scale.

Chesterton creates, in the character of Adam Wayne, the locally born Provost of the state of Notting Hill, and the Napoleon of the book's title, a beacon of populist patriotic revolt. Taking the nominal autonomy of citadel status literally Wayne embarks on a campaign to get the other inhabitants of Notting Hill to join him in taking up arms against the oligarchic forces threatening to demolish his beloved Pump Street in the name of progress. In *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, Pump Street comes to stand as an emblem of the local, the particular, and the small scale. Without irony, Wayne describes Notting Hill 'as a rise or high ground of the common earth, on which men have built houses to live in, in which they are born, fall in love, pray, marry, and die' (1904: 114).

Chesterton possessed an acute concern for the civic self-determination of ordinary men and women combined with a humanist faith in the alterability of conditions of injustice. As Chesterton saw it, plutocratic power and bureaucratic, 'progressive' reform in the first decade of the twentieth century operated to reinforce a contemptuous, diminished view of the common man. The substitution of traditions of self-help with official regulation, moralised exhortation and penny pinching central planning, were little more, in his view, than an attack on those palpable features of working class life – popular pleasures such as pub going, sexual licence and congregating on the street – that so offended puritan middle class sensibilities (Coates, 1984).

Chesterton's affirmation of the common man's urban public space in *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* was significant for the contrast it provided to the derelict urban geography fashioned by contemporaries such as George Bernard Shaw (2000) and Jack London (1963).

That the latter, unlike Chesterton, favoured forms of state intervention to address poverty of a particularly paternalistic and managerial caste were significant factors in the contrasting accounts of public space produced by these authors. In *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, Chesterton was keen to show how an active engagement with even the most unremarkable physical environment could rally the powers of poetic imagining and contribute to a potent sense of agency. *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* therefore inverted the 'realist' perspective from which Edwardian working class geography was customarily discerned. Where Shaw in his play, *Major Barbara*, and London in his investigative novel, *The People of the Abyss*, both foreground the 'objective', concerned reformer, *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* gave central prominence to the immersed, rhapsodic, self-determining common man.

In order, then, to convey a proper sense of Chesterton's approach to social space, I propose to examine in some detail the source and meaning of his interest in Pump Street. I will then go on to briefly contrast Chesterton's approach to the urban poor, that is his effort to represent the urban space of the Edwardian common man from the latter's own perspective, with that of Shaw's paternalism. I will conclude with a brief assessment of some themes explored by Chesterton potentially applicable to modern day youth work.

In his *Autobiography*, Chesterton described the moment, during a walk in North Kensington, when the image of Pump Street first forced itself upon his perception giving him the idea for *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*. Lost in a reverie of Walter Scott's mediaeval 'feudal sallies and sieges' and 'vaguely trying to apply them to the wilderness of bricks and mortar' all around, it occurred to Chesterton 'that London was already too large and loose a thing to be a city in the sense of a citadel' (1969: 110). Already here Chesterton is pointing to a couple of issues that animated much of his political philosophy and imaginative writing, not least *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*. First, the potential purchase of the pre-reformation mediaeval citadel on our civic imagination, and second, the directly related matters of scale and limits as they impact on social space, creativity and the quality of democratic human intercourse (Chesterton, 2005; Chesterton, 1950). During his perorations, then, Chesterton had an epiphany. Cogitating on London's metropolitan vastness, the peculiar scale and configuration of his immediate environment suddenly pressed upon his senses in a sudden jolt of pleasurable recognition: 'And something irrationally arrested and pleased my eye about the look of one small block of little lighted shops' (Chesterton, 1969: 110). An architecturally modest place of small-scale human density, it was, so Chesterton recognised, rooted in and relevant to the lives of its inhabitants. He began to imagine, moreover, what it would be like to use violence to defend this street: to fight to conserve its identity.

This, then, is the source for a positive vision at the centre of *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* Gate: an urban social space belonging properly to the common man. A microcosmic world of small, unexceptional architectural and topographical details whose magic is discernible only to the honed imagination of one who has lived fully in their midst. As the protagonist Wayne puts it:

> *These little gardens where we told our loves. These streets where we brought out our dead. Why should they be commonplace? Why should they be absurd? Why should it be grotesque to say that a pillar-box is poetic when for a year I could not see a red pillar-box against the yellow evening in a certain street without being wracked with*

something of which God keeps the secret, but which is stronger than sorrow or joy? (1904, 116)

In *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* the creative faculty of reverie and the emotional experience of scale are shown as critically related to the ethical capacity to feel a strong allegiance to 'place'. For Chesterton this was related to a philosophical conundrum with which he had been wrestling throughout his literary career; and one which he sought to address directly in his *Autobiography*: the relationship between liberty and limits. Wishing to correct what he perceived to be a common error, he challenged the assumption that the poetic and playful imagination yearns towards an infinite with no particular object seeking only for union with absolute freedom. Chesterton observed 'that the world is conceiving liberty as something that merely works outwards' whereas he has 'always conceived it as something that works inwards'. He summed it up in the following formula: 'the infinite is the opposite of imagination. For the imagination deals with an image. And an image is in its nature a thing that has an outline and therefore a limit' (1969: 107). So in the reveries of the child who dreams of flying somewhere or putting out to sea in order to reach some exotic destination, these other places to which he or she wishes to travel – by whatever means – 'are still *places*'.[2] Chesterton claimed that the child therefore seeks out limits in their play: physically in the form of impediments and mentally in the form of rules and concrete images. In fact it is precisely imagination that allows the invention of 'imaginary limits' with which to boundary and structure play (1969: 108). The narrator, in *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, gives the example of a small child defending the 'kingdom' of a paving stone: 'he will always be proudest if the stone is almost too narrow for him to keep his feet inside it' (1904: 134).

Significantly, this deliberately paradoxical image of the creative freedom earned through limits is intended as paradigmatic of patriotism in general and Wayne's patriotism for Pump Street in particular. But Wayne's overheated imagination is also seen as having received a fillip from three other specific sources. First, the perceptible matter available for his imagination to quarry is limited by his never having left the neighbourhood in which he was born. Second, he has been exposed at a formative moment in his childhood to the colourful pageantry and fanfare accompanying the establishment of the city-states. Third, a chance encounter as a sword-wielding boy with the king, who jokingly urges him to defend his lands to the death, has branded itself on Wayne's memory, leaving a deep and lasting impression. Hence serendipity has allowed Wayne to transform 'the leaden London landscape to a romantic gold' (1904: 135). Pump Street has provided an imaginative arena for the kind of childhood games and reverie that over time have nurtured to an almost deranged degree a patriotic and martial spirit. So that the child's playful turning of 'two or three shops' into 'an arsenal', 'an area' into 'a moat' and 'corners of balconies and turns of stone steps' into 'points for the location of a culverin or an archer' become the adult's battlefield plans for war (1904: 134).

Endowing, then, the urban space of Pump Street, burned upon his retina through constant exposure, with a magical and heroic significance, Wayne has absorbed 'the supreme psychological fact about patriotism' (1904: 133). To wit, 'the patriot never under any circumstances boasts of the largeness of his country, but always and of necessity, boasts of the smallness of it' (1904: 134). For Wayne, an otherwise nondescript block of five shops

on Pump Street stand at the 'heart of the universe', 'the citadel of the city'; 'a grocer's, a chemist's, a barber's, an old curiosity shop, and a toy-shop that also sold newspapers' (1904: 136-137). Their fundamental import, however, resides in their close and intimate aspect, for 'the fact that they were all small and side by side realised that feeling for a formidable comfort and compactness which, as we have said, was the heart of his patriotism and of all patriotism' (1904: 137).

Moreover, Chesterton's desire to emphasise Wayne's idiot savant subjectivism means that urban topography is seen to take the place of nature in the poetic imagination. Never having experienced nature in the raw, Wayne's comically bungled attempts at verse are nonetheless imbued, like nature poetry, with a yearning to express infinitude in the particular. He will render 'street lamps as things quite as eternal as the stars' and 'houses as things enduring like the mountains'. The narrator concludes 'nature meant to this man Wayne a line of violet roofs and lemon lamps, the chiaroscuro of the town' (1904: 130). In this regard Wayne is figured as a type of inverted Romantic, drawing his knowledge and inspiration solely from the (un)natural environment.

His urban space is, of course, completely man made, containing a host of accretions such as the 'cosmopolitan' imported goods in the grocer's store, and more importantly the phenomenon of mock medievalism (1904: 140-141). But then this seems precisely to be Chesterton's point. At its best, urban space derives its peculiar ecology from its scale and its density as well as from its democratic absorption of alien traditions. Even Wayne himself – the arch patriot – seems to acknowledge this fact in his balancing of the culturally foreign and the native. As he puts it: 'If a narrow nationalism be the danger of the pastry cook, who makes his own wares under his own heavens, no less is cosmopolitanism the danger of the grocer. But I come to you in the name of that patriotism which no wanderings or enlightenments should ever wholly extinguish' (1904: 140). In fact it is only owing to a bizarre anachronism – one that just happens according to Chesterton to speak to something enduring in the human spirit, though imposed, ironically, by kingly edict – that the patriotism of the urban common man for his small piece of city space is fully aroused. Taking the perspective of the common man, therefore, and dividing the city along ideological lines, served a specific polemical function. Chesterton wished to demonstrate the vast gulf between the virtuous irrationality of the common man with his deep, self sacrificing loyalty to a haphazard, memory steeped topography and the myopic rationalism of the novel's plutocrats, concerned only with the abstractions of progress, planning and profit. Thus Pump Street and its champions became parabolic exemplars of small-scale republican social space and democratic patriotism respectively.

Wayne's customary grandiloquent mode of declaiming sounds anything but like the locutions of a common man. Compare, however, Shaw's tortured efforts to render the authentic speech patterns of the poor man in Major Barbara, underlining the latter's threatening otherness. Here is Bill the play's ruffian promising to inflict maximum damage on all and sundry: 'You loy. Aw'm gowin to Kennintahn, to spit in Todger Fairmawl's eye. Aw beshed Jenny Ill's fice; an nar Aw'll git me aoown fice beshed and cam beck and shaow it to er' (2000: 91). Chesterton was not interested in realism proper. His parable, with its satiric inflation, deliberate anachronisms and valorisation of feeling over logic, evinced something more along the lines, in literary terms, of a 'parabolic realism'. Accordingly, in

The Napoleon of Notting Hill, the language of logic is the property of the utilitarian world-view of Buck, the 'the man of business' and Wayne's sworn enemy:

> *"Your Majesty may have heard" he began sarcastically "of Hammersmith and a thing called a road. We have been at work ten years buying property and getting compulsory powers and fixing compensation and squaring vested interests, and now at the very end, the thing is stopped by a fool. Old Prout, who was Provost of Notting Hill, was a business man and we dealt with him quite satisfactorily. But he's dead, and the cursed lot has fallen to a young man named Wayne, who up to some game that's perfectly incomprehensible to me. We offer him a better price than any one ever dreamt of, but he won't let the road go through."* (1904: 94)

The city state dispensation means that the Plutocrats are now drawn into the game of pursuing their aims jointly under the banner of single boroughs. For the people of Notting Hill this emphasis on the *particular* means that what might previously have been an enemy of diffuse, impersonal forces – business, politics, planning – is now one with a manifest identity: North Kensington, West Kensington and Bayswater.

Shaw's *Major Barbara* and London's *The People of the Abyss*, written in 1905 and 1903 respectively, sought each to address the plight of the impoverished common man in relation to his living conditions. In both works, however, the poor are seen as fundamentally objects of paternalistic concern and pity and seldom as subjects in there own right. Where the common man is irrational, he is portrayed as the victim of his own ignorance or the determined dupe of his environment. Shaw and London consequently produced urban and social spaces with a very different purchase on democracy to that of Chesterton's. For example, Andrew Undershaft, the 'clear sighted' yet benevolent Arms manufacturer in *Major Barbara*, declares poverty a 'crime'; indeed he judges it to be 'the worst of crimes' (2000: 141). Seeking to explode the religious sentimentalism of those, principally his daughter Barbara the Salvationist, who would plead god's special regard for the wretched of the earth, Undershaft, the unapologetic capitalist and materialist makes his case for the prosecution:

> *Poverty blights whole cities; spreads horrible pestilences; strikes dead the very souls of all who come within sight, sound, or smell of it. What you call crime is nothing: a murder here and a theft there, a blow now and a curse then: what do they matter? They are only the accidents and illnesses of life: there are not fifty genuine criminals in London. But there are millions of poor people, abject people, dirty people, ill fed, ill clothed people. They poison us morally and physically: they kill the happiness of society: they force us to do away with our own liberties and to organize unnatural cruelties for fear they should rise against us and drag us down into their abyss. Only fools fear crime: we all fear poverty.* (2000: 142)

Such pestilence, abjection and dirt moves Undershaft to deploy his considerable wealth, organisational vision and singular will in the creation of a model village for his workers, 'St Perrivale'. St Perrivale is built around the rurally situated site of Undershaft's armaments factory, where each of its male inhabitants is employed. With its generous housing, municipal library and church, it is seen to serve the mutual interests of wealth creation,

efficiency and healthy living. Such social engineering is depicted as both the most enlightened and realistic solution to the death throes of an eviscerated social body. St Perrivale will enmoralise the poor, proving tutelary in community, pleasure and self-help.

Beatrice Webb writing in her diary at the time stated that 'we have little faith in the average 'sensual man', we do not believe he can do much more than describe his grievances, we do not think he can prescribe his remedies' (quoted Lasch, 1991: 318). Here was a caste of mind, that of the Fabian reformer, which to Chesterton appeared incapable of respecting the rational self-interest of a whole class of peoples, let alone their equality. As to the latter, the equality of all men, commonality was a central axiom of Chesterton's democracy; that 'the things common to all men are more important than the things peculiar to any men' (Canovan, 1977: 27). The poor, correspondingly, were not to be viewed anthropologically as a breed or race apart amenable only to the scientific interventions of experts armed with techniques for bridging their incommensurability (Chesterton, 2005).

As if the indignity of drudgery and hardship were not enough, however, poverty, as conceived by certain Edwardian reformers, appeared to provide a blank check for interference into what should properly have been affairs of a domestic and private nature. Intemperance, sexual promiscuity and attitudes of dependency and criminality were regarded as much causal factors as consequences of poverty (Lasch, 1995). The full and active citizenship of the poor, their emergence into self-governing autonomous subjects, could only be attained through social engineering instituted by disinterested professional public servants[3]. The invocation of poverty's degrading, de-moralizing effects, therefore, served also the anti-democratic purpose of denying to the poor any genuine capacity for politically fashioning solutions of their own to the problems of the communities in which they lived and worked. The ascriptive categories of the Poor Laws, deserving and undeserving, respectable and unrespectable poor, were still being pressed into service despite the fact that reform was intended to do away with the very iniquities that followed from such thinking. Chesterton put it:

> *I have listened often enough to Socialists, or even to democrats, saying that the physical conditions of the poor must of necessity make them mentally and morally degraded. I have listened to scientific men...saying that if we give the poor healthier conditions vice and wrong will disappear...If the poor are thus utterly demoralised, it may or may not be practical to raise them. But it is certainly quite practical to disenfranchise them. If the man with a bad bedroom cannot give a good vote, then the first and swiftest deduction is that he shall give no vote.* (quoted Canovan, 1977: 22)

The remark about the poor man's 'bad bedroom' was not meant merely for rhetorical effect or for the purposes of polemic. For Chesterton, the contribution of the home was critical to a person's rooted sense of place in the world. According to Chesterton's ethical framework the man referred to above would have been dealt a double injustice. Not only was he expected to get by as best he could in whatever squalid habitation the market made available to him, probably also supporting a family, but his material poverty was taken as an index of mental and moral incapacity. Hence his uneducated vote would prove lethal to democracy. Mathews (2002), in discussing Chesterton's contribution to the debate on collectivism and socialism within the *New Age* magazine during the years 1906-1908/9,

notes a keenness on his part, almost unique amongst his close contemporaries, excepting Hilaire Belloc, to open 'up a discourse on the material and cultural conditions conducive to freedom'.

Chesterton's engaged interest both in domestic and urban space marked an acute awareness of the critical role of *place* to the development of the creative and moral qualities that go to make up a truly republican spirit; and its need, therefore, of vigilant safeguarding against the incursions of well meaning but uncomprehending 'experts'. As an aspect of his populist radicalism his interest in place was also evidence of what Mathews rightly identifies, referring to the importance given by others to modes of bureaucratic administration, as Chesterton's 'idea that freedom and democracy could not be upheld by institutional structures alone' (ibid.: 99). Patriotism, then, according to Chesterton, derived primarily from the psychological state of intense imagining projected on to an intimate object of attention. As such it was bound up with the notion of freedom within limits. That is to say, the more intense a person's attachment to a specific place, and people, the more secure that person is about his or her place in the world – and thus, ontologically, the more free.

For Chesterton, the true patriot was not a slave to irrational hatreds of other people on the grounds of their merely being different or coming from a foreign country. Neither was he or she interested in conquering or colonising. The former is a jingoist, whilst the latter is an imperialist (Chesterton, 1969: 111–115). It is passionate regard for one's own place and people rather than hatred of, or covetous intentions towards another's that according to Chesterton defined patriotism. However, of critical importance here was his contention that the degree to which a person could become intensely attached to a place was in direct proportion to its scale. For if a properly patriot sense required localised, recurrent human interactions within a small, geographically well defined sphere, then it was the social world of the common man, i.e. a place such as Pump Street, which best met those key conditions. Patriotism, so conceived, much more than abstractions such as justice, rights or participation, underpinned for Chesterton the civic sense of commonality so essential to the democratic intercourse of equals within the popular, public realm. This democratic, republican spirit is figured, of course, in *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* in the popular taking up of arms in defence of the very urban space that is its source.

Chesterton, particularly in his long essay *What's Wrong with the World* (2005), sought to expose how the social reforms advocated by those such as the Webbs, were in effect leading to the creation of a more pliant and well adapted work-force for the labour market. Meliorating reforms – imposed from without – were leaving intact the unequal structures of society. For the social historian Christopher Lasch, the radicalism of early twentieth century social reformers, arguably epitomised by Shaw and the Webbs, was fatally compromised by one key fact. Whilst evidently moved and indeed spurred into action by the spectacle of social injustice, such thinkers seemed reluctant, or unable, to deduce from their observations that social injustice might require addressing at its root. Instead of seeking a confrontation with the actual forces maintaining inequality, these reformers employed progressive educational methods and promoted welfare as a means of harmonising the very conflict and discord produced by inequality, thereby securing a healthier adjustment on the part of the poor to present conditions (Lasch, 1965). Intervening for social change thus became indistinguishable from social control. Referring to a leading light of the American

settlement movement, Jane Addams, Lasch observed that her 'reflections' on the problems of urban juvenile delinquency lead her to believe that the solution to the problem lay in the behaviour itself:

> *These reflections might have led Jane Addams to attack the indifference at the source to which she traced it – capitalism itself, which values individuals only for their labor power. Instead she came to a very different conclusion. If juvenile delinquency sprang from "the quest for adventure", she reasoned, then the problem was to find substitutes for crime which would satisfy the same yearning and make use of the same energies.* (1965: 156)

This reforming tendency surely now finds its contemporary expression in New Labour's economistic, instrumental view of youth and community work: early intervention, prevention and regimes of surveillance to ensure disadvantaged young people are locked into educational services leading to concrete, marketable outcomes. Deviant forms of creative self-expression and entrepreneurial behaviour are therefore appropriated, monitored and marshalled. Creative interventions provide, for example, 'anti-social' 'taggers' with approved spaces for producing edifying works of graffiti repeating verbatim the vacuous pieties of New Labour's citizenship agenda: 'participation' and 'respect' etc. Young drug dealers, likewise, are diverted onto business courses enabling the transference of skills.

Modern day youth work is thus seen as perfectly positioned to sublimate the unruly energies of 'NEET', 'at-risk' and 'vulnerable' young people by corralling them into as many 'positive' learning experiences as possible; particularly those that address and regulate their sexual behaviour, use of substances, leisure time and occupational preferences. Confidentiality and trust are sacrificed on the altar of managerial efficiency through deficit based targeting, the surveillance of social space, multi-agency information sharing and data management. In the minds of New Labour policy makers the young seem only to exist at one of two extreme poles: either as feral, anti-social aggressors, or as vulnerable, hapless victims, never as merely 'common', complex young men and women. Thus the community part of youth work becomes the policing of abandoned social spaces in the interests of fearful adults. 'Youth' on the other hand is treated as an ailing body in need of constant intervention. Chesterton was able to see just whose interests were being served by focussing on – indeed inflating – the deviant, non-purposive behaviour of the common man; his failure to become a successful economic monad. Then, as now, progressive reform, operating through a 'politics of behaviour', was working to de-politicise social problems. The consequences of this can be seen in the corrosion of democratic agency, the promotion of conformity, the micro-management of human relations, and, ultimately, the reinforcement of an individualised, socially atomised status quo (Bauman, 2001). Furthermore, Chesterton's unerring critical gaze would have pierced New Labour's progressive credentials as begetters of social inclusion in a thrice, making the utilitarian grounds of social inclusion – its role in ensuring the poor are better adapted to the conditions of the global economy – palpably clear. For as he so eloquently and wittily put it:

> *Men need not trouble to alter conditions, conditions will so soon alter men. The head can be beaten small enough to fit the hat. Do not knock the fetters off the slave; knock the slave until he forgets the fetters.* (2005: 13)

Most would agree that the deficit categories of social planners invoked imaginatively a hundred years ago by Shaw and others, and which now find their modern day equivalent in policy terms such as anti-social, at-risk, dysfunctional and disaffected, are the dominant frame within which youth work is currently understood. Youth and community work, however, surely finds its proper empirical place and meaning amid Chesterton's subjective, random and demotic treasures of shared and individual histories, topography and architecture; its patriotic fantasies and concern with a sense of rootedness. His rejection of paternalism, plutocratic commerce and rationalist planning; his celebration of dense, human scale architectural disorder, pre-figures the urban 'anarchism' of Lewis Mumford, Jane Jacobs, Richard Sennett, Marshall Bermans and Thomas Bender. Chesterton's fictional riposte to bureaucratic planning shows, despite the gulf of time, that if youth and community work is to successfully engage hearts and minds, the urban space it would attempt to inhabit, and perhaps even transform, can never be a 'hub' or 'beacon' to managerialist conceptions such as social capital, cohesion or inclusion. Nor if it is to have any true value to the common man and woman can it be a consumerist, surveillance regime for modifying the behaviour of 'stakeholders' and 'clients'. Rather, both youth work and community can provide a lifetime's store of memories, experiences and relationships if given the favourable conditions – autonomy, time, commitment, trust and informality – in which to flourish. This surely is the grist, in Chesterton's terms, to democratic self-determination.

In *What's Wrong with the World*, Chesterton, ever the contrarian, called for an 'impractical man', an idealist person of vision, to take charge of public affairs; somebody capable of conceiving and championing ideas and plans that were not merely an accommodation to the dominant, prevailing norms (2005: 6-9). The question is surely this: would today's young people be better served by just such a class of dreamers, 'impractical' youth workers and youth policy makers – or by the pragmatic realists currently in the ascendant?

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Must Read

For a solid biographical introduction to the world, ideas and works of Chesterton, the books by Canovan and Coates, respectively, are recommended. Canovan's is particularly useful for its attempt to provide a proper assessment of Chesterton's populist, libertarian politics and philosophical outlook. Coates' work analyses Chesterton's democratic commitment to so-called common pleasures in the context of Edwardian cultural politics. The work that provides the fullest insight into Chesterton's views on Edwardian social reform is his long essay, *What's Wrong with the World*, unfortunately now only available to purchase through Indy Publishers' 'print to order' service.

Notes

1 'The Common Man' is Chesterton's epithet for ordinary working class and poor people. It is the title of a book of his essays, and shall be used here – accepting its presumptive claim to speak also on behalf of the 'common woman' – in accordance with Chesterton's respectful attempt to find a corrective to the prevailing condescension to the 'lower orders' during his day. See Chesterton's introductory essay, 'The Common Man', a complaint precisely against what he saw as the anti-democratic injustices meted out to the 'Common Man' in recent history by the 'Uncommon Man', i.e. England's intellectual elite. Speaking in relation to sterilisation schemes directed exclusively at the 'lower classes', Chesterton remarks that this snobbish phrase has become 'the liberal modern title for the poor'.(1950, 2). In using the synonym 'common man', I shall, however, be dispensing with the honorific capitals and quotes.

2 Emphasis added.

3 The resonance here with New Labour's social policies should be obvious. In the era of TINA ('there is no alternative'), promoting respect, tackling anti-social behaviour, fetishizing citizenship, pontificating on rights and responsibilities, applying directly to the social body the preventative measures of what Anthony Giddens terms 'life politics'; all are intended to get each of us, but particularly the poor, to better adapt to

the new, globalised economy. It is possible to discern some of the moralising aspects of Edwardian collectivism and Fabian concerns with efficiency in New Labour's 'third way' political realism. On the latter, see, Alan Finlayson, *Making Sense of New Labour* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2003) and Bill and Charlie Jordan, *Social Work and the Third Way: Tough Love as Social Policy* (London: Sage, 2002) and on the former, A.M. McBriar, *Fabian Socialism and English Politics: 1884-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

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Aylssa Cowell

When first asked to review Phil Harris's *Drug Induced* my heart did not leap with joy. It's a fairly small unassuming book and I was somewhat unprepared for how much I was going to enjoy it. Deidre Boyd, editor of *Addiction Today* in her foreword calls *Drug Induced* a 'wise book' that readers should thank Phil Harris for writing and I agree with her. Harris challenges the way we view and treat addiction in an excellent critique of widely held beliefs within the drugs field.

Drug Induced puts addiction and treatment in perspective, but it is from the perspective of a drugs worker who, we are told in the introduction, was constantly challenged by what he read about addiction and what he worked with on a day to day basis. It is a collection of articles and seminars that Harris has accumulated over a number of years rewritten to form the body of the book. Unlike many other books of this nature, his chapters whilst being short and concise flow well into each other and never seem disjointed.

When we think of addiction we generally think of it as something within us which we will be slave to for the rest of our lives and this is a view point that Harris strives to challenge throughout this book. On a personal note I recently gave up smoking after 12 years of 'joyously' puffing away. I was given Nicotine Replacement Therapy, or the patches and gum if you're interested, which after 2 days I realised were just stupid. I was still getting my Nicotine but just not in an enjoyable way anymore, so off the patches went and here I am 3 months later still not smoking. If I was on an American chat show this is where you'd all clap. About 3 weeks ago I went out and smoked about, honestly 15 cigarettes, then the next day nothing, no withdrawal, no cravings, just a knowledge that I would never smoke again. Why am I telling you this I hear you ask? Well the reason is that this is the filter through which I read this book and perhaps why I agree with a lot of what he has to say. On the other hand I know instantly that some of you will hate it and this I believe is part of its charm.

This book I believe is not only for those who work with drug users. Harris has managed to write several chapters which should be essential reading for all who work with young people, his critique of peer pressure, the importance of relationships throughout adolescence and why some young people are more prone to drug dependency than others are brilliant. Harris also argues that addiction is not only the biological action of the drug but it is also the cultural context in which it is taken. Individual circumstances will determine

if someone has issues with drug dependency and how long these issues will take hold for. Harris argues that it is not just the drug that people are addicted to it is also the lifestyle. You cannot separate the lifestyle from the drug, aptly stating 'you cannot treat social exclusion with methadone'. If someone has nothing in their lives other than their drug use it will be difficult for them to let that go. They have nothing else.

Drug Induced is an excellent book which takes the reader through various theories regarding addiction, challenging the assumption that addiction is biological. I realise if addiction was purely biological it would be easier to treat and easier to explain, but it's not. As Harris points out it is a complex web of cultural and biological circumstances that intertwine and render a common treatment useless. Harris argues that Methadone can never be the only solution, that people should be assessed about their readiness to change using Motivational Interviewing techniques – if someone is not truly ready to change their behaviour they will not change. This is also a criticism of the biological disorder view of addiction. If you believe you have a disorder and therefore you cannot control your actions the belief will be held that you really can never change.

He also calls on counsellors to step out of their comfort zone and to use techniques that cater to the individual needs of the client instead of the individual styles of the counsellors! In his latter chapters Harris successfully tackles the difficult subject of dual diagnosis and brilliantly subjects Prozac and anti-depressants to the firing line.

Much to my own surprise I thoroughly enjoyed *Drug Induced* and found myself repeating to colleagues much of what I read. I found it to be a refreshing, courageous book that radically challenges many of our widely held beliefs about addiction and treatment; it is just up to you now to read it.

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Michael Murphy
Developing Collaborative Relationships in Interagency Child Protection Work
Russell House Publishing 2004
ISBN 1- 903855-48-9
£16.95 (pbk)
pp. 152

Heather Smith

Murphy highlights that his book is 'about more than safeguarding children'. He argues that the text is an 'exploration of the interagency, collaborative nature' of the task of safeguarding. This is the second edition of this text, originally called *Working Together in Child Protection* and previously published by Ashgate. It now comes in the wake of Laming's inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié and the many changes within child care practice that have flowed from the governments response, including

Keeping Children Safe and the Green Paper *Every Child Matters*.

In the introduction Murphy sets out that child protection is essentially a team task and that it is 'a complimentary, collective process that needs the positive collaboration of all concerned' (p. xii). He aims for the text to be theoretically challenging and practically useful, something that practitioners will be able to make use of. Murphy acknowledges that there is a rise in expertise within the area of child protection but is concerned that what has been ignored it the fact that it is a team task.

With 'part of the task' of the book being to 'uncover the layers of difficulty that exist within the system' (p. 3) Murphy usefully set outs a definition of child abuse. This brings to the forefront that definitions of abuse depend upon people's perceptions of what constitutes abuse before intervention can take place. Unfortunately for practitioners this does little to clarify the arena of child protection as 'child abuse is not a naturalistic category' (p. 3). Rather it is 'only child abuse if it has been proscribed in a given society' with the difficulty being that 'societal perspective will differ between societies or communities and will also change over time' (p. 3).

The death of Maria Colwell in 1973 brought child abuse again to centre stage within society and brought the need for collaborative working to light. Maria died from physical abuse and neglect when she was seven years old yet she was already known to workers from key agencies such as social services, education, health, police, housing and the NSPCC. The failure in interagency communication was one of the central themes in the Colwell Inquiry particularly 'the fatal failure to pool the total knowledge of Maria's background, recent history and physical and mental condition' (quoted p. 10). Throughout the book Murphy pays particular attention to the importance of interagency communication and sees this as the key to child protection and keeping children safe from significant harm. This is especially significant as the more recent Laming Inquiry confirmed that one of the main factors influencing the handling of Victoria's case was 'an almost total breakdown of inter and intra agency communication' (p. 10).

What is important within this book is that it does not just highlight where the problems are and where agencies and practitioners are failing. Instead Murphy criticises the blame culture that sees individual workers being held totally responsible rather than the agency as a whole and offers ways in which practice can be improved.

Murphy devotes a chapter to explaining the intricate nature of the child protection system and highlights 'structural' blocks to interagency working. The exploration of what happens once a child is referred to the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) enables practitioners to further their understanding of the process but also equips them with the knowledge of how it should work. This exploration of knowledge is then continued through Murphy's description of the different agencies involved in the ACPC, namely Social Services, Education, Health and the Legal Service/Professions. Each agency is broken down into the varying job roles, training/qualifications and areas of concerns. This is practically useful as a reference guide as to how different agencies and workers operate. But what is refreshing within the text is the acknowledgment that interagency collaboration needs constant attention, re-motivation and energy. Particularly as child abuse, and safeguarding

children from it, is an emotive subject for any practitioner and that the 'pain and stress of the child or the family can be mirrored in the feelings of the practitioner' (p. 125). Murphy also highlights that each practitioner comes with a personal history and the presence of a worker's personal/professional split is largely false. In short, child protection work affects the practitioners involved and therefore their welfare should also be of importance if effective interagency communication and practice is to take place.

Murphy's style of writing is very clear, concise and accessible. Each chapter is thorough in its explorations and overall the text achieves the author's ambition of being both 'theoretically challenging and practically useful'. The use of subheadings and diagrams compliments rather than detracts from the point that he is making in each chapter. In particular the inclusion of a 'Glossary of Terms' at the beginning of the book supports his argument that you should never presume people's knowledge within the child protection system. The text amounts to a consistent and coherent tool for any practitioner wishing to both further and re-enforce their knowledge of the system and effective working towards safeguarding children from harm.

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Kathryn Geldard and David Geldard
Counselling Adolescents
Sage Publications 2005
ISBN 1-4129-0235-5
pp. 249

David Collander-Brown

The Australian authors have clearly identified a market for this useful, practical and well-referenced book, reprinted in every year, sometimes twice, since first published in 1999. This is the second, revised edition. Here is provided both an understanding of how young people can be enabled to make use of some of the wide range of approaches and methods that counselling has to offer. The fundamental thesis is that young people's communication is different both from adults and from children and that counselling them will have to take this into account. It needs to be active, lively, spontaneous and creative. The authors begin with an initial, though necessarily brief, exploration of the description of childhood and adolescence, including an outline of mental health and ill health. The particular approach – Proactive Counselling has been developed specifically in the light of this understanding of adolescence.

Proactive Counselling draws on many different models taking aspects of them to apply to work with young people. It includes elements of psychodynamic, Rogerian, cognitive, behavioural, gestalt and brief solution focussed approaches. Adolescents need different things at different times and these approaches can be applied both to their particular social circumstances and in recognition of developmental changes. The range is presented as

very brief overviews then with a technique or exercise drawn from that model. The models are not seen as in competition but offered as complimentary resources available to the experienced practitioner. They are there to support young people in their understanding of their situation, or to enable expression of feeling about it, or as a means of taking action. 'Whatever works' seems to be the thinking. Techniques such as ways of giving feedback, clearly important in working with adolescents, are carefully listed and qualified: 'giving compliments, cheer-leading, normalising and reframing are examples of this process. Part of its usefulness is that some techniques can also be applied by the professional practitioner working with young people in youth work, Connexions and other one-to-one settings. However, a note of caution, all the techniques are here set within a counselling framework and, though some could be used in other settings, the appropriateness and process of applying them is not clearly articulated. For example techniques such as 'the miracle solution', or 'active listening', can be 'taken off the shelf'. Others, such as the use of a 'sand tray' or work with 'dreams', are strategies and need to be contained within the therapeutic framework.

The book does provide an excellent resource offering a holistic and flexible approach and a variety of techniques. These provide a useful toolkit for practitioners working closely with young people. However its core readership is counsellors with young people. Though there are now many different kinds of counselling leading to qualification (and careful selection is necessary), there are few that are particularly orientated towards counselling young people. *Counselling Adolescents* goes a good way towards filling that gap. It will be an effective support to the professional counsellor working with young people. In fact many may wonder how they functioned without it!

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Gordon Bazemore and Mara Schiff
Juvenile Justice Reform and Restorative Justice: Building Theory and Policy from Practice.
Willan Publishing 2005,
ISBN 1-84392-094-8
£25.00 (pbk), £45.00 (hbk)
386 pages

Ros Burnett

A profusion of books on restorative justice have been published during recent years, including many which, like the present volume, concentrate on youth justice, and several by the same publisher. How does this book distinguish itself? Given its generalised title, readers of this journal may be disappointed to find that the empirical findings discussed are restricted to practice in the United States while there is only passing mention of more advanced restorative developments in youth justice in other parts of the world. The reforms to youth justice in England and Wales following the Crime and Disorder

Act, and the subsequent policy endorsements of restorative justice as an integral part of the system, are therefore not under consideration. Nevertheless, this thorough account provides much that is of importance to practitioners and researchers in all parts of the world with an interest in the integrity and effectiveness of restorative justice processes. The authors' main objective is to advance the understanding and evaluation of restorative justice with the ultimate goal of improving policy and practice.

Their analysis is focused on 'face-to-face decision-making processes', which they term 'conferencing'. They regard conferencing as at the core of the restorative justice vision of reform because it is a non-adversarial means of engaging stakeholders in decisions about how to repair the harm done by crime, and a gateway to expanding the participation of victim, offender, relatives and other citizens in other aspects of justice including informal control and social support.

The core of the book – chapters 3 to 7 – reports the findings of a 5-year multi-level study that included (1) a quantitative national inventory to locate, identify and describe conferencing models operating across the United States; and (2) a qualitative investigation to examine the extent to which conferencing programmes are informed by and adhere to theories and principles. They sought to identify dominant practitioner concerns, competing priorities and the logic and theory behind their practice: that is 'grounded theory'. In doing so, they applied a general set of core restorative justice principles as their guiding framework, to see if practice was aligned with these.

The three general principles which Bazemore and Shiff apply, originally proposed by Van Ness and Strong (1997) are: (1) The principle of repair: parties should strive to heal victims, offenders, and communities that have been injured by crime; (2) The principle of stakeholder participation: parties should have opportunities for active involvement in the process; and (3) The principle of transformation in community and government roles and relationship: the relative roles and responsibilities should be rebalanced. They argue that: 'It is adherence to these principles... rather than protocols or program criteria that provide the first standard for differentiating restorative justice practices... from other forms of intervention' (p.33). Given competing priorities, one danger is that programmes describing themselves as 'restorative' are in fact guided by some other theory or practice. Practices are 'less than meets the eye' if they are ill-conceived, imprecise or applied for trivial matters. Hence the authors' stress on the application of guiding theory for conferencing practice, rather than 'cookbook' approaches in programme manuals.

However, accommodating a principle-based restorative justice into a system in which there are competing aims and objectives will inevitably prove challenging. The authors describe US juvenile justice as a 'system whose transformation in the past decade has followed a direction that must seem less than inviting to restorative policy and practice' (p.5). Despite the apparent advances in implementing restorative justice in the youth justice system in England and Wales, its combination with punitive and crime control elements leaves the system here open to much the same criticism. Thus, Bazemore and Schiff's concern with how restorative programmes fit as one component of a larger juvenile justice system and in a wider community context remains a pertinent question for the multi-faceted, multi-purpose youth justice system of England and Wales.

The most important contribution of the book (as identified by the authors themselves, p.332) is in developing the research agenda for further investigation of restorative justice practices. In the final chapter, based on their analysis, they set out numerous testable propositions for future research and suggest research designs to study the impact of conferencing. These provide a rich quarry for the development of evidence-based restorative justice practices. From this perspective at least, the book deserves the line-up of expert testimonies which fill the back cover.

Reference

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Sarah Dickens and Kandy Woodfield
New approaches to youth homelessness prevention: A qualitative evaluation of the Safe in the City cluster scheme
Joseph Rowntree Foundation/York Publishing Services, 2004
ISBN 1 85935 136 0
£15.95
pp.79

Jo Dean
Unaddressed: The housing aspirations of young disabled people in Scotland
Joseph Rowntree Foundation/York Publishing Services, 2004
ISBN 1 85935 145 X
£13.95
pp.46

Barry Percy-Smith

There appears to be two challenges for social research. First, to what extent does it contribute to new knowledge and second, does it have an impact in response to the issues and lives of the people concerned? *Unaddressed* sets its objectives quite clearly as – filling gaps in knowledge regarding the housing careers of disabled young people in Scotland. To that extent this is a report based on empirical research which fulfills its objectives admirably and in so doing rightly gives voice to the experiences of a group who, like others with specific needs or who are marginalised, so often remain silent.
This text is very readable and informative. It begins with a brief review of the literature on young people's housing careers noting that it rarely acknowledges disability as an issue in housing choices; and goes on to consider key social policies influencing young disabled people's housing choices. It then systematically discusses the empirical findings

from the research on which the text is based. To this extent it contributes favourably to new knowledge. The text identifies three categories of disabled young people according to their position on the 'leaving home' continuum – (a) those who had left the parental home; (b) those aspiring to leave and (c) those not aspiring to leave. In relation to each of these it considers a complex range of factors influencing young disabled people's housing careers such as housing satisfaction, support needs, gender, desire for independence, family background. Principal findings included the importance of good quality housing, difficulties in accessing suitable housing and lack of information about housing choices.

Whilst providing an important 'voice' for young disabled people, the conclusions to *Unaddressed* seemed to suggest that the housing aspirations of disabled and non disabled were not too dissimilar. Equally I couldn't help thinking that the suggestions for action (albeit drawing on Dean's previous work) – increasing awareness, information, advice and advocacy – are not specific to disabled young people but to all people, and we are to assume that through these suggestions, things will change. However, the section on future directions for research is useful, although I did wonder how 'knowing more about what affects aspirations and experiences' will help to 'achieve the community care ideal of an independent life' without due attention to changes to those systems which affect housing choices. I would add to the recommendations the need for research which investigates dilemmas and possibilities in the functioning of housing systems in response to the issues at hand, in particular inquiry with local authority officers into how current policy is enacted.

Dickens and Woodfield's work in contrast is a report of an evaluation of an intervention initiative – Safe in the City – a 'new' approach designed to reduce the risk of young homelessness. This is therefore clearly about addressing the second of the two challenges highlighted above – about having an impact in terms of impact on the lives of young people, as well as, in the process, generating new knowledge. I was particularly drawn to Dickens and Woodfield's work, curious to find out what the new approach was. A quick flick to the first section tells me that Safe in the City is an innovative response to the problem of youth homelessness; a preventative initiative concerned with developing early intervention for young people 'at risk' of homelessness. Further the report tells me that the approach is new and innovative because it adopts a 'joined-up' approach in response to homelessness. This involves bringing statutory and voluntary agencies together in partnership as 'clusters' or 'schemes' headed by a lead agency and focusing on three 'elements': Family Support, Personal Development and Skills & Employment.This didn't appear to be so innovative given that partnerships and joined up working between voluntary and statutory sectors are widespread now (albeit with varying degrees of success).

The Dickens and Woodfield report also states that Safe in the City was set up as an 'action research' project, involving continuous monitoring to find out what helps and to continually improve partnerships and services to better meet participants' needs. As an action research practitioner this sounded like good practice to me and I was looking forward to learning more about this process, about how the different agencies involved learned and changed from experience in response to the dilemmas and successes the initiative encountered. Given that practitioners and academics alike are constantly seeking to learn about new approaches

and about good practice in developing effective interventions, I was disappointed to find an absence of reflections on the action research process itself. Nonetheless, this report does provide some valuable insights into the dynamics of intervention processes, the poor deal that many vulnerable young people get when they have difficulties and learning about what makes a difference with young people at risk of homelessness. In particular the importance of working with how young people feel and personal development issues; the critical role of the intervention practitioner (in this case a key worker); the importance of the young person having a say in the referral process; and the value of personalized, tailor-made interventions rather than standardized 'schemes'. Indeed it starts to paint a picture of what effective statutory services might look like if only local authorities would get out of their silos. Specifically it uses the words of young people themselves to highlight the positive changes some young people experienced in particular in terms of their own personal development. For example changing the way they feel about themselves, helping them to make different choices, building individual capacity around identity issues, raising self esteem, and contributing to more stable family relationships.

What was interesting about both of these reports was the insights they raised over and above housing and homelessness issues about what matters for young people. Although this level of discourse is (unfortunately) not entered into in either text. There is much of value in both of them to inform social policy interventions per se. For example, what was important from Dean's study, over and above housing aspirations, is the way it illustrates the extent to which disabled young people want to be included in, rather than restricted from, life chance benefits on equal terms to non-disabled people. For disabled young people this means achieving their aspirations for independence, but more broadly, to be able to enjoy and participate in everyday social life. In exploring the importance of location, Dean highlights, for some, problems of loneliness and desire for higher levels of social interactions and in response, the importance of proximity to family and neighbours and to local social facilities. The message from this for policy and practice is to challenge thinking about disabled young people as having agency and who should therefore have choices, rather than being restricted by attitudes which view disability in terms of limited ability and dependency. Indeed this whole package of research underlines the case for further legislation to support the inclusion of disabled people to benefit from opportunities that non-disabled people have, in line with the Community Care policy which espouses choice and independence. In Dickens and Woodfield I was encouraged to see an acknowledgement of the importance of how young people feel and of emotions and self esteem, and whether they feel loved and valued as being central to the change process in response to youth issues. Rather than the continued emphasis on 'instrumental competences' concerning material attributes such as, skills, qualifications and income.

As always these JRF reports provide easily accessible and to-the-point reviews of topical research. In terms of new knowledge and insight into what makes a difference in preventing homelessness and supporting successful housing transitions, these texts both make a useful contribution.

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John Buell
Closing the Book on Homework
John Buell
Temple University Press 2004
156pp
ISBN: 1-59213-218-9

Terri Dowty

Had I reviewed this book a month earlier I would probably have suggested its emphasis on homework as a serious political issue was a bit over-egged. But that was before the media-fest that surrounded headteacher Patrick Hazlewood's announcement that he is planning to do away with compulsory homework at his school in Swindon. Just like Hazlewood, Buell, the author this book, also saw his thoughtful arguments for education reform reduced to the tabloid shocker of 'banning homework'.

Ironically, the book has little to do with 'banning homework'; rather, it is about being tough on the causes of homework. Buell challenges us to look at our undemocratic educational structures, our attitudes to children, our obsession with curricula, tests and monitoring, and at the political ideology that underpins education policy. Although he writes about the US, his message travels easily to the UK, inviting us to explore the role that homework plays in reinforcing much that is wrong with the school system, and with society as a whole. At the heart of it is the question: what are we educating for?

Homework, says Buell, is about the control of children. It ensures that they have little personal space that is not structured by authority, and it extends the reach of school into home and family. Not that parents necessarily object: for some, homework is yet another essential in the feverish round of improving activities and educational toys that will lead to eventual 'success'. For others, hard work is their child's ticket out of poverty and deprivation. Thus, homework becomes a major factor in the ruthless competition to maintain, or gain, social and financial status, with the laurels going to the child whose parents are best equipped to help him win the race. But what is the point? Buell quotes fifteen-year-old Mark:

> *We've got superparents who raised superkids and we're working so hard, and we hate all this pressure. I mean, my sister, who's in second grade, is at one of these hot girls' schools and has two hours of homework a night. She cries about it and I have to help her 'cause my parents are out a lot. And what is it all for? To go to Harvard or Yale ... to work your butt off at some law firm, just to become another superparent raising superkids.*

Buell is in no doubt that homework is a strategy designed to train good little foot-soldiers for the global economy. It habituates children to pointless drudgery and tells them that play, family time and day-dreaming are luxuries for rare idle moments. While exponents of homework may extol its character-building importance in teaching children the dubious life-skill of 'learning to do what you don't want to do', Buell believes that:

Both the form and content of homework is designed to send the cardinal message of today's business civilization: this is a competitive world whose purpose lies in endless production.

To make any complaint about such a thought-provoking book seems churlish, but it can be a tad rambling or repetitive in places, and the temptation to skim-read makes it easy to miss the subtle connections between Buell's various arguments. It is perhaps indicative that, despite my own enthusiasm for the subject matter, it took real-life events to bring home the full importance of what he is saying. To digest it properly, I would recommend some of the UK media reports about Paul Hazlewood's plans as a starter.

Overall, though, my grumbles are small. Buell has produced some fascinating arguments here, and I can guarantee that he will give any reader a great deal to think about.

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Philip Bean and Teresa Nemitz
Drug Treatment: What works?
Routledge 2004
ISBN: 0415268176
£23.99 (pbk)

Cara Robinson

As a practitioner working in the drug treatment field and as a student embarking on research within the area of young people, drugs and crime, *Drug Treatment: What works?* entertained for me the exciting prospect of a long-awaited text to support and assist my search for measures of success within the field.

The introduction by Bean and Nemitz shows a thorough awareness of the issues facing drug treatment services. The book seeks to ask difficult questions that are likely to challenge the philosophies and policies of treatment – a subject which until recently drug treatment agencies have been allowed to hide and researchers have purposely avoided – due to ethical restrictions and the difficulties associated with studying an 'unloved' group. Immediately the book declares a heavy interest in the link between substance misuse and crime – a natural point of emphasis give the Governments recognition that drug use and crime are endemically linked and its subsequent rush to commission criminal justice services within the drug treatment sector. Aims and justifications of treatment have long proved a contentious issue. Agencies have struggled to find indicators to measure treatment outcomes – abstinence being a poor measure of success.

In chapter two Joy Mott considers National Treatment Outcome Research (NTORS) and comfortingly reassures the reader that treatment outcomes should include a wide range of

morbidities. Michael Gossop extends this thinking, highlighting the differences in treatment outcomes between agencies. Gossop's chapter strongly argues for the need for Drug Action Teams to review their encouragement of competition between agencies and look towards a consistency in treatment approaches.

'Drug Treatment: What works?' sets out to deal with the adult user and the adult offender within treatment. It clearly fails to address the needs and issues facing drug and alcohol youth services. Drug treatment for young people ensues differing strategies and principles and the nature of the beast is clearly different. The abstinence versus harm reduction argument becomes less appropriate – and the emphasis leads to a focus on the role of preventative work alongside harm reduction. Bean and Nemitz probably steered away from considering youth issues recognising that this would mean a completely separate book. Whilst this is understandable, it was however frustrating to read Jay Carver's chapter: 'Drug Testing: A necessary prerequisite for treatment and control' without mention of the recent prominence of passive drugs dogs in schools, and the more extreme measure to swab test school pupils. The chapter refers to Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, however, youth policy makers would do well to heed Carver's overall message: drug testing should form part of a comprehensive care pathway.

Despite the books reluctance to address youth issues, I would recommend it to practitioners, students and academics interested in youth studies as a lot of the treatment options described can be adapted by youth services. Chapter three: 'Types of treatment for types of patients' by Ken Checinski and Hamid Ghodse is a good example of this. Much of this contribution would prove a worthy induction tool for new workers in the field. The assessment process is thorough – and could be engineered for use with young people. Interestingly, it also highlights the usefulness of motivational interviewing with substance users. As a substance misuse worker I would not be without Prochaska and DiClemente's *Cycle of Change* (1986) within my 'tool box'. The cycle itself requires the worker to translate it into 'user friendly' terms – but once this has been achieved it is unparalleled in its ability to allow substance users to gain insight into their personal motivations for treatment (this saves the worker a lot of hard work and time). This chapter also deals with the importance of care planning and review.

Colin Brewer's chapter strikes the most controversial note in the book. He damningly criticises therapeutic activity and those who practice it – ridiculing such practitioners overwhelming belief that what they do is useful. Brewer argues that such work is ineffective and his proclivity is towards physiological treatments to act as antagonists to the substance use. It could be argued that in his objectives Brewer fails to consider experimental or recreational drug use and that his idea of treatment is only an option for those with entrenched drug use (and not wholly suitable for young people). The chapter in its polemic state does aid to further the debate around substitute prescribing and is useful to those that have traditionally worked towards methadone maintenance programmes.

'Coerced treatment for drug-using offenders' – is the hot topic covered by Douglas Longshore, Michael L. Prendergast and David Farabee. Drug treatment agencies have historically crusaded against coercion believing that patients should willingly enter into treatment – this chapter shows that the argument is complex and that coercion often stems from many different sources and functions at differing degrees. This chapter serves to lessen the burdens of communication

and joint-working between criminal justice services and drug treatment agencies. It is hoped that the writers' recommendations for further investigation are followed up. Chapter eleven is devoted to describing the position and development of the National Treatment Agency and is written by Paul Hayes, the NTA's first chief executive. Chapter 12: 'Linking treatment services to the criminal justice system' by Philip Bean, focuses on a model of integration between supervision, drug testing and treatment. Other chapters look usefully at Dual Diagnosis, prison interventions and the lack of provision for those misusing prescribed drugs.

Chapter thirteen is also of particular use to the drug practitioner. It continues with the theme of motivational enhancement work with substance users – in particular those involved within the criminal justice system. Jovis Casselman conveys a good understanding of the difficulties facing the Criminal Justice System and Drug Treatment Agencies when they try and work together, a point much stressed throughout the book. The chapter identifies that the two agencies operate within completely different principles and ethos. The chapter also details 'general principles' that practitioners should follow when working with substance users. The emphasis is on keeping the substance user in treatment once the engagement process has begun.

Overall the book provides an honest and credible initiation into the complex issues surrounding substance misuse treatment. It makes a worthy attempt to answer the questions it sets itself and goes some way to address the field's turbulent configuration of treatment options and outcome measures – a great achievement given the meagre evidential material with which to draw upon. As a result the book relies heavily on the professionalism and experience of the contributors (not such a bad thing in this case). My lasting impression is of a text offering candid self-criticism but was unable to find sufficient data to meet its needs. *Drug Treatment: What works?* criticises vociferously the historical omission to commit to evaluation and investigation into 'what works?' by commissioners and agencies. Unsurprisingly then the book advocates research as the way forward.

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Peter Barnes and Bob Sharp
The RHP Companion to Outdoor Education
Russell House Publishing 2004
ISBN 1-903855-36-5
£18.95 (pbk)
189pp

Ken McCulloch

Russell House is a specialist publisher with a strong orientation towards texts concerned with work with young people. They have published, for example, material on youth work, youth justice and youth social work. A developing area of their list is work with a focus on outdoor and adventure education. Their online catalogue lists Outdoors, adventure

and the environment as a specific specialist category and it is to this growing market that Barnes' and Sharp's new collection is addressed.

The material is arranged in four sections, headed as the context, users, practice of and issues in, outdoor education. Each of these contains a half dozen or so chapters mostly about five to eight pages long but with one or two longer and shorter pieces. The contributors to this collection range from established voices such as the two Rogers – Putnam and Greenaway, to some much newer authors. Kate O'Brien is acknowledged as the youngest contributor and her co-authored article on 'Women Working in the Outdoors' is privileged as the closing chapter.

The idea of a compilation of articles covering a range of perspectives and issues is an admirable one. In outdoor or adventure education a collection of this kind aimed at a UK audience is probably long overdue, and the editors are certainly to be congratulated for recognising the possibility and drawing together such a diverse range of perspectives. There is much here of interest to practitioners and commissioners of outdoor work with young people, and most readers with an interest will find something stimulating or worthwhile in this collection.

There are however some significant criticisms to be levelled at the editors. One of the most important features of such an edited collection ought surely to be an overall coherence in the selection and sequencing of the chapters. Some sort of argument or arguments should emerge from the nature and placing of the material even if only implicitly. That does not seem to have been achieved in this volume. There may be several reasons why that is so. The decision to structure the book as a large number of relatively short pieces is one important reason for this problem of coherence. Even the most diligent and directive of editors would have a major difficulty in managing such a diverse body of material with such a range of themes and of inevitably variable quality.

Second, the selection and briefing of authors for any collective work is inevitably fraught with difficulty and in this case the results are sadly somewhat flawed. The variability of the individual chapters was a major problem for this reader. There are some worthwhile pieces of work here, such as the chapter on Values and Ethics (although it would have been good to see a more fully developed paper than the short version presented here) and Marcus Baillie's chapter on Rewards from Risk. The other side of the coin is represented by, for example, the chapter on Research Methods, which read as a slightly wordy reworking of well-rehearsed general arguments about social scientific or educational research. There is certainly some interesting territory to be explored in relation to the specific challenges and special demands of research in outdoor education, but they are barely touched on in this chapter. Similarly the chapter on Outdoor Education and the Voluntary Sector seems like something of a missed opportunity, concentrating as it does more on the contribution of volunteers than on broader questions about the voluntary sector as a category of provision independent of the state. Overall there is a disappointing lack of theoretical depth to many of the pieces, not helped by the generally short length of most.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about this book is what, or more particularly who, is missing. There are a number of notable contributors to debates about theory, practice and policy in relation to outdoor education whose potential contributions to a collection of this

kind seem, surprisingly, to have been overlooked. One cannot avoid speculating that some of the weaknesses of this book might have been ameliorated or even largely avoided if some of the slighter contributions had been substituted with work from other sources.

A volume of this kind ought to have represented the best available but too many of the contributions do not measure up, reading more like good student essays than arguments with real weight and substance. Encouraging new and untried talent is a worthwhile aim but perhaps a more appropriate vehicle might have been found if that was what was intended. This book appears to aspire to the status of 'key text' for the field and it is disappointing to have to say that it has missed that target by a significant margin.

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Marianne N. Bloch, Kerstin Holmlund, Ingeborg Moqvist and Thomas Popkewitz (eds)
Governing Children, Families and Education: Restructuring the Welfare State
Palgrave Macmillan 2003
ISBN 1-4039-6225-1
pp. 347

Clive Erricker

This edited collection of thirteen chapters, is an examination, in differing national contexts, of changes in policies and their effects on the governance of children, families and education. It focuses on shifts and changes introduced in the late 20th and early 21st Century that have 'created new patterns of governing associated with the notions of welfare, care and education' (p.4). In this review I shall extract specific notable trends, themes and critiques that best characterise the contributors' contributions to this area of research into social policy.

There is a strong emphasis across the contributions on interrogating governing discourses in relation to power relations. There is also an emphasis on the tensions between the way in which neoliberal, globalised reforms impact on specific countries, groups and 'locally contingent' factors. The latter is particularly evident in Beth Swadener's and Patrick Wachira's chapter on 'Governing Children and Families in Kenya: Losing Ground in Neoliberal Times' (Section 3: The Embodied Social and Welfare State). This argues that global policies promulgated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, amongst others have increased inequities in Kenya and other poor countries.

Generally, a tension is presented concerning globalised hegemonic policies and their effect on pluralistic populations in various countries, especially given the movement of what we might, euphemistically, call 'human resource' or the flexible movement of labour and immigration. Camilla Hallgren and Gaby Weiner's chapter on 'The web, antiracism, Education and the State in Sweden: Why Here? Why Now?' asks questions about the complex relationship between assimilation, difference and otherness in the construction of identity in a country coming to terms with new citizens from Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

Also focusing on Sweden, but with a concern for motherhood and gender roles, Kerstin Holmlund's chapter 'Governing New Realities and Old Ideologies' is an historical 'case study' on 'the public debate concerning motherhood and early childcare institutions in Sweden, 1931-1950'. Here she explains the difficulties of relating public policy on children's care to the economic circumstances of mothers. She examines the resulting feelings of failure mothers had in relation to their role as they seek also to earn.

Writing in the context of Argentina, Ines Dussel's chapter 'Educational Policy After Welfare: Reshaping patterns of Governing Children and Families in Argentinian Education', identifies shifts in the construction of childhood from the child as immature and in need of protection (throughout most of the twentieth century) to 'reflective individuals whose development has to be guided and oriented by teachers'. Her concern is that ideological models are not used as the basis for such constructions but that 'complexity and heterogeneity' are appropriately addressed in applying a more 'inventive politics' to challenge present injustices.

Marianne N. Bloch's chapter, 'Global/Local Analyses of the Construction of "Family-Child Welfare"' takes a wider view than those chapters presenting research based on one location. She examines contemporary 'cultural reasoning' about family-child welfare and compares that to its historical counterparts from a global perspective, within which she identifies certain specific localities. Her chapter usefully presents the overall approach used throughout the whole volume. These studies are examples of 'postmodern' readings of governance in tension with ideological models, they argue for more nuanced, subtle and innovative ways of understanding governance in relation to children, families and education. The themes of globalisation, plurality and social justice extend across the contributions as uniting threads in chapters with different foci.

The type of literature drawn upon to support analysis is that of Foucault, Bhabha, Deleuze, Guattari, Lyotard, Derrida, Levinas, to name those who appear within a range of chapters. Whilst postmodern readings can throw new light on situations and deconstructive method can be illuminating, overall these contributions do not have the telling impact one might hope for. Densely written, and with attention to detail, the authors, nevertheless, all to often write in an opaque style and derive conclusions that are timorously inconclusive.

For example, in Thomas S. Popkewitz's chapter on 'Governing the Child and Pedagogicalization of the Parent: A Historical Excursus into the Present', we read, 'The transmogrification of all children to that of the child who lies outside of normalcy is analogous to a museum exhibit on art and primitivism.' (p. 54). And in Hallgren and Weiner's chapter the conclusion, reflecting on the value of a specific piece of new technology is that: 'SWEDKID's emphasis on the person suggests that in an era where it feels as if no one is in control, taking responsibility for the quality and ethics of our personal practice is, perhaps, the most that any of us can aspire to'! (p.330)

Whilst this collection is a welcome addition to research literature in the field and address significant issues, overall I feel they achieve less than they might have done. In their attempts to uncover uncertainty in (post)modern times and warn against simplicity of governance and concentration of power when dealing with complexity these studies

generally lack a sense of future practical purpose emerging out of their research that might make those who shape policy in relation to governance sit up and listen.

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Douglas Robertson and Alan Dearling
The Practical Guide to Social Welfare Research
Russell House Publishing 2004
ISBN 1-898924-93-7
pp. 243.

Carl Barton

The authors make it clear from the start and throughout that this book is to do for social welfare practitioners what one of them, along with another co-writer, did for housing practitioners. It is to provide those in the 'rapidly evolving worlds of social welfare' (p. xi) with a no nonsense 'it does what it says on the tin' type book that will guide the reader through the practicalities of how to do or commission research.

The emphatic practical theme of the book is evident in all aspects of content and presentation. The layout, for example, is based upon a conception of the 'research project' as being fixed around three interdependent parts that the practitioner reader needs to be guided through: 'planning' it, 'doing' it and 'finishing' it off. Hence, the text is split into three 'Parts' with these headings. Each Part is divided into clearly defined chapters, all of which begin with a highlighted boxed statement of objectives, and each chapter is sharply divided into dedicated sub-headed sections. Chapter one in Part one, for example, dismantles the 'research process' into 12 distinct sub-headed stages and gives from a half to two pages of nuts and bolts information on each. Holding to this format throughout allows the authors to cover a lot of ground and introduce a wide range of points involved in doing or commissioning social research. In this respect the work can be regarded as comprehensive, clearly presented and therefor 'practical' to the intended practitioner reader.

From having the same title aim as the previous practical guidebook for housing practitioners, the authors are acutely aware of the need to associate the title term 'practical' with content material that has a straightforward clarity and is geared specifically to the practitioner. Such an approach brings into question initial perceptions of comprehensiveness, clarity and practicality for the target reader – mostly because it works with an associative definition of 'practical' that can only be established by standing back from the more involved considerations of theory. It is therefore, with little consideration of their complexity that concepts such as 'community', 'disempowerment' and 'best practice', for example, can be, and are, used pointedly throughout the text as little more than confirmational linguistic symbols, to help pull some fairly general and non-practitioner specific material into a shape that appears clear, specific and acceptably 'practical' to the target practitioner reader.

The lack of depth and detail on a wide range of concepts such as 'freedom', 'bias', 'values', 'reflexivity', 'truth', 'objectivity', 'ethics', 'inductive' and 'deductive reasoning', 'praxis' and the like (as essential theoretical and methodological considerations within the conduct of social research) allows the research process to be made to appear more ordered, sequential and systematic than it ever is in so many projects or designs. This position, which is symptomatic of the preferred practical approach, is maintained by the authors not acknowledging the weight of evidence to show that social research is a messy process. One that does not conform to a logical sequential or linear structure with classificatory stages that allow the systematic application of the type of research plan they insist upon (pp. 25-27). Further, the axiomatic usage of youth homelessness as a staple example of research helps to keep the authors away from working with a recognition of the vagaries and exigencies of social research in practice across a highly diverse range of subjects of study. Subjects that could have been used to introduce a variety of practical factors likely to be faced by the social welfare researcher in the field, such as the importance of being flexible, creative and ingenious in order to get through potentially research threatening ethical and political dilemmas, for example, and continue to collect information.

The systematic execution of the aim of the book produces a double edge in that the desire to be practical produces the benefits of research relevant material and clarity, but at a cost to its practical feasibility. This is to say, that informative work on different aspects of the research process is given throughout the book, such as advice on sources of material and features of different methods in Part Two, along with using data collected in Part Three. And, although there are lapses in clarity, such as the (mis)use of the word 'impute' (p. 46) the book does for the most part present its content clearly. However, little is written on ethical, political, methodological, epistemological and ontological issues in social research, which does appear remiss in practical terms, given the likelihood of the nature of research undertaken, or commissioned, by social welfare practitioners to be involved in some very sensitive areas.

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John M. Ulrich and Andrea L. Harris (editors)
GenXegiss – Essays on Alternative Youth (Sub) Culture
The University of Wisconsin Press 2003
ISBN 0879728620
pp.308

Stephen Harrison

GenXegiss – Essays on Alternative Youth (Sub) Culture is a three-part exploration of how the term 'Generation X' has been applied in relation to post 2nd World War youth culture. The application or usage of Generation X as a description of alternative youth culture is examined under the headings; Music and Performance, Print Media and Electronic Media. The book comprises of ten reasonably diverse essays relating to Generation X with an authoritative introduction offered by Ulrich which makes an excellent

job of tracing the origins of the term and its application and the inherent contradictions in its usage.

Evocative photographs of French, German and English youth from the 1950s and 1970s suggest an exploration of youth subculture/s that transcend narrow national geographical boundaries, indeed hinting toward a cultural domain which is born of or in response to western, industrialised, late capitalist society. However, whilst Ulrich's introduction acknowledges this dimension of the Generation X phenomenon much of what follows is focused upon American manifestations of youth culture and its referents leaving readers this side of the pond who may be interested in its British manifestations potentially disappointed.

The essays themselves vary somewhat dramatically in quality and accessibility. Each attempts to deconstruct Generation X from varying starting points and whilst they lack a real thematic unity they seem narrow in the terrain they cover. The major thrust of the academic interest in Generation X is that it is a generation and in turn a set of cultural responses to a post-war, post-AIDS, post-modern world. The literary reference points drawn upon within the essays dealing with this area such as Douglas Copeland's 1991 novel *Generation X*. However, it's where the authors turn to the musical references that I find myself becoming a little irritated and unconvinced. An example of this can be found in Haynesworth's 'Alternative' Music and the oppositional Potential of Generation X Culture. The opening epigraph to the essay quotes the lyrics of American 'Punk band' Green Day. Whilst I have no truck with the idea that music could possess 'oppositional potential' and represent the alienation and disaffection of a whole group of young people. What I am not sure about is how this claim can be made as it relates to such an unconvincing set of cases. The selection of Green Day and indeed the Offspring I believe undermines the arguments being forwarded within this book. These so called 'Punk' bands are only the most recent manifestation of a tradition dating back to the 60s and 70s. If we ignore the British tradition for one moment we can trace the oppositional chants of white American youth back to Iggy and the Stooges and The MC5, to be followed later-on by the Dead Kennedy's through to Sonic Youth (one of America's longest lasting alt rock acts). This lineage is ignored and inadvertently locates the analysis of Generation X in the late nineties and early years of 2000. The fact that Green Day is a pale imitation of The Clash (art school punks of the highest order) means the analysis of the subject is like appreciating art through an Athena poster copy of a masterpiece.

It has to be acknowledged this book irritated me because I hoped it would speak to me about the cultural backdrop of my own youth. However, I was brought up on a British working class council estate, waiting for the next release by The Jam (Town Called Malice), The Clash (Guns of Brixton) and The Specials (Do Nothing) worrying about the National Front recruiting at my school gates and whether 'Blowing in the Wind' was just a really good cartoon or an accurate portent of nuclear destruction (its ok it's a generational thing) not in the white middle class suburbs of America.

The weaknesses in this book, for the British reader, relate to the overemphasis on Generation X as it relates to an essentially American context. I think it would have been more accurate to insert 'American' into the title *youth (Sub) Culture*. It will ironically be of interest to those who work with young people in terms of trying to get a grip on the cultural reference points

many white middle-class British youth are now accessing. A quick look around the suburban British landscape and we see the reappearance of long black hair and eye shadow, black paratrooper boots and long black leather jackets. Yes, the gothic punks are back and they are listening to Green Day and the Offspring.

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Tony Jeffs with Ruth M. Gilchrist
Newcastle YMCA 150 years – mind, body, spirit.
The National Youth Agency/Newcastle YMCA
£6.95 (pbk)
pp72

Barry Burke

The book is a fascinating account of Newcastle YMCA's development and transformation over a century and a half. It recounts the ups and downs of the organisation. It tells the story of the many selfless individuals who were influential in moving the 'Y' along and the problems that they encountered on the way.
The authors have trawled through the YMCA Archives at the University of Birmingham as well as local collections to produce an informative, entertaining and well-produced publication full of insights about the nature of the work carried out by the YMCA both in Newcastle and nationally. Accompanying the text are a considerable number of old photographs and some lovely pencil drawings from old Newcastle 'Y' publicity material. There is also a very useful bibliography for anyone setting out on doing research in similar fields.

It is not known the exact date of the founding of the YMCA in Newcastle but it was definitely established by 1849 and held its meetings above a grocer's shop in Grainger Street. This was five years after George Williams, a London draper's assistant, had founded the YMCA. The authors point out that Williams, a deeply religious young man, had invited a small group of like-minded young men to his lodgings 'to discuss the formation of a Christian association to work amongst drapers and their social equivalents'. Their aims were essentially to improve the 'spiritual condition of young men engaged in the drapery and other trades'. No one could join unless they were members of a Christian Church and all members had to be proposed at a meeting where their moral character was examined and explored.

Over the next two years a number of YMCAs were founded around the country including Newcastle. There is no doubt that the Newcastle YMCA of 150 years ago was very different from its current counterpart. It was a deeply religious organisation catering for young Christian men between the ages of 18 and 30. They had a library and a reading room, held biblical and devotional meetings every other Monday interspersed with 'conversational' meetings where members reported on their religious activities and talks were given by

members, all of which had a Christian focus. They were also expected to be actively involved in Sunday Schools as well as evangelical work amongst the 'spiritually neglected localities of the Town'.

Actual membership in Newcastle was never large. In 1858, it stood at 20 but never rose above 30 in the next decade. By 1876, a considerable programme of meetings and classes was held and by the end of the 1870s, the weekly programme included, in addition to prayer and business meetings, string band rehearsals, choir practices, a choral society, French, German, Greek and shorthand classes, weekly lectures and a Sunday School Preparation Class. There was also a cricket club in the Summer, an annual camp and a Mutual Improvement Society. By this time the membership had reached three figures and there were a number of 'associates' who also took advantage of the facilities. There is no doubt that the authors are correct in describing the association as 'an incredibly active organisation'.

In addition to their evangelical work, later in the century, there was an expansion in the level of welfare provision offered to members. The Association began to develop as a Friendly Society offering sick benefits and funeral expenses. There was also a Thrift Club, an Apartment Service and an Employment Register. Membership of the YMCA never at any time covered the whole social spectrum. The authors make it clear that 'membership was neither sought nor encouraged from certain sections of the working population'. Essentially, YMCA members came from the 'respectable' working class and the lower middle class – clerks and shop workers. They were certain of their Christian faith but respected all aspects of that faith so that different sects and denominations within Christianity found a home in the YMCA. They were usually teetotal or supporters of the temperance movement.

The early years of the 20th century saw a move away from the educational and welfare aspects of the association. There were other agencies that could cater for this aspect in far better ways. The evangelical aspect also faded and gradually Newcastle YMCA became primarily a leisure-orientated club. Billiards, chess and badminton were prominent as was the Camera Club and the Gymnasium. However, it was the First World War that brought the YMCA to national attention. As soon as war was declared in 1914, the YMCA, both nationally and locally set up recreation huts for the troops both in France and on the home front. These were places where they could relax, write letters home, obtain refreshments and entertain themselves. In a very detailed and well-researched chapter, the authors maintain that 'the Red Triangle of the YMCA became a familiar symbol everywhere troops were stationed, hospitalised or likely to alight'. They go on to make the point, with justification, that 'never before, or since, has a voluntary youth organisation played such a prominent part in British life than the YMCA did between 1914 and 1919'.

The inter-war and much of the post Second World War years witnessed an expansion of the leisure provision, the commencement of a boys' club and the perennial problem of keeping out of debt. Membership never rose to dramatic heights. Throughout the book, the reader will find that at various stages during the twentieth century the Association was 'treading water', or 'in limbo'. The words 'decay' and 'decline' are used. By the middle 1970s, despite quite ambitious programmes, membership of the YMCA in Newcastle was 'in free fall'. It was the 1980s that changed all that. Jim Lamb was appointed General Secretary in the

latter part of that decade and he was determined to change the focus of the organisation as well as its character which he regarded as being seen by the general public as 'a middle class movement'. In two years, Jim was instrumental in moving the Newcastle YMCA from a largely unsuccessful building-based movement to successful detached work with vulnerable young people.

The book records all of these dramatic changes. From education and evangelism, through welfare provision and leisure, from building-based to detached work. These are all part of the story that the authors hope 'helps contemporary practitioners clarify their thinking about what they are doing'. It does this admirably.

The authors cover considerable ground in their book. If there is one criticism I have it is the lack of any substantial links to what was going on in the North East during the period covered. What, for instance, did the 'Y' do during the General Strike of 1926? What was their attitude to the Jarrow Marchers of the 1930s? Did the organisation do anything to help the miners during the strike of 1984-5? For an organisation that prides itself on its involvement with the city, it is a shame that events such as these are missing.

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Kevin Ford, Rob Hunter, Bryan Merton and Deirdre Waller
Leading and Managing Youth Work and Services for Young People
The National Youth Agency
ISBN 0 86155 319 5
£24.95
pp. 247

Gavin Turnbull

The intended audience of this book is leaders and managers of youth work in both local authority and voluntary sector provision. It is developed from a reader that accompanied a management development programme for youth work managers in England, delivered by Ford Partnerships on behalf of the DfES. NYA Chief Executive Tom Wylie suggests that the book 'will help to broaden the focus by providing managers ... with the opportunity to catch their breathe, pause in what they do, take stock, think, analyse and reflect on their practice'. The authors' approach is to utilise an adapted model of Kolb's experiential learning and, in their own words, 'bombard' the reader with models, theories and tools in an attempt to enhance their capacity for analysis. As such, the book provides a good jumping off point into a wide range of management areas and approaches.
The book is, however, open to a number of significant criticisms on both pedagogical and ideological fronts. In pedagogical terms, the book tries to do too much. A multitude of management models are presented in rapid, uncritical fashion, potentially leaving the reader bewildered. Consequently there is limited information with which to make informed, reflective and analytical choices about the instrumental purpose of these approaches and

critical analysis is often lacking. From two paragraphs on fuzzy logic to a couple of pages on the complex area of risk management, the book tries to cover too much material and leaves some areas deficient of meaningful content. The authors would perhaps have been far better concentrating on the depth of key areas, perhaps leadership or a more coherent approach to strategy, rather than touching on a broad spectrum of issues.

The effectiveness of the authors' approach is questionable since the reader is ill-equipped to do anything other than pursue the source text to find out how a brief paragraph about a key theory can actually enhance their practice. Though there is a 'further reading' section, in many cases the link from a management model to further reading is vague or absent. At no time do they suggest how in depth critical analysis is to flow from what is mostly a descriptive regurgitation of the basic points of a series of management models followed by a short summary of the current youth work context. Whilst some critically reflective questions are posed within the text, this is limited. The training programme from which the book emerged was built upon the same model of 'pause, reflect, think, learn, apply', and the course reader formed a well received part of this. The programme evaluation conducted by DeMontfort University did, however, identify that a significant part of the process was the co-learning environment – something that is of course missing from a stand-alone text. It is not possible to expect the same of a book as of a reader that accompanies intensive training and participant interaction.

There are also some omissions in the book. For a text that includes the oft-used comment that organisations are usually under-led and over-managed, 'leadership' as a dedicated area of study itself only warrants nine pages, nestled in a chapter on 'modern management'. Situational leadership is omitted from this, and the text would have benefited from a deeper study of public sector leadership, with more practical models of good practice or other exemplars derived from the public / community sector. In ideological terms, the text is evangelical about current UK Government approaches to the public sector and New Public Management (NPM). This appears to go far beyond equipping the manager to work in this context and its rhetoric will probably grate for even the staunchest New Labour supporter. The book cites examples of good or innovative practice whereby the reality rarely if ever matches the rhetoric, from direct payments as a model of empowerment for disabled people to the Connexions Service as a ground breaking example of user involvement at all levels.

Furthermore, its engagement with the professional values, philosophy and practice of youth work is often limited to recent Government prescribed descriptions. Consequently this means that other perspectives on the profession, its direction and alternative management approaches are rarely articulated. Whilst raising some general questions it rarely, if ever, encourages the reader to consider the underlying assumptions behind public sector effectiveness and the third way approach, or indeed the UK Government's approach to professional youth work. The Government's 'empowering' approach to local authority governance is not, for example positioned in relation to its critics from the sector who suggest that target driven funding streams are somewhat 'procrustean', forcing conformity and ignoring local circumstances. Whether or not we agree with the range of arguments, their absence is contrary to an approach that espouses critical thinking. The pragmatic approach of managerialism and NPM is not ideologically neutral as is tacitly suggested within the publication.

One is also left wondering about the target audience of the book. For many senior managers the approach may feel incomplete and perhaps patronising, lacking sufficient depth to be truly useful. Those in the voluntary sector are likely to find much of the context interesting but not sufficiently representative of their management terrain, probably preferring texts such as Handy, Adirondack, or other 'pure' management and leadership texts. Undoubtedly, however, the book will provide a useful resource for those delivering initial management training to those in the youth work context, particularly when supported by further discussion and exploration of the issues.

Another essential question about the book is its shelf life, focussed as it is on managing in the Transforming Youth Work (TYW) context. As the book itself highlights, change is constant and it is likely that given its focus on the current policy, priorities and targets of TYW, the book will become dated very quickly. Indeed the political map regarding the future of Connexions and the direction of Children's Trusts has already changed. Ironically, it is this record of the current managerial climate in youth work that will be of interest for years to come, not least as a record of the success, or failure, of Third Way thinking and New Public Management as applied to the sector.

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Priscilla Alderson and Virginia Morrow
Ethics, Social Research and Consulting with Children and Young People
Barnardo's
ISBN 1 904639 07 1
£12.95 (pbk)
pp 171

Sue Mansfield

This is a timely publication, sitting as it does at the nexus of three emerging trends that no one involved in either work with children and young people or social research can afford to ignore. In neither law nor within social work, educational or medical professional practice are minors any longer regarded as the property or chattels of their parents but as individuals who have rights that must be respected. Furthermore, at times the rights of the child must also be recognised as having primacy over the rights of parents, even if the way they choose to exercise these rights is at variance with the wishes of the parent or the professional practitioner. Similarly, within the field of social research it is increasingly being recognised that those who agree to participate in research projects are not just research subjects but rather stakeholders who have as strong a vested interest in the outcomes and uses to which the research findings will be put as the researchers do. Possibly even more so in those circumstances where further or changed interventions in their lives might be one very real consequence of the research. But increasingly, those researchers are not necessarily disinterested third party observers but practitioners carrying out research

in their own workplace within an action-research paradigm with a view to improving their practice or for the purposes of informing policy development within the employing agency. The coming together of these three trends presents researchers with complex ethical dilemmas that cannot always be easily resolved but most certainly can never be ignored.

Alderson and Morrow do not provide simple, prescriptive answers to these dilemmas, however much some of us might wish that they could be magicked into existence! What they do instead, and do very well, is identify the issues and pose the questions that researchers need to consider if they are to ensure that their research is conducted ethically. To that end they clearly identify what they consider to be the sort of research that comes within the compass of their concern and they set that boundary very broadly. As a result the book is of relevance not only to those who undertake large scale research projects and/or academic research, that would fall within the bounds of traditional social research models but also, for example, professional practitioners who are seeking to find out the information that they think they need to improve their own policy and practice as well as evaluative research designed to monitor and appraise that practice as is often carried out by external consultants. Having defined their parameters in that way, they equally comprehensively take the researcher through every stage of the research process from planning to disseminating the findings and assessing the impact of those findings on stakeholders, examining the ethical issues that each stage of that process gives rise to, making useful and positive points about the questions that researchers need to be asking themselves. Moreover, they also make reference to useful examples, drawn from actual research projects, of how they might be addressed and ethical research practice developed and maintained as the research progresses. Not only is the content useful but the layout of the book is clear and concise with summary boxed-off lists that would form very useful aide-memoirs for researchers wishing to regularly audit their research practice for monitoring purposes.

As the title suggests, this book is mainly aimed at researchers who are seeking to conduct research with and about children and young people, and by implication it sets out the guidelines that Barnardo's expect to be adhered to in any research conducted by or for them, but to assume that this is the only group of readers who would be interested in it is to underestimate its usefulness. Any researcher proposing to work with any vulnerable group or where there are concerns about whether truly informed consent can be obtained will find this an extremely useful book too. Indeed, this would actually be a valuable handbook for any researcher or practitioner with an interest in or concern with the need for research involving people to be conducted on the basis of sound ethical principles and practice. However, despite initially adopting a fairly broad definition of both research and who those researchers carrying it out might be, the content is written on the assumption that it is largely addressing a readership of trained and experienced researchers who have an informed knowledge of the different research approaches that it refers to in passing. Thus, it makes reference to various participative approaches and methods of gathering data but does not discuss the underlying methodology and, for example, assumes that readers will know exactly what a focus group is and how it would be conducted. It is, therefore, not necessarily a book aimed at those who are new to research and looking for guidance on how to do research as opposed to how to ensure that their research is conducted ethically. The novice researcher would probably need to use it in tandem with a good research methods handbook but it would be an ideal addition to the booklists on research training

courses and should be essential reading for anybody involved in supervising practitioner-led research. In summary, therefore, it is a welcome addition to the literature as well as a useful practical tool for social researchers and any practitioners or agencies who wish to ensure that their data-gathering is in line with best ethical research practice.

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Gill Valentine

Public Space and the Culture of Childhood

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£42.50
pp. 141

Tony Jeffs

With good cause growing attention is being paid, in particular by academic researchers and some of those concerned with the question of children's rights, to the issues surrounding young people's access to public space. A plentiful array of empirical evidence now exists to confirm the suspicion of some of us that children and young people now spend far less time unsupervised outside of the home than earlier generations. Increasingly a plethora of paid and unpaid adults monitor and manage the time of young people, controlling what they do, where they go and who they meet. School days and years are lengthened so that it is no longer remarkable to encounter young people who spend between 10 and 11 hours a day incarcerated within a school building for all but a few weeks a year. Whilst outside of school-hours more and more young people are hurried from one approved activity to another, 'deposited' with selected friends who match the expectations of the parent or left to watch television and play on the computer in the home. Computers and televisions that incidentally are evermore likely to be chipped or regulated to enable the parent(s) to restrict the assortment of programmes available to the young person and limit the range of material they can access via the net. As Valentine reminds us the desire of adults to control the freedom of young people and micro-manage their time is not a trend that has emerged during the last decade or so. Rather it is one that, aided by technology and propelled by a climate of fear, has over time gained momentum. As one writer puts it less and less are children growing up 'free-range' rather they are being battery reared.

The author provides a thorough overview of the literature on this topic. Consequently here is an authoritative starting point for anyone seeking to gain an overview of the issues and an insight into the existing body of research underpinning the debates. However this is not merely a literature review as the greater part of the text draws upon a recently completed research programme. This sought to examine parental concerns regarding young people's use of and access to public space. In addition to a questionnaire survey the findings are based on a number of interviews with parents and young people (aged 8 to 11) resident in a cross-section of urban, suburban and rural localities. These convey an awareness amongst

the former that they gift their off-spring far less freedom than they themselves once enjoyed as children. Heightened fear of 'stranger danger' and 'threatening youth' predictably play a substantial part in fostering this shift. However as some of the parents point out the urge to control can also flow from a conviction that unmanaged leisure is time lost – time that should have been productively spent acquiring the skills and attributes that lead to the promised 'good job'.

Predictably many young people 'fight back' and find ways of securing more time for themselves and of gaining greater access to public space. They negotiate with parents, bend the rules and simply lie about what they have done and where they have been. Perhaps surprisingly, for some readers, young women, more than young men, appear to be trusted by their parent(s) to handle the world outside the home and school. It being assumed they have greater maturity and savvy to better manage the threat posed by strangers, unruly peers and the complexities of the world beyond. Paradoxically although Valentine encountered amongst parents generalised urge to manage the time and movements of their children a number commented upon what they perceived as an increasing refusal on the part of their children to follow orders.

As already noted the focus of the research was on a younger age grouping but Valentine does devote a chapter specifically to Teenagers in Public Space. This carefully sets before the reader a case for what she terms 'open-minded space'. Space that is 'open to encounters between people of different ages' as well as between people with widely differing beliefs, attitudes and backgrounds. Thankfully Valentine does not overlook the absurdity that at a time when youth participation and consultation are superficially so prominent on the political agenda, here and elsewhere, planning and policing policies are simultaneously intent on driving young people from so many public spaces. Understandably the book does not consider the frequently contradictory roles played by some youth workers in this process. Hunting down truants during the day, hitting 'hot spots' at night and tracking those identified as most 'at risk of offending' – they both protect some young people from exclusion from public space and aid in the removal of others. Discussion of the youth work role in the processes Valentine discusses is significant but remains as something that will need to be picked up and discussed by others.

Inevitably the book has been over-taken by events. Notably the proposals for 'extended schooling' that in many ways will formalise the management of young people's time described here. Certainly if enacted and adequately funded (the latter is big 'if') they may well go some way towards ensuring that the class disparities highlighted by the research may be reduced. Working class children will become as managed and monitored as their better-off peers are already. It matters not a jot that these proposals are not discussed except to note that they confirm the accuracy of Valentine's analysis and of her assessment of the direction in which policy is heading. This is an enthralling read based on research that helps clarify our understanding of what is happening to young people with respect to a crucial aspect of their lives.

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Maxine Green and The National Youth Agency
Spirituality and Spiritual Development in Youth Work: a consultation paper from
The National Youth Agency
The National Youth Agency
Leicester
45 pages

Maxine Green and Carmel Heaney
A Sense of Respect: inter faith activities for groups of young people
The National Youth Agency
Leicester
ISBN 0 86155 321 7
£9.50
60 pages

Peter Hart and Melody Briggs

What does spirituality have to do with today's statutory youth work? 'Harry Potter', Kabbalah, the general decline of church attendance, the prominence in the press of fundamentalist beliefs, 9/11, mass grieving after Princess Diana's death, the child abuse cases involving torture to 'exorcise demons'... Spirituality is something that is very real to all young people and our society as a whole. Britain seems to have moved away from institutionalised religions, while keeping a real sense of 'the spiritual', and what the NYA's report aims to do is explain the importance of spirituality and start a dialogue on its role within youth work. This is no easy task. Given that 76.1% of people in England and Wales still think of themselves as Christian while another 5.2% subscribe to other faiths, and given the increased fascination with what is called the 'supernatural', 'magical', or 'occult', we begin to see the magnitude of NYA's task. The potential for causing offence or confusion seems indirectly proportionate to the ability to produce a report that will have definite and firm proposals that are useful to youth workers in the field.

This document is an exciting piece of work. Spirituality has seen differing levels of success within a formal educational setting, but could come into its own within the sphere of youth work. The current RE syllabus has turned complex world-views into neat and uncontroversial subject headings. We need to learn from this and use the report for an open and honest dialogue, which remains respectful at all times but is not scared of appearing politically incorrect for the sake of a meaningful discussion.

The consultative paper encourages youth workers to grapple with issues relating to spirituality, a part of our work that is under-represented due to the need for targeted results. It does not claim to offer a policy; rather it is a first step, a catalyst for debate. The report struggles with a definition of 'spirituality', and rather than trying to pin down a specific and clear meaning it uses several quotes to produce what could only be described as a broad boundary for discussion. However, drawing upon the report's use of the word, we understand spirituality to include some sense of the 'other', something separate from but essential to life. It has obvious connections with our highest and lowest points, and it is in some sense an 'inner truth' that generates a sense of 'awe and wonder'.

The document recommends engagement with spirituality for several reasons. It is needed for the sake of historical continuity, following in the footsteps of Hannah More and her peers. It also represents a link with the Albemarle report and historically important organisations (e.g. the Scouting Association). Spiritual development fits in with youth work's holistic approach to young people, complementing the work done within a formal education setting. An understanding of spirituality should help young people gain the skills needed to deal with the spiritual throughout life, and knowledge of different faiths has been proven to increase social cohesion. Despite its benefits, spirituality has not been given much attention recently in youth work. This is because it is notoriously difficult to define and viewed as potentially causing offence. There is a fear that increasing spiritual awareness within statutory youth groups will appear to be coercive or indoctrinating -this goes along with the popular assumption that secular or atheistic world-views are somehow neutral. There is also a recognition that many statutory workers do not feel prepared to deal with spirituality.

Maslow's hierarchy of need is used in the paper as its framework for exploration of spiritual development. This in itself shows the report to have a humanistic approach to the spiritual, perhaps again because this is considered to be more 'neutral' than religious ideas. The overall implication is that spirituality, despite its broad definition, focuses on the individual. It is usual for the spiritual, particularly in a religious context, to concentrate on the sacred (often in the form of a deity) and the individual. Without this balance spirituality is at risk of becoming another tale of personal fulfilment. However, it is difficult to criticise the report's stance on spirituality as it avoids being pinned down to one definition. While recognising the aim of the booklet is to promote debate rather than stifle discussion with a narrow classification of the spiritual, a working definition would have made arguments easier to formulate.

The report is well worth reading, and being part of this ongoing discussion will help to inform practice. The report is not without its flaws. It is vague in many places; possibly for the sake of encouraging argument, possibly to avoid offence. It is not (yet) a holistic discussion, but it is not meant to be. It is a chance for an honest dialogue between faiths and spiritualities that has been long awaited in the youth work setting.

In their booklet Maxine Green and Carmel Heaney compile an excellent set of resources for promoting inter faith dialogue among groups of young people from a variety of faith backgrounds. The booklet consists of 23 practical, well-planned inter faith activities, including 'My Faith Story', 'Soul Food', and 'The Golden Rule – Implications for Society'. It is intended as a complementary resource to *Connect: Different Faiths, Shared Values* – a resource for young people produced in 2004 by The Inter Faith Network for the UK.

The aim of the booklet is to help young people understand people of other faiths, something much needed in multi-cultural Britain. By including a wide range of materials, Green and Heaney supply the youth worker with a good starting resource. The activities are designed to stimulate discussion, although the youth worker may have to mug up on a number of faiths before using some of them effectively. If handled inappropriately these activities could metamorphose into a RE lesson, but if handled well, they promise just what they offer: an open, informal inter faith discussion.

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Nicola Ansell
Children, Youth and Development
Routledge 2005
ISBN 0 415 28769 3 (paperback)
pp. 286

Jo Trelfa

When offered the opportunity to review this book my first (summer vacation!) reaction was 'it is not my subject area'. A second, and more considered response, was that it provided me with an ideal chance to read 'outside' the areas I lecture in, a luxury not ordinarily possible during a typical academic year. Through Nicola Ansell's contributions I very quickly re-visited my notion of 'subject area', something that had always underpinned my understanding somewhere – but as a result of reading this book has been very significantly underscored and developed.

Unlike other texts examining globalisation and development in general terms, this book focuses entirely on children and young people. Opening with a useful reminder of the tensions surrounding definitions of 'childhood' and 'youth', Ansell proceeds to identify how their experiences are affected by particular international practices and policies, examining those of 'development', 'a process imagined and initiated by the West'. In this she includes global models of childhood and youth and perceived 'universal' notions of family, health, education, and work – and the extent to which they are in effect Western bias, paternalism and control in sheep's clothing. Alongside her evidence of how adults conceptualise and influence the lives of children and young people, Ansell includes as an equal focus how children and young people experience their own lives, noting the historical and societal tendency to consign this to a 'culture of silence'. In this way she invites us to continually address the fact that they are 'actors in their own lives, not merely objects of development or victims of history'. I particularly liked her emphasis on children and youth being 'human beings' not 'human becomings'

The invitation to remain vigilant regarding discourse about children and young people, and sustainable development, is extremely relevant and timely within my professional field, that of Youth and Community Work. Both in general terms but also in relation to the current DfES Youth Service Unit work around sustainable development and youth work – the contribution Youth and Community Work can make to embedding this in its preparation of professionals and in turn the communities they work with. Ansell highlights the need to ensure that any discussion of sustainable development reflects direct participation of children and young people. To what extent do we really listen to their voices, I wondered?

Reading the citing of Griffin's (2001) observation that 'the "state of youth" is the signifier of the "state of the nation"' I was left reflecting on what current policy and discourse in the UK around young people is signifying about UK society at the moment. In fact, Ansell traces how notions of 'troubled' and 'troubling' youth very present today have been running since the early 1900s – and it is easy to see how the Dionysian and Apollian approaches are being acted out through, for example, ASBOs and the *Youth Matters* Green Paper. Linking these two lines of argument it did strike me it could well be time to try something innovative and new! Mid range leaders (such as Youth and Community Workers) who by nature are

engaged with the grass roots and institutions/state she writes about, and hearing the voices of children and young people themselves, could be a way to proceed with this. I was further struck by the poignancy of Griffin's observation through the book's well-evidenced exploration of the experience of being a child/young person globally.

The challenge to question 'taken for granted' concepts and understanding of childhood and youth, to see for example the extent to which they are culturally and historically situated, is set out in the first chapter and then explored through the four areas noted above as well as 'children/young people in difficult circumstances' and 'participation, activism and power', in their immediate contexts and in relation to the wider national and international policies that frame them. In my mind this makes for essential reading for all child workers and youth workers, whether informal and formal education, social work and/or health. Ansell continually reminds us of the need to question 'whose notions of what constitutes adversity and whose ideas about risk and developmental normality should prevail?'.

The book itself is divided into clear chapters exploring the areas highlighted above. Each chapter opens with an overview and outline of progression, and following the conclusion identifies key points/ideas, discussion areas and a list of resources to refer to in order to further explore the issues raised, through books, journals and websites. The dilemma of either distracting the reader by leaving boxed case illustrations and tables in an appendix or by including them within the text, is one that is unresolvable. Ansell has chosen the latter which at times meant I lost the flow of her point/argument – but it took minor effort to pick it up again!

Children, Youth and Development provides a compendium of extremely useful and well evidenced information to challenge assumptions, and a thorough picture of how it is to be a child/young person today in the world. I have incorporated it into all my teaching and am recommending it to students as an essential introductory text that will provoke interest to follow up areas and ideas around globalisation, sustainability and development more broadly. If this is the only book they read in the area it will be a firm foundation on which to base their practice and theory.

Jo Trelfa College of St. Mark and St. John, Plymouth.

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