youth & policy
nos. 97 and 98
Autumn 2007/Winter 2008

Youth & Policy

Double issue on Youth Work Training
Nos. 97 and 98
Autumn 2007/Winter 2008

Guest editor: John Holmes

The National Youth Agency

Published by:
The National Youth Agency,
Eastgate House,
19–23 Humberstone Road,
Leicester LE5 3GJ.
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E-mail: nya@nya.org.uk Website: www.nya.org.uk

Proofread by:
CN Proofreaders Tel: 0191 581 2427

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ISSN 0262 9798

Subscriptions: 0116 242 7427
Advertising: 0116 242 7480
Information for contributors: Inside Back Cover.

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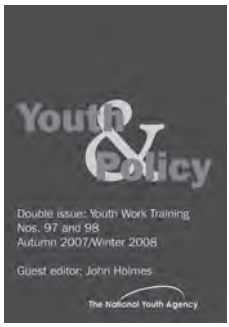

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Introduction

Youth and Community Work Qualifying Courses – Living with the Tensions?

John Holmes

In recent years the role of tutors in explaining the tradition of Youth and Community Work to new students has been made easier by the growth of more accessible historical sources. *Youth and Policy* history conferences have led to a number of books (three so far) comprising articles on wide ranging topics within Youth and Community Work (Gilchrist, Jeffs and Spence, 2001; 2003; 2006). As an introduction to the history of the Youth Service, Bernard Davies' two volumes (1999) are key texts, and although no longer in print, are available as free downloads on the National Youth Agency website (www.nya.org.uk). The current state of students' finances makes such access particularly valuable. Whilst students are unlikely to read these two volumes in their entirety they provide sources for the main historical developments since 1939, in particular government policy on youth work. As a conceptual framework the 'irresolvable tensions' that Davies introduces can help students to come to a more sophisticated view of what youth work is, and move away from glib definitions. These tensions (between universalism – selectivity, education – rescue, professionals – volunteers, voluntary sector – State) it is argued have provided the context for the history since 1939, and before.

I have found it valuable to refer back to these tensions when thinking about Youth and Community Work Qualifying Courses and how they have developed in relation to the Youth Service and youth work more generally. Initially it would seem plausible to argue that the development of professional training leading to JNC qualification, following the Albemarle Report (Ministry of Education, 1960) and much increased by the move to two year courses in 1970, following the Fairbairn-Milson Report (DES, 1969), was simply evidence of growing State influence in an area of work that only existed in the voluntary sector prior to 1939. As Bradford records in 'Practices, policies and professionals' in this issue, the period 1939-45 saw the first moves of the State promoting training for youth workers, but substantial, sustainable initiatives had to wait until the post Albemarle period. Voluntary sector training courses such as the one at Westhill college in Birmingham, that preceded these developments (Holmes, 2007) came into line with a national qualification, and over time the curriculum of all courses became more proscribed, leading to the current position whereby professional validation is dependent on showing links to the Youth Work National Occupational Standards, which lay down what youth workers should be able to do. It has clearly been the role of these courses to provide the professionals, often taking people away from volunteer and part time roles and enabling them to gain the qualifications to move to full time paid positions. In terms of the first two tensions mentioned above it can also be argued that professional qualifying courses have been a tool to implement government

policy. Initially in the 1960s and 1970s this would have been towards a greater universalism and towards embedding youth work as part of a State education service, moving away from the selectivity and social rescue ideologies of the voluntary sector, but more recently the State has itself moved back towards targeted and selective work, with ideologies around social inclusion having considerable resonances with older views of social rescue (Levitas, 1999).

Yet such an interpretation of higher education courses being the tool of government policy will find much disagreement from the 'field' of Youth and Community Work, from the State policy makers, and within Higher Education itself. The history of the qualifying courses is one that has been fraught with criticism that they have been failing the Youth Service both in terms of providing sufficient students who want to work in this area, and even when they do graduates are seen as ill prepared for their roles as youth workers. On the other side, HE tutors have strongly resisted attempts to have their role construed as training people for pre-determined roles; they have seen their role as educational and about personal development rather than training, and have often preferred to talk about community development, community education, or informal education rather than youth work.

So how is the history of Youth and Community Work qualifying courses since 1960 to be understood, and what does the future hold? With one exception, all the articles in this edition are written by people who are currently involved as tutors at higher education level and so mainly represent insiders' views of professional training. The one exception is 'Getting the balance right: training and education within NVQ and HE routes in youth work' which deals with the tension between different styles of training that exist within local authority and HE institutions. This edition of the journal may be criticised as insufficiently representing the views of employers from the local authority and voluntary sectors, or from government funded agencies such as the NYA, or the views of workers and union, but potential writers from these areas were contacted. As happens with any journal, what has emerged is what was available at the time of publication. In my view it does not represent a complacent view of qualifying courses but rather in the spirit of Davies' history identifies more tensions and contradictions faced by HE courses. Sue Robertson's article on 'Changing Patterns of Recruiting Youth Workers' deals with how the traditional recruiting ground of HE courses for youth work students has shifted away from older men with considerable experience as youth workers before entering HE. Mark Hammond provides an insight into how in Northern Ireland the University of Ulster youth work course has opted for an integrated approach, resisting the separation into distinct faith communities for professional training despite youth work operating in largely segregated communities of Catholics and Protestants. This article raises issues for English courses that are now recruiting on the basis of faith, with the rapid growth of Christian Youth Ministry courses over the last ten years.

For qualifying courses in a range of professional areas there is a continual underlying, and in my view irresolvable, tension around the extent to which the curriculum should be critical of the state of their 'field'. To be uncritical is to turn courses into narrow vocational training, with students ill prepared to think for themselves, and often unable to deal with changing circumstances. Yet when the curriculum is so critical that it questions the very basis of the work, it may come to lead students to question their roles to such an extent it encourages them to look elsewhere for work, and this can lead to a divorce between courses and their

field. The history of Youth and Community Work qualifying courses is closely related to this tension, which was apparent even in the government sponsored National College for the Training of Youth Leaders course in Leicester which followed Albemarle in the 1960s when terms such as service, dedication, leadership and character building were questioned (Davies, 1989). In the 1970s following the setting up of two year courses, normally with the addition of 'Community' to Youth Work (following the Fairbairn-Milson Report) the Youth Service and government generally questioned whether these courses were really preparing students for youth work (Holmes, 1980). In the 1980s there were a number of government sponsored moves to bring courses into line around the training of youth workers (or leaders) and give a greater say to employers. The Youth Leaders for the Inner Cities Programme (DES, 1992) targeted at younger, often black, youth workers, went alongside those that were 'employer-led' but which were sometimes short lived or taken over by HE institutions that had originally been contracted to deliver just some content.

These employer-led developments reflected the wider on-going criticism of education institutions that they were failing to provide appropriately trained workers, which helped the growth of the Manpower Services Commission and the rise of National Vocational Qualifications. Youth Service Officers have often complained about insufficient quality applicants for their posts, and by quality reference has often been made to lack of practical management skills, in particular in relation to running centres. This often goes along with the view that qualified students are too critical, and too theoretical. But the considerable growth in both courses and students since 1990 has not primarily come from a response to these criticisms. Rather this growth has reflected the wider growth in HE student numbers. It has been market driven in the sense of the growing demand for HE courses and this raises the question of its appropriateness in professional areas with limited numbers of full time posts available. This led to criticism of HE institutions as being opportunistic to the extent of irresponsibility in relation to graduate unemployment (Jeffs and Smith, 1993:16-17). Clearly the graduate job market has changed so that many graduates are having to take lower paid, often part-time work, and jobs that do not necessarily require graduate skills and knowledge.

Although the shift to professionally qualified youth workers taking part time work, and often a number of jobs, has occurred, the rise in student numbers has not been the main factor in the continuing criticism that HE courses are insufficiently serving the Youth Service field. The extent of the difficulty in securing a well paid youth work job following qualification has mainly depended on a fluctuating job market, which has picked up since 2000, with the growth of public sector jobs. There remain problems in particular geographical areas, especially in London and the South-east, where the cost of living is outstripping the weakening pay and conditions of youth workers, and in areas where there are a cluster of courses and students are unable or unwilling to move from where they studied. Often students seek posts that are not on JNC pay and conditions, and even not directly related to youth and community work. The underlying tension remains of whether JNC qualifying courses should be preparing students for Youth Service posts. Increasingly commentators from HE, in particular Tony Jeffs and Mark Smith, are arguing for a break from training for the Youth Service. There is a long standing argument that the Youth Service, even youth work itself, as it was originally conceived and developed as a form of practice is dying, and that this is a result of both the failures of the Youth Service and

HE qualifying courses. It is argued that only by building strong theoretical and research based programmes of study around education can students be prepared for the tradition of informal and community education practice, and that such students will not fit with a Youth Service which is losing its educational roots, and really wants technicians prepared to submit to government imposed targets around youth problems, issues and numbers. HE courses are also criticised when they have been prepared to become employer led (or adapt to Foundation Degree criteria), or submit to NYA criteria that are too narrowly focussed, or have failed to embrace let alone develop the intellectual tradition, or have taken students who are seen as ill prepared and of a lower standard than other undergraduates.

Two major issues arise from this. First the extent to which HE courses should take what are now called 'non-traditional' students and second whether the commitment to the profession is still meaningful in youth and community work. The 'widening participation' agenda in HE and the push to recruit more 'non-traditional' students can be criticised as a 'cruel con' when it occurs on a reduced 'unit of resource' (Ainley, 2007) and must be critically analysed when, as in Youth and Community Work courses in HE there has traditionally been a reliance on mature students who have not been the high fliers at school. Tony Jeffs and Jean Spence make the case strongly in this issue that such students are being encouraged not out of principles of equal rights but rather for market reasons, and there is little responsibility in ensuring the support structures are in place to ensure they are successful in their studies, nor that jobs are available on qualifying. The case for equal opportunities in HE is one that Youth and Community Work tutors are likely to be sympathetic to given their backgrounds in Youth Work, and understanding how young people unfairly lose out in the school system. Yet Jeffs and Spence in this edition, and previously (Jeffs and Smith, 1993:16-17) argue strongly that tutors' primary responsibility must be to ensuring quality and standards, in an area of work that is already in doubt with colleagues in related professional areas. Sometimes it is important to remember in all the jargon of HE policy that recruiting 'non-traditional' students means being more representative of the diversity of the population. Surely if Youth and Community Work is going to have credibility with people in local communities, crucially young people, then it needs to recruit across class, gender, race and other categories. The tension for me is how to survive in an elitist HE system, whilst both maintaining educational standards and trying to ensure that non-traditional (read working class) students are not simply given access to drop out or , worse, pass but then fail to get jobs. My experience at Birmingham University, which alongside other so-called elite universities such as Durham and Reading has closed its Youth and Community Work qualifying undergraduate routes, suggests that this tension is fragile. Birmingham University stated explicitly that having too many (over 25%) 'non-traditional' students on the courses was the reason for closure, despite previously welcoming the merger with Westhill as broadening the intake at Birmingham (Holmes, 2008). It has to be admitted there were problems with increasing drop out rates in the Birmingham Westhill course, particularly from the part time route, but this was partly due to higher levels of expectation from tutors and external examiners, a trend I have observed nationally as an external examiner.

Most tutors in this area of work can identify students from working class backgrounds who have entered HE without the normal A levels but for whom the opportunity to study at HE level has been liberating, and they have succeeded in moving from qualifying to Honours

and then post graduate levels. The Open University is keen to highlight just such students to justify its policy of open access. Although these academic high fliers are to be congratulated on their success, it is rather those that also come from disadvantaged backgrounds but continue to struggle with the academic world during their studies that I want to highlight. These students are often recognised as able and committed Youth and Community workers on entry, but see themselves as more practical and applied, and are fearful of theory and extended writing. For these students to succeed, often with a failed assignment or even deferral for a while, is rewarding because it is often these students who can continue to offer so much to the field of youth and community work. They continue to have their feet on the ground, continue to understand that the purpose of their studies is to improve their practice as workers, and understand the continuing struggle of young people in a schooling system that, as with the HE system, is increasingly divided and alienating for those who do not 'fit' academic expectations.

It would seem that undergraduate qualifying courses can no longer survive in the rarefied world of the elite HE universities. If that is the case then it is to the post 1992 universities that we must look for qualifying courses. There is a problem of resources in these universities as they do not receive the research income of the old universities but there are ways of keeping small groups and providing individual support to students that give a reasonable chance of success to students. The trade off with large group teaching and the use of internet resources does make a difference (the contribution of Mark Smith's website www.infed.org.uk can hardly be exaggerated in this respect). Although Foundation Degrees (FDs) are only a short term solution they do provide a continuing basis for recruiting students from diverse backgrounds, not only in terms of an alternative to academic entry qualifications but also in fee levels that are more realistic for poorer students (in Birmingham the fees are 50%, or more, lower at the Newman Foundation Degree than at the now closed Birmingham University Dip.HE course). It will be pointed out by critics of Foundation Degrees (and many older universities refuse to implement this development) that the higher level of government support for this central government inspired initiative comes at a cost – namely greater employer involvement, less academic autonomy. It can further be argued that Youth and Community Work is becoming a sub-profession, such as teaching assistants, and that FDs delivered primarily within the FE sector could become the way for the deprofessionalisation of youth workers into youth support workers (a category of lower paid youth workers already existing within JNC pay and conditions), who will become the primary basis for the Youth Service workforce.

Such doom laden prophets are right to warn of what could come about but to feel under attack from all sides sometimes results in not knowing who your friends are. My recent experience of developing a new JNC qualifying course at FD level was not one of employers imposing a curriculum on Newman College, nor was it that the National Youth Agency were trying to impose too close a link to the admittedly too functional National Occupational Standards, nor are local employers trying to micro manage the new course and its development. Rather it has been a struggle to get busy local Youth Service managers to be involved at a developmental level, and in Programme committees. The problems, limited though they were, were rather with internal Newman politics and the ever growing power of 'Quality Assurance' people in HE. As stated above there is inevitably a tension with the field, and particularly employers, around qualifying courses but it still seems possible to live

with that tension and work constructively to try to build a better Youth Service. It is not as if Youth Service managers are in unanimous agreement about the way forward and wish to impose this on qualifying courses even though the government, and their allies in the Sector Skill Councils, might want that to happen. Rather the Youth Service is under considerable strain in the moves to Children's (and Young People's) Services following *Every Child Matters* and is often looking for ways to preserve an educational basis for youth work.

In this the qualifying courses can be important allies because it is here, compromised though it is, that there remains a clear commitment to maintaining and developing professional youth and community work. The articles in this issue demonstrate that lecturers are continuing to think about how to keep true to educational principles but also respond to changing fields. The article by Catherine Forde and Michael O hAodain about the growth of the Cork University course in Southern Ireland demonstrates the tensions with a field moving to employ qualified professionals. In England Susan Cooper is trying to find ways to hold onto the exploration of values, and sees the main threat to this as coming from within the changing nature of HE. Yvonne McNamara, Mike Lawley and John Towler write on the importance of supervision both within qualifying courses and for workers in the field. Supervision is an area which characterised the early professional development of youth work but has recently gone into decline as too managerialist views have been promoted (noticeably the word supervision did not appear in fpm management courses). Carol Packham's article on the relationship to volunteers is clearly relevant to the field and tries to redress the balance in qualifying courses which have tended to underplay the importance of volunteering in youth and community work.

In analysing the history of youth and community work with our students it is important to acknowledge that in addition to the top down influences from the 'benevolent philanthropists' in the voluntary sector and the State in more recent years there is a bottom up influence from communities, young people, and workers in the development and implementation of policy. In the case of youth and community work qualifying courses it is still possible to challenge the implementation of policies, whether these are in the Youth Service or HE, and it is much more likely to be effective if we as lecturers in HE try to do this in partnership with our local Youth Services. Whilst this will not be easy we can be reassured that attempts to resolve the tensions involved in youth work, such as the ill fated Connexions Service, can now be seen as doomed because of their failure to recognise the inherent nature of the tensions. As with our students we must be encouraged to work within the tensions and contradictions to find a way to both develop critical educational thinking and maintain the profession of youth and community work.

There is a significant gap in the content of the articles in this journal, and this relates to an extended discussion of the history and role of the Training Agencies Group (TAG). This group represents the interests of Community and Youth Work lecturers based in HE and teaching on JNC qualifying courses. The origins of this group go back to the early 1970s when the two year full time courses were being developed following the end of the one year National College course at Leicester. When the history of this group is written there will need to be a critical analysis of its role in relation to other groups such as Local Authority and Voluntary Sector Employers and Youth Service Officers, Unions, national bodies such as the National Youth Agency, and the short lived CETYCW (Council for Education and Training

in Youth and Community Work). A continuing dilemma for this group has been the extent to which the courses are training for the Youth Service (as the title TAG suggests) or whether they are a group of educationalists with much broader interests. My position is that this tension is irresolvable but that TAG, both locally and nationally, must continue to engage with the Youth Service, particularly at this time when it is being incorporated into Children's (and Young People's) Services. The future of the JNC qualification and the profession of Youth and Community work may well be influenced by this dialogue and the attempt to recognise common interests. To take one example; the valuable work that is currently being done by TAG towards Subject Benchmarks, to ensure that academically this area is recognised, needs the support of other interest groups within the Youth and Community Work field.

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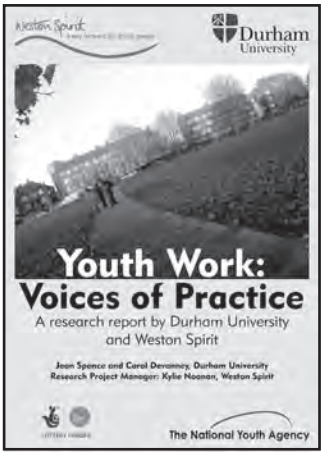

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Practices, policies and professionals: emerging discourses of expertise in English youth work, 1939-1951

Simon Bradford

This article examines the development of professional training for youth leaders (now youth workers) in England and Wales from 1939 until 1951. The article identifies the state's construction of young people as a problematic social category at a time of national crisis, its mobilisation of youth work as part of the war effort and a growing conviction that expert (eventually professional) intervention in young people's leisure time would support effective transition to adult citizenship. The Board of Education (BoE) supported, sometimes tacitly, the development of courses for youth leaders in some universities and voluntary organisations. By 1942, full-time courses of training recognised by the Board under Circular 1598 existed at five English Universities and University Colleges and one voluntary organisation. The article explores the policy-making behind these developments.

Keywords: youth work, war, professional training, professionalisation, policy

In 2010 an honours degree will become the minimum level of study for students qualifying as professional youth workers in England. This signifies a dramatic change since the youth service's inception in 1939 when no formally recognised qualification existed for youth work. This article explores policy-making in the professional training of youth leaders in the youth service in England between 1939 and 1951, a period framed by Circular 1486 and the Fletcher Report (Board of Education, 1939; Ministry of Education, 1951). This episode was characterised by vigorous policy-making about youth service prior to a longer period – the 1950s – in which the service became quite marginal in debates about education.

The article identifies the construction of young people as a problematic social category at a time of national crisis, the mobilisation of youth work as part of the war effort and an ambivalent acknowledgement that *expert* (eventually professional) intervention in young people's leisure time would support disciplined transition to adult citizenship. The Board of Education (BoE) tacitly supported the development of University courses for youth leaders and by 1942, full-time emergency training was established at five English Universities and University Colleges. The Board's position in this reflected the British state's historical reluctance to take an openly leading role in education, partially consistent with the ideology that in free societies the function and scope of state activity should be minimal (Nozick, 1974:26). However, twentieth century policy-making in English education held in tension the peculiarly English tradition of voluntarism (characterised by accretion, an emphasis on local discretion and an acceptance of the role of the church and other philanthropic actors) with the almost relentless (but invariably occluded) centralisation of education through the bureaucratic structures of the Board and Ministry of Education (Simon, 1974: 313-314). Policy-making in the wartime youth service reflected this.

Wartime youth work

Prior to 1939, central government – *state* – policy on youth enabled support to be given to a range of mainly voluntary organisations that undertook leisure time educational work with young people (the 1937 Physical Training and Recreation Act permitted local authorities to provide grant aid, staffing, equipment or facilities to youth organisations, for example). The state is regarded here as an ensemble of institutions, agents and practices dispersed across social space and broadly concerned with managing population in the accomplishment of various objectives such as welfare, education or health. The processes involved here are best understood in terms of *government* (Miller, 1987:13) in which various institutional arrangements, like the partnerships and networks that are so familiar in New Labour Britain, are established to achieve these objectives. It is sometimes assumed that such partnership modes of government are a contemporary phenomenon (Newman, 2005:8). This is not so and the war years demonstrate the complexity of arrangements (indeed, partnership discourse dominated much of the agenda at the time) that were established to govern young people through the encouragement of youth work interventions.

Under Circular 1486, the 'Service of Youth' (Board of Education, 1939) was a 'full partnership in a common enterprise' designed to consolidate an existing network of local youth organisations working with young people in their leisure time. Partnership took the form of a National Youth Committee (located in the BoE) and local Youth Committees situated in local authorities. This arrangement retained the historical model of the local (through which local authorities and voluntary bodies provided legitimacy to the project of government) predominating in policy and practice, with central government providing 'guidance and leadership... throughout the country'. The extent to which youth organisations had an identity as a service or constituted a 'movement', as Circular 1486 described them, should not be over-estimated. Youth clubs 'as a whole had little binding code in common... [but] grew out of the needs of boys and girls in some corner of England, or... the loving devotion of a man or woman' (Edwards-Rees, 1943:16). The voluntary sector had no a priori existence, and only became an object of policy interest when concerns arose about the capacity of the state to provide for welfare. Ling argues that this occurred specifically in the 1970s (2000:90), but similar anxieties about the state's capacity to deliver services are demonstrated in the war years. Both welfare and warfare are important in understanding policy at this time (Hinton, 1998: 275) and the state encouraged existing voluntary youth organisations to contribute to a 'maximum national effort'[1] during the war years.

The new Service had three main purposes that built on youth organisations' earlier objectives and which contributed to an institutional identity. *First*, it had a crime diversion function. Youth crime had been rising steadily since the 1920s (Board of Education and Home Office, 1941: 3) and three explanations were offered for this: war disturbance, unregulated leisure and family breakdown. These offered grounds on which youth work intervention and growth were justified.

Second, the Service aimed to improve young people's morale, and their mental and physical condition through organised leisure opportunities. Physical fitness was not simply a private matter. The fit body, defined and redefined in terms of physique, sexuality, productivity, fighting capacity and compliance was a commodity to be mobilised as 'duty... an act of

service to the country' (Board of Education, 1940, paragraph 8). Acute anxieties, in the form of moral panic (Cohen, 1973:1), also arose over young women's alleged promiscuity and the spread of sexually transmitted infections (Hall, 2001: 131). For one commentator, 'picturegoing and dancing' were particularly hazardous as ' the sex instinct is being over-stimulated at precisely the age when this should be avoided....it is folly to allow thousands of adolescents to waste such a large proportion of their energies on these pursuits' (Jephcott, 1942: 125). Leisure was, therefore, a space in which pleasure should be carefully managed by youth leaders for individual and collective good.

Third, the Service undertook informal citizenship education by helping young people to engage in war-specific service to their communities. This resonated with underlying liberal democratic principles acknowledging individual responsibility in contributing to the civic order. Service had particular importance in wartime and the youth service aimed at institutionalising mutuality: 'service *by* youth as well as service for youth' (Board of Education and Home Office, 1941:8). However, tensions existed in this aspect of its work. The dominant view in the BoE was that the Service was fundamentally educational but questions arose (from Churchill amongst others) about whether young people's participation in youth groups should be made compulsory. A.E. Morgan (who had been Vice-Principal of Hull University) had argued in 1939 that 'unless we have the courage to compel, the river of freedom will dribble away into the sands of ineffectiveness' (Morgan, 1939: 198). In 1941 Ernest Bevin, the Minister of Labour, asserted 'We do not want all the people drawn into one machine. But we cannot allow the youth of this country to run wild'[2]. Bevin's position crystallises a paradox of democracy (and an enduring problem for youth work) that articulates the central motif of freedom whilst acknowledging the ever-present risk of transgression. The task of the youth service was to mediate indiscipline to ensure the formation of *responsible* citizens.

The politics of youth work provision were complex. Positioned between the War Office's commitment to military pre-service training (principally through the Cadet organisations) and its own vision of a liberal education, the BoE took a pragmatic stance. To secure a future the Service would have to contribute meaningfully to the war effort. The Board cleverly presented local youth organisations undertaking 'jobs of war service' ('Youth Service Squads' and 'Corps') as central to the youth service's identity and no attempt was made to prescribe these groups. Rather, they reflected a voluntaristic ethos, a 'spontaneous local development, inspired in part by local sentiment and adapted to local needs'. Their longer-term importance in providing recreational activities that would make them a 'continuing element of the Youth Service when the present strong incentive of national service in war-time is removed' (Board of Education, 1941:1) was emphasised. The Service subsequently became linked to a centralised system of compulsory youth registration, organised jointly by the BoE and the Ministry of Labour and National Service and which sought to formalise the deployment of young people in war service (Board of Education, 1941a, 1942, 1942c). After the war, A.E. Miles-Davies (a Principal in the BoE and intimately involved in the youth service) claimed 'we were all playing at soldiers and rather liked the role ... I made pretty good use of registration as a means of airing the need, eg. for part-time continued education for all' (Miles-Davies, 1953). All 16-18 year olds were *compulsorily* interviewed, boys in late 1941 and girls in 1942, with the characteristically liberal aim of *encouraging* them to take up non-compulsory leisure activities.

Registration was a form of auditing young people both as national asset and social problem. If carefully deployed, youthful energy, commitment and enthusiasm were resources with potential in 'war service' but if wasted, young people could clearly be a source of disorder. Registration also provided the opportunity for systematic intervention in working class lifestyles so that the 'the apparent aimlessness of the way in which young people spend their leisure' (Board of Education and Scottish Education Department, 1943:16) could be replaced by supervised and approved forms of recreation. Registration raised the important question of training for youth service leaders. S.H.Wood, Principal Assistant Secretary in the BoE, warned, ' we are... pressing (youth) to join services which are inadequately equipped with leaders and at the same time are doing nothing about the equipment of leaders' (Wood, 1942).

Training the leaders

The Service of Youth was charged with the skilled organisation of leisure -free time – activities. In the early war years (as now) the idea that freedom could not be left to the individual was persuasive; indeed, freedom is not 'equated with anarchy, but with a kind of well-regulated and '"responsibilised' liberty" (Barry, et al, 1996:8). The state's definition of youth need (in Circular 1486 and subsequently) and its recognition of youth work's utility in managing young people indicated a view that youth work required leaders with something more than personality, flair and virtue that had characterised pre-war youth leadership although these remained important. This was a time in which collectivist discourse was already defining 'the problems needing to be tackled and the range of solutions which can be seriously contemplated' (Perkin, 1989:343). Collective planning, the modernisation and expansion of social services (health, education, housing and social security through Beveridge, for example) and their professionalisation achieved some popular support. Youth work was a modest, but important, element of the *expert* resolution of wartime social problems and from the early war years an institutional culture and organisational base grew and facilitated the development of professional training for youth leaders. This had four principal elements.

1. Pressure from existing voluntary organisations

Complex arrangements for training 'club leaders' had long existed in the voluntary youth organisations and formed a base on which state-supported initiatives could stand. During the 1920s and 1930s the idea had grown that youth work required more than the 'personality' and 'zeal, tact and energy' that had sustained it in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Stanley, 1890: 269; Russell and Rigby, 1908: 690). The Church of England, for example, had established courses for leaders that their advocates considered equivalent to 'honours standard at the University.' Their curricula departed from the earlier view that knowledge situated in specific class and gender identities (embodied in cultural capital emphasising duty and service) was adequate to undertake youth leadership. These courses emphasised the importance of *technocratic and universal* knowledge informed by the social sciences ('psychology', 'elementary social administration' and 'club management') and structured by pedagogy, assessment systems and certification (Inter-Diocesan Council for Women's Work, 1925). In 1933, the Church recommended acceptance of the National Council of Girls Clubs' (NCGC) 'Interdenominational Club Leadership Certificate' as denoting

qualified status providing (in NCGC's terms) it 'maintains the standards of our existing syllabus both on the religious and technical side' (Inter-Diocesan Council for Women's Church Work, 1933). New understandings and definitions of youth need encouraged the NCGC to add 'qualifications' to 'genius' through formal training courses (National Council of Girls Clubs, 1934: 8). Courses (full and part-time) were located in major cities in England and Scotland and had four variants, three of which applied to the small number of 'career' leaders. The number of qualified leaders emerging from the NCGC courses between 1935 and 1940 was small, 13 certificates awarded in 1936-1937 and 20 in 1937-1938. Despite this the NCGC initiative re-imagined youth leaders who, as well as having 'birthright', natural 'genius' and special 'gifts', were able to deploy understanding 'of the problems with which they are likely to have to deal' (National Council of Girls Clubs, 1934: 8) derived from theorisation and reflection on supervised practice.

As well as the NCGC, other voluntary organisations ran leader training at this time. The YMCA, for example, had a history of offering courses for General Secretaries of local YMCA groups. Westhill College organised short courses for 'Christian Youth Leadership' during the war and the YWCA ran a full-time course for leaders (Carnegie UK Trust, 1943: 17; Kuenstler, 1951: 14). However, the capacity of voluntary youth organisations to establish courses and train leaders was limited and they were unable to meet the demand for trained personnel created through their own definitions of youth leadership as an increasingly expert practice. The South Wales Federation of Boys Clubs (SWFBC), for example, wrote to Kenneth Lindsay (Parliamentary Secretary, Board of Education and author of Circular 1486) in November 1939 (there were then 13 full-time leaders in Wales) arguing that another 40 clubs required 'expert leaders' and that club work 'must at least, to a substantial extent, be placed in the hands of those who are qualified'(SWFBC, 1939:6). By 1941 NCGC was arguing for more trained leaders, the shortage of which resulted 'in the appointment of those, who though possessing the right personality, are yet unqualified and untrained; this method of recruitment to a highly skilled profession is only tolerable in an emergency' (NCGC, 1941:14). Annual Reports from NCGC (from 1941, the National Association of Girls Clubs and from 1944 the National Association of Girls Clubs and Mixed Clubs) suggest a continuous push for 'professional' training. From 1939 NCGC courses (and later, following Circular 1598, courses offered by the YMCA and other voluntary organisations) were funded by the Board and from 1940 by the Carnegie UK Trust, also supportive of the professionalisation of youth work.

2. Embryonic 'professional associations' and discourses of 'education'

Small numbers of career leaders in the NCGC formed the Club Leaders Association in 1938 (Lady Astor became the Association's president in 1939) and attempted to 'raise the status of club leadership and to encourage the employment of fully trained leaders at adequate salaries' (Potts, 1961:1). But by 1941, the National Union of Teachers sought to establish youth leadership as a legitimate part of the teacher's role, arguing that the youth service 'cannot be included in the province of education without teachers having special and specific relation to it' (National Union of Teachers, 1941:18). Acknowledging the 'major importance' of training, NUT claimed authority over this particular territory of work by defining it as essentially educational (and therefore the province of teachers) although youth leadership was defined by others as part of a broad corpus of social work. The difference between education and social work was sometimes expressed in terms of

a distinction between group work (educational because of its setting in schools or leisure spaces) and case work (focusing often on individual, economic, need), understood as the province of social workers (eg. Younghusband, 1949:2). This indicates the instability of occupational identities in the absence of clear routes to recognised qualification. However, the NUT embodied an organisational capacity and authority – an occupational power – that had not been achieved by related occupations. It was able to make a convincing case for colonising this particular territory by defining the needs of those working in it and its broader significance within education (indeed, until 1988 the youth workers' trade union was a central association of NUT and maintained a partnership with NUT until 2005). This dominant educational discourse (originally confirmed by Section 17 of the 1918 Fisher Act) was reflected in subsequent government reports that envisaged youth work maintaining contact with young people after they had left school and was predicated on the idea of continuing education to be realised in the County Colleges (outlined in the 1944 Education Act). Post-war compulsory continuing education was not established for financial reasons and because technical education assumed priority (Tinkler, 2001:93), despite young people being defined as 'young learners' as well as 'young earners' (Board of Education, 1941c: 18).

3.The involvement of the universities

In 1940, three Universities – Homerton College Cambridge, Durham and Liverpool – (Board of Education, 1941b) expressed interest to the BoE in incorporating training for youth leaders as part of the professional training of related workers (training in social work had been situated in universities since the early part of the twentieth century). Liverpool University's Professor T. Simey wrote to Kenneth Lindsay on behalf of a conference sponsored by the Social Science Department at the University. The conference (attended by members of the University and voluntary youth organisations) discussed modifying existing social work training to include curricula relevant to youth work. Simey's letter sought support from the Board for the development of youth leader training and suggested integrating training of social workers, teachers and 'club leaders', agreement to the use of student grants for undertaking training in 'club work' and the official recognition of this work for pension purposes (Simey, 1940). The conference report shows an interest in gaining recognition of qualifying training for youth leadership noting that the Certificate in Social Science, suitably modified, could provide the basis for 'specialised training'.

A year later, the BoE convened a conference on youth leader training at Queens College Oxford, thus beginning a process to consolidate a formal definition of youth work and identifying its implications for training youth leaders. It was attended by senior representatives of a number of English universities, members of the National Voluntary Youth Organisations, Directors of County Education Services, HMI and representatives of the Board[3]. The conference acknowledged that youth work's effectiveness 'depended on the quality of the people taken into the work, on their training and on the standards which were developed in the profession' (Board of Education, 1941b). Having convened the conference, a subsequent memorandum from S.H. Wood to the Secretary of the BoE in May 1941 suggests reluctance to take any responsibility for professional training, although accepting the 'ultimate' necessity of regulatory policy for youth leaders similar to that applying to teachers. Wood suggested that the Board might support the development of some 'experimental courses of training' in order to 'learn what to avoid' (Wood, 1941) but

there is little evidence in the literature of strong direct support from the Board.

The Oxford Conference established the Informal Youth Training Committee (IYTC), consisting mainly of senior academics including Sir Fred Clarke, and Eileen Younghusband of the NCGC, which reported in December 1941 that the 'training of workers in this field is to be considered... as the training of workers for service in an integral part of the education and social work systems of this country' (IYTC, 1941: 1). It proposed that youth leaders should share some of the training received by social workers and teachers because these occupations shared a central core of competence (this resonates with the current core skills agenda, Department for Education and Skills, 2005) and to facilitate occupational transfer. This was defined as both theory and practice in a minimum one year full-time course for students with existing qualifications (social science graduates, for example) and three years for a 'full course.' Theory included the 'mental and physical characteristics of adolescents,' sex education, 'principles and processes of instruction,' club management, religious studies, 'social philosophy,' 'social and educational administration' and 'social and industrial conditions.' Up to half of the course was to be made up of assessed practice co-ordinated by a personal tutor. This broad model shaped the twenty-two full-time one-year so-called 'emergency' courses that ran between 1942 and 1948 and which were initially recognised under Circular 1598 (Board of Education, 1942b). These were located in two Departments of Education and one Social Science Department at three universities (Bristol, Durham and Swansea) and in two university colleges (University College Nottingham and Kings College Newcastle), with 302 students (158 men and 144 women) participating in this period (Kuenstler, 1951: 24). Circular 1598 recognised a full-time one year course run by the YWCA and part-time courses that were run at Durham University, Liverpool University and by NCGC (Evans, 1965:194).

Evaluation reports of the early courses at Bristol and the part time courses at Liverpool and the NCGC suggest serious problems. Criticisms were made of the knowledge base, the relation between theory and practice, the quality of work placements, the optimum age for entrants and the qualification acquired by students (University of Bristol, 1943:20; Board of Education, 1943). One later inspection report of the 1598 courses identified 'overcrowded' curricula, courses doing little to 'provide a background of general culture and of personal interests,' students having 'scantiness' of reading and there being a 'scarcity and inadequacy' of placement locations. Students' competence was also criticised, some 'can only be said to be fit to enter the youth service because the times have forced emergency measures on us' (Board of Education, 1945:7). There is little suggestion that these courses reflected anything like the professional status that had been intended for them and substantial numbers of their graduates either did not go into youth work on graduation or did not remain in it for long. Some students used their training to enter related occupations, reflecting limited opportunities in youth leadership but mobility in entering other sectors of the labour market (Kuenstler, 1951: 29-30).

There are three points here. *First*, university involvement in training confers some status on an occupation by supporting claims to a formal knowledge base. This also signals closure through which occupational group members attempt to separate themselves from the laity, so characteristic of professionalisation. As such, the universities were significant actors in the elevation of *professional* training for youth work. *Second*, the ambivalent and diffused approach (particularly by the BoE) to policy-making that is evident in relation to training is

typical of English education's preference for distantiated government (almost 'government without governing') and the typical deferral of initiatives to voluntary and, nominally, independent bodies. *Third*, the combination of formal knowledge (largely based on the social sciences) and supervised and assessed practice that shaped these courses formed a dominant model of professional education for youth work.

4. Official policy on youth leader professionalism

Between 1944 and 1951 three documents on professional training for youth work emerged (Board of Education, 1944; Ministry of Education, 1949; Ministry of Education 1951: the McNair, Jackson and Fletcher Reports respectively) and have a dual significance. They acknowledged youth leadership as a career (that is, something more than the predominantly voluntary activity it had been) and youth leaders as professionals required to undertake organised training to acquire a recognised qualification. A Ministry circular issued in September 1945 confirmed that a one year university-based course of training (appropriately modifying the courses run under Circular 1598) would lead to graduates being 'regarded as suitably qualified to take up full-time work as leaders in the Youth Service' (Ministry of Education, 1945:2). This appears to be the state's earliest acknowledgement of *qualified* status for youth leaders yet in the absence of recognised conditions of service it is difficult to know how significant this was in practice.

These three reports reflected expanding state intervention (through the BoE and subsequently the Ministry of Education) in the professional organisation and work of youth leaders. The documents have similarities, and reflect perspectives on training for youth leadership that had emerged in the 1920s. *First*, they represent youth work as a profession requiring improved conditions of service, training based on careful selection and the assessment of an underlying body of knowledge and skill that constitute the base of the profession. The three reports were written in the broader context of teacher recruitment, and youth leaders were viewed as extending the work of teachers and contributing to continuing education (defined in the 1944 Education Act) for young people who had left compulsory schooling. *Second* the three reports delineated models of training in which theory and practice are separated in a technocratic way, the former being largely drawn from the social sciences (eg. psychology, social administration, political studies). Practice was increasingly defined as a reflective process that should engage students in the construction of a professional identity through continuous work on the self (a view probably influenced by Eileen Younghusband of the National Association of Girls' Clubs' who sat on the McNair Committee). As McNair put it, 'disciplined reflection may result in the discovery by each individual of a philosophy of life or, at any rate, of certain standards of thought and conduct. A well-informed philosophy of life... is most necessary to the youth leader' and 'religion, politics and sex' were identified for particular attention (Board of Education, 1944:101). This 'reflective practice' has since become the dominant discourse in professional training. *Third*, (and unlike the Church, the NCGC, and the YMCA work in the 1920s, 1930s and later) neither McNair nor Jackson understood youth work as a permanent career, although Fletcher (perhaps as an academic at the University of Bristol and responsible for the Bristol course established under Circular 1598) suggested it might be so. Youth leadership was seen by McNair and Jackson as beginning at twenty three, lasting for fifteen to twenty years and being a career interlude for teachers (the main source of recruitment). Though some of the reports' recommendations were influential in the longer term (eg. the

form and content of youth leader training and youth leaders' conditions of service), by 1953 the only surviving university-based course of professional training for youth leaders was at University College Swansea.

Limits to policy: 'constraining professionalisation'

Between 1939 and 1945 the interests of the universities, the voluntary youth organisations, youth leaders and the state partially intersected to create conditions in which professional training for youth leadership developed. Anxiety about young people supported a tacit acknowledgement of organised youth work's utility in wartime and its potential longer-term value as an educational practice in post-war reconstruction. Two principal factors constrained policy outcomes during the war years.

1. The 'service of youth': a precarious partnership?

The 1939 partnership embodied ideological tensions. Partnership (then as now) was shorthand for arrangements that attempted to accommodate difference by forming consensus on philosophy, aims and practices. A more or less pragmatic norm of accommodation seems to have prevailed although Circular 1486 acknowledged difference between state and voluntary youth organisation interests: the ' full partnership' of local authorities and voluntary bodies should not lead to 'any loss of prestige or individuality on either side' (Board of Education, 1939). The evocation of partnership implicitly acknowledged that the capacity necessary for extending and maintaining the government of young people was highly dispersed. The state was dependent on a range of actors and practices (for knowledge, skill, organisation, etc.) in the work of governing youth, yet for the voluntary organisations anxieties about independence, incorporation and co-option recurred. For example, though the idea of the professional youth leader was persuasive, the NCGC had asserted in 1938 that:

> *It is not our aim to replace the voluntary helper by the professional... but we do see the urgent need to have a body of well trained, understanding leaders, whether voluntary or professional, to undertake the responsibility of organising and running clubs* (National Council of Girls Clubs, 1938:11).

The distinction between discourses of professionalism and voluntarism emerges time and again in this literature. It is refracted in distinctions made between the personality of the youth leader and forms of *professional* knowledge deriving from the academy (crystallised in discourses of psychology or social administration, for example). As one contributor to the 1940 Liverpool conference referred to earlier (interestingly, a member of the University's staff) pointed out 'the right personality was a *sine qua non*... training in itself could do little where this was lacking' (University of Liverpool, 1940:5). A participant in the 1941 Oxford conference similarly warned of 'the possible loss of inspiration or sense of vocation which the professionalisation of adolescent education might entail' (Board of Education, 1941b). However, personality was also the solvent of these anxieties. The McNair Committee in 1944 suggested that fears about professionalisation ' will be falsified if the quality of men and women recruited to the profession is sufficiently high to maintain the best of its traditions' (Board of Education, 1944: 94).

There was unease about how state intervention in youth work might compromise the 'vocation' – the calling – that characterised voluntary provision but the tenacious voluntarism that has marked public provision (particularly education) in England (King, 1997:386) was evident. For the voluntary organisations, professionalisation signalled the disruption of an important aspect of civil society: a space for individual investment (perhaps as duty or service) and social solidarity. State professionalism, it was implied, would not preserve this. Liberal notions of democracy (championing a strong civic domain) had been contrasted with a statist Prussian Germany since the First War and were evident throughout the Second War (Schairer, 1941:110; Donald, 1992: 71). A narrative of liberalism and voluntarism underpins an idealised and mythical English identity, an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991: 6). This narrative is central to a conception of citizenship that embraces the active contribution of the ordinary man or woman and is embodied in the identity of the volunteer. The narrative traces out the cultivated dispositions sought by youth work intervention: compassion, good sense, service and dedication. The fear of state interference (and the dissipation of the voluntary spirit, despite the state being crucial in the constitution of youth as an object of government) contrasts with a simultaneous recognition of the advantages of professionalisation. Ironically, the state's constitution of youth as a target for intervention created needs and demands that it was unable to satisfy. Despite the fears of the voluntary organisations increased opportunities for their work emerged in this process.

2. Youth leadership: an ambiguous profession

Professions and professional practices are central to the project of government. Indeed, expertise institutionalised in professional form has increased the reach of the state in its capacity to represent social problems in such a way as to make them amenable to governmental practices. As occupational strategy, professionalism has characterised the helping occupations since the war and some aspirant professionals (social workers, health visitors, occupational therapists, and latterly, youth workers) elicited public and political support, so acquiring a mandate to practice within the welfare state. Professionalism is also a power practice, an attempt to achieve closure by producing a commodity whose acquisition and distribution is assiduously monopolised by professionals themselves (Larson, 1977). However, despite their professional aspirations the exclusivity of the youth leaders' knowledge base was limited. This constrained their capacity to consolidate power.

Although the BoE was reluctant to become directly involved in supporting courses of training, the tri-partite relationship that emerged in the war years (the Board, the universities and practitioners) gave political leverage that led to recognition of courses of training for youth leaders under Circular 1598. However, some in the Board were unwilling to see these courses as more than wartime emergency provision to 'provide further knowledge and experience for those already engaged in the Youth Service and some initial form of training for those who intend to take up such work during the present emergency' (Board of Education, 1942b, paragraph 6). They 'will not be regarded by the Board as connoting a full qualification in Youth Service' (Board of Education, 1942:1). Representations of youth leadership as a profession were thus limited at the time.

Two recurrent challenges to the professionalising discourses of youth leadership emerged in the contemporary literature. *First*, was youth leadership really an occupation based on a distinctive expertise indispensable to governing young people? Did it require training of

a specialised kind, especially when its practices seemed so difficult to define? A.E. Miles-Davies summarised the views of the Inspectorate in an internal BoE paper responding to the McNair Report in 1944. There are, he wrote:

> *certain attributes desirable in a youth leader which if one sets out deliberately and self-consciously to achieve them by training produces the wrong kind of chap altogether. The technique of youth leadership* such as it is*, is something that should be given in small doses and by stealth... short courses of technique and experience (for) students... engaged in a university or similar course of general education* (Miles-Davies, 1944: 4, emphasis added).

In an internal memorandum to the Deputy Secretary of the Board less than a year later Miles-Davies wrote:

> *there is likely to be a considerable development of work in this social-cum-educational field. Either the state will do this itself, which would be lamentable, or it must encourage initiative on the part of other organisations... There is no doubt in my mind that a real danger is involved in our widening the social services without at the same time taking steps to ensure a supply of trained social leaders* (Miles-Davies, 1945).

Miles-Davies (reflecting a perspective of voluntarism and the minimal state although also acknowledging its limitations) raised clear questions about the substance of youth work, perhaps mirroring a paradox that has since characterised youth work. This identifies youth work's breadth and flexibility and yet, that very capacity fosters uncertainty about its precise nature and purpose. Its informality and permeable boundaries seem, until very recently at least, to have undermined its capacity to attract recognition as an expert practice with its own distinctive territory of work.

Second, uncertainty existed about whether youth leadership was a temporary career as suggested by McNair but which was later challenged by the Fletcher Committee in 1951 (Board of Education, 1944). The Youth Service Inspectors' Advisory Committee (located in the BoE and reporting immediately after McNair) envisaged that teachers would be the main source of leadership but that leadership might only be a career break (McNair's view was that 15-20 years would be its duration). Training, the Inspectorate argued, should be part of a broader teacher-training or a Social Service Diploma rather than having any distinctive separate identity. Indeed, HMI Jack took the view that 'it would be hazardous to set up a profession of Youth Leader and that other ways should be found.' The inspectors 'were satisfied that a wider and more comprehensive training was needed than training in youth leadership alone' (YSIAC, 1944a and 1944b), a view that departed significantly from McNair's view that a three year course of 'full-time study and practice' was necessary (though not compulsory) for unqualified entrants to youth leadership. In summary, little consensus existed over the war years about what was *really* required for the training of youth workers beyond the view that the right kind of personality and some underlying knowledge were necessary. This matter remained unresolved as the war ended and the immediate importance of managing young people's leisure diminished. It assumed importance again only as mass youth culture emerged in the later 1950s.

Conclusions: policy-making and professional education in youth work

The development of youth work through the war years provides a fascinating example of education policy-making. It is given particular salience as a reference point for developments that will establish professional youth work as a graduate occupation in 2010. The closure sought by leaders in the 1930s and through the war years appears now, some seventy years later, to be closer although the varied degree routes to qualification (foundation as well as traditional degrees, for example) will undoubtedly be reflected in occupational status. Questions of core professional skills and knowledge, occupational transfer and broader issues about the role of professionals in practices of government resonate throughout the twentieth century history of youth work and remain central to current policy agendas.

Education policy-making in England has always been conservative and deeply fissured by class interests. Challenges to an education culture emanating from a powerfully established status quo located in the public schools and elite universities have, characteristically, been 'tackled with all the strong force of habit, underpinned by an educational background and social outlook acquired outside of the national system of education' (Simon, 1974:255). This conservatism is evident in policy-making in youth work, a practice concerned with managing the leisure time activities of principally working class young people but, in the 1940s, largely organised and run by leaders from lower middle class and working class backgrounds themselves (Carnegie UK Trust, 1943: 42-43; Kuenstler, 1951:27). In class terms this meant that youth leadership was a relatively marginal (although significant) occupation that was unlikely to attract major sponsorship by the state. The fact that, historically, many youth leaders had been women is also likely to have diminished the occupation's status. Given this, the extent to which it *has* achieved some professional status is remarkable.

However, the state's interest and intervention in the professional training of youth leaders increased greatly in the war years, largely due to fears of young people's capacity for social disruption. The mechanism adopted for policy-making was the appointment of nominally independent bodies. The Informal Youth Training Committee established in 1941 is an early example of this (the move from the National Youth Committee to a Youth Advisory Council in 1942 reflects a similar reliance on independent expertise), but McNair, Jackson and Fletcher offer a stronger case of the state's capacity to defer policy-making to apparently independent and expert bodies whilst simultaneously orchestrating agendas and outcomes. Interestingly, these three reports recommended that youth leader training should be regulated by the Area Training Organisations (ATOs), signifying an increase in the reach of the Board and Ministry into the work of those actually providing courses and escalating the conservative bureaucracy that surrounded them. Fletcher, for example, recommended a 'standing committee' of the ATO to supervise youth leadership courses and to partially determine recruitment (Ministry of Education, 1951: 11) and is an example of the consolidation of centralised power.

This discussion inevitably draws attention to the nature of policy-making itself. It challenges rationalist views of linear policy-making in which problems are identified, responses formulated, strategies implemented and subsequently evaluated. The policy cycle (Parsons,

1995:77) fails to acknowledge the contested and complex nature of policy-making that is demonstrated in relation to youth leader training in wartime England. In contrast, Kingdon (1995) suggests that 'policy windows' open and close through the articulation of three figures: problems, politics and policies. Some *problems* assume particular force at certain times, creating a sense of policy turbulence that has specific focus in the light of public anxiety or political interest. The Second World War was such a time. Young people were constructed as a social *problem* (eg. in terms of crime, sexuality or poor physical condition) through various *political* practices pursued by the range of interest groups involved: the voluntary bodies, youth leaders and politicians structured the youth work agenda and formed an appeal for policy on professional training for leaders. Yet, policy-making itself was incrementalist, constituted in a complexity of decision-making aimed at change (new courses, for example), the avoidance of change (the BoE resisting defining a formal qualification for youth leadership) and incorporating contradiction between different policy actors (individuals within the Board, AE Miles-Davies, for example, and the collective view of say, the Fletcher Committee). Incrementalism demonstrates the 'complex mixture of rationality and realism, short-term expediency and planned development that determines policy' (Lowe, 1993:49) and which has invariably reflected entrenched rather than radical views.

For youth work, war facilitated the extension of a rudimentary network of initiatives to become a service with a degree of institutional identity. In particular, the registration of young people was central to the state's interest in youth work as a means of governing youth in the wartime management of population. Registration alerted some in the BoE to the necessity for youth leader training. The immediate crisis of war provided justification for the training of leaders but the momentum for youth service development diminished as wartime conditions changed. The politics of the budget in particular (and a political commitment to technical education), the ambiguity of youth work as a professional activity, a reluctance by the state to over-govern as well as the subsequent role of national service as a surrogate youth service constrained expansion of youth work and youth leader training in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Notes

1 House of Commons, Official Report, Seventh Session of the thirty seventh Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, First Volume of Session 1941-1942, London, HMSO, December 2nd, 1024.
2 House of Commons, Official Report, Seventh Session of the thirty seventh Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, First Volume of Session 1941-1942, London, HMSO, December 4th, 1346.
3 The identity of some of those attending the conference (and its prestigious location) gives a sense of the significance given by the Board and the universities to training: Professor Carr-Saunders, Director of the LSE, Professor Fred Clarke, London University Institute of Education and Professor Barnard, University of Reading participated as well as others from University Training Departments and Social Science Departments.

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Board of Education (1942b) *Emergency Courses of Training for Those Engaging in the Youth Service*, Circular 1598, London: HMSO.

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Challenges in the Education and Training of Youth and Community Workers: Experiences from the Republic of Ireland

Michael O hAodain and Catherine Forde

This article provides an overview and analysis of the establishment and development of the B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work), a degree programme offered by the Department of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork (UCC), Republic of Ireland. The programme, which commenced in 1995, provides a JNC-recognised professional qualification to youth and community workers. The article provides an overview of the societal and political context within which the programme was established, explores the ethos and philosophy that inform the degree and discusses course content and delivery. Drawing on primary research conducted by the authors, it analyses the changing characteristics of the student body and discusses graduates' experiences of the programme and their destinations after they complete it. The paper also considers the prospects for the future of the degree in the context of a rapidly changing Irish society, ongoing developments within youth and community work, and the competing demands of professionalisation and a range of interests including the state.

Key words: community and youth work students, University College Cork, JNC qualifications, professionalisation

Context: Youth and Community Work in the Republic of Ireland

Youth work and community development have long histories in Ireland and have historically shared certain features, most particularly an emphasis on voluntary initiative. The origins of youth work in Ireland 'are very far from clear' (Hurley, 1992: 2) but initiatives in the nineteenth century mirrored those in Britain and included the establishment of church-based youth clubs. After independence in 1922 the British influence continued with the establishment of the Catholic Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The government of the Irish Free State displayed an early interest in youth work, principally due to fears concerning 'the decline of moral standards among Irish youth' (ibid:14). There was little significant state involvement until the late 1960s. However, when a special section for physical recreation, sport and youth was established in the Department of Education, a grant scheme for youth organisations was launched, and the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), a coordinating and policy-making body for youth work organisations was formed. These developments coincided with the emergence of large-scale voluntary youth organisations such as the National Youth Federation (now known as Youth Work Ireland) which operates regional youth services throughout the Republic of Ireland.

Until the late 1970s youth work was delivered chiefly by volunteers but the recession and accompanying social problems of the 1980s meant that professionalisation of the work proceeded swiftly. Voluntary youth organisations began to employ full-time youth workers to deliver a range of interventions aimed at responding to the needs of young people experiencing poverty, social exclusion and related difficulties including drug abuse.[1] These developments were accompanied in the 1980s by the establishment of the first postgraduate programmes in youth work and community development in two Irish universities – St. Patrick's College Maynooth and University College Galway.[2] Subsequently other universities and colleges developed undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, some of which deliver youth and community work in an integrated manner while others specialise in youth work or community work.

During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s successive governments published a plethora of policy documents on youth work but none was implemented in full. Jenkinson (1996: 39) explains some of the reasons for this inertia:

> *It certainly reflects a lack of political will to take the needs of young people seriously … The strong tradition and commitment to the principle of volunteerism in Irish youth work has been used conveniently by the state as an excuse not to take responsibility for youth-service provision.*

Since the new millennium there have been unprecedented developments in youth work policy. The appointment in 1997 of the National Youth Work Advisory Committee (NYWAC) by an outgoing administration compelled the succeeding (and present) government to introduce youth work legislation (Lalor, de Róiste and Devlin, 2007, p. 275). The Youth Work Act 2001 provides a statutory basis for and a legal definition of youth work which underlines its educational and developmental nature and emphasises that youth work is primarily delivered by voluntary organisations and based on the voluntary participation of young people. The National Youth Work Development Plan (NYWDP) 2003-2007, which was conceived by NYWAC, has established a framework for the development of youth work provision at both the national and local levels, at which in recent years the state has already been funding a significant number of targeted youth work initiatives in the areas of drug awareness and crime diversion.[3] From the perspective of youth and community work training, the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) which was launched in 2003 and is the equivalent of the British National Occupational Standards seeks to foster progression, recognition of prior learning and easier comparison with awards in other jurisdictions, particularly the UK. A further significant development was the establishment, in 2006, of the North-South Education and Training Standards Committee (NSETS), an all-Ireland body which will regulate and validate professional youth work education and training on the island of Ireland. This body is just one of a number of joint initiatives stemming from the growing *rapprochement* between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Negotiations between NSETS and the equivalent bodies in Britain have 'ensured mutual recognition of endorsed programmes on an 'East-West' basis, thereby enhancing the professional mobility of graduates' (Lalor, de Roiste and Devlin, 2007: 282).

Community development evolved from the communal self-help tradition of rural Ireland through to the establishment of more formalised local voluntary groups including parish

councils and local development associations and, more recently, community councils. State intervention in community development activity is a relatively recent phenomenon but, as with youth work, it has grown considerably in recent years (Forde, 2006). Reasons for this include the influence of European Union initiatives such as the first, second and third Anti-Poverty Programmes and the LEADER Programme, all of which had a presence in Ireland. Harvey (1994) points out that these projects took the concept of co-operation between the state and local groups far beyond anything that these groups had previously experienced. Perhaps the most important reason for growing state involvement in community development is the corporatist approach that has characterised Irish economic policy since 1987 when the first 'national agreement' between the Government, trade unions and employers was instituted. At that time Ireland was undergoing a severe recession with concomitant high levels of unemployment, poverty and emigration. Since 1997 the Irish institutional landscape has been characterised by neo-corporatist arrangements, whereby civil society organisations are included in negotiations leading to national agreements, of which there have been seven to date. At local level there are a range of state-led targeted initiatives aimed at generating socio-economic development in urban and rural areas which have experienced high levels of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. These initiatives, some of which are based on neo-corporatist or 'social partnership' principles, seek to harness community participation and community development approaches to facilitate economic regeneration, reduce unemployment and encourage local self-help. Like youth work, community work has become increasingly professionalised[4] as significant numbers of full-time positions have become available in state-sponsored initiatives and as community workers undertake training courses in third-level colleges and universities.

Recent developments in youth and community work coincide with, and have been influenced by, a time of unprecedented economic expansion and prosperity in Ireland. Since the early 1990s the Irish economy has grown considerably and levels of employment are at an all-time high. There have been substantial societal developments, including urbanisation, immigration and population growth. Approximately 61 per cent of the population of the Republic of Ireland now lives in urban areas (Central Statistics Office, 2006a, 2006b, 2007b). In 2006 non-Irish nationals comprised 9.4 per cent of the population as opposed to 5.8 per cent in 2002 (ibid, 2006b) and this figure is projected to grow to 19 per cent by 2020 (O'Brien and King, 2006). Furthermore, it is estimated that by 2020 the population of the Republic of Ireland, which currently stands at just over 4 million people, will expand to 5.3 million (ibid). Serious social problems which have accompanied or been exacerbated by economic expansion include inequality and poverty, educational disadvantage, homelessness, violent crime and racism. It is within this context that youth and community work is carried out and courses such as the BSocSc (Youth and Community Work) function.

The B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work): Ethos and Values

When the B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work) at UCC was established in 1995 it was the first youth and community work degree at undergraduate level in the Republic of Ireland. Nationally, the only courses that preceded it were the Post-graduate Diploma in Community Work of St. Patrick's College Maynooth and the MA in Community Development of University College Galway and the M.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work)[5] of University

College Cork. The reasons for establishing the programme included recognition of the growth of paid youth and community work and a concomitant awareness that employers in these fields were increasingly looking for workers with relevant qualifications.

From the start the programme adopted a critical ethos or 'worldview' based on social justice principles. Despite a diversity of backgrounds, all members of the course team share a strong commitment to these values. The core team is made up of three male and three female members of staff. Of the six team members, two were previously employed as community workers and two as youth workers, while the remaining two members were a community garda (policeman) and a teacher. One staff member is employed on a part-time basis as a local manager for a neighbourhood youth development project while other members maintain a number of voluntary youth and community work commitments. These commitments include board membership of a centre for older people and of a community arts project, membership of a local community council and activism in the anti-globalisation, anti-war and pro-choice movements.

A commitment to integrated youth and community work training has been a hallmark of the programme since its establishment and this commitment remains strong despite the emergence in other institutions of courses in youth work or community development. The course team and sponsors adhere to the view that youth work and community development are intrinsically linked rather than separate entities. According to this viewpoint community development is 'the primary framework for professional youth work practice' and practice is informed by 'community development practice values, such as empowerment, participation, advocacy or social action' (Corney, 2004: 521). This perspective largely corresponds with traditional youth and community work practice in Ireland, although the development in recent years of state-sponsored targeted and specialised youth and community work interventions has already begun to re-shape practice in order to meet the imperatives of state and market (Kearney, 2007; Bowden, 2006; see also Harland and Morgan, 2006 for analysis in the Northern Ireland context).

The programme has developed and maintained strong links with the youth and community work field. It has three co-sponsors – the Department of Applied Social Studies, the Centre for Adult Continuing Education in UCC and Youth Work Ireland. In 1994 an employee of Youth Work Ireland was seconded to UCC for one year to consult on and develop the course document which was then approved by the university. In 1995 professional validation was obtained from the English National Youth Agency (NYA) which will continue to accredit the programme until NSETS takes over this role in 2008. The programme enjoys a good relationship with youth and community work organisations which supply representatives for the Practice Assessment Boards (PABs) and interview panels for recruitment and provide students with a range of placement opportunities. In accordance with an NYA requirement the course team is establishing an employers' advisory panel that will advise on matters relating to placements. While this is a positive development because it will hopefully ensure the strengthening of existing relations with the field and an ongoing flow of good quality placements, the course team is keen to maintain the relative autonomy that it enjoys and to preserve the integrity of programme values against the vagaries of youth and community work funding and the jobs market.

The programme has been primarily aimed at youth and community work activists who come from communities that experience socio-economic disadvantage and marginalisation. It also offers places to workers, whether paid or voluntary, who have demonstrated a commitment to working in solidarity with groups and communities that experience social exclusion. Given these prerequisites, the programme is committed to recruiting exclusively mature students of at least 23 years of age. In order to widen access and in keeping with the provisions of the National Framework of Qualifications (2003), the course team has been investigating the possibility of recognising the prior learning of graduates of the part-time diploma in youth and community work of the Centre for Adult Continuing Education in UCC. Options include exempting all diploma graduates from one or two first year modules or enabling exceptional graduates to enter the degree in second year.

To date the programme has had 12 intakes comprising a total of 255 students. Ten of these cycles were based on the UCC campus in Cork while the remaining two were delivered on an outreach basis in counties Carlow and Wexford. The following sections explore course content and mode of delivery and the changing characteristics of the student body.

Course Content and Delivery

The B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work) is a full-time programme which is currently just offered in one venue, on campus at UCC. It is taught over three years and comprises 18 self-contained modules and three practice placements (see Table 1). Each year consists of six taught modules, associated tutorial support and a practice placement. The programme is composed of a mix of theoretical and practice-based elements. As the course is a bachelor of social science, its principal theoretical building blocks are social policy, sociology and research methods. The social policy and research material is delivered across the three years while the principal sociological material is delivered in the first two years. The youth and community work elements of the programme are delivered through modules that combine theoretical and practical dimensions and that seek to build students' knowledge, skills and professional identities throughout their time in college.

Table 1: Course Content

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Introduction to Youth and Community Work Social Analysis 1 Research Methods 1 Principles and Practice of Youth and Community Work New Technologies Social Policy 1 Placement 1	Communications Working with Individuals Social Analysis 2 Research Methods 2 Working with Groups Social Policy 2 Placement 2	Law and Rights Reflective Practice in Youth and Community Work Research Methods 3 Organisational Development and Change New Approaches to Youth and Community Work Social Policy 3 Placement 3

While the programme has been ostensibly modularised since it began, students are required to complete six taught modules and a practice placement each year. Unlike equivalent programmes in the UK there is no facility whereby they can opt to complete fewer modules per year, based on their own learning needs and personal circumstances. In the authors' view this is a weakness as it places mature students under considerable pressure to fulfil both academic and practice demands while simultaneously maintaining their personal and work commitments. The extent of the pressure on students is underlined by the brevity of the academic year, which begins in late September and finishes at the end of April when the summer examinations commence. While a more flexible way of delivering the programme is desirable, it is governed by the regulations of the National University of Ireland (NUI), the governing body for most Irish universities, and significant changes are therefore difficult to make.

In 2006, following consultation with the students, it was decided to introduce optional modules for third year students in 2007-2008. These options, which are already delivered on a sister course, the Bachelor of Social Science (B.Soc.Sc.) general degree and which will be delivered concurrently with the existing third year curriculum, will give final year youth and community work students the chance to specialise in areas that particularly interest them and allow them to mix with the wider student body. Areas which the optional courses will cover include sexuality and society, disability and society, punishment and welfare, education and opportunity, mental health, planning and sustainable development and child and family policy. Currently most of these subjects receive minimal attention on the B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work) yet their importance for youth and community work practitioners is considerable. Thus, the course team believes that the addition of these modules will enhance the core curriculum of the programme while integrating well with its 'worldview'.

The Student Body: Changing Characteristics

In summer 2003 the authors decided to undertake some research into the characteristics of students who had been through the programme since 1995. The team was interested in establishing demographic details such as gender and age breakdown and the geographical origins of students, destinations of graduates and their attitudes towards the education they received. Some of this information was obtained from an analysis of UCC student records. In 2004 a questionnaire seeking more qualitative information was circulated to 101 graduates and 44 responses were achieved. This research has since been partially updated to 2006 using statistics obtained from UCC student records. This longitudinal information is interesting because it reveals changes in the characteristics of the student body in the decade since the programme began. Some of these changing characteristics, which are discussed in the following sections, reflect the rapid changes in Irish society that were identified earlier in this paper.

Who enrols on the course?

In terms of their youth and community work involvement, students of the B.Soc.Sc. (YCW)

come from a wide range of backgrounds. The course attracts people with varying levels of interest and commitment to the work, including those involved in local communities and issues, in politics at local and national level, in special interest and minority groups working to combat disadvantage, discrimination and oppression, and in environmental, community arts and many other activities.

It is possible to classify those who apply for the course into four main groups. First, there are those already in paid employment in youth and community work who wish to gain new knowledge, skills and insights into their work and obtain a professional qualification. Second, there are those in other paid employment who have decided on a career change. They may have a significant voluntary interest and enrol for the course with the ultimate intention of embarking on a new career. Third, there are those, many of whom are women, who are not in paid employment but who have significant experience of involvement in volunteering and/or community activism. They may be involved in a variety of groups and organisations at a serious and committed level. The course enables them to gain new knowledge, skills and insights into their work and also to become professionally qualified and potentially employable in paid youth and community work. Fourth and finally, there are people, many of whom are very young, who are working voluntarily in youth work and community work. They use the course to obtain a degree and a professional qualification which will enable them to embark on a career in the sector.

Number and age profile of students enrolled 1995–2006

A general overview of the path of the 255 students who have undertaken the course between 1995 and 2006 shows that 167 have graduated successfully while there are currently 60 students on the course across the three years. Of the remainder, over the twelve intakes, 20 students have withdrawn, four have failed and four are presently availing of time out with the intention of resuming. With regard to those who have withdrawn from the course, the majority did so for personal reasons. A small number withdrew within the first few weeks and most withdrew at some point during their first year.

In order to obtain a more detailed insight into the profile of students in each intake Table 2 includes information on their numbers, age and gender. The table reveals that there have been considerable variations in the numbers enrolling each year, with no discernible pattern emerging. The highest number of students in an intake was in 1997 when there were 29 and the lowest was in 2003 when there were 15. (see table 2 overpage)

Table 2: Age range and gender of students enrolling for course each year 1995–2006 inclusive

Age Range: 23 – 29 yrs. 30 – 39 yrs. 40 – 49 yrs. 50 – 59 yrs.

Year of intake	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot	Overall total
1996	3	1	**4**	8	4	**12**	2	2	**4**	0	0	**4**	**20**
1996	7	4	**11**	3	2	**5**	8	1	**9**	3	0	**3**	**28**
1997	5	5	**10**	8	2	**10**	7	1	**8**	1	0	**1**	**29**
1998	4	2	**6**	4	4	**8**	3	3	**6**	0	0	**0**	**20**
1999	4	5	**9**	4	0	**4**	4	–	**4**	0	0	**0**	**17**
2000	3	1	**4**	3	1	**4**	3	1	**4**	5	0	**5**	**17**
2001	5	0	**5**	3	3	**6**	7	–	**7**	0	0	**0**	**18**
2002	1	4	**5**	5	3	**8**	5	3	**8**	1	0	**1**	**22**
2003	4	0	**4**	2	1	**3**	5	1	**6**	2	0	**2**	**15**
2004	7	1	**8**	5	1	**6**	5	2	**7**	2	1	**3**	**24**
2005	9	4	**13**	5	4	**9**	2	1	**3**	1	0	**1**	**26**
2006	7	4	**11**	1	0	**1**	2	4	**6**	1	0	**1**	**19**
Totals	59	31	**90**	51	25	**76**	53	19	**72**	16	1	**17**	**255**

To date students have ranged in age from 23 years to 59 years at the time of enrolment. As Table 2 reveals, over the period 1995–2006, 90 students or 35 per cent of the total number were in the 23–29 age range while 76 or 30 per cent were in the 30–39 age range. A further 72 or 28 per cent were in the 40-49 age range, while 17 or 7 per cent were in the 50–59 age range.

A closer examination of the figures in Table 2 reveals significant shifts in the age range of students coming onto the course over the different intakes. In particular in the 2005 and 2006 intakes there has been an increase in the number of entrants in the 23-29 year age range, which may indicate a developing trend. Prior to 2005 the percentage of students in this age range varied from 20 per cent to 39 per cent of the overall number of students, apart from the year 1999 when they made up over half (53 per cent) of the student body. In 2005 there was a corresponding decline amongst those in the 40-49 age range to just

12 per cent, from an average of 30 per cent in the years 1995-2004, and in 2006 there was a decline among those in the 30–39 age range to 5 per cent from an average of 31 per cent in the years 1995–2004. It will perhaps take some more time to see whether the recent trend towards younger intakes becomes established but, if it does, it may reflect the growing professionalisation of youth and community work as young people in Ireland increasingly see this type of work as a valid career choice. Writing about community youth work training in Northern Ireland, Harland, Harvey, Morgan and McCready (2005: 53) point out that since the 1990s there has been a similar shift towards a younger age profile among entrants to courses, and that the main group of entrants have been 'females (under 21), often joining the course immediately after completing their A Levels.'

Gender breakdown of students

The majority of those enrolling for the course over the twelve intakes (1995–2006) were female. Of the total enrolment of 255 students, 179 (70.2 per cent) have been female and 76 (29.8 per cent) male. The following table sets out the numbers and equivalent percentages of males and females enrolling for the course in each intake.

Table 3: Gender breakdown of students enrolling for the course each year

Year of intake	No. of Females	No. of Males	Total	% female	% male
1995	13	7	20	65	35
1996	21	7	28	75	25
1997	21	8	29	74	26
1998	11	9	20	55	45
1999	12	5	17	61	29
2000	14	3	17	82	18
2001	15	3	18	83	17
2002	12	10	22	55	45
2003	13	2	15	87	13
2004	19	5	24	79	21
2005	17	9	26	65	35
2006	11	8	19	58	42
Totals	179	76	255	70.2	29.8

In a similar fashion to the issue of age, the overall figure for gender breakdown conceals significant fluctuations in the gender balance on various intakes. The balance, always in favour of females, has fluctuated between the highest ratio of female to male of 87 per cent:13 per cent in the 2003 intake, to the lowest ratio of 55 per cent: 45 per cent in the 1998 and 2002 intakes. The other intakes span the range between those extremes with the most recent intake in 2006 showing a ratio of females to males of 58 per cent: 42 per cent. No discernible trend is evident in these figures. Combining age and gender, it is of interest to note that in the 50-59 age group there is an overwhelming preponderance of females to males. Out of a total of 17 students in this age range across all of the intakes, only one has been male (see Table 3). This gender imbalance is not unique to this course. Harland, Harvey, Morgan and McCready (2005) established that in community youth work training in Northern Ireland in the years 2002-2004 female graduating students outnumbered males by a ratio of 3:2. Further, in recent years 'females have outnumbered males by as much as five to one' (ibid: 53) on the University of Ulster full-time Community Youth Work degree.

The gender imbalance evident in this course is not unique in the social sciences. In recent years female students have predominated on social science courses in the Department of Applied Social Studies in UCC. For example, nearly 89 per cent of those who graduated from the Department in 2006 were female. This raises wider issues that it is not possible to address here concerning the under-representation of males in professions such as social care, social work and youth and community work. In a Northern Irish context Harland, Harvey, Morgan and McCready express concern regarding what they describe as an 'emerging gender pattern', whereby females outnumber males in teaching and social work training courses. They contend that this gender imbalance means that 'the balanced workforce necessary for development and responsiveness to needs' is not developing and that employers are concerned about the 'shortage of male applicants for jobs and in particular for detached youth work' (2005: 53-54).

Geographical Origins of Students

While the vast majority of the students on this course come from either Cork County or Cork City a significant minority originate from outside these areas. Most of these are from the Munster region with a few coming from other parts of Ireland. However, over the past number of years there has been a small but significant shift in the geographical and cultural origins of students coming on to the course which, to some extent, mirrors the growing ethnic and cultural diversity of the country as a whole. As Table 4 below indicates, over the past three intakes from 2004 to 2006 students who are non-Irish national in origin have made up a greater proportion of the student body than heretofore. In 2004 these students comprised more than 20 per cent of the intake. The countries represented in the student body over the past number of years have been the UK (4 students), Nigeria (3 students), France (2 students), Romania, South Africa, Uganda and the United States (1 each). It is expected that greater numbers of non-Irish nationals will undertake the course in the coming years.

Table 4: Place of origin of students enrolling on course 2000–2006 inclusive

Year of entry Place of origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Totals
Cork County	8	5	9	7	10	8	5	52
Cork City	6	4	5	5	3	3	4	30
Munster region	2	6	4	2	6	10	8	38
Rest of Ireland	1	3	3	0	0	1	1	8
UK	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	4
Nigeria	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
France	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Romania	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Uganda	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
United States	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Totals	17	18	22	15	24	26	19	141

Having an increasingly heterogeneous student body represents both an opportunity and a challenge for the course team. Students from diverse backgrounds enrich the course by sharing their experiences of other places and cultures. At the same time, diversity has presented the course team with a steep learning curve as linguistic and cultural differences sometimes manifest themselves and are recognised and accommodated.

Student achievement and destinations

Adult learners in general tend to display a strong commitment to learning and many achieve high standards in their course work. The achievements of students on the B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work) over the years tend to bear out this assertion. Over the nine graduating years (1998-2006 incl.) of the course, a total of 167 students have graduated and over 57 per cent of these have achieved second class honours grade 1 (2H1) degrees while 10.2 per cent have achieved first class honours. Table 5 presents details of graduates' final year results for the period from 1998 to 2006 and gives in percentage terms a breakdown of the levels of final year awards for the combined graduating years.

Table 5: Level of awards achieved by graduates 1998-2006 inclusive

Year of graduation	1H	2H1	2H2	3H	Pass	Totals
1998	6	11	2	1	0	20
1999	1	11	9	3	1	25
2000	2	11	8	1	0	22
2001	1	9	4	2	0	16
2002	0	7	6	2	2	17
2003	3	6	5	1	0	15
2004	3	7	7	0	0	17
2005	1	8	9	0	0	18
2006	0	8	7	1	0	16
Totals	17	78	57	11	3	166
Totals as %	10.2	47.0	34.3	6.6	1.8	100

The information in Table 5 indicates that the number of students achieving first class honours degrees has declined since 2005, while the numbers achieving second class honours grade two (2H2) has increased over those two years. While this information is insufficient to indicate the emergence of a trend, staff members are concerned that work and personal pressures are making it increasingly difficult for students to attain degrees that reflect their ability. Undoubtedly these pressures are symptomatic of busy contemporary lifestyles in which individuals juggle a number of roles, including parenting, work and study. Interestingly, issues concerning the implications of external pressures on student performance are emerging as areas of academic research, as exemplified by the forthcoming (2007) SWAP conference 'University Life Uncovered – how are students' experiences outside the classroom impacting their learning?' The delivery of the BSocSc (Youth and Community Work) on a part-time modular basis would potentially alleviate some of these pressures and open the degree to people who could otherwise not undertake it.

Post-Graduation: Opportunities for employment and further study

The primary research conducted in 2004 reveals that, of the graduates in paid employment, 29 (74 per cent) were in full-time employment, 10 (26 per cent) were in part-time

employment and five were not in paid employment. Twenty were employed directly in youth and community work while the remaining 19 were employed in a variety of settings, most of which were connected to the youth and community work sector. Of the five who were not in paid employment, two were engaged in post-graduate studies while the other three were not in paid employment by choice. Of the 19 employed in a variety of settings, four were working with the Travelling community, three were working in the area of disability, two were working in education, two in housing and homelessness and two as social workers (having completed the Master in Social Work degree). The remaining six were in employment as a Community Welfare Officer (CWO), an Education and Welfare Officer, a Probation Officer, a clergyman, a support worker for lesbian and gay groups and a Citizens Information worker. This diversity of destination, the apparent flexibility and adaptability of youth and community work graduates and the acceptance of the value of the qualification by a range of employers and organisations are also noted by Harland, Harvey, Morgan and McCready in the Northern Ireland context. They comment on the increasingly diverse nature of community youth work there and how youth workers' 'skills and expertise are being recognised by non-traditional employers' such as 'the Probation Service, Youth Justice and Health and Social Service Trusts' (2005: 52-53). They do however, express concern that youth work could be in danger of 'losing its distinctiveness or compromising its overall purpose' as it 'drifts into the preserve of other professions' (ibid). Similar concerns could also be expressed in the Republic of Ireland where recent years have brought an increased level of professionalisation, growing state involvement and an increasing involvement in and engagement with other professions concerned with young people.

Ongoing contact with graduates enables the course team to obtain a broader picture of students' destinations once they complete the degree. Graduates are currently working as project workers and managers in the following organisations amongst others: Community Development Projects (CDPs); youth organisations such as Youth Work Ireland, Ogra Chorcai (a Cork-based youth work provider) and Foroige (a national youth work organisation which also supports youth work provision in local communities); regional Health Service Executive (HSE) community work departments; area-based partnership companies; local Drug Task Force Projects; Youth Reach and Neighbourhood Youth Projects (NYPs); Traveller groups; voluntary organisations such as the Simon Community for homeless people, Victim Support which works with victims of crime and the Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA); gay and lesbian groups; voluntary housing associations; public service organisations such as the Education and Welfare Service and the Probation Service; childcare and social care organisations; Community Arts; and organisations for people with disabilities such as the Brothers of Charity, Cheshire Homes and Enable Ireland.

It is important to mention that not all graduates of the course choose to go on to paid employment. A number continue to use their qualification and skills in an exclusively voluntary way. Nonetheless, most students intend to use the degree to obtain paid employment.

Graduates are also well equipped to engage in further study in UCC or in other institutions. Of the 44 graduates who responded in the 2004 research, 22 were involved or had been involved in post-graduate study. At that time 9 had successfully completed their post-graduate studies while 13 were still engaged with these courses. Post-graduate courses

which have been undertaken include the Master of Social Science (M.Soc.Sc.), Master in Social Work (MSW), Master of Arts, PhD (one student is completing a PhD in theology) and postgraduate courses in counselling. It appears that further study is becoming increasingly attractive to students of the course, as one quarter of the current third year group have applied for various postgraduate degrees and diplomas.

Graduate perceptions of the degree

Overall the primary research reveals that graduates have a very positive view of both the programme and what it has yielded for them since graduation. An overwhelming 43 out of 44 respondents indicated that they regarded their time on the course as 'very valuable' (the most favourable choice available) from a personal perspective, while the remaining respondent indicated that it was 'somewhat valuable'. Regarding the value of the course in terms of yielding employment opportunities, 75 per cent of respondents felt that it was 'very valuable', 18 per cent felt it was 'somewhat valuable', 5 per cent chose the non-committal 'neither/nor' response, and just 1 person felt that it was 'not valuable.' Asked to consider the value of the course to them generally, 93 per cent of respondents chose the highest option of 'very valuable' while the remaining 7 per cent selected the second highest option regarding it as being 'somewhat valuable'.

When asked to state what they considered to be the most important personal outcome resulting from their completion of the degree the graduates mentioned a number of outcomes including improved employment prospects and an enhanced ability to make career choices; a growth in self-esteem, self-confidence and a sense of having developed personally; the building of friendships; the acquisition of knowledge; a sense of achievement and satisfaction with self resulting from academic success and obtaining a degree. For many the choice to progress to third level education had not been available to them after school, due to early school leaving or failure to achieve the appropriate standard at second level. The following comments from respondents are representative.

> *The most important outcome for me was achieving... in getting my degree. It was something I never thought I would achieve. The second important thing is my job which I love and could not have had without the degree...*
>
> *The most important outcome for me was on a personal level – the satisfaction of acquiring a degree – to know that I could do it – and the realisation that my learning potential increased dramatically. It was a very rewarding experience, one that has influenced and touched my life ever since.*
>
> *To have had the second chance with education...My self-esteem soared and has stayed up. Being able to understand and relate the theories behind the practice while working with people has enabled me to know my limits, set boundaries and have the confidence to make choices about what I do.*
>
> *Personally this course has helped me develop my character and personality. My greater sense of self has given clear focus to my direction in life and the journey of actualisation.*

My sense of 'what social justice is' and 'what is equality' is central to my life and my work.

The course gave me a second chance where both fellow students and lecturers believed in me and supported me. I gained confidence to apply for jobs and feel confident that I was qualified to apply ... I encourage young people to reach their own potential in the same way that participating in the course helped me achieve my potential.

Enabled me to work full time in an area where I previously worked as a volunteer. I made a large number of friends and contacts through the course...enhanced my personal development – a very worthwhile course.

Respondents made various criticisms of the degree although these were few in number and relatively minor. These criticisms included dissatisfaction with marks received, a lecturer's teaching style or with relationships with lecturers. A small number of graduates indicated that they felt that some of the course content was not particularly relevant to them and to their subsequent employment. As mentioned earlier, the course team is attempting to address this concern by providing optional modules in third year, thereby offering students the opportunity to focus on an area of study in which they have a specific interest.

Conclusion

This paper began by tracing key developments that have taken place in Irish youth and community work since the late nineteenth century. In doing so it identified some of the societal and political changes that have shaped the provision and delivery of youth and community work, particularly over the last twenty years. Unprecedented economic expansion, population growth, urbanisation, immigration and the benefits and problems that accompany these phenomena represent both opportunities and challenges for youth and community work and for education in this field.

Changes in Irish society are already having an impact on programmes such as the B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work). The empirical research conducted for this paper shows that the student body is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of background and culture while there has been a significant increase in the number of younger students undertaking the degree. The research also pinpoints a continuing preponderance of female students on the programme. The issue of gender balance has resonance in the context of community youth work training in Northern Ireland where concern has been expressed regarding the under-representation of males in social professions such as youth and community work (Harland, Harvey, Morgan and McCready, 2005).

Opportunities and challenges arise from increasing state involvement in the initiation and funding of youth and community work activity. Increased funding has led employers to seek workers with professional qualifications and this in turn has generated a significant and increasing demand for third level courses in youth and/or community work. The B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work) emerged as a response to the professionalisation of youth and community work in Ireland and inevitably it contributes to this trend by producing

significant numbers of graduates who go on to take up full-time positions in a wide range of organisations and projects. Recent developments such as the Youth Work Act 2001 and the NYWDP are likely to consolidate professionalisation and consequently bolster the demand for courses that provide a recognised professional qualification. It remains to be seen whether growing state involvement in the provision of youth and community work will begin to have an impact on the education and training of workers in this field.

Finally and fundamentally, the empirical research has established that graduates of the B.Soc.Sc. (Youth and Community Work) view the programme very positively and feel that it has been of significant benefit to them both personally and professionally. Key future tasks will be to meet the challenges and opportunities that arise while continuing to provide students with a beneficial experience and maintaining the core values which have underpinned the programme since its establishment.

Notes

1 According to the NYCI, in 2005 there were approximately 1,000 full-time youth workers in the Republic of Ireland and over 40,000 volunteers.
2 These universities are now known as NUI Maynooth and NUI Galway respectively.
3 Bowden (2006, pp. 21-22) speaks of the 'punitive turn' of the Irish state: the imperative to protect the newly wealthy society engenders 'a hardening attitude to those marginal to, or indeed outside of, production and consumption markets'.
4 Accurate recent figures for the number of full-time community workers in the Republic of Ireland are unavailable but due to the large number of state-funded initiatives it is likely that their numbers comfortably exceed those of youth workers.
5 This course was established in 1994 and discontinued in 2004.

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Thinking Seriously About Youth Work and Work With Young People

A Symposium

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All those presenting papers have agreed to stay for the duration of the conference to help facilitate this process. To encourage an atmosphere of mutual commitment to learning we are asking all participants to make a firm commitment to attend for the whole of both days and are restricting the number of places to a maximum of 60.

Four writers will be offering papers: Priscilla Alderson (Institute of Education London University), Charlie Cooper (University of Hull), Mike Males (University of California) and Terry Thomas (Leeds Metropolitan University). They have been asked to help the symposium reflect upon aspects of youth work and work with young people from fresh perspectives by drawing on educational philosophy, sociology, criminology and social policy. In addition participants are invited to contribute workshops and papers to foster debate and discussion. We have already been offered papers on Dilemmas of school-based youth work and Youth Work: the essence of practice.

For further information and booking form please contact Tracey Hodgson, Youth and Policy, 24 Harle Street, Browney, Co. Durham, DH7 8HX
E-mail: cyw.conference@googlemail.com

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Cross community youth work training in a divided and contested society

Mark Hammond

With an increase in the number of special interest youth work training courses (in particular Christian, but also Muslim in England) there is a need to reflect on some of the issues inherent within this trend. This article will draw on the Northern Ireland experience of training youth workers in a 'contested' and divided society, where the decision was made to develop a cross-community approach rather than have separate courses for Catholics and Protestants. Following a brief overview of the Northern Ireland context this article sets out the practice and policy developments of community relations and cross-community youth work. From this basis the paper will present how the University of Ulster developed a cross-community approach to youth work training in this divided context, identifying issues of working in a segregated community. The themes of interdependence and interculturalism will be explored in the conclusion.

Keywords: Divided society, cross-community training, University of Ulster.

The Northern Ireland context

Northern Ireland is a divided society with a population of 1.7 million comprising 43.8 per cent Catholic, 53.1 per cent Protestant and the remaining 4.1 per cent 'other' (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency [NISRA], 2001): affiliation to religion is aligned to socio-political and community identity. The divisions are reflected in segregated housing comprising over 70 per cent of public provision (Northern Ireland Housing Executive, 1999) and integrated [mixed religious] schools forming just over 5 per cent of the education system (Department of Education, http://www.deni.gov.uk). This context has been referred to as an ethnic frontier (Wright, 1996) which is marked by the inability of either of the significant groups to control or dominate the other. In this type of contested society diversity is often seen as a threat and cultural traditions, history and politics are not shared across the main religious divide.

Children and young people under the age of 18 represent 27 per cent of the population (NISRA, Census, 2001) and with few opportunities for integration young people embrace sectarian attitudes and beliefs from an early age. Evidence suggests that growing up in this type of divided society has a significant impact on children and young people (Cairns, 1995; Connelly, 1999; Connelly et al, 2002). In this environment, children as young as three understand something of what has euphemistically been called the 'troubles'. Connelly et al (2002) identify that:

> *The general picture is that the majority of children in Northern Ireland are being*

> *introduced to and becoming aware of various cultural and political events and symbols from the age of three onwards. Moreover, while they are also able to begin identifying themselves with particular communities at that age and also holding sectarian attitudes, these two tendencies do not begin to emerge among the children noticeably until the ages of five and six.* (p.52)

While the sectarian conflict is not the only issue facing young people in Northern Ireland (see Young Life and Times survey, 2006 http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/) it continues to surface among the issues. Harassment because of religion, race or skin colour accounted for 13 per cent of respondents in a NISRA survey (2003). Furthermore 86 per cent of 16 year olds 'remain convinced that religion will always make a difference to how people in Northern Ireland feel about each other' (Schubotz and Devine, 2005:63). Youth and public sector bodies have responded to this divided and contested place with various practices, priorities and policies.

The Youth Service Response: Community Relations

The youth sector in Northern Ireland pioneered work with young people that tackled the issues faced within the ethnic frontier such as identity, culture and religion. This work ranged in sophistication and became known as Community Relations. Community Relations as a term was an import from the race relations context of Britain (Fitzduff and Frazer, 1994) and has involved a range of methodologies (Fitzduff,1993) that have developed since the early 1970s to the present. During this period contact schemes were organised progressing to what is now referred to as EDI (Equity Diversity and Interdependence) work. This practice was a response to the identified needs of young people and made way for the policy framework that ensued, including statutory youth provision throughout the region.

Early cross-community (Protestant and Catholic) youth work was epitomised by contact schemes, working from the premise that contact between the two communities would promote greater understanding and break down barriers. Often the work was recreational in nature involving activities such as football and outdoor pursuits. This contact hypothesis has been criticised for its lack of empirical evidence (Cairns, 1994) in contributing to enhanced relationships or peace building and Connolly (1998) suggests that it may 'have actually been counter-productive' (Harland cited in Magnuson and Baizerman, 2007:182). Therefore over time, dealing with controversial issues and conflict resolution became the additional goals of these initial encounters as outlined in the 'Clem McCartney model' (cited YCNI, 1992) for cross-community work. This model promoted more intensive experiences which involved a range of approaches and programmes with young people in varying contexts. Although not exhaustive these approaches can be categorized into seven broad areas (Fitzduff, 1993) including mutual understanding work, conflict resolution and cultural traditions work. Incorporated within these approaches were a range of methodologies (YCNI, 1992).

The development of single identity work created opportunities for both Catholic and Protestant young people to reflect on their identity, hopes and fears before engaging in cross-community activities. This intra-community approach enables more free discussion

and is likely to produce less defensiveness, greater mutual understanding, (Fitzduff, 1993) respect for diversity and own culture validation (Church and Visser 2002). Discussion within single identity contexts focuses on attitudes and feelings towards self and the 'other' and while not always developing into cross-community work, it offers a useful basis for such work.

Single identity work was not undertaken in isolation as the youth service [statutory and voluntary provision] also developed themed cross-community programmes which focussed both on commonalities and difference. This work involved the development of cross-community programmes that primarily focussed on discussion based 'understanding' work, where symbols and emblems, identity formation and cultural traditions were discussed openly and were aimed to encourage greater understanding and mutual respect. Whilst such mutual understanding work was sometimes premised on the contact hypothesis, there is much evidence to indicate deeper understanding and relationships with the 'other' community (YCNI 1992, Connelly, 1999).

International holidays and exchange schemes were also developed in the early 1970s and were in vogue until the late 1990s. These were initially designed to give opportunities for respite and mobilise young people out of high conflict zones. Although these projects may have been useful in minimising risk to young people, there is now less emphasis on 'holiday' and more on learning and study evolving to incorporate more significant encounters.

Alongside these youth sector initiatives, the Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) scheme was developed within schools. Although based in a formal education setting this provision was facilitated in part by youth workers using non-formal and informal educational processes. Whilst being mandatory the EMU schemes did not make cross-community contact compulsory. They promoted respect for diversity, appreciation of interdependence, understanding of what is shared and different among the traditions and the benefits of resolving conflict by non-violent means (YCNI, 1992). Nonetheless the EMU programme has been criticised for its lack of impact across the segregated schooling system (Harbison, 2002).

Thus various values and practices permeated both formal schools and informal youth sectors. Smyth (in Magnuson and Baizerman, 2007) categorises them into three stages of peace keeping, peace making and peace building. This variety of community relations practice among young people was a serious attempt to address the inherent sectarianism in this contested society. Clearly community relations work in schools and throughout the youth sector was and is not the panacea for the problems of Northern Ireland; however the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) acknowledge that 'they [schools and the youth sector] have a potential to positively influence the situation and the climate where solutions might be found' (YCNI, 1992:12).

Given the context and the emphasis on peace and relationship building measures it could be assumed that resourcing would not be an issue. However a disproportionately small amount of government funding has been utilised to support community relations work. In the youth sector, funding was released through the Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme which gave 'a flexible framework for providing opportunities for practical

community relations work with young people' (Harbison, 2002: 31). The International fund for Ireland and the European Peace programme are identified as the two other significant funders for community relations activity (Harvey, 2003). European Peace funding has helped to sustain an ongoing peace and reconciliation agenda within the youth service particularly within the voluntary and community sector. Even with this piecemeal approach Harbison (2002) indicates that the youth sector has continued to develop good practice, particularly within the development of the Joined in Equity Diversity and Interdependence (JEDI) policy.

The concepts and values of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence have dominated much community relations practice and policy from the mid 1990s. JEDI sought to bring clarity and 'define effective community relations practice' (JEDI, 2002:29) In the Northern Ireland youth work context, equity is about fairness, opportunity of access to provision, and inclusion. Diversity is used to support an embracing of difference regardless of identity, experience, culture and perspective (Ibid) and a desire to deepen understanding of the 'other'. 'Interdependence is centred on relationships. In a context where enmity dominates this principle acknowledges that different communities are interconnected... it is about building strong relationships and a democratic culture.' (ibid: 31). Community Relations practice has clearly evolved since the start of the 'troubles'. Regardless of these changes the youth sector has continued to demonstrate a commitment to enhanced community relations and peace.

Policy and Legislative Context

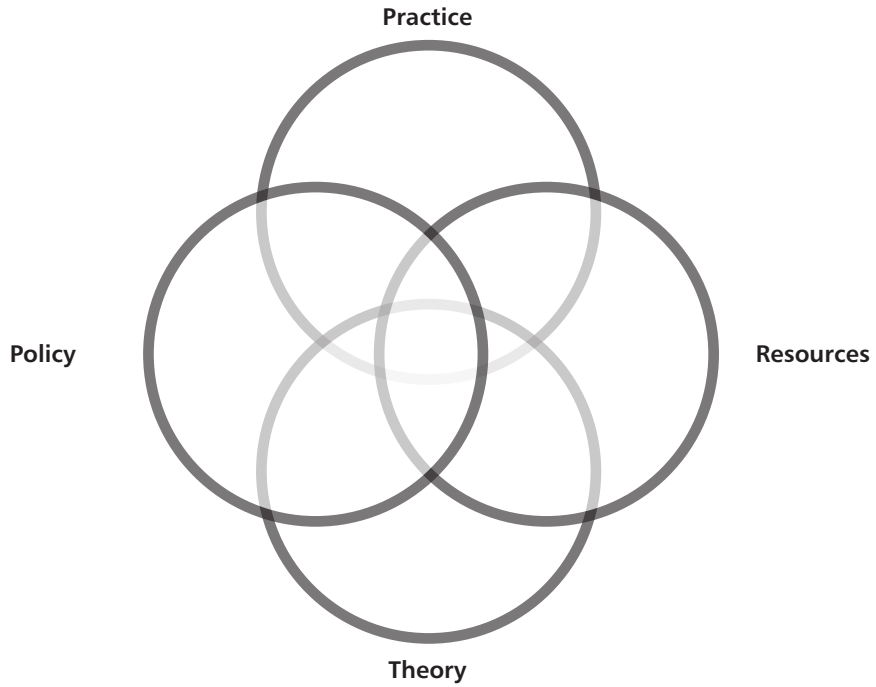
The pragmatism of community and youth workers from the 1970s enabled the innovative practice of community relations work and led the way for the policy framework rather than the converse. In Northern Ireland the policy framework for youth work practice originated in the 'Recreation and Youth Service Order (NI), 1973' creating statutory youth provision and making Northern Ireland the first place in the UK with statutory youth provision. It is not a coincidence that 1972 had the highest death toll of 467 (in McGarry and O'Leary, 1990) due to the conflict. Subsequently the 'Youth Service (NI) Order 1989' and the 'Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986' came into being, developing the youth service further. A curriculum document was developed in 1987, evolving into a Model for Effective (youth work) Practice and revised in 2003. The Department of Education, the body with responsibility for the youth service, commissioned a Youth Service Review in1999 and recently supported the development of 'The Strategy for the Delivery of Youth Work in Northern Ireland, 2005-2008.'

The specific response of the youth service to young people affected by the conflict is evident throughout the strategy document where peace-building is described as an underpinning value of youth work that 'should actively promote a peaceful and inclusive society based on equity, diversity and interdependence' (Department of Education, 2005:5). Other policies and schemes such as 'A Model for Effective Practice' (2003) and the JEDI (Joined in Equity Diversity and Interdependence) initiative (www.jedni.com) also seek to embed Equity, Diversity and Interdependence within the youth sector. These three interconnected values and principles (Eyben et al, 1997) have evolved in practice (Morrow and Wilson, 1996; JEDI, 2002 and Eyben et a,l 2003) and have informed youth service and public policies relating to (yet not exclusively) the sectarian divide within Northern Ireland.

The wider policy context also emphasises the need to develop good relations within and between the communities. This 'Good Relations' agenda is derived from section 75 of the 'Northern Ireland Act 1998' which 'places a statutory obligation to promote good relations' (CRC, 2004:5) among all groupings, not just the two main religious communities. This is evident within public policy documents such as 'A Shared Future' (OFMDFM, March 2007) which recognises that 'the youth sector, in particular, has an important role to play in developing coherent programmes to promote good relationships between children and young people within and between communities' (p.26). 'A Ten Year Strategy For Children And Young People In Northern Ireland 2006 – 2016' (Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister, April 2006) holds similar aspirations 'that our children and young people are supported to grow together in a shared, inclusive society where they respect diversity and difference' (p.17)

In addressing the legacy of the conflict these youth sector and broader public policy objectives emphasise the need to work for a shared future. This is not only intent within policy but an ideological aspiration which has been informed by empirical evidence and community relations practice. Such developments recognise that there are more than two communities in this part of the United Kingdom and Ireland and implicitly support the development of a more plural society. This policy framework emphasises the need for working together and promotes interdependence rather than co-existence as a political and social aspiration. Throughout the last 35 years practice, policy and resourcing have been informed by theoretical principles and concepts and have been factors contributing to community relations work.

Fig. 1: Factors contributing to the development of Community Relations work and vision



Youth Work Training in a Divided Community

The University of Ulster has delivered youth work training for 35 years with almost 1000 students. The religious breakdown has been 55 per cent Catholic, 34 per cent Protestant and 11 per cent 'other'. In a region where Protestants constitute 53.1 per cent of the population these student statistics are somewhat incongruous. The gender balance has been 53 per cent male, 47 per cent female overall; however in the last 15 years there have only been two years when men outnumbered women. Since its inception in 1972 the course has placed a strong emphasis on learning from the Northern Ireland conflict. Given the contested nature of the socio-political and historical context this emphasis has been wholly appropriate while responding to the external factors such as the varying levels of conflict and shifting methodology within Community Relations practice. Throughout this period a number of principles, themes and practices have emerged to support community youth work training in this divided society.

Staff Team

From the outset there has been a religiously mixed staff team, regrettably comprising more males than females but with a commitment to peace building and community relations. Many of the teaching staff have pioneered community relations and reconciliation initiatives in the community and have an awareness of the community needs and the issues of a contested society. This mixed staff team also modelled new possibilities in a region where the workforce was, and to a large extent is still divided (Equality Commission, 2006; Shuttleworth and Lloyd, 2006).

Recruitment

The university has always had an open access policy with regard to recruitment. In a partisan society such as Northern Ireland the community youth work course recruits students from across the religious and political divide. With separate education, housing, to a lesser degree employment and divided social lives as marked characteristics of this ethnic frontier (Wright 1996) having 'cross community' student cohorts facilitates deeper understanding of the 'other'. Conscientious efforts have been made to be inclusive in advertising and selection, and while the demography of the student body is not always fully representative of the wider society, the principle of equity is a constant focus within the teaching. More recently a five year project of monitoring recruitment has begun. This process will enable closer scrutiny and support a more equitable enrolment strategy.

For many, the student experience was the first time they encountered and formed relationships with someone from a different religion or community background. At a time when the conflict was at its height the course was already taking risks in bringing people together and proactively helping them learn from each other. While equality legislation and more recently Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 now legislate against discrimination, the community youth work course has been actively seeking diversity in its recruitment for years. Rather by design than default the philosophy of the course to teach in this cross-community, multi-cultural and diverse way has made a small political statement.

The Syllabus

The syllabus, while meeting JNC requirements is essentially derived from the Northern Ireland

context. The socio-political issues have been an integral element of the taught curriculum within youth work training. This has manifested itself in various forms but always with an experiential focus. In an ethnic frontier (Wright, 1996) the possibility of talking about themes such as history, politics, identity and cultural traditions may well be unique as there is little alternative opportunity to learn from the 'other' (Morrow and Wilson, 1996). Creation of such opportunities is necessary if informal educators are to work with young people in new ways within the same partisan society that they have experienced. In a cross community learning environment such teaching provides the trainee youth workers with new relationships and therefore new possibilities (Ibid). Alongside this experiential approach is the more formal training which incorporates subjects such as sociology, community development, history and development of youth work and working in a contested society. These modules facilitate cross-community dialogue about issues that have the potential to divide. A strong emphasis is therefore placed on the safety and development of the learning environment.

Values and Principles

Youth work is not a value free profession. Unlike other professions it does not have a universally agreed set of values. Nonetheless the course in Northern Ireland embraces many of the values outlined by Sarah Banks (in Richardson and Wolfe, 2001) that are inherent across youth work practice. These values and principles include a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice, 'respect for the individual and rights to self-determination [and] respect for different cultures and religions in society'' (p.64). In more recent years the values inherent within the 'Model for Effective Practice' and the 'person centred approach' of Carl Rogers are taught within the course modules. The Rogerian approach is especially evident within the teaching of interpersonal skills. With an emphasis on unconditional positive regard the students explore what this means in a divided and contested society. In Northern Ireland the priorities within practice and policy also ensure that the values of equity diversity and interdependence also underpin the course. These interlocking values present a new model for working. As Eyben et al (1997) outline:

> *equity in Northern Ireland cannot exist without accepting that there are different identity groups with different needs, and both cannot exist in a vacuum, away from the fact that people's lives are based on relationships: at work, in the family, with civil servants, with politicians, with paramilitaries, with the clergy, with the police, with their neighbours and so on. This reality demands a more co-ordinated approach at an institutional and organisational level to policy making, the development of new procedures and structures as well as the availability of appropriate training for support and development* (p.235)

Placements

The community youth work course in Northern Ireland has always encouraged students to move outside their 'comfort zones.' One practice has meant Catholics undertaking placements in Protestant areas and vice versa. Although anecdotal, throughout the 35 years of the course there is little evidence of sectarian tension within the placement experience with only two cases being cited of students changing placements because of threat of sectarian violence. There is an international dimension to the second placement which has also created space for reflection on the Northern Ireland conflict and supported students in gaining cross cultural experience. These factors have enhanced learning and broadened the outlook of the student, challenging stereotypical views and ideas. Placement review

has enabled sharing of the experience and reflection on the contrasting practice within Northern Ireland. These two practices of external and internal reflection facilitate a learning experience which has encouraged greater interdependence.

A changing context

Northern Ireland is a changing society with some research indicating that the sectarian divide is narrowing (NISRA and OFMDFM, 2007). The conflict has dissipated considerably with five deaths due to the 'security situation' in 2005 (Ibid:8) contrasting with 467 deaths in 1972 at the height of the 'troubles' (McGarry and O'Leary, 1990). Attitudes are also shifting (See Young Life and Times survey, 2006) and with a new elected assembly and the re-establishment of a power sharing executive on May 8th 2007 the future is more hopeful than in recent years. The shifting demography with ethnic minorities representing almost 2.5 per cent in 2005 to a predicted 5 per cent of the population in 2030 (Watt and McGaughey, 2006) also impact upon the environment for youth work practice.

Conclusion

Youth work training in Northern Ireland has evolved over 35 years, a period characterised by violence, community conflict and division. Throughout this time the course has endeavoured to seek an alternative way of being in this ethnic frontier where taboos around religion, identity, culture, politics and history dominate. The role of youth work training is to support youth workers in working with young people from diverse backgrounds, facilitating students to learn and supporting their development. In the University of Ulster, staff have not only endeavoured to teach with a cross community ethos but with a vision for a fair and just, diverse and interdependent society. Interdependence is focussed on relationships. In a divided community such as Northern Ireland legislation alone is not sufficient in supporting diversity and equity measures. Open safer spaces must be created if stronger relationships are to be established. Interdependence In the context of Britain could be seen as interchangeable with the emerging term of interculturalism. Interculturalism is defined as:

> *a process of mutual learning and joint growth. This then implies a process of acquiring, not only a set of basic facts and concepts about 'the other', but also particular skills and competences that will enable one to interact functionally with anyone different from oneself regardless of their origins* (Wood et al, 2006:8).

Interdependence in the same way should remain a focus within training if barriers are to be broken down and different communities and young people are to develop together and learn from each other.

There are dilemmas and challenges in cutting across partisan boundaries such as religion and cultural traditions. There may even be a place for single community youth work training. However in the Northern Ireland context taking risks in addressing the legacy of the conflict within youth work training and involved creating opportunities to talk about and examine the divisions and not avoid them.

While this model for youth work training has been operational in the Northern Ireland context for 35 years, it may be presumptuous to think that there are lessons for the wider British context. Nonetheless Britain, with increasing numbers of religious schools, rising immigration and ethnic diversity and widening social and economic divisions may need to foster greater interdependence rather than further segregation and partition. The role of the youth worker may be to re-focus on values, principles and practice which seek to address the issues rising from these diverse needs and contexts.

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'Teaching' Values in Pre-qualifying Youth and Community Work Education

Susan Cooper Bradford

This article aims to provide some insights into the process of 'teaching' professional values in pre-qualifying education of youth and community work students. It draws on the findings of a small-scale action research project, conducted in 2006, involving students across year groups of an undergraduate course. The focus is primarily on the formation of professional values and identity in the context of a changing field of practice and the extent to which the delivered curriculum supports and enables learning. The argument is that the outcome-focused approach to curriculum in higher education is reductionist and fails to support affective learning. The complexity of the concept of values development required a course-long, holistic approach to curriculum design during which students are encouraged to collectively engage in critical reflection.

Keywords: youth work, values, identity, pre-qualifying education, curriculum

The research

The research on which this article is based took place in one community and youth work programme in England in 2006. Methods used involved questionnaires, a semi-structured group interview and two focus groups and involved 44 students from across the three HE levels. The rationale for the research was to investigate the student experience of values development during the BA Youth and Community Work course in order to make some judgement as to the effectiveness of the curriculum with a view to improve practice. The belief that youth and community work values ran like threads through the course and were ever present both in taught content and in assessment criteria was strongly articulated by the teaching team and further supported by course paperwork, for example a value-base statement in programme handbooks and module learning outcomes relating to values. The purpose of this research was to question this belief to ascertain how close our theory- in-use matches our espoused theory (Argyris and Schön, 1974) through gaining a student perspective. As Fook et al (2000:178) tells us:

> *Students may make entirely different interpretations of taught material than those intended by educators, or of course, educators may communicate entirely different messages from those they intend...and there may be contradictions between espoused messages of educators and implicit messages embedded in the context.*

The gathering of 'rich' data concerning the student experience across the programme would provide at least an impression of the effectiveness of our current methods and curriculum.

It might also identify some of the contradictions and possibly identify ways of working that better support student learning.

It is important to make clear at this point it was not my intention to explore the value-base of youth and community work per se or indeed, to inquire whether all youth work educators subscribe to an agreed set of values but rather to question to what extent the approach to teaching and the curriculum on this course enable students to engage in enquiry in order to develop their understanding of professional values. I direct those readers requiring more detailed information relating to youth and community values to Jeffs and Smith (2005) and *Ethical Conduct in Youth Work: A statement of values and principles*, (The NYA. 2000).

The nature of the research question influenced the choice of paradigm and methodology, 'what one *wants* to learn determines *how* one should go about learning it.' (Trauth 2001:4 cited in Rowlands, 2005). A qualitative interpretive paradigm was most suited to explore the phenomena under investigation: how do we enable students to develop their professional values? Qualitative research is best placed to explore the uncertainty of the subject of enquiry, the learning experience of students. An interpretive paradigm is based on the assumption that people construct their own realities (Klein and Myers, 1999) and acknowledges the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is being explored. Action research:

> *seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities* (Reason and Bradbury, 2001:1)

The research was driven by a concern for improving practice in the context of a changing professional environment; as such an action research approach was adopted.

Background

Banks (2006:6) asserts that although the 'value-base of social work' is a common phrase in literature; it has a vagueness about it. This holds as true for youth work as it does for social work. Some might argue that there has been gradual erosion in status of the concept of 'value-base' both inside and outside of Higher Education institutions. An increasing emphasis on skills and competence in pre-qualifying education has encouraged a more technical approach to professional qualification (Barnett and Coate, 2005). However it can be argued that whilst it is perfectly acceptable to view technical competence as important in terms of 'doing youth work', it is not sufficient to sustain the 'being' a youth worker (Blair, 2002). This relies much more on having a clear sense of purpose and of professional identity and the key to this is values clarification:

> *Our values contribute to the kind of teacher [youth worker] we are or hope to be... We teach [practice] in certain ways because we have certain beliefs that guide our (teaching) methods.* (Rice, 2002:33)

Values can be seen to fundamentally shape our practice and yet the term itself is not straightforward, having a variety of meanings (Timms, 1983). In literature on professional values, there is an increasing tendency to distinguish 'values' from 'principles' (Banks, 2006:7). Values relate to the broad beliefs about what is good or bad, right or wrong and principles refer to actions that promote values. This principle-based approach to professional ethics is dominant. The introduction of the document *Ethical Conduct in Youth Work* (The NYA, 2000) supports this. Under the headings of ethical principles and professional principles the document sets out a number of practice principles demonstrating how youth workers should apply the ethical and professional principles in practice.
Smith (2002) highlighted this shift away from the concept of values in his critique of the government document *Resourcing Excellent Youth Services* (REYS) (2002). He argues that whilst the document does make various references to youth work values, the statement of values are not really values at all. 'Youth Work Values' (ibid: 20) combines both youth work values and a number of actions that are derived from values. The move to a 'practice principle' approach fits well with managerialism in terms of seeking to remove autonomy of interpretation from the practioner. Banks (2003), however, asserts that codes can be about raising professional awareness about the potential for value conflicts and therefore the need for practioners to engage in constant debate. Further, she argues that emphasis on 'the professional as an impartial moral agent, acting rationally by applying principles,' (2004:79) fails to take account of the fact that professional practice does not take place in a values vacuum.

Acknowledgement of this raises questions about how personal and professional values connect and in particular, how students are encouraged and enabled to explore the dilemmas created by conflicts between personal and professional values. In today's constantly changing environment, where youth work is shaped and re-shaped by government policy it is essential that pre-qualifying education provides students with opportunities to actively engage with professional values. A key aspect of this changing landscape is the move from separate to integrated services. The question of how students can be best prepared for working collaboratively across the professions arises. Barrett and Keeping (2005) suggest that the key to effective interprofessional working is confidence and competence and Loxley (1997) highlights the close link between confidence and professional identity. The importance of enabling students to develop a commitment to their professional values is clearly a very important first step towards achieving the vision of professions working together to provide effective services for young people (Children Act, 2004).

Jeffs (2006: www.infed.org) raises the question of how professionals 'can be furnished with the confidence to question the opinion of other professionals', a recommendation arising from the Laming Report (2003). He asserts that this confidence cannot be gained through instruction but needs to come from 'faith in rightness of one's actions and value-base' and argues that the current emphasis on skills within higher education will not achieve this. Graham (2003) supports this view, stating that values are treated 'objectively' in social work education, 'here they are, know them, memorise them,' (ibid: 217) and little attention is given to how values impact on perceptions, assessments and intervention strategies.

Banks (2003) suggests that we should not take codes of ethics too literally arguing that they

can have as much capacity to inhibit ethical practice as to promote it.

> *On occasions agency rules and procedures may inhibit good or ethical practice. Workers have to decide whether to accept the rules without question, to bend or break the rules, to make a reasoned case for why the rules should not apply in this particular case and/or to challenge the usefulness of the rules in general* (Banks, 1999:12).

Students however often appear to desire a more structured, formal guide, understandable in a climate of increasing regulation, but as stated earlier rules or codes are not sufficient in enabling sustainable practice. There will always be situations in practice that demand judgement that is the nature of practice. Students need to build their confidence in making value-based decisions.

Youth work values are essential to the definition of youth work, providing insight, vision and discernment (Young,1999, Jeffs and Smith, 2005)) but while we might assert these values with apparent ease they are not easily articulated. This lack of clarity can cause students, and indeed practioners, difficulties when in dialogue with other professionals and can thus undermine the sense of being a professional. Rice (2002) suggests that we have a responsibility to clarify our own values and attitudes, to articulate them in order to be able to enter into reasoned debate when confronted with opposing views. The lack of understanding that still shrouds youth work outside of the profession means that this process is vital for youth workers, especially newly qualifying youth workers entering an interprofessional field. As Banks demonstrates, through the inclusion of the following quotation from a social work interviewee, a strength of professional identity enabled by a clear understanding and commitment to the value base is essential.

> *You have to have a very good grounding in social work as not just a profession but as a value base otherwise its very easy to get sucked into the dominant culture* (Banks, 2004:135).

As we enter a new era of practice, practioners are expressing concerns related to loss of identity and a threat to the purpose of youth work. Both of these issues are underpinned by values. With the dominant culture being one that problematises and individualises young people (Garrett, 2004; Griffin, 2004; Wyn and White, 1997) it could be argued that never has the need for clarity around values been so great.

Values clarification should be both an individual and a group activity (Smith, 1982); students need the opportunity to develop their position and their argument. However recent changes in higher education have not supported an holistic or collective approach to learning. Higher education has been going through a metamorphosis (Fisher, 2006) expanding to meet the political goal of fifty percent of 18-30 year olds of the population enjoying tertiary education by 2010. The development of managerialism has impacted significantly on curriculum, and outcome focused curricula is now dominant (Barnett and Coate, 2005). It is highly questionable as to whether this approach to curriculum does anything to enhance the student learning experience.

Barnett and Coate (2005) tell us that 'good curriculum design is partly in action, in the

pedagogy, in the daily shaping of the student experience' (ibid: 45). However, this does not sit easily with the idea that education is a 'commodity', which, like any other, can be packaged, measured and controlled. In contrast the 'curriculum as learning outcomes' approach fits neatly into this market-led, employment-driven, commodified view of education (Kemp, 1999). The rationale for adopting learning outcomes is persuasive (Allen,1995 cited in Kemp, 1999). They provide students with a clear statement of what learning is about in a given module. With this information students are able to take responsibility for their own learning. They provide students with a framework for their study time and provide transparency around assessment. However this approach to curriculum design is not without its critics. Kemp (1999) argues that the outcome-based approach to curriculum is reductionist, the 'essential aim is to render academic activity measurable by reducing it to its component skills and knowledge' (1999:7).

Any assessment of teaching and learning should consider the concept of the 'hidden curriculum', recognising that the attitudes and values of the teaching team will be communicated to students whether intended or not (Kelly, 2004). When examining the teaching and learning of a subject as complex as values development it is essential that this is reflected upon. Barnett and Coate (2005) connect the term 'hidden curriculum' with 'curriculum as reproduction' and whilst their discussion is based in the context of social reproduction, the connection is worthy of consideration in terms of values development. A number of questions arise. Do we currently provide students with the opportunity to make independent judgements about the value-base, to openly examine and critique it? Do we encourage collaborative enquiry? Or is our approach more about delivering a message, a transmission of values more akin to indoctrination? Hornby and Atkins (2000) tell us that professional identity is shaped during pre-qualifying education through a process of socialisation. This socialisation will reflect a number of issues, our personal values, our professional values in relation to education, our approach to teaching and our curriculum.

'If we go back to the meaning of education, from its root *educare*, it means to 'draw out' rather than 'put in' (Kumar, 2005: in conversation). The 'drawing out' approach provides opportunities for students to engage in critical exploration and has the potential to enable students to develop a strong professional identity necessary for effective practice. The 'putting in' approach, however, has the potential to set students up to fail as it does not encourage students to explore and critique issues around personal and professional values. It does not encourage a sense of ownership or a process of integration. This may leave them unable to articulate their role or purpose, insecure in their professional identity and ultimately ineffective in their practice because through indoctrination genuine understanding and personal commitment is not achieved.

Key Issues for considerations

Time and Space

An unexpected finding of the research relates to the 'unreadiness' of students to engage with the process of developing professional values at the start of the course. A strong theme emerged from the exploratory group interview with year one students. The majority of these students highlighted issues relating to their emerging 'student' identity as most important.

They placed little importance on issues of professional values or professional identity. Their area of concern was the development of an identity as student not as a professional youth and community worker. Although questions were asked relating to their experience of values development, many responses related to their experience of learning and the assessment of that learning. This preoccupation with assessment arising from an outcome-focussed curriculum was more pronounced in year one than in years two or three. The focus on assessment meant that their readiness to engage in something that was not so openly related to assessment, their appreciation of professional values, was delayed. The 'student' life stories of year three students echoed this experience:

> *I didn't know if I was coming or going...*
>
> *I was carried along with this whole idea of being a student...*
>
> *I struggled to get into academic life in the beginning...*
> (FG1 relating their experiences in year 1)

Time is a crucial aspect of curriculum design in higher education (Barnett and Coate, 2005). The response from the group raises questions in terms of curriculum planning. It is necessary to consider when and if there is a 'best time' to include focused input on professional values given that the rate of development will vary from student to student and cannot be rushed. Students are not a homogenous group; they come with an extremely wide range of backgrounds, experience, knowledge and learning styles.

> *...it can be argued that the process of identity development does not occur in a uniform fashion. The formation of identities takes place within different arenas, at different points in time, and in different ways* (Tucker, 2004:86)

Taking into consideration the diversity of the student cohort, an approach to the task of developing professional values that is on-going and central to the course seems appropriate.

Students are encouraged to reflect on their values and identify their developing ability to reflect in terms of developing their confidence and sense of professional identity:

> *I wasn't prepared for that at the beginning, I didn't come thinking I'd actually have to find myself, I thought I was fine. The challenge has actually been the self-reflection.*
>
> *...you only do that if you let yourself...I think you can only do that if you're open...*
>
> *reflection that's what you've taught us...*
> (FG 1 on reflection)

The impression was that the level of engagement was different across the cohort, some students readily engaged with the process of exploration and discovery whereas some students were more reluctant. More time and space for students to develop trusting relationships with each other and with the teaching team would encourage and support students to collectively enter the risky business of values exploration and critique. Course-

long learning however is challenged by the modular approach to teaching and learning.

The fragmentation and false separation resulting from a modular approach to teaching clouds the central position of values in youth and community work practice. As already stated values development is complex and, I suggest, best suited to course-long attention, mirroring the pivotal place of values in reflective practice. There is also a need to consider diverse methods of engagement to meet the diverse needs of students. A course-long approach was a recommendation offered by a student participating in one of the focus groups:

> *From a course perspective, I think it would be really useful to revisit the value base perhaps at the start of each year – when ... after placement we have learnt to embrace what it is to be a professional and a little bit about embracing the values so I think there should be the opportunity perhaps in the second year to share that with everyone and see how far you've moved on and the same with the third year because each time, each step ...I'm not sure we explore the values as much as we should. And also perhaps, as we are doing now, review the value base.*
> (Student from FG 2)

It seems appropriate to take heed of the message that students are focused on assessment, in line with the dominant accountability culture of 'what is valuable is what is measured,' when considering how best to engage students in a learning process. Perhaps it is desirable to integrate the development of values into the assessment process as one student suggests:

> *Maybe doing an assessment to see how things have changed, to assess your journey at the end of the module...rather than it [the values] being just underlying...*
> (FG1)

However I would argue that this may also be counter-productive as it may discourage critique, students opting for the safe position of 'saying the right thing.' Depending on the assessment, it may only encourage student to adopt a surface approach to learning (Biggs, 1987), the defining features being an intention to complete task requirement, memorising information needed for assessment, a focus on discreet elements without integration and treating the assessment task as an external imposition, (Entwistle, 1987). The risk of 'objectifying' of values is clear. The challenge is to find more innovative ways of engaging students that encourages a far deeper approach to learning, one that enables students to 'consciously and deliberately construct their realities' (Graham 2003:215).

The link between a particular module and values development provides further evidence of the impact of modularisation or perhaps, more correctly, the impact of how we have implemented this in practice. This provides an interesting parallel between policy implementation in higher education and in the field of youth work and how the decisions made often seem to contradict our professional values giving way to the dominant discourse, in this case managerialism.

Direction: Too Little or Too Much?

There was much discussion in both focus groups about the extent to which the course was

explicit about professional values. Two competing perspectives emerged. There were those who espoused a need for the course to be clearer with students in terms of subscribing to a set of professional values and in the opposing camp, those students who felt that if the value-base was too prescriptive it could become a block to radical thinking.

Direction: Too Little...

An example of the first perspective follows:

> *It isn't explicit enough, for example, when we first started on the course, the module (...) was a prime time to examine your values but it was all about the history and the curriculum and you haven't explicitly said what the values are – or even what a youth worker is...it's still ambiguous. It's still a mystery ... for me, like you haven't gone 'these are my values, these are the value base for the course, these are the values of youth & community work' ... I have struggled with that.*
> (Student from FG1)

Expressed within this quotation is a strong sense that values have not been explored explicitly enough, and further perhaps that the teaching in this particular module should have provided a clear step-by-step route to a place where values are fixed. This can be interpreted as a request for a very systematic approach to values development, perhaps even an underlying call for the rulebook approach. All this is understandable, the expressed 'struggle' is one many newly qualified practitioners feel and this struggle brings insecurity in professional identity. What is not demonstrated by the quotation is an understanding that values development is a continuous process. This reflects the complex and problematic nature of values and the vulnerability this can bring to students and practitioners alike. The provision of space within the curriculum to explore this vulnerability would be beneficial to students. This is the area in which we should be more explicit perhaps, providing opportunities for students to recognise the fluid nature of values, the need to continually critique values and to develop a sense of professional identity that enables them to manage the vulnerability associated from practicing in a value-based profession

The quotation also identifies the expectation that a particular module would cover values development, and provides further evidence here of the impact of modularisation. This is not in accord with the teaching staff's view that values underpin all the course modules. These differing assumptions are an important factor in terms of learning opportunities and effectiveness of the programme. There is a need to clarify this situation both for staff and students.

The struggle that newly qualified practitioners face is picked up by Fook et al (2000) in their development of the Dreyfus Model of Expertise (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986). The Dreyfus model identified five stages of skills acquisition; novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert. The learner moves through the stages, starting with reliance in 'context-free rules' guiding behaviour through to developing their own 'situational rules' based on their experience and intuition. Fook et al's research confirmed the original five-stage model but they introduced three changes in order to meaningfully place the model within the social work profession. This included the addition of a pre-study stage; a separation between experienced and expert in the final stage and the inclusion of context and value-based dimensions.

The pre-study stage takes account of the fact that students arrive at the start of the course already influenced by a range of assumptions, knowledge and theories which they have developed through their social and cultural experiences. The impact of this on learning styles and rates of progression needs to taken into account when designing learning opportunities. This clearly calls for a process that emphasises a strengths perspective and one that is responsive to the needs of a diverse population.

Of particular relevance to this piece of research was their inclusion of a values dimension (see Table 1) that clearly illustrates the developmental nature of professional values formation.

Table 1: (Fook et al, 2000: 182)

Development of professional expertise for working in uncertainty
Values Dimension

Pre-study stage	Unformed concern
Beginner stage	Begin to learn professional values and ethics
Advanced beginner stage	'Hide personal values' Concern with performance and evaluation.
Competent stage [first year(s) of professional practice]	'Constrained performist' Concern with performance 'Get the job done'
Proficient stage	Less conformist More personal confidence 'Personal and political'
Experienced stage	Pop sociology Professional handling ethics Separating personal and professional
Expert stage	Broader values

Students already awarded their professional qualification (JNC) spoke of concerns of being accountable, of doing the right things, of being professional and references were made to people 'hiding their personal values' in line with the advanced beginner stage in the table. I have added a column (see table 2) to represent the values development process in pre-qualifying education, accepting that 'students start formal courses of study as 'embodied' individuals, constructed by their social and cultural contexts.' (Fook et al, 2000:178). This offers a clear indication to students that they are not expected to be 'finished articles' at the end of their pre-qualifying courses, a concern raised in the focus group. Instead

it clearly identifies a continuing professional development approach through reflective practice, potential easing some of the anxiety felt by newly qualified practioners. This model provides a useful framework for enabling discussion and for self and peer assessment. As with all models it is open to critique, in particular, it does present a linear progression and in practice, this is questionable. It also begs the question of who defines 'expert'. However, I believe both of these points add to its value in terms of promoting critical exploration of values development.

Table 2: (after Fook et al, 2000: 182)

Development of professional expertise for working in uncertainty
Values Dimension

Pre-study stage	Unformed concern	Prior to Higher Education
Beginner stage	Begin to learn professional values and ethics	1st Year students
Advanced beginner stage	'Hide personal values' Concern with performance and evaluation	2nd & 3rd year students
Competent stage [first year(s) of professional practice]	'Constrained performist' Concern with performance 'Get the job done'	First year(s) of post-qualifying practice
Proficient stage	Less conformist More personal confidence 'Personal and political'	Continuing Professional Development
Experienced stage	Pop sociology Professional handling ethics Separating personal and professional	
Expert stage	Broader values	

Direction: Too much?

The second perspective expressed in the focus groups related to the concern that taking a 'too directive approach' in relation to professional values would limit radical thinking as well as development of their own values:

> *...I think its wrong to ...like having the values that this is what the college wants you to aspire towards ...I do, like, not necessarily agree with having a set of values and saying that by the end of the 3 years these are going to be your exact values...its wrong. And people's personal values are different...*
> (Student from FG1)

> *I can remember one of our early lectures, one of the lecturers saying – if you don't hold our value base you probably shouldn't be on the course … I found that a bit threatening … especially cos like its moulding...you're going to have your personal values and your professional values and its up to you how dear you carry your personal values (Student from FG2)*

These comments highlight the relationship between personal and professional values. Research has shown that in the early stages of professional identity formation, students can struggle with this relationship; often the personal was seen to be sacrificed to the professional. (Fook et al, 2000:158). This perspective was not supported by this research, in fact it was challenged:

> Researcher. *ok ... so you're saying, people may take on the cloak of professional values to do the job but it does not necessarily mean that they have changed their personal values...so they can act within the professional value base while at work...*
> Student 1. *Could you rather say that...rather they put on the professional values but that they don't act on them...they work according to their personal values which are actually detrimental to people they are working with...*
> Student 2. *...so their personal values actually shape the way they perform their professional values...personally I don't think your personal values can ever be pushed back...I think they are always there, I think that you can behave professionally – but personal values still drive that...*
> (FG1)

The question of which set of values, personal or professional are most powerful when informing action is of importance. Implicit in the quotations is a presumption of superiority of professional values over personal values. It seems we are concerned about divergence between personal and professional values only when this may result in poor practice rather than recognising and valuing constant critique of impact of professional values on practice. The adoption of 'bottom line' thinking is used to attempt to ensure practitioners operate within professional values. There is a link here with the 'hiding of values' stage of development (see table 1) and would indicate that the practitioner has not moved beyond advanced beginner stage in the model of expertise. This would not represent a satisfactory position for either the practitioner or the employing agency.

The inter-relationship of personal and professional values is interesting and according to research carried out with students within the field of social education across a number of European countries, a range of approaches exists (Banks and Williams, 1999). Findings suggested that in Belgium some students drew on their personal moral stances and values and were as influenced by their own feelings and emotions as they were by agency rules or professional guidelines (ibid:7) whereas in England the findings appear to suggest the opposite. It is suggested that the different approach in England is a product of a massive growth in procedures and guidelines, driven by the risk-averse culture of the public sector. The growth of managerialism within the social professions has meant there is less room for professional discretion and as a result, workers have a greater tendency to follow the rules. So what might our response be? I am in accord with Banks and Williams (1999: 10) who state:

> *I do not think we should aim to turn students from emotional, responsive and caring people into duty-bound rule-following professionals. The issue is broader that just that of developing awareness of the importance of and reasons for professional duties and agency rules. It is about developing students' abilities to see the complexities of situations and the myriad of different and conflicting interests, rights, desires and duties.*

The question still remains, how? An over-riding theme to emerge from the focus groups was that the process needed to be dialogical, reflective and collective, approaches that are based on youth work values (Oliver, 2006). Further, it must be recognised that appropriate learning environments need to be created that allow and encourage students to feel safe to explore, question and critique something as sensitive and complex as the value base. Facilitation is key; a balance needs to be found between the role of educator and gatekeeper. Closing down dialogue because it challenges the status quo will not enable students to move forward from the 'hiding values' position and thus must be avoided:

> *... some people ... they did express their values at the very beginning and were judged on them...it can be quite intimidating if you were to do that at the very beginning ... people are judged on what they say ... to a certain extent it makes it more difficult to express what you think.*

> *... Wouldn't it be wrong to prejudge people at the start? If someone has their own set of values then we should respect them ... the first year here was very controversial ... people were more open ... some were more vocal than others. I think that maybe we learnt how to deal with this in a professional way and you're never going to lose that. People are always going to say 'you're wrong' but its how you deal with that ...*
> (Students from FG1)

Sachs (2001) identified two distinct discourses that she argues dominate contemporary educational policy and practice; the managerialist discourse and the democratic discourse. She promotes the use of 'democratic discourses' in enabling identity formation, asserting that the open flow of ideas regardless of their popularity enables transformational change.

Conclusions and recommendations for action

The rationale for this research was to review the effectiveness of our current curriculum in terms of 'teaching' professional values in pre-qualifying education of youth and community work students. The research findings have highlighted a number of issues that relate to the recent on-going changes in higher education and in practice. It is clear that effectiveness of the curriculum has been affected both by these changes and our responses to them.

This research supports the view that an outcome focused approach delivers a narrow, fragmented and behaviouristic form of education that limits enquiry and creativity, and more vitally in the context of values education, it ignores the affective dimension of education (Brady, 1996). This approach to teaching and learning objectifies values, given, learned and knowledge-tested. Here lies the problem; values development cannot be entirely reduced to skills and knowledge. A creative curriculum needs to contain spaces

for reflection (Knight, 2002); this alludes to time outside of the programme of teaching, a space for collaborative enquiry.

Students often bring a surface approach to learning to higher education, we need to enable and encourage them to adopt a deep approach to learning in the context of values development. Bowden (1990 cited in Bowden and Marton, 1998) suggests that by changing the students' learning environment the majority of students would adopt the desired approach. It is clear that individually, students found discussing values in the focus groups helpful in terms of developing their own understanding and clarifying their positions and that of others. Doing this in small groups enabled them to develop a real sense of collective identity. However, a number of other aspects to this participation enabled and supported the depth and breadth of the discussions. The students participated voluntarily, the focus groups took place outside the formal course and therefore were not open to assessment, the small-groups discussion were facilitated, not directed by teacher input. It was a collective reflection. In the same way as Oliver (2006) drew on youth work principles to explore the sense of identity, I too believe that pre-qualifying education providers may well benefit from revisiting the youth work principles of voluntary participation, collective action and developmental group work as an effective learning environment.

Professionals in any field need to have a good understanding of subject-specific knowledge, but they must be constantly aware of its limitations in practice. This awareness and judgment comes from our professional values and reflective practice and for this, students need the opportunity to develop an individual and collective sense of 'being'.

The ethos of youth work supports curriculum as 'product and process' (Ord, 2007). There is a clear tension here both in terms of the delivery of our programmes and for the process of socialisation (Hornby and Atkins, 2000). Youth and community work is value-based and value-driven yet we continue to teach students in ways that obscure the primacy of values (Allen, 1993). It is evident that standardised teaching methods, for example, large group lectures, together with an over-emphasis on assessment comes at a real cost; that cost is the loss of emphasis on community and equity. Too much of the teacher-student contact time is directed, either explicitly or implicitly at passing the assessment. Time for students to engage in a collective learning environment, where they are facilitated to lead their own enquiry is almost non-existent. But why has this happened? We must take some responsibility for our response to the current pressures. In the same way as practitioners in the field need to take a courageous stand against responses that allow external targets, for example accreditation, to pervert the purpose of youth work, we too need to have faith in our ability to challenge the dominance of outcome focussed curricula. As stated earlier, professional identity is shaped through a process of socialisation; no longer can we afford to miss the opportunity to enable students to develop strength of professional identity that affords them the courage to be creative in the face of uncertainty and change.

I am not proposing an ostrich approach or a refusal to co-operate with institutional policy but I am proposing an alternative response to the passive acceptance of the outcome focused, modularisation of learning. This response starts with a clarification of values within the teaching team followed by a rebalancing of our curriculum. A shift of focus from the assessment of knowledge and skills towards a more holistic curriculum that recognises and

values the 'knowing, acting and being' dimensions of development (Barnett and Coate, 2005) is required. This is no easy task; it will come at a cost in terms of resources and commitment. Our challenge is to create space and time, outside of the formal assessment relationship, outside of the current modular structure where students choose to participate collectively in the process of values development.

Rising to the challenge

A constructivist paradigm of teaching and learning offers the opportunity to meet this challenge (Graham, 2003). This approach is well suited to the delivery of pre-qualifying youth and community education as it reflects and supports professional practice. It builds on strengths, responds to the diversity of needs across the student cohorts and places values centrally. The constructivist paradigm supports critical reflection, requiring students to examine biases in theory, the profession, the course programme and staff, and in themselves.

The basis of the approach is grounded discussion where both the teacher and the student participate in the co-creation of knowledge. Facilitating the focus groups provided a real insight of the potential this approach has for fostering high levels of engagement, for promoting peer interaction and for enabling students to experience and appreciate the complexity of the concept of values development. The potential of this approach is that students can make connections between their own experience and the topic integrating their knowledge as opposed to acquiring it as an external commodity (Graham, 2003). Operating outside of the modular structure enables the formation of small groups that will enable the creation of a 'safe' space where 'mistakes' are allowed, and are seen as part of an open learning culture.

As a result of this research grounded discussion groups will be introduced running throughout the three-year course programme. This provides the best opportunity for students to develop a strong sense of professional values and collective identity, preparing them well for the current conditions of change and uncertainty.

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Supervision in the context of youth and community work training

Yvonne McNamara, Mike Lawley and JohnTowler

This article examines the crucial role of supervision in developing professional practice and practitioners, considering its role both within qualifying courses and as an essential form of staff development for qualified practitioners. Claims to professionalism and the centrality of supervision in ensuring the responsible exercise of professional autonomy are explored. The focus is upon the role of supervision in training youth and community workers, which is informed by recent research with workers in training and their supervisors (Lawley and McNamara, 2007). The article examines research concerning the 'third partner' or 'invisible client' (Towler, 2005) and the role of the 'fourth partner' the Higher Education Institution (HEI), in the supervisory relationship.

Keywords: supervision, professionalism, HE, partnership

The proletarianisation of professional work

The organisation and perception of professional work is changing rapidly and significantly. 'New managerialism', sometimes referred to as neo-liberalism (Davies, 2003) which has been influential (not to say dominant) from the 1980s onwards, has contributed to these changes, devaluing professional work and undermining professional values. Examples include the establishment of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE, 1999), which now provides 'authoritative guidance on what treatments work best for patients' (Dobson, 3/2/99) and sets limits to the discretion of medical professionals to prescribe drug therapies for their patients. More recently teaching assistants, without professional teaching qualifications, may 'teach' classes in schools as 'some teaching activity can be undertaken by suitably trained staff without QTS (Qualified Teacher Status)' (DfES, 2003). Developments such as these support the notion of a broad challenge to professional status, or what Dominelli (1996:163) refers to as the 'proletarianisation of professional work.'

This is an important consideration for youth and community workers especially during the transition into Children's Services (The Children Act, 2004) and major revisions to the professional qualifications framework. As Tucker (2005) argues, these external forces play a powerful role in shaping and (as this article argues) undermining professional identities. Identities are not just formed through skills, knowledge and status – they are the product of attitudes and values that are held by particular occupational groups (Tucker, 2005: 205) and are formed 'by a sustained and critical reflection upon intervention' (Jeffs and Smith, 1990:124). This reflective process is central to effective supervision, and facilitates professional identity formation.

In his influential exploration of youth service history, Davies (1999) highlights some key

dualities that have persisted through to the present. These include universalism versus selectivity, education versus rescue, professionalism versus volunteerism, and voluntaryism versus the state. Alongside these on-going historical questions has been the 'process versus product' debate – or, as Williamson (2002) expresses it 't'ain't what you do, it's the way that you do it....' Supervision is critical in this context, as it challenges the 'false dualism' of process and product, and enables workers to explore the processes of their interventions together with the results of their actions. Importantly, this 'reflection on action' (Schön, 1991: 132) enables workers to explore outcomes which may have ensued had they chosen different interventions.

This is not intended to imply an overarching commitment to outcomes-based practice. The current audit culture, which necessitates a focus on outcomes, or what is sometimes referred to as Evidence Based Policy and Practice (EBPP) or, in New Labour parlance, 'what works' (ESRC, 2001) is obscuring youth work's uniqueness. Youth work supervision emphasises that the most positive outcomes will ensue only if the process is appropriate, to both individual and context. To complete Williamson's thought, 't'ain't what you do... (it's the way that you do it) ... and that's what gets results.'

Audit culture, in privileging outcome over process, undermines both effective youth work intervention and professional practice. As Rose (1999) argues, audit culture, the defining feature of new managerialism, 'is characterised by the removal of the locus of power from the knowledge of practising professionals to auditors, policy makers and statisticians, none of whom need know anything about the profession in question' (cited Davies, 2003:91). This is clearly to the detriment of those whom professional practice seeks to serve, as audit culture measures what is measurable rather than what is valuable, and focuses on outputs rather than the experience of the journey. In contrast effective supervision of professional staff allows for deep reflection on the intervention process and enables learning from experience 'a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience' (Kolb, 1984: 38). It is a process that 'cannot specify outcomes in advance.... it looks to the qualities of interaction that occur in an educational situation ...' (Jeffs and Smith, 1999: 63).

It ain't what you say, it's the way that you say it …

There are more subtle challenges to professional youth work practice. Those concerned with professional youth work education need to pay particular attention to the language being adopted. The professional education of youth workers is now subsumed within the 'Children's Workforce Strategy' (2006) which aims to 'support the five outcomes (of *Every Child Matters*) more effectively' (ECM, 2004). The term 'workforce' is significant in this context. A number of theorists have recognised the power of language not simply to describe but also to '... "name", wound, challenge and to shift meaning' (Hey, 2006:442). Here we have an example of the way in which youth work is being 'named', not as professional practice, but as 'work', and in its naming the meaning is shifted. Similarly, those who engage in professional practice, become a 'workforce' – a term redolent of modernity and the unskilled, replaceable 'industrial workforce'. Youth workers (and other professionals) are being acculturated to thinking about youth work as a non-professional

activity. A focus on supervision enables us to resist this 'naming' as the values and principles of professional practice are explored, deconstructed and reconstructed, as the essential foundations of professional practice.

What's in a name?

Professionalism itself is a contested concept, which crystallised around an historical model that validated the established professions, e.g. medicine, law. Definitions of what constitutes a profession are based on ideas appropriate to hierarchically ordered, male-dominated professions, or, as Davies contends 'the professional ideal ... was forged in historical processes where the key actors were men' (1996: 669).

Banks (2006: 5) has reignited this debate in her discussions of both 'trait' theory and the status/power approach to characteristics of professions. Broadly, trait theory suggests that claims to professional status rest on defining characteristics, including the existence of a professional association, a code of ethics, a system of qualification, state licensing and an esoteric (specialist) body of knowledge. The status/power approach depends upon an occupational group's claims to status, giving members of the group power over their work, which is recognised in wider society. Arguably, this approach is an acknowledgement of the narrowness of trait theory. Banks argues that youth and community work, lacking many of the necessary 'traits', and sharing the territory of 'young people' with a host of other professions, occupies a quasi-professional category.

This ambivalent professional status may also owe something to the early beginnings of youth and community work which developed from, in the main, philanthropic activity of the well-to-do who, in youth work's early days, resisted state intervention as undermining their voluntary commitment. Relatively half-hearted attempts by the state to colonise youth work territory were met by resistance from the early pioneers, who saw the voluntary nature of the practice as being indivisible from the process.

This continued to be the case into the 1970s when debate concerned the establishment of *either* a professional association or a trade union (Nicholls, 1997). Those advocating a trade union, as more attuned to youth and community work values, were the eventual winners, possibly contributing to youth work's lack of professional kudos and its conception as 'an ambiguous set of practices' (Bradford in Roche et al, 2004: 246).

Professional youth work practice is educational, value driven, ethical practice. This requires a commitment to 'hard intellectual work ... to suspend our conventional beliefs and look at the taken-for-granted assumptions influencing our relationships, work, behaviour and political conduct' (Jeffs and Smith, 1987:112). Davies (1988) argues that the achievement of high standards in professional practice is not easy. He emphasises that youth workers need to be 'carefully selected'; to undergo `a particular kind of education'; to develop their 'professional ethics'; to extend 'the body of knowledge on which all [their] work is based'; and to have `supervision available... to preserve and deepen their trained skills.'

Therefore, we conceptualise youth work as professional practice, rather than as a narrowly

defined profession or 'quasi-profession.' In this conception supervision is an essential mechanism which both defines and supports professional practice and its underpinning values (Davies, 1996). The centrality of supervision to professional practice requires that it begins with workers on qualification courses, and that their experience of supervision is of the highest standard. This will ensure that 'the individual's sense of agency and freedom through which professional energy, dedication and power were formerly generated' (Davies, 2003:93) is not eroded by internal and external challenges to professional practice. This emphasis on supervision needs to be manifest in two ways, both through students receiving quality fieldwork supervision and through substantial, practical supervision training being integral to every course. This will enable youth and community work students to develop reflective practice as active learners.

Changing times

From an organisational perspective there are more pragmatic reasons for elevating the process of supervision. Several influential theorists have drawn attention to the rapid rate of change and consequent uncertainty that characterises late modern society. Beck (2004) has termed this the 'risk society', where; as a consequence of industrial and scientific development, people live individualised and increasingly risky lives, where traditional, reflexive forms of knowledge are discounted. Such individualising tendencies may separate youth and community workers from what has gone before, reducing the likelihood of learning from 'what works.' Workers are cut adrift from the fundamentals of the profession – its values and ethics – and supervision offers an important mechanism through which values may be revisited and renewed (National Youth Agency, 1999) and workers reconnected to the past. As Corney (2004: 514) writes 'it is not possible to act "objectively" or remove personal values from youth work ... personal values influence and determine the way people work ...,' and examining personal values critically, through the process of supervision, ensures that the ethical base of youth work remains intact.

Bauman (2005) writes of living a 'liquid life' in 'liquid modernity', defined as the kind of society where 'the conditions under which its members act change faster than it takes ways of acting to consolidate into habits and routines' (2005:1). Learning from the past becomes increasingly difficult. Through reflection on practice, supervision enables workers to make sense of their work. They learn to deal with events they haven't dealt with before, as in a changing society there is a greater need for experiential learning (Schön cited in Smith, 2001), and as the responsibility for maintaining the currency of professional practice is increasingly passed to practitioners. If practitioners are to be effective in the task, supervision must be integral to any professional qualification course as, increasingly, 'youth workers typically rely on their own experiences' and supervision is essential if practice is to be based on processing and working through those experiences (Halpern et al, 2000, in Huebner et al, 2003) to ensure that both best practice and worker motivation are maintained.

Supervision for workers in training

The sense of achievement and joy from working professionally with young people and

colleagues comes at a price. It is physical, emotional and intellectual work that requires energy, commitment and resilience. The functions and tasks of supervision, as laid out by a range of practitioners (e.g. Hawkins and Shohet, 2006; Gilbert and Evans, 2000; Holloway, 1997; Watkins, 1997; Smith, 1996) lend themselves to supporting workers on youth work training courses which use an experiential learning model. Courses require students to develop and integrate knowledge, skills and perspectives necessary to work effectively and ethically with young people in communities. Supervision is an important constituent of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Heron, 1989) and facilitates deep learning (Ramsden, 1988), connects theory and practice, and facilitates the construction of a sense of professional identity and reflective practice. This period of change for trainees, when old patterns of behaviour and thinking are challenged, raises issues of personal and social competence that require time to work through, in an environment which fosters critical self-reflection. The process of supervision models the practice of youth work and demonstrates to practitioners that their way of working with young people is genuinely valued by the organisation. Gilbert and Evans' (2000) description of supervision captures core elements of the youth work model and highlights that supervision:

- is always interpersonal
- involves a systems perspective
- involves a process of enquiry rather than a search for 'truth'
- involves an immersion in but stands back from the process; the participant-observer dimension
- is the co-creation of a 'new' narrative between supervisor and supervisee which informs the work with the client; the co-creation of meaning
- fosters the development of 'inclusion' and a third person perspective in all the participants in the process
- allows for any mutual understanding which emerges to be partial and open to deconstruction and reconstruction in light of new experiences (Gilbert and Evans, 2000: 7).

Workers in training, through their learning journey, move along a number of relational and developmental trajectories involving self within key relationships including self with clients, managers, colleagues, tutors, supervisors and the organisation.

Built in to models of youth work are understandings of human beings in the social world; how we connect or exclude. Connection with someone going through a learning experience inevitably means that we are connected both emotionally and intellectually. Personal learning and growth for both worker and young person in youth work settings involves participants working through their individual psychosocial, developmental needs and crises (e.g. Erikson, 1950; Marcia, 1966) as well as the relational crises of family, friends and institutions.

Youth workers operate relationally bringing their own attachment style (Bowlby, 1969) into the job. There is a need to keep professional distance and yet build a genuine relational nearness. This, inevitably, creates an emotional tension which requires management through self-awareness, an understanding of theoretical models of the person, professional practice ethics and personal emotional support. For workers in training, learning how to

do this comes from their qualifying course, previous experience, observation of colleagues, professional practice and, crucially, as is argued in this article, the use of supervision. Through supervision trainees can find space to address emotional and intellectual needs and explore their models of ethical practice.

The 'helping professions', including youth and community work, social work, psychotherapy and work in the psychiatric services, engage with, although not exclusively, people in crisis. A trainee in these fields is required to bring techniques and theory to complex human situations which do not respond easily to simple strategies. Expertise which combines knowledge, experience and successful practice is required almost immediately, and the competence of the worker is 'on display' both to the users of a service and to professional colleagues.

Using the 'self' in professional practice requires energy and courage, because the worker risks personal damage in situations where a sense of competence and self worth can be diminished. For the worker in training there is not only the pressure of coping with interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics and institutional demands, but also the need to fit theory and practice together. Often trainees have a history, either as a volunteer/paid member of staff or service user, with their organisations and client groups, so there is the added task of redefining a position within the group.

Youth work is socially demanding, requiring energy mobilisation (Theorell, 2001) for varying degrees of traumatic encounters with young people and their systems, which might contain anger, violence, mental illness and/or bereavement. These encounters involve connecting and working emotionally with others and activates our own emotions, some of which can be painful. For example, emotional systems in the brain which process loss are connected to pain processing centres in the brain (Panksepp, 1998; Goleman, 1995). This pain activates the body's stress systems which, if overused, can lead to system failure with various symptoms, including depression and chronic fatigue syndrome. Other psychosocial job factors are related to ill health:

- Low decision latitude (with both little authority over decisions and little skill discretion)
- high job strain (high psychological demands and low decision latitude)
- poor effort-reward balance with little reward for high effort
- shift work with periods of night work mixed with periods of day work (Theorell, 2001: 46).

Workers in training find themselves working with the sometimes competing demands of their organisation, the young people with whom they work and their qualifying course. Furthermore, their resources are often uncertain, short-term, fluctuating and diminishing. Increased managerialism and efficiency measures leave little time for reflection upon the issues and development of a sense of certainty and competence in an already challenging environment. Newton et al (1995), remind us that, unless we pay attention to the difficulties of viewing the individual at work rather than the organisation in the market place as a major contributor to stress, then supervision may be seen as little more than a form of social control. An analysis of the 'emotional labour' of workers (Newton et al, 1995) and the explicit and implicit rules of social engagement within the organisation

that drive psychological games (Berne, 1964), can reveal how power and insecurity are maintained institutionally and may lead to pathologising staff. The professional self is created within structures of power and through the act of language, around autonomy and personal responsibility. The supervisor needs to be curious about the wider culture and the local enactment contained within the employer-employee relationship, and highlight the mutuality of responsibility. The particular conversations within supervision can reveal these local and wider ideas about what it means to behave professionally, and how that impacts upon practice (Crocket, 2007).

While supervision is not psychotherapy, nor an antidote to poor managerial practice or inadequate policies and procedures, it can have mitigating effects upon organisational stressors. Raised awareness of stressors may lead to action to interrupt destructive patterns. Supervision fosters self-reliant practitioners who 'exhibit an interdependent attachment style and have the ability to form secure, reciprocal relationships with others' (Quick et al, 2001:25). These capacities have broader implications which relate to personal development, including the creation of social support networks, mentoring relationships, and health and well-being (Quick et al, 2001). Supervisory support was found to moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in a study of airline staff (Tourigny et al, 2005). The supervisee's well-being is as important as that of the client group. As such supervisor's need to be aware of such sources of stress as:

- Role ambiguity, conflict and overload
- Client contact overload
- Over exposure
- Psychological loneliness
- Qualitative overload
- Interactions across organizational boundaries
- Responsibilities for people
- Lack of participation in decision making.

Youth workers, and other workers in the helping professions, are prone to 'burn out', and supervisors could usefully look at areas of concern relevant to the particular worker and institution. These may include noble aspirations and initial enthusiasm leading to over commitment with little reward, a lack of realistic criteria for measuring accomplishment, inadequate funding and inefficient use of resources and the tension generated when high public visibility is coupled with misunderstanding and suspicion.

Supervision for workers in training usually sits in the context of a trainee working in an organisation and will often be carried out by line managers. On occasions, special arrangements are made for independent supervisors to provide non-managerial supervision. These two kinds of supervisors can be linked with two different kinds of supervision (Smith, 1996), one being task oriented, the other educational and supportive. The line management supervisor may be seen as focusing on the administrative function, with primary responsibility to the organisation for the efficient completion of tasks within a team. The non-managerial supervisor may be seen as having responsibility, primarily, for the personal development of the trainee. While there may be different priorities for supervisors within a given context, an emphasis on one aspect or another may leave a trainee missing

opportunities to bring together vital aspects of the work.

Youth work practice and training has drawn upon supervision to ensure that the space for reflection is created. The Brunel University PGC course in Youth and Community Work, for example, has supervision as a compulsory component. Supervision models have mostly been developed within the counselling and psychotherapy professions, within which supervision, at least in the UK, is compulsory for all psychotherapists who wish to stay accredited by the main accrediting bodies, including: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) and the British Psychological Society (BPS). These bodies stress that supervision is essential for ethical practice and affords, at least some, protection for clients. Wheeler and Richards (2007), in a review of the research on supervision and its influence on the practitioner, his/her practice and his/her clients, identify seven areas of positive impact. Supervision helped counsellors become more self aware, improve their skills, raise self-efficacy beliefs, and the elements of support, timing and frequency of supervision, and theoretical orientation contributed towards the development of the supervisee and improved client outcomes.

Counselling and psychotherapy practitioners have outlined and researched a range of models for supervision and highlighted the importance of supervision for trainees (Watkins, 1997) with supervisors who are not only experienced in the field but also accomplished supervisors. Holloway (1997) proposes a structure for the analysis and teaching of supervision. In her systems approach (SAS model) she identifies three essential factors:

- interpersonal structure of the relationship – the dimensions of power and involvement
- phase of the relationship – relational development specific to the participants
- supervisory contract – the establishment of a set of expectations for tasks and functions of supervision (Holloway, 1997:251).

These core factors form the relationship of supervision which assists the supervisor and supervisee to work on the functions and tasks of supervision. This is set within the context of client, institution, trainee and supervisor. Carroll (1996) highlights the importance of supervisors assessing and acknowledging the developmental needs of trainee workers. Stoltenberg and McNeill (1997) provide a complex integrated developmental model of supervision which combines personal development in 3 structures relating to a sense of self: motivation, autonomy and self-other awareness, with skills sets relevant to the work. For workers in training a supervisor may have to work with a supervisee who is dependent, needing structure with a limited self awareness but highly motivated to learn the skills of the job. The various tasks may be seen in isolation and set backs may lead to low morale and a difficulty seeing strengths and weaknesses. They suggest supervisory strategies for each of three levels of development and recommend that supervisors who take on trainees are competent to manage these aspects of staff development.

When youth services acknowledge that supervision can have positive effects for trainees and their organisations then thought needs to be given to the training of staff in supervision. The work requires supervisors to explore their own practice as both face to face workers and managers, while building their own models of supervision. Ad hoc allocation of unprepared, managerial staff to supervise trainees, who bring a wealth of experience from

outside the profession as adult learners, can lead to de-motivation, dependency and a focus on self in crisis. Hawkins and Shohet (2006) outline a developmental approach within this field, recognising that trainees require more and different supervision than experienced and qualified practitioners. They summarise the stages of development, with links to how trainees view themselves in the work thus:

Level 1:	self-centred.	Can I make it in this work?
Level 2:	client-centred.	Can I help this client make it?
Level 3:	process-centred.	How are we relating together?
Level 4:	process-in-context-centred.	How do processes interpenetrate?

(Hawkins and Shohet, 2006:74).

These stages fit a model of youth work (Smith, 2001) which focuses on young people, emphasizes voluntary participation and relationships and is committed to association. It emphasises friendliness and informality, acting with integrity and concern with the education and, more broadly, the welfare of young people. It is a practice in which the worker plays an active part in building a sense of community through the use of self. Supervision is part of the experiential learning undertaken by the worker in training to explore how conscious and unconscious psychological processes impact upon him/her and the young people in their work together. Hawkins and Shohet (2006) capture this element by looking not only at the content of work sessions with the activities, strategies and interventions but also at the relationship dynamics experienced by the worker. This model relies on the worker in training and the supervisor to be aware of and open to their own processes and to make sense of what the worker brings from outside to the supervision session. Obholzer and Zagier Roberts (1994) describe how staff set up defensive dynamics to avoid the anxiety contained within the primary task of the organisation. Supervisors act as consultants, finding more open and constructive ways to contain the anxiety and to make conscious the unconscious.

Supervision is a powerful tool which can be used to facilitate workers in training, progressing through their life long learning. It has the potential to assist organisations in valuing staff through addressing the known stress points of the particular work performed. Most importantly, it can help staff keep focused on the young people at the heart of the youth work enterprise.

Competing Influences

It is important to recognise that developmental supervision assists the organisation in valuing and developing staff and in contributing to its purpose. However the organisational and training contexts influence the process of supervision, whether managerial, non-managerial, or training (Gonzalez Doupe, 2001; Towler, 2005; Willis, 2006). The influence they exert may be positive or negative, conscious and/or unconscious.

Current debate and flux surrounding the future shape of Youth Services (eg. Every Child Matters, 2004) has created a sense of transition during which staff accommodate, assimilate or resist the emerging culture. The uncertainty generated is reflected in different organisational practices in relation to supervision, as wider systems, including social policy

enactments, are brought to bear on youth work practice and training.

In a recent survey (Lawley and McNamara, 2007), fieldwork supervisors and their trainees (supervisees) reflected on the nature of their supervisory experiences, identifying both hindering and facilitating factors, and some of the issues which arose reflect this uncertainty. Concerns included the exercise of power, both consciously and unconsciously, in supervisory relationships, which involved recognition of the influence of contextual factors on supervisor and supervisee and the exercise of control and monitoring. Central to their reflection was the role of informed and uninformed managers which could have the effect of either reducing or generating further uncertainty.

Towler (2005) argues that the organisational context influences the supervisory process like a hidden 'invisible client'. Training organisations can play a counterbalancing role by facilitating a productive alliance between organisation, supervisor and supervisee. Such brokerage enables the exploration of relational boundaries, creates opportunities for valuing and being valued and facilitates the co-creation of a flexible space for a relational focus for supervision.

Traditionally three significant frameworks position the supervisory process and its organizational context. We have adapted these models to show the potential influence of the training organisation. The three-cornered contract (English,1975) including the concept of 'psychological distance' (Micholt, 1992) highlights the necessity for agreements between supervisee, supervisor and the relevant organization thus avoiding the potential for playing psychological games, leading to distortions of accountability indicating either collusion or alienation between the parties. In the revised model of the four cornered contract (Figure A) the role of the HEI is to make visible the influence and constraints of all parties.

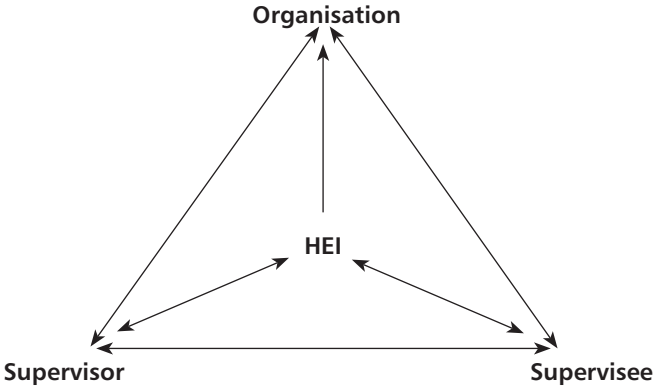

Figure A: The Four Cornered Contract (adapted from English 1975; Micholt 1992).

Hawkins' 'Bath Model' (figure B) views organizational culture as residing at five distinct levels:

- artefacts – the rituals, symbols/logos, mission statements of the organisation, buildings, organisational structure
- behaviour – the unwritten rules which constrain how people behave, what is and what

is not talked about, how people relate to each other
- mind-sets – the spectacles through which members of the organisational culture view themselves, the environment with which they interact and problems that arise
- emotional ground – the collective feelings which underlie and influence the other three levels of culture; the emotional mood and feeling within the business ORGANISATION?
- motivational roots – the fundamental aspirations which drive choices within the collective business organisation?.

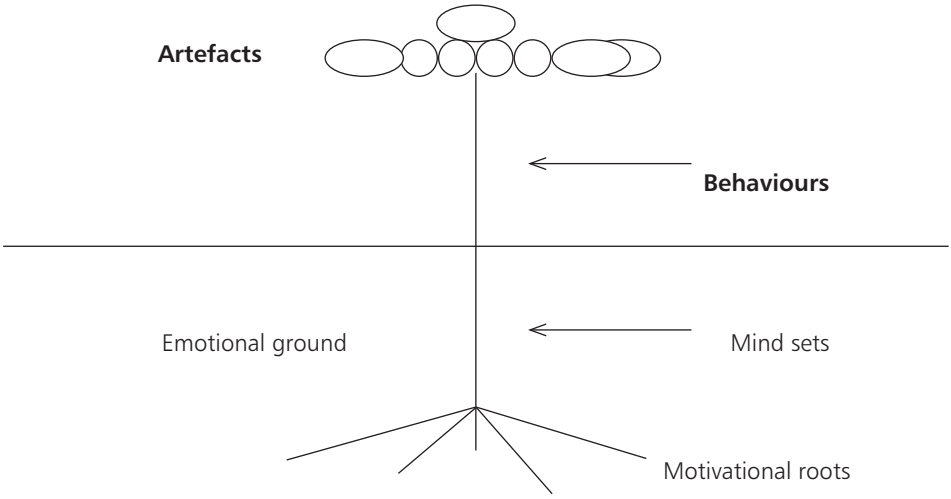

Figure B: The Bath Model (based on the work of Geertz, 1973 and Schein, 1985) cited in Hawkins and Shohet (2000:16)

Hawkins, applying psychoanalytic theory, suggests that it is only the top level of organisational culture which is fully visible and conscious. The behavioural norms may operate without people being aware of the conventions within which they are acting. The mind-sets may be sub-conscious and the emotional ground may be fully unconscious. Youth work courses need to assist students to map out their organisational culture and to give them tools to identify the unconscious processes inherent in their work structures.

Figure C represents some of the factors contributing to culture and where HEIs may have a positive influence. This model highlights the current transitional nature of youth services. National culture is characterised by target driven, 'value for money' services identified by recognised, benchmarked outcomes (DfES, 2004: 1). Pressure and crisis is generated by governmental social policy (e.g. exclusion orders, ASBOs) as workers are expected to engender rapid, positive changes in young people' lives. Young people as key stakeholders, rightly expect a competent, accountable, professional service. Supervisees and supervisors often experience conflict between meeting organizational targets or young people's needs (individual versus organization). The role of the HEI, in influencing the agenda of supervision, might include encouraging explorations of ethical dimensions of practice and the influence of ethical codes (professional associations). Supervision, viewed from this perspective, is a multi-layered and complex process, requiring all parties awareness of

competing demands, beyond what happens in supervision. An important role for HEI's is to make these external influences explicit, to enable both supervisor and supervisee to acknowledge and work with them.

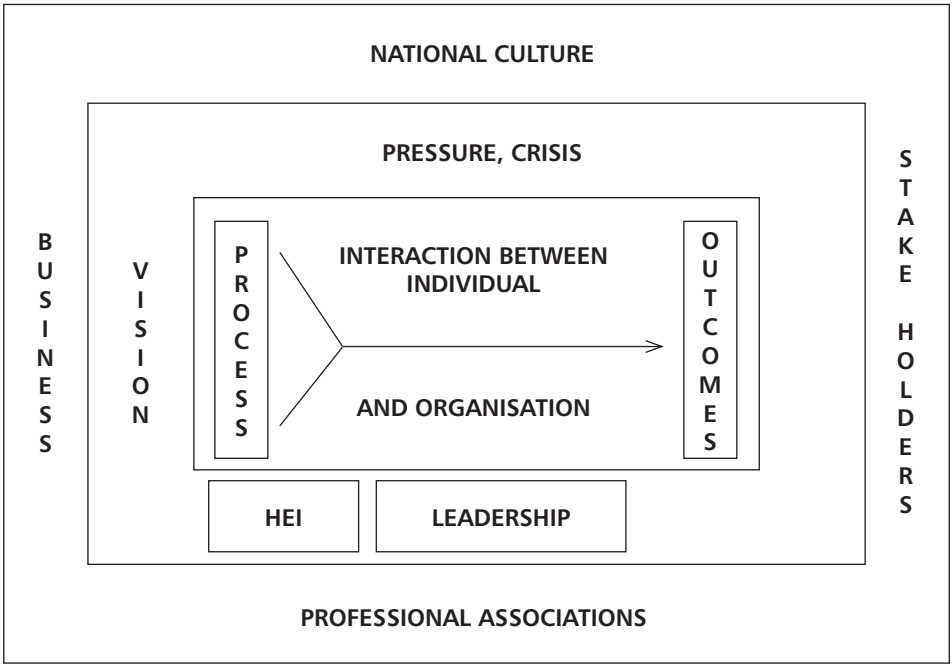

Figure C: A conceptual model for understanding organizational culture (adapted from De Witte & Van Mijen 1999: 498)

Recognising the power of the invisible client and the potential power of the HEI is only part of the picture. Foucault (Rabinow, 1991) argues that the exercise of power is an aspect of every relationship. Proctor (2002:21) provides a useful distinction between:

- 'power-with' expressed as empowerment
- 'power-over' expressed as domination and coercive authority
- 'power-within' expressed as respect for others and their individual power

Supervisory relationships, especially if managerial, can easily slide into 'power-over' relationships, especially if the pressure upon the supervisor is to monitor rather than supervise the worker. The covert exercise of power creates inflexibility, lack of trust and opportunity for bureaucracy and over-prescription to become guiding principles.

It may also create feelings of resentment, and severely limit issues the supervisee feels comfortable exploring in supervision. Supervisors may engage in what Lukes terms 'the mobilisation of bias' (Lukes, 2005: 20) as the unacknowledged influences of sponsoring organisations ensure some issues are 'organised into' supervision, while others are 'organised out'. For example one supervisee commented, 'It is seen as a weakness if you bring anything up about pressure … a criticism about how you manage your time' (Lawley and McNamara, 2007).

It is paramount that supervisees and supervisors are alert to the hidden influences of the context, which may impose an unbalanced agenda. The frameworks of Hawkins (2000) and De Witte and Van Mijen (1999) indicate strongly a measured reflection on the sometimes competing demands of supervisee and organization, mediated in managerial supervision through the supervisor. In training supervision the demands may be exacerbated by the requirements of the teaching institution for students to complete academic and practice based assessments within prescribed timeframes. Thus the HEI has a particular responsibility to ensure that these invisible powers are made explicit and worked with. One method of achieving this is through clear contracting. Those supervisees surveyed (Lawley and McNamara, 2007) indicate that unclear contracting can lead to a lack of safety and feelings of confusion about the structure of supervision and the roles of both parties. The contract between supervisee and supervisor needs to reflect the greater contract between supervisor/supervisee and organization and the HEI, as in the '4 cornered' contract above.

English (1975), Hay (1992), and Sills (1997) support the notion of contracting on three levels:

- The administrative: Where? How often? How long?
- The professional: What is the focus? What is its purpose and how shall we accomplish it? How will it be structured? What is expected of each role?
- The psychological: What are boundaries of information sharing? Confidentiality? The hidden agendas?

Supervision is a fine art of orchestration, where the needs of supervisor (managerial, training), supervisee, HEI and employing organization each have space, an opportunity to speak and be understood, and work towards accommodating each parties' needs (English, 1975; Micholt 1992). The key element here is managing this aspect of supervision. Reframed as the guardian of quality control, both of the supervisee's performance in their work with young people, and of meeting the HEI and employing organization's targets, the supervisor needs to be able to operate from a balance of support and challenge, being authoritative and facilitative, informed by ethical competence. The HEI has a specific role in supporting and ensuring this through clear contracting and on-going training and support.

Identifying the facilitating and hindering forces in supervision

Towler's research (2005) uncovered a dual process of contesting relational boundaries between supervisee and supervisor, supervisee and organization, and supervisor and organization, alongside equal processes of supervisees and supervisors valuing and being valued by each other and the organization. Taoist concepts of 'yin and yang' encapsulate the way in which opposites are 'intertwined in a state of tension' (Morgan, 1997: 283). The concept of 'force field' (Egan, 1994) had yielded the same sense of flux and flow, as hindering and facilitating influences met, as supervisees and supervisors 'engaged in co-creating a flexible space and relational focus for supervision'. Recent research (Lawley and McNamara, 2007) yielded similar expressions of facilitating and hindering factors, tabulated thus:

Facilitative	**Hindering**
Enough time Able to trust Being understood Checks about me Feeling supported Suggestions for improving professional practice Share worries and concerns Good structure Intentional Supervisor's expertise	Time constraints Not being understood Poor contracting Feeling unsafe Conflict with organizational goals Supervisor not turning up Supervisor never chases up actions agreed Other meetings over-ride the need for supervision

Proctor (1997:350) identifies 'management sympathy' and 'management informedness' as crucial, as they will affect the priority supervision is accorded, and consequently the motivation of supervisee and supervisor in the effort and enthusiasm each contributes to the process. In the above research students had negative experiences when supervisors hadn't attended or had cancelled sessions in favour of other priorities, or seemed unsympathetic to or uninformed of the demands of qualification training.

The implications of this are clear for HEIs. There is an important role in ensuring students are adequately trained in supervisee and supervisor skills. Most institutions recognise this and ensure that such training is a core part of the programme, and that, experiences as supervisees and supervisors (as increasingly students find themselves in managerial positions whilst unqualified) are regularly integrated into the curriculum and tutorials. Management informedness is generally addressed through a system of contracting, regular monitoring, and assessment of placement experiences from both an organisation and student perspective. Management sympathy is an area in which HEIs may need to be more proactive in making explicit the impact of the invisible client, and in ensuring that organisations are fully aware of the benefits of quality supervision. As Towler (2005) concluded:

> *... at the heart of organisational supervision I had discovered a correlation between the perceived values and beliefs of the organisation and those of counsellors, supervisors and their professional bodies. As Handy (1993: 191) has observed, 'a fit between the two should lead to a fulfilled psychological contract, to satisfaction at work' – and vice-versa.*

This leads to a number of Implications for organisations responsible for training, including:

- ensuring clear contracting with all four parties regarding roles and responsibilities.
- helping supervisees and supervisors distinguish between practice and operational issues
- ensuring continuing personal and professional development in conceptualising and working with hidden influences (unconscious processes) of organisational cultures,

HEI's share with supervisors the responsibility of ensuring that supervisees develop an awareness of the hidden influence of organisational systems and their impact, conscious or unconscious, on the process of supervision. This entails an awareness of the importance of working with organisational systems, not against them, and of creating and maintaining good working alliances with all parties in the contract. Supervisees need to be supported in making efforts to understand the organisational culture and its influence on practitioners, their supervision and their client group. This needs to extend to an appreciation of the necessity of flexibility and adaptability, enabling them to become appropriately acculturated to the prevailing culture, tempered by ethical good practice

HEI's also have a responsibility to ensure that organisations become informed and educated about the nature and practice of youth work supervision. This entails ensuring organisations find ways of acknowledging and using creatively the organisational 'shadow side', develop a strong working alliance with students, supervisors and HEIs and that they are compassionate – students get tired of being 'grown-up' all the time.

Conclusions

Research and practice of organizational supervision in a variety of settings, including youth services, is beginning to attest to the hidden influences of context, often mediated through unconscious processes. When engaging in supervision, the hidden client in the room (Towler and Pickard, 2003; Towler, 2005) is an ever-present reality. Practitioners need to be aware of a process of assimilation with and acculturation to the prevailing organizational culture. There will be elements of that culture which will be resisted, others which will be accommodated. Not to recognise and work with this phenomenon may result in distorted realities, collusive activity and alienation from each of the parties in the supervisory experience.

Thus, a renewed emphasis on fieldwork supervision of those undertaking qualification training, and academic training in supervision, encompassing supervisor and supervisee roles, is essential. In this way an understanding of and commitment to supervision as a defining aspect of professional practice will be ensured and worker health protected. Only by asserting the centrality of supervision to professional youth work practice will young people remain at its heart, and continue to achieve positive and life enhancing experiences.

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Changing Patterns in Recruiting Youth Workers

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This article looks at issues of recruitment both to youth work posts and college courses. It draws on an evaluation of recruitment to the youth work course at the University of Chichester and a small piece of research looking at the motivation of youth workers. The discussion considers national statistics and research, theoretical perspectives such as youth transitions and social capital, and decision making about higher education among young people. I attempt to put youth work recruitment into the national context of student recruitment to Higher Education and to examine the changes in the student composition and implications for practice.

Keywords: Recruitment, Higher Education, Youth Work

The National Context

Nationally the number of youth and community work courses has grown from 15 in 1980 to 50 currently. In addition, the Open University has recently had a youth work course validated which may recruit 500 students annually. As the National Youth Agency has decided that the professional qualification for youth work will be at degree level from 2010, we can expect institutions to reformulate their foundation degrees and Diplomas into BA degrees in Youth Work. On the other hand some 'Russell Group' institutions such as the University of Birmingham have decided not to continue their youth work qualification course as catering for students who are outside the normal pattern of 3 'A's at A level at entry. There are a growing number of courses at post graduate and Masters level.

Alongside the increase in numbers of qualifying courses there has been a change in the composition of the youth work student population and of the youth work workforce, particularly in gender.

Despite the growth in number of training courses, and an increase in numbers of students from 1030 in 2002 to 1518 in 2004, there is a 'recruitment and retention crisis' (Moore 2005, *Young People Now* 30/8/06:21) for youth workers. A survey of employers in 2000 undertaken by the Community and Youth Workers Union (CYWU, 2000) showed that many vacancies had to be re-advertised several times and there are not sufficient youth workers to meet targets set by the government in *Resourcing Excellent Youth Services* (DfEE 2002). There have often been concerns in the past about the supply of qualified youth workers (Jeffs and Smith, 1987,1993). The latest concerns over recruitment and retention in the youth service led to the 2002 Warwick conference (NYA/DfES/Connexions2002) and a working group (NYA/DfES/Connexions2003). A JNC Workforce survey of 2001 covering all LEAs and a sample of voluntary organizations found that 46.9 per cent of full time/full time equivalent staff were nationally qualified. The fact that youth work has a large number of

part time unqualified workers makes its recognition as a profession more difficult but its strength is in its ability to encourage local people into work with young people, not only as paid staff but as volunteers.

Many Youth and Community Work graduates do not actually take up youth work posts, (Harland et al, 2005) and the NYA's annual surveys reveal an increase of 4 per cent in the numbers entering the voluntary youth work sector since 2003/4 (NYA, 2005) so that recruitment of newly qualified workers to the voluntary and statutory sectors are almost equal at about 30 per cent. However, the NYA's survey included a large 'not known' category of 17 per cent as well as 8 per cent entering other employment, so the figures may be misleading.

In his research interviewing youth workers in the South East of England Moore (2005:29) found that 'it has been particularly difficult to recruit sufficient staff, and just as difficult to retain experienced youth workers in employment.' Seventy three per cent of the students and practitioners interviewed by Moore identified 'the desire to contribute to society' as the reason they were attracted to the job, and emphasised their commitment to the work. However, youth work staff in the research felt isolated and 60 per cent felt they lacked support in their jobs. The importance of managerial support is recognised in the field (Jenkinson, 2002) but still not always provided. Managers tend to blame the quality of training for workers failing to understand the responsibilities required of them, and finding it difficult to cope or 'manage' (Moore, 2005). This is an old, long standing issue with managers, although I have always found it hard to pin youth service managers down to what they actually mean by 'management' skills. It may be the case, as Blundell (2001) suggests, that the JNC expects too much from trainee youth workers. The move to a three year degree course should be able to address this to some extent, but as a teacher of youth workers I feel I need to make sure my students understand the values and methods of youth work before moving on to thinking of themselves as 'managers'. The three year degree may also help with the perception of youth work as a profession, but there are concerns that the move to a graduate profession may deter people from starting a course which will probably last at least four years part time.

The cost of studying may also be off putting for some potential students. It can be argued that youth work students are disadvantaged compared to teachers and social workers and that they should be funded as social workers are, with bursaries and travel funding with payment for placement supervisors. It is often difficult for youth work courses to find appropriate placements for students, and this affects their learning and their ability to practice.

Another factor affecting recruitment into courses and into jobs may be the changing nature of youth workers themselves; in the nature of the qualification they start with, in ethnicity, disability, in age and especially in gender. There are also issues about the recruitment of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds into Higher Education.

Course Entry Qualification

The percentage entering undergraduate youth and community work courses without GCE A levels or GNVQs in 2004/5 was 63.4 per cent compared to 62.3 per cent in 2003/4.

Other qualifications include access courses / NVQs, GCSEs. Fifteen per cent of programmes recruited students with GCSEs as their highest level of qualification. These students often need a great deal of support to survive in HE and many courses raise concerns about learning support as an issue.

Students with GNVQs in Childcare or the CACHE Diploma are also applying to youth work courses; this course is traditionally done by young women.

Entry from other professions

Most full time youth workers now have a youth work qualification. While in 1983, 43 per cent were teachers (Kuper, 1985), after 1988 teachers were no longer recognized as qualified youth workers. However, recently there has been national discussion in the development of the Children's Workforce about the need to be able to transfer across professions more easily. Youth Work is not necessarily seen as a long term career compared with teaching or social work (Harland et al, 2005) so this may be an advantage for youth workers. Currently a qualified youth worker who wants to teach has to do the whole teaching qualification. Youth work courses still attract, particularly at post graduate level, those students who are seeking a change of career and they are often extremely well motivated. There are also potential workers from other European countries.

The requirement for the JNC qualification is up for debate on many courses as many Local Authorities appoint workers without the qualification. It will then depend on the nature of the post whether training is paid for. Now that Youth Services are subsumed into Children's Services the demand for what we might describe as generic youth work is less and employers are not insisting on the professional qualification, partly because it is difficult to recruit. The debate about the value of the youth work qualification as statutory and generic 'youth workers' jobs decline is an important one that needs wide discussion.

Age

There is a shift towards younger students, also found by Harland et al in Northern Ireland (2005). In England the mean age for youth work students was 24.6 years in 2003, compared with 29.2 years in 1999. Holmes found 29.3 years in 1981, so it seems the age has only dropped relatively recently. One factor may be the rise in faith based courses which attract younger students (NYA, 2003). The most significant growth is in the intake of students aged between 21 and 24 years, by 3.5 per cent nationally in 2004/5 (NYA, 2005) However, for 13 programmes, under 21s comprised the largest percentage intake. In Chichester, which is used as a case study for this article, the average age is 25 years, with 45 per cent of community and youth work students under 21compared with 60 per cent for the university as a whole. The Chichester course is full time and it may be the case that a recent relative rise in part time courses has kept up the national average age. Certainly my experience is of a younger cohort on the full time courses.

The first part time course which started in Avery Hill in 1972 had a cohort with an average

age of 42 years (*Youth in Society*, 1973). There was a general age bar for youth work students of 24, but this was dropped when courses came under UCAS in the 1980s. Youth and Community work courses have traditionally provided older students with access to Higher Education; the courses demanded experience in youth and community work and recruited many community activists. The NYA lowered the criteria for experience in the 1990s and, although courses still ask for some experience of youth work, institutional pressures to fill courses may mean this is minimal. The emphasis in qualifying courses is now much more clearly on youth work rather than community work and the NYA's validation criteria are specific that the bulk of face to face work on practice placement has to be with young people.

Ethnicity

Youth work courses have always been adept at encouraging wider participation and recruiting black and ethnic minority students. NYA figures show a small but encouraging rise in recruitment from ethnic minorities onto courses, from 11 per cent in 2000 to 13 per cent in 2002. The way that these figures were collected by the NYA was changed in accordance with the categories recognized by the Commission for Racial Equality in 2004/5; in that year, eight programmes had an exclusively white intake, 33 included black /black British students and 27 Asian/Asian British. The JNC workforce survey of 2001 found that 'generally a high percentage of staff with non-British origins was reported: 18.1 per cent of full time staff'.

Disability

There is a relatively high proportion of students with disabilities on youth and community work courses; this proportion has increased over the last few years from 10 per cent in 2002 to 14 per cent in 2004. The proportion affected by dyslexia is known to be higher than is the norm on other higher education programmes (NYA 2003, 2005); this has implications for the level of learning support these students need. However, the biggest shift has been in the gender ratio.

Gender

When I was first a full time worker in 1979 my colleagues were mainly male. Now the balance is shifting. It is difficult to establish when the trend to a more female workforce started. Certainly in 1991 increasing numbers of female students were being recruited to qualifying courses in the Northern region (Sawbridge and Spence 1991). In the 2001 workforce survey that was conducted by the JNC as part of the pay agreement, the full time workforce was evenly split between male and female (52 per cent male). However there were more men at higher grades (56 per cent at level three, the highest grade for youth workers), and more women trainees (53 per cent) showing a change towards a female workforce. In 2005 in Scotland, Atkin et al, found that out of a total full time work force delivering youth work, of 655, there were 349 women (53.3 per cent). However, out of 158

staff employed at council level to shape policy only 69 (43 per cent) were women. In 2003, research by the Thomas Coram institute showed that 71 per cent of the Welfare/Community and Youth Worker section of the Care Workforce are female (Simon, Owen et al, 2003). However, this includes workers other than youth workers.

There may be several factors influencing the change in gender balance. Even though men often do well in it in terms of promotion (Simpson, 2005) they may avoid entering a youth centred profession in view of concerns about men working with children (Pringle,1995). In this regard, there is also a decline in male secondary teacher recruitment (Macleod, 2005). However, there is a general increase in young women in higher education generally, and changes in youth work towards a more individual mentoring role and away from activity orientated provision once dominated by male workers may also be impacting on the situation (Spence, 1989; Colley, 2003). In 1989 Sawbridge and Spence found the agenda in youth work dominated by men and by male ways of working. In interviews I conducted recently with a small number of full time workers, women youth workers said they often felt unsupported in the workplace and unable to advance to management positions. But some felt there was no difference attributable to gender. For instance, S. said 'Well, I think it's more to do with style and personality than gender.' The two male colleagues of this woman are very different in working style. One is more an 'old fashioned' very 'hands on,' organizing, busy type of worker, while the other is very concerned about measuring outcomes, has moved into management and is very managerial. So the gender issue for her isn't obvious. Meanwhile, G. despairs of 'macho male workers who like to be one of the boys,' and contrasts them with more reflective female workers. For other workers gender and feminist ideas had very much shaped their entrance into youth work, but they found that men still dominated in management and resources for work with girls as well as boys. Any feminist agenda was difficult to find and argue for, so that an increase in the number of women has not necessarily changed the youth work agenda.

On qualifying courses the new student intake is predominately female; there were 63 per cent female students in 2004 (NYA 2005). This is also true in the Republic of Ireland (Forde and O'hAodain, 2007) where 70.2 per cent of the students on the youth work qualifying course at the University of Cork were female (over 12 intakes the majority were always female, but ranged from 87 per cent in 2003 to 55 per cent in 1998).In Northern Ireland, Harland et al (2005) point out that between 2002 and 2004 female graduating students outnumbered men by a ratio of 3:2. However, in Holmes' research of the late 1970s (Holmes, 1981) 72.5 per cent of the students were male. In Chichester there are 75 per cent women on the course at present. The NYA figures show that the largest gap between male and female recruitment is in the over 34 category and the under 21 category, so that certainly the trend to younger students is a factor.

Is the feminisation of youth work, at least numerically, concerning? As a youth work teacher I believe youth work needs both male and female workers, in particular those men who will challenge sexual oppression and the 'macho' attitudes of many young men, but also female workers with a feminist perspective. It is not the case that having more women necessarily brings about a change in the culture of any work force (Walby, 1997) and it could be argued that recent changes in youth work have been towards a more masculinised and managerialist culture of targets and outcomes. An increase in the number of women

has not led to more cooperative working in a less hierarchical service as feminists would envisage happening. The same phenomenon was demonstrated by Skelton (2002) in her research into primary school teaching.

The lack of male students may also be a concern for local authorities as, according to research (Harland et al, 2005; Holmes, 1986) many of those youth work students not going into youth work posts after completion of their training are women, and women are less likely to go into local authority work and particularly into centre based work. Holmes suggested that the reasons included women adopting a realistic position i.e. these jobs were male dominated, or that they may prefer problem based work with small groups. Women workers often saw themselves more in the role of 'carer' or 'counsellor' than 'organiser' and women's emotional labour is an important aspect of these roles (Colley, 2003; Colley, 2006).

So the rise in women students and therefore workers may mean a decline in traditional forms of centre based youth work, which I find concerning as I have argued elsewhere that clubs are the bedrock of the work (Robertson, 2005). Certainly my experience is that some students are reluctant to undertake this work on placement, seeing it as less 'exciting' than project work and some don't want to work the unsocial hours that club work demands. Harland et al (2005) found that twice as many female respondents as males cited unsocial hours as a reason for leaving the profession. They also found that many students felt the voluntary sector offered imaginative and exciting opportunities compared with the statutory sector.

While youth work courses have experienced a decline in male entrants the same is true throughout the HE sector and recruiting male students is not only important for youth work courses.

Higher Education, Gender and Class

There is a general increase in women students in higher education. Chichester University is 68 per cent female; this is above average as the figure for all universities in 2004/5 was 58 per cent female. Over the last decade more than 70 per cent of the increase in full-time undergraduates in the UK has been female. According to Berliner (2004) it is not just school leavers who are skewing the balance. Women in their 20s and 30s are increasingly taking up opportunities as mature students in much greater numbers than men. In the academic year 2002-3, 56 per cent of first-degree graduates and 58 per cent of first-year undergraduates were women (Berliner, 2004).

Higher Education and students access to it has been fertile ground for researchers over the last decade. They draw on a number of theoretical perspectives, particularly those relating to cultural and social capital and to youth transitions to understand and explain it. These concepts indicate that there are specific issues for the recruitment of male students onto training courses and also those from disadvantaged groups. Despite years of effort and cash universities are still failing to attract the poorest young people (*Guardian Education*, 12.06.07).

Berggren (2006) found that during the recession of the 1990s in Sweden more young students from lower classes entered higher education. However, when the labour market recovered, men tended to abandon higher education while women continued to increase their involvement. Her hypothesis that an economic recession in society leads to class equalisation in the recruitment of new students to higher education was supported for men but not women. Berggren suggests that cultural capital inherited from the family and environment is decisive for success within the educational system. This includes how to express oneself, how to manoeuvre within society and also a knowledge about cultural distinctions and familiarity with art. The social networks acquired through family or peers known as social capital (Field, 2003; Putnam, 2000) give access to the sort of cultural capital that is unobtainable for others, so that working class students do not have access to the same information about higher education as middle-class students have. More affluent students get not only financial support from parents but often help in choosing a university through networks of family and friends which comprise social capital. Reay, David and Ball (2005) use notions of family 'habitus' derived from Bourdieu to make sense of the differences in involvement between parents. Parents with no history of higher education attendance found it difficult to be involved in their children's choices. The process was gendered, with boys being more reluctant to involve their families. Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' is an embodied form of capital; it is an unreflected way of acting in social situations – a habit, acquired from life experience so far. So that the choice of going to university for middle class children with parents who have been to university seems obvious, in fact one more difficult not to make than to make. Children like those described in Reay, David and Ball's research are living out a 'normal biography.' Normal biographies are 'linear, anticipated and predictable, unreflexive transitions, often gender and class specific, rooted in well-established life-worlds' (Reay, David and Balls, 2005:33). However, it is also the case that individuals retain agency, and Bourdieu has been criticised as viewing social hierarchies as relatively static and economically determined (Field, 2003). Bourdieu saw his contribution as reconciling structuralist accounts of inequality, from a Marxist tradition, with constructivist understandings of human agency. He viewed social capital as a concept about family rather than groups, which denies the networks that young people can form through their peer groups (Halpern, 2005). Berggen (2006) identifies what she calls, 'school capital', acquired by the student themselves from school, leaving certificates, degrees, and diplomas. It is also the case that students are expected to have taken part in extra- curricula activities, at both school and university, and may be asked about these at university and certainly interviews for management programmes (Brown and Hesketh, 2004). For many youth and community work students this capital comes mainly in the form of youth work experience; many have been involved in youth projects and inspired by the staff. Those interviewed for places on the course in Chichester tend to want to help other young people in the way they were helped. So their background can be a positive factor on getting in courses if they actually apply.

However, although many young men have gained experience through youth work, one of the problems with recruiting young men to university seems to be the image of 'cool masculinity' that is about work and not study and that needs money to sustain it (Francis, 2006). Once students get to university the majority need to work while studying (Callender, and Jackson, 2005; Forsyth and Furlong, 2000; Reay et al, 2005). Youth work students also need to work at placement and may end up doing very long hours with studying,

doing youth work and some other paid work. Forsyth and Furlong (2000) suggest that more young students, especially those from poorer families, are increasingly attracted to vocational courses. Their research found that many disadvantaged young people were attracted to specific courses because these were seen as having a job at the end, allowing them to clear up debts accumulated whilst a student. These were not necessarily the subject the student was most talented in. For example, students who are talented in music or the arts may chose to do youth work courses, to help other young people get involved in the arts, rather than pursue their own interests.

Education is important for its own sake, not just as a route to employment and one of the important aspects of the work of an informal educator, which is what our youth workers aim to become, is to have a wide background knowledge and be able to discuss a multitude of subjects with young people (Jeffs and Smith, 2005). It is important that students develop a critical perspective on government policy and can use theory to explain their practice. Youth work also demands a vocational commitment (Jeffs, 2006). Increasingly the vocational element derives from religious faith and in particular, many students have a Christian commitment and experience of church based youth work. However, prospective youth workers with a radical or politically motivated agenda seem hard to find and young people are often regarded as 'problems' to be solved by youth workers.

Another important issue affecting students is tuition and top up fees. It is suggested (Forsyth and Furlong, 2000; Callender and Jackson, 2005) that working class students are likely to be more averse to getting into debt than those from the middle classes. Callender and Jackson (2005) suggest that the fear of debt is greatest among low-income families. Entering higher education is an increasingly risky investment decision for low income students such as single parents. Callender and Jackson's research concludes that the risk of failure may discourage prospective students from less advantaged backgrounds from borrowing the large sums of money now needed to get a university degree. There was a 17,000 fall in applications to university in 2006, the first year of top up fees (TES, 25.8.06:19). This may mean that working class students will not attempt to go for a three year degree, but seek a lower youth work NVQ qualification instead- which has implications for youth work quality. Youth work surely needs the best educated young people it can get to work with the most disadvantaged.

Brown (cited in Berliner, 2004 and Brown and Hesketh, 2005) believes that middle class boys are as interested in going to university as they ever were, but that working class boys continue to be as disinterested as ever. The shift in gender at HE is occurring as a result of working-class girls and women seeking higher qualifications, because more jobs in the 'feminised' market need educational credentials, thereby increasing the gender gap. Reay argues that the market for middle-class higher education students is now saturated (Berliner, 2005; Reay, David and Ball, 2005). Even middle-class men and women who ten years ago would not have considered themselves academic enough are going to university, which leaves any further rise in university entry to come from the working classes. This is where the different approaches to education between the sexes, shown by her research, come into play. How girls and women work and respond to opportunities is the key to the rising gender gap in the higher education student body.

> *Right from the start of school, girls assume different attitudes to learning...They have a willingness to play by the rules of the educational game and an engagement with learning. Even if they find things tedious, they get on with it rather than get out. As we move from an elite to a mass higher education system, working-class girls are buying into it, while working-class boys are opting out. Nothing is going to pull these young working-class men in. They are disenchanted with education before the sixth form* (Reay, 2005:12).

The debate about the influence of structure and agency on how young people make decisions is at the core of research into participation in higher education. This is one of the key transitions that young people make into adulthood. Traditionally transitions are between living in the parental home, and living independently, from education to work and from progeny to parent (Coles, 2005). Although it may be argued that these transitions were more straightforward in the past and quicker than they are today (Miles, 2000) young people have never been a homogenous age group. A generation ago there was a clear distinction between the later, extended transitions of the middle classes and the earlier, accelerated transitions of the working classes (Jones et al, 2004) and family background continues to be a crucial factor in educational and work outcomes (Forsyth and Furlong, 2000). Although there is a broad trend towards the extension of dependent youth, it is not across the board. Adulthood still comes early for some, so that there is a polarisation of experience in youth (Jones, 2002 cited in Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004). Fast track transitions are distinctive and more subject to policy interventions than the increasing middle class majority whose transitions are extended, although they may also be problematic. Social class continues to play a significant part in young people's biographies through the reproduction of beliefs and cultural capital as well as the transfer of wealth (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977 cited in Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse, 2004). In today's society the decision to enter higher education and construct their own individualised biographies is seen as an individual decision for young people to take, but in fact how they 'choose' depends on their class, gender and race background (Beck, 1992, Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). It also depends on the level of family support they get. In their research, Jones, O'Sullivan and Rouse found that young people without supportive families had risky transitions and were far more likely to drop out of education, training and employment and be targeted by policies to combat social exclusion.

Research into the admissions process of universities is increasingly relevant as higher education admissions are now, for the first time, of interest to a majority of the voting population (Price, 2002). Last year I undertook a small evaluation into the recruitment of students on to the Youth Work course at Chichester. Although we produce a leaflet to go to youth work projects the majority of recruitment marketing to the course is via the university website and a large number of potential students find about the course by word of mouth. The main marketing initiative of the university is through school liaison visits, which are not subject specific. The University also holds open days and mature students evenings. Research suggests that it is crucial for potential students to visit the institution to be sure of making the right choice, if students are left with a positive experience from a campus visit they are more likely to want to go there and will keep it as their main choice' (Heap 2001 cited in Moogan and Baron, 2003:275).

I run taster days as part of the 'Aim Higher' initiative to widen participation; these consist of some group activities and lunch, plus information giving. Participants value the day as a chance to meet students who would be studying with them and to meet staff in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Moogan and Baron (2003) suggest that departmental days where students join in activities and gain a taste of university experience are a good idea; making students feel less nervous about entering Higher Education. This is a particularly big thing for prospective students where no member of their family has been to university before (Reay et al, 2005). Many working class students find the whole process incredibly nerve wracking (Reay et al, 2005). Students found contact they made with the course team helpful 'I was made to feel valued, comfortable and reassured after reflecting some of my insecurities.' However, 25 per cent found it difficult to get information. Universities have centralised admissions over the last few years and while this may be cost effective it does mean that it is often difficult for prospective students to speak to people who really know about the course.

The University sent a questionnaire in May 2006 to all applicants who had declined their offer from Chichester (on any course). The aim of the survey was to discover what had affected applicants' decisions and if anything could be improved for future applicants (University of Chichester Decliners Survey, 2006). The major deciding factor in not picking Chichester (20 per cent) was that students wanted to attend a university closer to home Other issues included: 'not enough happening socially,' 'Chichester is an OK university, however it really lacks that multicultural vibe which is really needed in order to gain more publicity for all ethnic minorities. That is the only thing wrong with your university.' The youth work course recruits very few black/Asian students. Research has shown that ethnic minority students are more likely to pick courses near to home (Reay, David and Ball, 2005) and West Sussex has a small ethnic minority population.

Most respondents cited the course content and /or the qualification for the area of work they wanted to go into as their reason for choosing the course. However others mentioned the ratio of mature students at Chichester, and the closeness to home and flexibility of part time options.

One of the interesting results for me was that there a higher application rate from women and also a higher acceptance rate. Male students who applied to courses were less likely to end up taking up a place. In 2006 I had 22 per cent of applications from men, but only 14 per cent of the course entrants were men. Of the male potential students only 36 per cent accepted a place while 77 per cent of women applicants did so. Why this should be the case will need further investigation.

Marketing

The University of Chichester markets itself as 'small and friendly' which many students appreciate, but respondents to Reay, David and Ball's research stated that they often distrust marketing by universities. The information needs decoding, a process easier for middle class children and parents. They felt that some of the new universities were in a double bind in which their current marketing strategies can work against their credibility. Some of their

respondents felt that they should be selling the course, rather than the friendliness or the social life of the university.

Moogan and Baron (2003) found that the three key components in student decision making were: course content, location and reputation, they found that reputation was most important for male students. They found that social life was not regarded as important, although it was mentioned as a factor in the decliner's survey. Moogan and Baron (2003) found that females were more anxious about not settling into university life; generally they found that pupils chose an institution where they felt they would settle in and succeed. It is important for staff to make applicants feel valued and important and try to put them at their ease. Locality is an increasingly major factor in students decisions about universities, Moogan and Baron (2003) found that females were more anxious about moving away from home than were males, the increase in female students would then have an impact on choice of local places to study. The home to work transition has become increasingly extended over the last few years with more young people remaining at home for longer (Coles, 2005; Miles, 2000). The decisions about universities, even with the expansion of higher education are still a function of class, so that as a small, non prestigious university Chichester is more likely to attract local students from state schools. It has 96 per cent of students from state schools compared to the average for all universities of 87 per cent. The percentage of working class students (classes 5, 6 and 7) was 26.5 per cent compared to a national average of 28.7 per cent. This compares with a University like Exeter, also in a rural county but larger and more prestigious, where only 71.2 per cent of students are from state schools and 16.6 per cent are from the working classes (Leach, 2006).

Conclusions

In this article I have attempted to put the issues in recruitment to youth and community work courses into a national context. Youth work is a changing profession, both in terms of the job role and who is applying to do our courses. The change in the work towards project work and targeted work with individuals has coincided with a change in make up of potential students. More changes are coming because of the change to a degree profession and the possibility of a new 'youth professional' role. There is also an issue about recruitment and retention of youth workers. Alongside these changes in youth work there have been changes in Higher Education with the introduction of fees and the widening of access. There are also discussions nationally about an Integrated Qualification framework for workers with children and young people. At this time of change one of the clearest differences between recruitment to youth work courses now and when Holmes did his research in the 1970s (Holmes,1981) is the change in the gender make up; this is also evident in the workforce.

The low recruitment of male students at Chichester is part of a national picture, both for Higher Education in general and for youth work courses in particular. In the past many male youth workers were recruited later in life after having worked part time in youth work settings, usually clubs, and they were traditionally from the working class. As youth work has become more professionalized, this traditional route is less common. With the qualification becoming a degree in the near future it may become even more difficult to

persuade people to give up their day job to study. Working class boys are not currently choosing to study in university and it is this group that the national validating body, the NYA is anxious to see as workers and role models for young men (NYA , 2005).

These issues are important for youth work educators. As an admissions tutor on a small higher education course I have found it interesting to see national patterns played out on a small scale. Youth work courses today are benefiting from the widening of access into higher education, with more courses being set up. However this also means more competition between courses so that marketing and recruitment strategies are important. Who is recruited is an issue and theoretical concepts such as social capital, habitus and 'transitions', have a vital role in enabling us to understand what is happening in the interface between individual agency and societal pressures. With student debt a big issue for potential university students, vocational courses are attractive. Both two year qualifying Diploma courses, such as the one at Chichester, and part time courses still recruit people who have an extensive youth work background. However, it seems likely that the move to a degree profession, entailing longer studying time, will mean a shift to younger students with less youth work experience on entry, which has implications for the future of youth work training.

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The Role of Youth and Community Work Training in Relation to Volunteers

Carol Packham

This article makes the case that Youth and Community Professional training programmes are neglecting to give sufficient attention to the complex types of volunteers and the relationship of professional workers to volunteers. I provide a volunteer type framework to help identify the different types of volunteers, and use theoretical approaches to analyse and help understand the complex nature of volunteers within communities. These theoretical approaches enable a critique of social policy in relation to the role of volunteers in the generation of human, social and state capital.

Keywords: Volunteers, community and youth work training, policy, social capital

Historical and Policy Context

Most Youth and Community Work students have been or are volunteers, and many of those whom professionally qualified workers work with will be volunteers. However, much of the attention of professionally qualifying Youth and Community courses is given to work with other professionals and service users. Training people to be aware of the different types of volunteers, their roles, purpose and possible requirements is largely lacking from the programmes. Consideration of these issues has now become a matter of urgency, partly in response to the plethora of government initiated policies, such as Take Part, the adult 'Active Learning for Active Citizenship' programme (www.takepart.org.uk), and the many volunteering programmes for young people.

The current omission of the role of volunteers from training programmes may be due to ambivalence by Youth and Community Workers regarding their own role and status as professionals. This is reflected in *The Community Development Challenge* report (DCLG, 2006), the result of a Government sponsored cross sector working party established to explore the role of community development in relation to the British Government's emphasis on community engagement. In the report, a lack of clarity is shown by the interchangeable use of the terms 'profession', and 'occupation' when referring to community development.

The lack of attention to work with volunteers may also be a reflection of the period in the 1960s and 1970s when state intervention and an increase in paid workers resulted in a reduction in the number of volunteers, and so a reduction in their role within youth and community work in general. More worryingly it may be a reflection of the lack of status and interest that the profession has given to volunteers.

There is therefore a case for professional training programmes to acknowledge the growing area of work with volunteers, and to prepare professionally qualified workers to:-

1) be better able to foster, support, recognise and value the different types of volunteers;
2) to meet the requirements for effective volunteering;
3) to locate volunteering in relation to different ideologies and perspectives, and so critique social policy in relation to volunteering and its implications for practice;
4) be clear about their role as professional workers in relation to volunteers, who may appear to be 'doing us out of a job.'

Volunteers have existed throughout history, although named in different ways. Taylor (1965) notes that voluntarists were 'a great army of busy bodies' who 'were the active people of England and provided the ground swell of her history' (1965:175). When discussing the history of volunteering, Prochaska (2002) traces the development of what he terms 'charity' and philanthropy in an English context. He suggests that Victorians thought voluntary and charitable activity 'to be the most wholesome way of promoting individual reformation and social harmony' (2002:2), whereas he sees current volunteering initiatives and notions of charity as being predominantly philanthropic, such as the giving of financial or physical resources.

The Russell Commission on Youth Action and Engagement (2005) uses the United Nation's Definition of Volunteering (2001):

> *there are three key defining characteristics of volunteering. First the activity should not be undertaken primarily for financial reward, although the reimbursement of expenses and some token payment can be allowed. Second the activity should be undertaken voluntarily, according to an individual's own free will, although there are grey areas here too, such as school community service schemes which encourage, and sometimes require, students to get involved in voluntary work and Food for Work programmes, where there is an explicit exchange between community involvement and food assistance. Third, the activity should be of benefit to someone other than the volunteer, or to society at large, although it is recognised that volunteering brings benefit to the volunteer as well.*
>
> *Within this broad conceptual framework it is possible to identify at least four different types of volunteer activity, mutual aid or self help: philanthropy or service to others: participation or civic engagement: and advocacy or campaigning. Each of these parts occurs in all part of the world* (Russell, 2005:4).

This article acknowledges the Government emphasis being placed on volunteering, and makes the case that as shown in the United Nations definition above that volunteers are varied in type, role and function. This will impact on the relationship between individual volunteers and Youth and Community Workers, with subsequent implications for the training agencies who are preparing professionals for effective professional practice.

Many students have joined youth and community work courses following long periods as volunteers, and many continue to be volunteers. For younger students this is increasingly

through organised schemes such as mentoring programmes, Millennium Volunteers, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. For others it may be in self help groups or on management committees. As pointed out in The Community Development Challenge (DCLG, 2006) 'entry to the (community development) profession has always included a special route via community activity. This is a distinctive feature of community development which is not available in other professions'(2006:34).

The role of the professional Youth and Community Worker is unusual in that it should foster rather than replace volunteers, who in other professions may be viewed as unqualified novices, or amateurs. Despite often negative views of volunteering in other professions, charitable, voluntary activity has been seen by commentators such as Putnam (2000) Etzioni (1995,1997) and Prochaska (2002) as an important element of the building of civic and civil society. For example Putnam when advocating a communitarian agenda states 'volunteering is a part of the syndrome of good citizenship and political involvement, not an alternative to it' (2000:132).

Historically, the status of volunteering has changed depending on the role of the state in relation to the delivery of welfare; volunteering and philanthropic activity being at its height in the period before the development of the welfare state in Britain. The current British Government has adopted a 'Third Way' approach, identifying and developing the ground between state and society with an increased role for the private and third sector.[1] The Local Government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities sets out a new agenda giving more power to local authorities and encouraging an improved relationship between 'local government and citizens' (Kelly, 2006:5). It also acknowledges that, 'Despite the range of new engagement opportunities generated by the proposals, many citizens and community groups will need support to make the fullest use of them' (2006:44). This is particularly in relation to community capacity building, increasing skills and confidence to engage. The growing role for community members was further supported by Hazel Blears MP – Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (2007) who advocated an enhanced role for citizens in direct democracy, through running local assets and participatory budgeting (Wintour, 2007). Given the potential for professionally qualified Youth and Community Workers to facilitate and support such volunteers, it is essential that Youth and Community Work courses should recognize the need to integrate content about the role of the worker in relation to volunteers, critically locating volunteer programmes in relation to social policy initiatives. This article therefore also discusses the need to see Youth and Community training as a site of resistance to state intervention into the third sector, and the principles and practice of voluntary involvement.

Training for working with volunteers

Training programmes must recognise that there are many different types of volunteers, in relation to their skills, knowledge, levels of confidence and the familiarity of the person to the setting. This will result in a range of likely roles for Youth and Community Workers in relation to individual volunteers.

A framework that draws on the model of skill acquisition developed by Dreyfus and Dreyfus

(1980), can be used to identify the different types of volunteer, particularly in relation to the tasks they are to undertake (Table 1). Such categorisation could help volunteers to identify where they feel they are located on the spectrum in relation to a given task, and for workers to assess what degree of support, induction, and supervision they may require.

Category of Volunteer	**Support Requirements**
Novice, an unskilled/inexperienced volunteer	Intensive support
Advanced beginner, possessing some skill and knowledge in limited areas	Medium Support
Competent, more skilled, able to plan consciously, application of longer term goals	Minimal Support
Proficient, quickly able to act as effective co-worker, showing sensitivity and skill	Partnership
Expert, high levels of proficiency, both skills and knowledge of value to the agency	Reciprocal 'support' Induction

Table 1. Support requirements for categories of volunteers, adapted from Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980).

Volunteers may move along the novice to expert spectrum based on their own capacity, familiarity with the setting, and the work to be undertaken, and could be deemed to require differing degrees of professional worker involvement depending on the volunteer's levels of competence.

However this model is rather simplistic. It does not take into account the complexity of the volunteer role and as a result the complexity of the volunteer/ professional worker relationship. Expertise alone is not a sufficient indicator of the type and amount of support that a volunteer may require. This was made evident for example on a visit by the author to the La Verneda project in Barcelona, a self help, community based adult education project working on Freirian (1972) principles. The workers stated that they received many offers of volunteering input from 'experts' such as trained teachers. Although these volunteers possessed high levels of skill, knowledge and expertise about their subject area, their lack of understanding and familiarity with the approach and methods of the La Verneda centre meant that they were novices in relation to the specific ethos and norms of the project. They therefore required a higher degree of supervision and longer period of induction than volunteers who had taken part in the centre's programmes, and so were familiar with its underlying ethos and approach, but who may have possessed fewer 'expert' skills.
The Dreyfus and Dreyfus model needs to be coupled with other means of determining the relationship of the volunteer to the community and the agency, to enable the Youth and Community Worker to assess more effectively the type of volunteer and how they best fit into the agency and the work required. This will be discussed with reference to Table 2.

Using theoretical frameworks to understand volunteering

As well as providing guidelines for practice, training courses should also enable practitioners to locate their work in relation to ideologies and theoretical perspectives. In the case of volunteering this can be by locating current government policies in relation to their ideological origins and purpose, and by using theoretical frameworks in relation to types of community engagement, and types of benefit. For example, Putnam's framework of types of capital is useful for categorising the different types of government supported volunteering programmes and their intended outcomes.

In *Bowling Alone, the Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Putnam (2000) explores what is required to enable the reweaving of the fabric of communities. He identifies three categories of capital involved in modern societies: physical capital which refers to physical objects; human capital which refers to properties of individuals; and social capital which refers to 'connections among individuals, social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (2000:19). He argues that social capital and the elements involved in it has value in the same way that human and physical capital contribute towards productivity. Putnam argues that human capital consists of 'tools and training that enhance individual productivity' (2000:18). This definition is reflected in more recent trends in government sponsored volunteering which for many people is seen primarily as being of individual value. For example the student volunteering programmes, primarily see volunteers in relation to the development of personal capacities, preparedness for work, and as individual citizens. This is evidenced by the strap line of the Manchester Metropolitan University coMMUni student volunteering project, 'Unlock your potential!'

As Hodgson (2004) states when discussing the government's focus on voluntary activity, volunteering is seen 'as a means through which skills are acquired and developed, personal self confidence enhanced and training for work provided' (2004:141). This is as opposed to developing volunteers as collective citizens (Storrie, 2004) who are aware of their role in groups, as part of teams or involved in forms of association, all of which contribute towards Putnam's notion of social capital. However this type of collective volunteering is evident through other government supported programmes such as Take Part (www.Takepart.org.uk) which is aimed at enabling citizens to better engage in life within their communities, and civic and democratic activities (Kelly, 2006). Other government initiated volunteering initiatives have a more compulsory element and are being used in a punitive sense, for example as part of the Home Office Community Cohesion agenda in relation to Refugees and Asylum Seekers (Home Office, 2004). These could be seen as producing manufactured social capital.

To enable an analysis of the types of voluntary activity in relation to the purpose of the work undertaken and resulting benefits both Putnam's (2000) and Dewey's (1916) notions of 'doing with' and 'doing for' can be applied. 'Doing with' is part of Putnam's conception of social capital and refers to the value of 'networks of social connection' (2000:117), and the subsequent 'norms and reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (2000:19). Contrastingly, 'doing for' 'is doing good *for* other people' (2000:117) and is altruistic as opposed to self help focused and may not be part of social networks and their resultant benefits, and is not defined by Putnam as being part of social capital. A volunteer who is involved *within* their community may have low levels of technical expertise but may have

local knowledge, which may enable their inclusion and be of great value to the volunteering activity, whereas someone who is doing for may have neither local knowledge nor skills.

Volunteering and active citizenship[2] can be placed on a spectrum to reflect engagement *with* and *for*, opportunities for association and critical dialogue, and the type of capital engendered (as evident in the resulting benefit). Networks of social connection, and so social capital are best generated through association. Association is the 'joining together in companionship or to undertake some task, (with) educative power of playing one's part in a group' (Doyle and Smith, 1999: 44) engaged in conversation, discussion and critical dialogue (Friere1972), the opportunities for which are greatly enhanced if volunteering is undertaken 'with' and as part of a community.

Table 2 sets out a framework based on the distinctions made by current social policy with regard to the involvement of 'volunteers'. The aim of drawing up the framework is to help analyse why there are areas of contention and most importantly to see what the implications for professional Youth and Community Workers might be, for example in relation to any support or training requirements for the different types of volunteers.

The four categories used in Table 2 to aid this analysis have been chosen drawing on
1) doing 'with' and doing 'for' (Dewey, 1916; Putnam, 2000);
2) the space to engage in critical dialogue (Freire,1972), summarised here as association,
3) distinctions of individual or community benefit.
4) outcomes in relation to Putnam's (2000) categories of capital.

The outcomes of the volunteering activity in relation to the types of capital generated are classified in the table as either *Social*, relating to community and group outcomes, with benefits for civil society, *Human*, primarily having individual outcomes, and *State*, referring to acting on behalf or primarily for the benefit of the state or civic society.

Volunteer Type Framework

Role	With or For	Association	Benefit	Outcomes
Volunteer	For	Limited	Individual	Human/State Capital
Voluntary assistance	Both	In part	Individual/Community	Human/Social Capital
Active citizen	Both	In part	Community/Individual	Human/Social/State Capital
Self-help	With	High	Individual/Community	Human/Social Capital
Community Activist	With	High	Community/Individual	Social/Human Capital

Table 2. Types of volunteer engagement and resulting benefits and outcomes.

Within this framework, volunteers are taken to be people who have become involved in carrying out work of an unpaid nature through schemes designed to link volunteering opportunities to individual skills and requirements, and to enhance their own performance (Hodgson, 2004). Examples of this would be University student and staff volunteering projects, and the Prince's Trust Volunteers. Although of some social benefit, the work is primarily carried out for the volunteers' benefit and they have little involvement with the community either through association or residence. This type of involvement through government initiated schemes produces primarily human and state capital as an outcome, as the main beneficiaries are the individual and to meet the predetermined aims of the government initiative.

The category of *voluntary assistance* refers to informal volunteering arrangements, or altruistic actions that are made within neighbourhoods and communities, that would often not be recognised as volunteering, but whose existence has been recognised as valuable for social cohesion and social capital (Putnam, 2000). Such volunteers carry out the work often out of 'neighbourliness' (Harris, 2006), but these may be part of informal reciprocal arrangements. Volunteers may or may not live within the area and do not see their actions as part of community activity, they therefore are only partly involved 'with', and may have limited association. The prevalence of this category of voluntary assistance is supported by the sample data for the Home Office Citizenship Survey (2003) which showed that sixty seven percent of the respondents said that they volunteered informally (as individuals) at least once in the last 12 months. In relation to notions of capital, voluntary assistance, as part of an informal arrangement, is not part of any government programme, but is primarily carried out for mutual benefit; it therefore contributes to individual human capital and social capital.

Active citizens are usually part of the community in which they are active. However they may or may not be involved in association with that community at a horizontal level; for example, they may be community leaders, and may not work as part of self help groups. They may also have their own as well as the community's benefit as a priority, as it is possible that their work may be paid. This type of active citizenship is apparent through the work of the Scarman Trust, 'who seeks to encourage a culture of active citizenship by building the power of ordinary people', what they call 'can-doers'.[3]

The *self help* category implies 'doing with', as the volunteer will be involved within their community and has become involved through the desire to improve their own circumstances. They will be acting with other people so their levels of association will be high. Although there will be benefits for the community their main aim is for individual benefit. Therefore in relation to outcomes they will contribute to human and social capital. Saturday schools that have been set up and staffed by volunteers to meet the perceived lack of positive, culturally specific education for children are an example of this type of volunteer activity. Many such self help initiatives are being supported by Government small grants such as that for children and young people through the Local Network Fund, and via Local Authorities eg. with grants for 'Neighbours Days' events.

The final category is termed community activist, and is akin to the term used by Popple (2000) of 'community action'. Within this category the community member is engaged within their community to undertake work usually based on self identified needs, and is

involved with other community members. This type of activity has high levels of association and the main aim is for community benefit. Although producing human capital the primary outcome is in the development of a healthy and independent third sector, their activity contributing to the development of social capital, and civil society. This type of activity quite often generates social movements and critiques of government intervention and policies. Therefore, the community activist would not be contributing to the generation of state capital, and would be operating often without the support of local or national Government funding.

People may move within the five categories indicated in Table 2, and Storrie (2004) suggests that some individuals may undertake what he calls 'an apprenticeship' where people who may be involved as individual citizens, over time through community interaction then become, what he terms, 'collective citizens'. This process would equate to a move within the categories in Table 2 from involvement with low levels of association to that of high levels, with growing levels of social as opposed to mainly human capital as the outcome.

The implications of this table for the training of Youth and Community workers is that it helps to locate and critique the interest in volunteering shown by the current Labour Government. For example whether the activity is state driven and seen as a way of manipulating community activity such as through the Respect agenda (Harris, 2006), or as in the approach of the Russell Commission (2005) where it is seen as a way of making a positive contribution to both the individual's human and social capital, where Russell states that 'young volunteers are making a positive contribution to the lives of others, and are helping to strengthen the fabric of our communities' (2005:1).

The Role of Professional Training in Clarifying the Role of the Youth and Community Worker in Relation to Volunteers

The implications of tables 1 and 2 for Youth and Community Work training is that they clearly show the complexity of volunteering and the relationship with the professional worker. This is similar to Popple's (1995) framework for identifying types of community intervention ranging from community care, to community activism. In the former the worker acts as lead organiser, and community members have low levels of participation and are receivers of services, whereas in community action, self help and anti-discriminatory work there is no requirement for a paid worker. Likewise it cannot be assumed that all volunteers are in need of support (eg. community activists may be self sufficient), or conversely that volunteers who are thought to have expertise, do not need induction and supervision.

Table 2 also challenges us to think critically about the type of volunteer involvement and the outcomes in relation to the individual, social and state benefits generated. In the context of professional training and the provision of theoretical and ideological frameworks for practice, professionals in training can be encouraged to evaluate the role of social policy, in this case in relation to volunteering and active citizen programmes and to locate themselves as practitioners within these contexts. An example might be the challenge of asking whether their role is compromised by being part of Government generated programmes which threatens the identity of volunteering as a key element in an independent and vibrant civil

society and third sector (Jochum et al, 2005).

Training programmes should ensure that professional workers in training recognise that they have a role with all volunteers, even those who may be self sufficient and proficient. All can be engaged in a process of association and so informal education. The worker can create space for critical dialogue to enable a process of transformation and change to occur. The worker can take on an enabling role facilitating voluntary engagement and self directed action. They should apply a critical perspective and act in inclusive and anti discriminatory ways (for example by recognising the different requirements of volunteers and how to facilitate involvement).

This requires recognition by the professional in training that they have expertise, and a particular role in relation to the different types of volunteers. The contentious issue of the subject of professional workers and expertise was discussed by Thomas who wrote 'there is ambivalence in community work about the idea of expertise' (1983:185). He noted that the Association of Community Workers, in a paper on what should be taught on Community Work courses, had stated that 'the notion of "the expert" is contrary to the spirit of community work' (1983:185), as the role of the worker has always been that we should empower those with whom we work, therefore challenging the usual powerful status of the expert. Thomas, however, goes on to argue that:

> *the trained and paid community worker is or ought to have expertise in her work; without such expertise there is no justification for the training and salary such people receive, and no justification for the trust and responsibility given them by employers and groups. The fact that part of the workers' expertise is to pass on his skills and knowledge, and to do so participatively, is not to deny that workers' expertise; rather it indicates the need for expertise, not just in community organising but in the role of the informal educator* (Thomas, 1983:185).

These comments echo those of Freire (1972) who, although he had a commitment to dialogical and popular education, understood that the facilitator (or in our case the informal educator) has an important role in bringing particular skills and expertise to the education process. Thomas believes that enthusiasm and commitment are not sufficient alone for effective intervention, he argues in the same way as Freire, for a 'strong sense of purpose' and for workers to 'define their goals and to be open about the political and moral values that influence them;' what he calls a sense of 'committed conviction or vision' (1983:186). This acknowledges that there is a role for the worker, and training in relation to all types of volunteer, for example to support and enable 'in-action training' (1983:186) opportunities. Thomas advocates that the role of professional training programmes should be 'part of the strategy to promote: role education, social and political education, community education and social leadership' (Thomas, 1983:202).

Organisational Issues to Support Volunteers

In addition to ensuring that the informal education role of the professional Youth and Community Worker with volunteers is explicit in training programmes, it is also important

that the content of training programmes in relation to organisation and management should include the organisational requirements for effective volunteering.

As part of a participatory evaluation of volunteering carried out with a trained team of volunteers from community groups in Tameside, Greater Manchester (Packham, 2004), the findings from the 26 community groups involved identified the requirements to enable effective volunteering. These were for generic interpersonal skills training, and for information, skills and knowledge (eg. regarding policies) specific to the work of the agency, requirements not in the main in relation to their own levels of competence. Most volunteers, although feeling they had skills and knowledge to offer, were involved in administrative type activities and cited the barriers to volunteering as being agency related, for example a lack of appreciation of the role of volunteers, lack of training, as well as the lack of financial support, and linguistic and cultural barriers. Whereas volunteers' own requirements were important factors, twice as many responses indicated perceived or actual organisational issues as being important deterrents to volunteers. These findings indicated training programmes must equip workers to have the capacity to engage with volunteers, and to consider the factors that may act as institutional and organisational barriers to volunteering which are summarised in Table 3 on the next page.

In addition to exploring the institutional and organisational barriers to volunteering,[4] it is essential that Youth and Community Work courses set our work with volunteers in context. Although much of what professional workers do is for the short term benefit of those with whom they work, and achieves primarily human capital, the longer term aim should be to facilitate work that contributes to social capital, and the benefit of wider civil/third sector and civic society. To be able to achieve this it is necessary to ensure that workers in training are aware of the political consequences of their interventions, and the impact of undertaking work that may be primarily producing benefits for the state as opposed to the community.

This process of reflection and critical analysis should include self awareness of Youth and Community Workers, of how personal and professional histories, identity and experience affects practice. This includes consideration of 'doing with' or 'doing for'. Professional workers have high levels of expertise in some areas, but if they are predominantly 'doing for' rather than 'with', their status in relation to the community will mean they are novices in other respects.

The development of activities that primarily generate state capital also means that the role of the professional Youth and Community Worker may become compromised. Youth and Community Workers have to consider whether their role and function is to unquestioningly undertake the work of the 'state' as determined by social policy initiatives, and whether all such initiatives are compatible with their principles and ethos. Although the many Government initiatives to recognise and strengthen communities and their members are to be welcomed, some could be undermining the nature of volunteering as set out in the United Nations definition, whilst others are challenging the independent nature of the third sector (Jochum et al, 2005). In 2003 it was made clear by the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett that his view of the role of professional workers was indeed to put into practice Government strategies; he stated that 'professionals working to reduce anti-social

Possible Barrier	Illustration
Lack of training	eg. in generic interpersonal skills
Lack of induction	In relation to organisational policies and procedures. Information regarding roles and responsibilities, the work of the agency.
Lack of information	About the organisation and ongoing activities.
Lack of communication	Being excluded from decision making or planning.
Lack of appreciation of the role of volunteer	Being given a role that does not utilise the volunteers skills, knowledge and abilities.
Lack of structure	Clear tasks and time scales not being negotiated. Unclear accountability. Unclear team membership.
Lack of financial support	Failure to reimburse for travel, materials, meals and child care costs.
Access/Exclusion	Physical, practical, and 'cultural 'barriers such as lack of a crèche, norms that exclude groups and individuals (e.g. homophobia), lack of accessible venues, materials, inappropriate timing.
Lack of awareness of inguistic and cultural barriers	Not providing materials in languages other than English, not meeting varied dietary and religious requirements (eg a prayer space), the need for single sex work, not providing activities that are not alcohol based (eg. held in a social centre, based around cheese and wine).
Need for regular supervision	Should ensure that the above factors are acknowledged and overcome, and the volunteer given space to discuss their work and development.

Table 3. Possible Institutional and Organisational Barriers to Volunteering.

behaviour who fail to use new powers afforded to them by Ministers should be sacked' (Blunkett, 2003). This could be seen to be a precursor of the role seen for professional Youth and Community Workers in relation to 'volunteering' activities, which in some cases are designed to enhance community engagement, but in others are used as penalties for anti-social behaviour.

Summary

This article makes the case that the growing number of volunteers[5] makes it imperative that Youth and Community Work professional qualifying programmes explore the role of volunteers and prepare workers in training for the complex nature of their engagement with volunteers and volunteering initiatives.

Programmes will no doubt already be drawing on the previous and ongoing volunteering experience of their students as examples of practice. However training must also recognise the important role that professional Youth and Community Workers have in relation to volunteers, and to equip workers to:

a) better understand the complex nature of the volunteer role, and the role of the worker in facilitating volunteer engagement
b) appreciate the contributions made by volunteers
c) be prepared and able to provide opportunities for informal education with volunteers, so that their contributions are set in a broader community and societal context
d) understand the organisational requirements of effective volunteering
e) be better able to critique social policy in relation to volunteering, and their potential role in supporting those initiatives.

The principles of informal education must be applied within professional Youth and Community Work training, providing an important space to enable critical dialogue and reflection of professional work and that of volunteers, its context, and particularly policy initiatives that are the context for practice. Professional workers must be able to draw on their own and others' experience as reflective practitioners and be clear about their role as facilitators and enablers of different types of volunteer activities. Lastly they must recognise how issues of inclusion and social justice pervade the volunteering agenda. The aim in training must be that professional workers ensure that volunteer programmes do not replicate 'colonial' and patronising notions of volunteering and 'doing good', by primarily perpetuating notions of 'doing for'. Youth and Community work courses should enable students to identify and challenge the barriers to individual voluntary engagement and importantly, should result in professional Youth and Community Workers who regard volunteers who participate as activists and allies in the essential role of critiquing, and pressuring for change.

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Notes

1 The Third Sector being organisations and groups in the voluntary and not for profit sector, e.g. charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises. See Third Sector www.thirdsector.co.uk, June 2007
2 'The current Labour Government has been committed to developing strategies to transform citizens from passive recipients of public services to self-sustaining individuals, active as individuals and as members of communities'. (Mayo 2008 forthcoming).
3 See www.thescarmantrust.org.uk
4 see www.NCVO-vol.org.uk, and the National Occupational Standards for Managing Volunteers (NCVO 2004).
5 Around 18.8 million people were engaged in active community participation (civic participation, informal and formal volunteering) in 2001, compared to 20.3 million in 2003, a rise of more than one and a half million. (Home Office Citizenship Survey 2003).

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Getting the Balance Right: training and education within NVQ and HE routes to youth work

Jo Trelfa and Dan Richmond

In our roles as Senior Lecturer, College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth and Training Co-ordinator, Plymouth City Council Youth Service, our aim is to enable the development of 'critically reflective practitioners' rather than just 'effective practitioners.' Exploring and reflecting on our own and student experiences of NVQ and degree routes to qualifying in youth work, we consider what 'critical reflection' means in practice and the extent to which the paths meet this as a destination. Within the current political climate we consider 'being competent' and 'competencies'; youth work as a profession and if it can be 'taught' and/or 'caught'; and the dilemma of holding a value base of empowerment and inclusion whilst questioning the extent to which this can drive qualifications in youth work.

Keywords: critical reflective practice, professional identity formation, Youth Community Work, HE/NVQs, assessing reflective practice

What kind of learning do we want a student on professional programmes to be engaged in? Whilst this question has challenged HE for years, the same has also been asked of Youth and Community Work since the 'birth' of the profession (Davies, 1999). In this context, can National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) with their focus on learning within local organisations and contexts be sufficient preparation for professional development in Youth and Community Work? Competency based strategies such as NVQs, as well as the introduction of National Occupational Standards, have been criticised as encouraging a return to the reconfiguration of the academic/vocational split that characterised education from 1900 to 1975 (Lea, 2002; Annan, 1990). Alternatively it has been suggested this movement has the potential to 'revolutionise' the elitism of HE (Wolf, 1995:128). In this case NVQs could be entirely compatible with the Youth and Community Work value base. In sum, can a competency approach offer a framework for professional education? (Clark, 1997).

Whilst originally 'education' meant 'a leading out or initiation into the adult world' (Ainley, 1990:5) such a definition is no longer sufficient since much of this focus has been taken over by 'training', compounded by the notion of the need to train and retrain throughout life to keep up with the changes of modern society. 'Vocation' required commitment to a set of ideals, a way of being in the world, and particular conduct entailing respect, justice, truth (Doyle, 1999). It also required the individual to be part of a community of practice that offered them the opportunity to name the qualities and craft for themselves, and have this tested by others and circumstance. (Doyle, 1999). Now it would appear to be about workforce and being prepared to be flexible within rapid change and an unpredictable future. 'Vocational education' is the system that supports and communicates these

changes. Since Youth and Community Work is about social attitudes, abilities, theory and professional grounding within practice (Abbott et al, 2001:8; Smith 1999, 2000; DfES, 2002) it can be argued it is more compatible with education, vocation and professionalism (Ainley, 1990:97). Whilst through history different priorities within the concept of 'professionalism' have been reflected, (eg. see Hugman, 1991), in this paper we refer to it in terms of 'democratic professionalism' (Jenkins and Brotherton, 1995:280). This 'other centred' approach stresses 'partnership, negotiation and power sharing' (Butcher, 2004) instead of the more traditional norms that emphasise practitioner expertise over others and dependency.

Currently, qualifying as a Youth and Community worker (JNC professional qualified status[1]) requires completing a programme of study in Youth and Community Work to a minimum of a professionally validated Diploma in HE or Foundation Degree (validated by the Education Training Standards Committee of the National Youth Agency on behalf of the JNC). Within HE, professional validation is mainly offered full time as part of a three year undergraduate degree, a one year postgraduate Diploma, or two year MA in Youth and Community Studies. This represents the current picture of a forty-plus year journey that began with the Albemarle Report (1960) which 'created' the professional Youth Service. Alongside developments in HE, such as the Robbins Report (1963) arguing that HE should 'become more of a mass medium for personal and social advancement,' efforts endorsing the professional skills required by Youth and Community Work culminated in the Fairbairn-Milson Review (1969) which advocated three year professional HE Youth and Community Work programmes.

In 1999 a NVQ Level 4 was proposed as an alternative route to professional qualification at the same level of HE recognised by the JNC Level 3, representing a move to competency based education and training (CBET) for professional status. In 2004 the issue took on greater weight following a series of National Youth Agency/Training Agencies Group (NYA/ TAG[2]) 'quality' seminars when a pilot was muted (eg. Johnson, 2004). This would enable development from the NVQ Levels 2 and 3 already in existence that do not confer professional status[3] (NYA 2004), but at the same time would respond to a number of pressures facing youth services in England and Wales, such as the need for nationally qualified staff and changes in the role of a Youth and Community Worker. 'Transforming Youth Work: Resourcing Excellent Youth Services' (DfES, 2002:26) required sufficient numbers of qualified staff to a 'Youth Standard' of one full time equivalent per 400 of 13-19 of youth population, within a service that historically has been resourced in part by volunteers 'working up through the ranks' which has led to a workforce that lack suitable qualifications. Local Authorities have organised their own training to recognise/award such pathways but a nationally trained workforce had been missing. Can what has historically been fought for and seen as the domain of HE be transplanted by work based training and education? The implication within this is that HE as a route is preferable, even superior.

The introduction of and need for NVQs was made in the White Paper 'Working Together: Education and Training,' (MSC/DES, 1986) and has been well documented (eg. Jessup, 1991; Pring, 1995; Barnett, 1990). Overseen by a new body, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ), the framework provided a 'clear, coherent and comprehensive system of vocational qualifications...directly relevant to the needs of

employment and the individual' (DE/DES 1985), although employment requirements took precedence (Jessup, 1991:18). For example, the White Paper 'Employment in the 1990's' refers to NVQs being employer-led (DE, 1988). Sector bodies identify National Occupational Standards on which they are based, and assessment and quality assurance arrangements are developed against criteria set by the NCVQ. It is a model of competence based on workplace roles (Wolf, 1995).

An NVQ is 'A statement of competence clearly relevant to work and intended to facilitate entry into, or progression in, employment and further learning, issued to an individual by a recognised awarding body' (NCVQ, 1989). Whilst it incorporates specified standards related to 'the ability to perform in a range of work related activities, and the underpinning skills, knowledge and understanding required for performance in employment' (NCVQ, 1989), the emphasis is on performance. Skills, knowledge and understanding are seen as commodities underpinning this but it is made clear that they 'are not the same thing as competence' (Jessup, 1991:16).

Each statement of competence is clarified through 'elements' (descriptions of something the person should be able to do) and 'performance criteria' (what would demonstrate that they can do it). Statements are unambiguous but also general enough to not relate to only one particular task, job, location, agency, etc (NCVQ, 1989; Wolf, 1995; Jessup, 1991). To be awarded with an NVQ a person needs to have 'demonstrated that he or she can meet the performance criteria for each element of competence specified,' so assessment is about whether competence has been achieved or not (NCVQ, 1989; Jessup, 1991). However, Wolf (1995:104) notes 'considerable conflict' in terms of the standards that competency ought to be assigned compared with what 'competency' *actually* means in sectors involved in working with people.

In relation to Youth and Community Work, NVQs would provide a nationally standardised route and hence improve/develop traditional local arrangements. Increased training provision would also increase access to programmes. Whilst within HE it is possible for people who do not want to or cannot step out of employment to study towards qualification on a four to six year part-time route, employers cannot always find the cover, resources, or will to release them. Further, HE provision of JNC professionally validated programmes is not evenly spread across the country and moving to a new area or travel may well be insurmountable barriers for some. Whilst distance/e-learning can be one solution (the YMCA George Williams College have been offering such courses for many years and recently has been joined by the Open University), questions remain about whether the interpersonal nature of the profession can be supported by such a mode of delivery. An NVQ work-based route would seem to be an obvious development, an effective way forward and an attractive alternative for potential recruits (NYA, 2004) and employers alike. It would also support the current government agenda of widening participation in education and lifelong learning highlighted by the widely cited aim of 50 per cent of 18-30 year olds entering HE (DfES, 2003). In addition the NYA Workforce Development objectives require alternative routes to professional qualification to be actively considered (NYA, 2005b). The NVQ 4 would mean access to a professional qualification in Youth and Community Work to groups that would otherwise be excluded (NYA, 2005).

Exclusion is a criticism levelled against the history of HE overall in its traditional practice of 'reproducing and nurturing social, political and cultural elitism' (Coffield and Williamson, 1997:5). Whilst for a minority HE did 'change structures and open up opportunities for social mobility' (ibid), in general it is argued that prior to 1975, if not a member of a privileged group, an individual would need to contend with discrimination in order to access university education (Annan, 1990). Not only did this produce and maintain inequalities but as a model it was unsustainable. Barnett (1997: 28-9) observes that whilst perhaps not representative of some kind of 'grand plan,' graduates were given significant privileges thus creating the 'educational supremacy of the minority' (Barnett, 1997:28 and 29). As a result of this exclusivity, HE was both 'at the centre of both civilisation *and* conflict' (Coffield and Williamson,1997:5) (our emphasis).

Whilst the gradual increase in student numbers within HE in the UK could be seen as evidence of changing structures and opening opportunities, the lack of significant policy guidance regarding the role of HE means any such growth is movement within this 'elitist model of what constituted a HE' (Coffield and Williamson, 1997:7). For instance, a recent ERSC report reveals despite the expansion of HE, the UK is at the bottom of a social mobility league table (Taylor, 2005) so indicating the 'gradients of educational opportunity' have still not been addressed (Coffield and Williams, 1997:6).

In such a context the introduction of competency based education and training into Britain through NVQs offered the possibility of education becoming 'more enabling, less elitist' (Wolf, 1995:13).[4] Argued as being 'based on rejection of, and antagonism to, one of the huge industries of our time: organised education' it had the potential of being a 'revolution' (Wolf, 1995:128). Over time a number of reports and White Papers have expressed the need for HE to reform and provision to expand.[5] Despite the evidence that Youth and Community programmes in HE have been more successful than most other HE courses, if not all, in recruiting students from diverse backgrounds (see NYA ETS annual monitoring reports), the introduction of an alternative to professional qualification outside of HE institutions would seem a positive development, and a development endorsed by Youth and Community Work's value base with its emphasis on inclusion, 'empowerment' and anti-oppressive practice.

Instead, the proposed NVQ 4 in Youth Work has been received by some as a threat to professionalism as well as undermining the contribution to the field and the necessity to locate the qualification within HE. One line of debate centres on whether Youth and Community Work is a 'vocational qualification' that can be approached in terms of competence and so be reduced to skills and knowledge and the application of these to tasks. What about 'professional artistry' (Schön 1983), craft (Trelfa and Feaviour, 2004) and professional practice – all the 'work' that goes on around and outside of 'tasks'? Further, current workforce reform policies embedding the principles of *Every Child Matters* (2003), the Children Act (2004) and *Youth Matters* (2005) require the development of more cohesive services working in partnership for young people. It is asserted there are 'core skills' and those working towards a professional qualification such as Youth and Community Work will need to be able to develop these. The NYA supports the idea of a 'certain element of training' in common for all professionals working with young people stating the case for a 'core first, specialist later' model (NYA, 2004:4), although this is contested by some

within the Training Agencies Group (TAG) of community and youth work teaching staff. It is hard to see how a work-based NVQ 4 will meet such a 'core first' requirement, and the argument about the suitability of competencies within the profession suggests it is questionable whether it can provide an adequate foundation for future development of the 'specialist' either. It is also uncertain whether professionals qualified through traditional academic routes, such as teaching, health service, social work, would perceive NVQ qualified Community and Youth Workers as 'professionally equal.' It risks a potential divide creating a 'second class' of workers which would not enable partnership work.

We also note a third point that considers the value base of Youth and Community Work from a different angle. Would a person 'grown' by an organisation in a predominantly white area, for example, be professionally ready to work in an area rich with people with a range of diverse backgrounds and experiences? The national standards set by NVQ units could be one way forward but is it possible to reduce a value base to simplistic, quantifiable goals? Within Social Work, Dominelli (1997:194) tracks changes in what is taught and assessed arguing it increasingly reflects competencies that governments and employers want, representing 'a move away from training as an educational process concerned with socialising professionals into the best traditions of the profession towards the technical transmission of approved skills.' We fear the same could happen in Youth and Community Work, a focus on 'portfolio building' as opposed to 'practitioner building.'

Indeed, Hyland (1994:89) declares that because 'CBET is conceptually confused, epistemologically ambiguous and based on largely discredited behaviourist learning principles' it is entirely inappropriate for professional preparation or professional studies in HE. As NVQs 'marginalise the notion of understanding, (Barnett, 1997:36), such routes risk setting minimum *competency* to be the standard stated and assessed (Wolf, 1995). Some go as far to argue that 'high quality training and qualifications are impossible' through NVQs, hence it could be argued that if introduced at a professional qualification level into occupations where such standards are essential due to the nature of the work, such as working with young people, it could lead to 'a catastrophe of epic proportion' (ibid).

While we could see value in introducing an NVQ level 4 in Youth Work, the question is what *kind* of workers? It could be argued it would produce a workforce that is less radical, rigorously informed and 'empowered'. Or are *we* being elitist in suggesting this? In our discussion and research we have been mindful of Wolf's (1995) observation that CBET supporters' overstated claims of NVQs being a revolutionary transformation of education are likely to produce the equivalent size of rejection from those who have a investment in 'their own sectional interests' (1995:130)!

With one of us having come through the HE JNC route and after 15 years Youth and Community practice working within HE on such programmes (Trelfa) and the other being more rooted in training/coaching and now working within NVQ provision (Richmond), coming together in our research would mean we could monitor the extent to which we were representing our own sectional interests, each of us being a 'check' for the other. We would ensure our work would not merely be a criticism of one route over another. We were also very conscious of not wanting to perpetuate the elitism of traditional routes into education. Our research means we are engaging with committed practitioners on the HE

route to qualifying as Youth and Community Workers as well as candidates moving through the NVQ route, and we are keenly aware of some of those in the latter group who have expressed their need for us to help NVQs be seen in a more equal light since the form of training meets their learning style and is possible and practical for them. Moreover, some express it as the perceived or actual elitism of HE that blocked them from accessing it in the first place so making NVQs the only way ahead. NVQs are established and it would be a pointless exercise to reach a place whereby we simply argue for their abolition. This said we are also open to the evidence from the literature review that indicates NVQs as a poor relative in educational terms. Through this research we aim to explore ways that both routes to professionally qualifying as a Youth and Community Worker can be developed as part of a wider workforce development study rather than just a one-off exercise.

Effective, reflective and critically reflective practitioners

Where we both agree is that through our practice in our respective roles we aim to enable student Youth and Community Workers to become 'map makers' more than 'map readers' (Lester, 1996), that is to 'become active experimenters and constructors of their own practice and theory on which it is based' and to see 'frameworks offered as perspectives or frames of reference from which to approach the territory, rather than as the territory itself'. Qualified Youth and Community Workers do need to be able to 'map read', that is 'find their way in their professional territories' through understanding technical knowledge, standards and boundaries (Lester, 1996:1) a rational-technical experience (Howarth and Thurlow, 2004) that clarifies identity which we feel is essential (Prosser, 2005). However, this is not the only learning and practice we expect Youth and Community Workers to engage in.

Schön (1983) characterises the 'caring professions' as those that deal with 'the swampy lowlands and messes of human interactions and communication' for which there is no blueprint or formula. Where people have tried to enforce formulaic answers to the situations that practitioners find themselves in, it has lead to differing views and opinions leaving no clear direction. This is particularly relevant in Youth and Community Work where the nature of practice means a 'blueprint' could not cover every eventuality anyway (eg. See Smith, 1994). 'Map-makers' are 'self-managed, intelligent practitioners capable of advancing their practice and operating effectively in environments of uncertainty and change' (Lester,1996:1). Howarth and Thurlow (2004) discuss this in terms of practice-moral activity.

Parallels with 'map reading' can be made to the rational-technical model of the NVQ framework, with learning being defined solely through measuring changes in behaviour (Lea, 2004:10; Jarvis,1995); learners being located in the 'present and particular' (Bailey, 1984 cited in Lea, 2004:11); a body of knowledge being related to a technique to be learned/applied; and evidence needing to be shown of achieving standards of competence in this. Such 'adaptive learning', or learning fit to standard or purpose (Senge, 1990) is appropriate for basic linear 'trigger-action' practice but is critiqued as limited, narrow, mechanistic and at the loss of educational content and pedagogical concern (Callender, 1992; Hodkinson, 1992). A case for 'map reading'/NVQs as relevant for early levels of Youth

and Community Work such as Youth Support Worker could easily be made, a fact concluded by the DfES itself concerning professions in general (cited in West, 2004:16). It would also be a sound base for a student *entering* a professionally qualifying programme, the area of learning we would want to see being built on and refined during early studies and placements/practical experience. We refer to this as being an 'effective practitioner'. At this stage students would be able to articulate a working but normative theory of their practice (ie. what should be done and being able to explain why) (Burgoyne and Reynolds, 1997:2).

However, there is a difference between this and a 'reflective practitioner'. Reflective practitioners should exhibit a balance between the rational-technical and practice-moral, (Schön, 1983; Howath and Thurlow, 2004), and so be able to 'scrutinise, question, and challenge application of knowledge for particular service users and practice situations as well as recognise the ways that experience and values inform the process' (Howath and Thurlow, 2004:9). It is a difference between knowing how and explaining it (NVQs), to knowing why they were drawn to act in the first place – an 'exploration of what it is to understand something at a fundamental level' (Beckett, 2004:380). Since the National Advisory Body on Public Sector HE stress that 'Initial HE should emphasise underlying principles ...[including]...the ability to analyse complex issues, to identify the core of the problem...to synthesise...to work co-operatively and constructively with others and... to communicate clearly' (cited in Ainley, 1990:100), such craft development is possible within the HE JNC framework. Since educational content and pedagogy are central to HE it becomes difficult to see how CBET at an NVQ4 level can achieve a practitioner of comparable standard (Hyland, 1994; Hodgkinson, 1992)

Adams et al (2002) and Burgoyne and Reynolds (1997:2) add a further dimension to 'effective practitioner' and 'reflective practitioner' – that of 'critically reflective practitioners', ie. individuals with more sophisticated practice in terms of action/outcome as well as values, ethics and moral dimensions. A critically reflective practitioner is informed by 'a rich and diverse mixture of descriptive, interpretative and critical theories and also an understanding of a range of rival normative theories to a preferred one' (Burgoyne and Reynolds, 1997:2).[6] Issitt (2000:129-30) unpacks the notion of critical reflectors further and describes it as including:

- The recognition that professional knowledge can always be improved;
- Technical expertise but also the realisation that the realities of practice means there are no formulaic answers to the everyday dilemmas and matters faced;
- Awareness of operating within a personal, professional and political value base, that means, for example, a commitment to anti-oppressive practice and analysis of structural power in relation to working for change;
- Engaging in critical reflective practice;
- A working context that is safe and supportive so as to foster reflective practice; and,
- Listening and learning from the ways that different cultures and groups reflect.

This fits with our own understanding and agreement of what critically reflective practice means, and what we feel professionally qualified Youth and Community Workers should be engaged in. Issitt's comment on political value base warrants further exploration though. In relation to education we take it as meaning requiring 'an educational process which

encourages and enables people to understand their personalisation of the political in their lives and the politicisation of the personal' (Allen, 1997:25). Where the focus is only upon 'active citizenship', so 'individual duties and responsibilities', 'respect for the law, and training to understand how society works' (Allen, 1997:23), it can equate to 'a passive and deferential population who think of themselves as good subjects but do not think of politics at all.' They may become politically effective but by accident, and hence 'pose few problems' to a government (Crick and Lister, 1974). The earlier question regarding the kind of Youth and Community Workers being developed in relation to NVQs rings warning bells since 'being competent' on its own risks creating 'uninformed participation' (Crick and Lister ,1974). 'Political literacy', on the other hand, is a 'conscious understanding of what one is about in any given situation and some capacity for action' requiring 'knowledge, skills and attitudes, to be developed together, and each shaping the other'. Someone who is 'politically literate' is self-aware, can be self-critical, think through consequences, is sceptical, and aware of a number of different ideas of what it is to be a citizen (Crick and Lister, 1974). Clearly, there is a distinct difference here, qualities we include in our definition of a critically reflective practitioner. Hyland (1994:92) argues such aims are 'totally negated by an approach which is covered only with collecting evidence to satisfy competences on a functional analysis of work role.' We want Youth and Community Workers to be able to read maps but also move between perspectives, create new ones, look beyond the present and particular, and 'work in the spaces where practice "creates" rather than follows the map' (Lester, 1996:1).

In the process of our work together, having shared our thoughts, discussed our practice and carried out a literature review – some of which is reflected here – we were aware that our views were limited by our sources and not grounded in clearly articulated evidence. From here our research has evolved. Our assumption was that at level 3 NVQ students would be effective practitioners, map readers, and non-reflectors or reflectors dependent on individual learning style. Sense of self as practitioner would be varied in relation to learning style and idiosyncrasies of working environment (factors like whether or not supervision is provided, the quality and kind of supervision, whether it is a supportive learning environment, whether the balance between support and challenge is appropriate). HE students at a similar level, that is in their first year of their JNC qualification would be less aware of the 'map' (eg. National Occupational Standards, the context practice takes place in including management structure, procedures, agency context), would know about the link between theory and practice but opportunity to integrate them would be less, and again would be non-reflectors or reflectors dependent on individual learning style. Their sense of self as practitioners would be similar in relation to learning style but also dependent on the range and type of prior experience in practice and life. By the time HE students qualify, however, they would have moved on every pole identified whilst within the same period of time if NVQ students had moved on at all it would be due to individual circumstance and difference rather than a guided learning experience and process. Our hypothesis means that if NVQ candidates continued on to NVQ Level 4 they would be at a disadvantage and because of the criticisms levelled toward NVQs they would be more likely to remain at the level of 'effective practitioner' rather than 'critically reflective practitioner'.

In the remainder of this article we explore some of the dilemmas we are encountering as we research getting the balance right in training and education within NVQ and HE routes in Youth and Community Work.

What contribution does HE make that is felt to be under threat?

The concern is that the shift in training for Youth Work erodes the contribution of quality in education that HE offers the profession. Relevant to an exploration of critical reflective practice, Barnett examines 'critique' and 'wisdom'. Critique is described as 'the setting up of alternative frameworks of understanding, and of interrogating the topic or situation in new ways which both critique the existing modes of thought and offer new possibilities for understanding, action and interaction.' Wisdom is described as 'access to alternative ways of understanding the world, of going beyond the conventional' (Barnett, 1997:36-7). He argues that the development and valuing of critique and wisdom require an 'institutional space in which both are generated,' something that would not happen in a move to operational competence where students are just expected to 'take on the capacities for immediate responsiveness' (Barnett, 1997:37). Our assumption is that HE continues to look for evidence of critique and wisdom.

However, in the same publication Barnett lists words that represent two versions of competency, those of 'operational competence' and those of 'academic competence.' More in the first relates to Youth and Community work: 'knowing how, oral communication, interpersonal, issue based, applied, and learning that is experiential and group based' compared with 'knowing that, written communication, personal, discipline based, pure, and learning that is proposition based and individualised.'. He argues that vocabulary now used within HE 'would have had little or no meaning a generation ago' (Barnett, 1977:33) – so, we see the HE route now requires evidence (read competence) in National Occupational Standards, transferable skills, and learning outcomes. The field of Youth and Community Work itself is now related to targets and outputs that have to be reflected in such programmes if students are to be employable on graduating. Further, it is through elements such as vocabulary that those engaged in HE 'come to understand themselves, their professional role and their pedagogical responsibility differently' (ibid). To what extent have frameworks moved to assessing elements like critique and wisdom as present when in reality they are observing just the appearance or rhetoric of them rather than anything more radical? Has the combination of pressures faced by HE and Youth and Community Work meant it is now inevitably moving towards operational competency, and does this mean Youth and Community Work is more related to operational competency and hence appropriate for a vocational qualification? If so then Barnett (1997:311) concludes that emphasis in learning will be more on product than process, as is claimed of NVQs.

In Youth and Community Work practice, however, the concepts listed by Barnett within each category of competence represent debates reflected in theory and practice rather than dichotomies, which may explain why emphasis has not become tilted toward product. HE programmes still do discuss the kind of learning and practitioner they want a JNC to 'create'. What it might highlight is, in contrast to more traditional disciplines the field of Youth and Community Work is at risk because of its 'more pragmatic and operational definition of knowledge and knowing' (Barnett, 1997:36). But whilst aspects of practice may naturally fall more within the 'operational competency' frame, the *profession* and what is required of its *professionals* does not. This tension would make it more vulnerable to the wider change towards CBET than perhaps other professions or fields and it risks being more

easily swept along with and under the auspices of NVQs. It also indicates how insidious a change to an operational mode of education can be: it may be difficult to know exactly when change begins, indeed if change has already begun, and then this argument can be used to justify acceptance of a movement from academic to operational competence.

Another significant area to consider is assessment, so, for example, whether reality or illusion/rhetoric is being assessed. One of the factors identified as clouding assessment is who does it. NVQs effectively rely on the community of practice to assess its peers and as such is open to the difficulty 'to criticise, let alone 'fail' the colleagues with whom they work' (Wolf, 1995:97). Wolf (1995:71) also notes how much assessment is left to the judgement of the assessor and their understanding of what the role/task involves. In contrast, the HE assessment framework supports efforts to guard against such bias as well as monitor the risk continuously. However, our work in this area shows the picture is not as polarised. Firstly, staff teams involved in the teaching of Youth and Community Work in HE often see themselves as members of the Youth and Community Work community of practice, added to which reliance is put on fieldwork supervisors based in the agencies where students work on placement to assess practice. Secondly, Allen (1997:86) and Wolf (1995:86) both note that much of assessment in HE is subjective and hence open to value judgements, so rather than it being a rational, 'stable preference' approach, (ie. either this grade or that within an allocation system), it is the result of an 'interaction of a stream of impulses with a system of filters' (McCain, 1990 cited in Allen, 1997; Wolf, 1995). We can hope that the 'system of filters' include those related to anti-oppressive practice so assessment does not becomes a form of discrimination but clearly this does not have to be the case. Would student experiences of assessment through the different routes be all that different? Do staff within HE, agency supervisors, and those involved with assessing NVQs, agree in their notions of what it is to be a good Youth and Community Worker?

So, having been clear about the significant role that HE plays in relation to Youth and Community Work and taking the assumption that this is superior to an NVQ route to professional qualification, we began to consider that rather than holding out against the move towards competency based education, HE programmes in Youth and Community Work have already begun to accommodate it.

Researching reflective practice

Since reflective practice has become widely accepted as relevant to all levels of learning and professions it cannot be avoided in the current education landscape (Huntingdon and Moss, 2004; Clegg et al, 2002). However, it is also now becoming increasingly apparent that 'there is more discussion of the concept of reflection or the extent of its use than empirical research reports on the assessment of [it] in learning' (Wong et al, 1995; Moon, 2000). In other words, its importance is stated but this is not backed up with empirical understanding (Hargreaves, 2004). Further, when something is included in a learning curriculum it needs to be assessed so the extent to which it has been achieved is clear. As it is 'an intricate and complex cognitive process' and it is only *one* way to develop and learn from practice, fair assessment is fraught with difficulty (Ixer, 1999; Rutter, 2006; Boud, 1999; Taylor et al, 1999; Hargreaves, 2004). Indeed much attention around developing and assessing reflective

practice is given to written formats yet it is possible to have excellent reflective skills without being able to record it in this way (Moon, 2004), the flip side being students learn 'the game of writing reflectively' whilst in reality nothing has changed (Clegg et al, 2002). In sum, student Youth and Community Workers could show they are reflective but how would we assess the extent to which behaviour, perspectives, application and/or action have changed as a result, hence decide if they are 'critically reflective' practitioners? (Hargreaves, 2004). We were interested in this on two accounts, the measuring of reflective practice that goes on in both NVQs and HE Youth and Community routes, but also how we might explore our hypothesis.

The notion of 'critical' further confuses this – how does a student know what it means? (Adams et al, 2002). Despite clearly defining it in our instructions for research participants, their reports of practice illustrations range from critique and articulation of everyday practice (Fook et al, 2000) to describing a crisis which if left unresolved would prove (further) destructive. At this early stage of the research it is interesting to note that students who appear to fall more into the non-reflective and reflective categories are likely to approach it as the latter, which suggests that unless there is a crisis, reflective practice is minimal.

Moreover, do those assessing whether a practitioner is a non reflector, reflector or critical reflector truly know for themselves, or agree with another assessor, on what these categories consist of and the difference between them? Alongside this, what do different assessors look out for in recorded reflections – for example, to what extent is reflective practice used as a tool to police thoughts, behaviours and attitudes, a process whether overt or covert that would inhibit the learning and development that is supposed to be taking place? In this vein, Janet Hargreaves (2004:200) identifies three 'legitimate narratives' within accounts of reflective practice, those that are 'valedictory' (ie. 'There is a crisis – the narrator recognises the problem, turns the situation around and 'wins the day''), 'condemnatory' ('There is a crisis – poor decisions are made and the outcome is negative, no-one wins and the narrator feels guilty or angry'), and/or 'redemptive' ('The narrator is faced with a situation that exposes their belief system/behaviour to scrutiny. Through reflection they 'redeem' their beliefs/behaviour and thus improve their professional practice'). The outcome of all of this could be that, if anything, students learn to perform according to what is expected of them, become competent in the skill of 'being seen to be reflective' and suppress rather than critique and examine their practice. Map reading and adaptive learning if ever we saw it! Our research includes discussing with participants the extent to which they feel able to be open, honest and uncensored in their reflective recordings, explores assessment issues with assessors and different forms of developing and assessing reflective practice.

At this stage of our research we had in fact begun to consider whether the concept of critical reflective practice was the equivalent of a naked emperor pretending/believing in clothes of great finery whereas we had just discovered the true state!

Getting the balance right

It is too early for us to draw conclusions from findings, but the dilemmas of 'doing' the

research have alone been significant, causing us to redefine the research parameters. This said, it is clear from our literature review that our premise is Youth and Community work cannot be approached as 'competency based' – critically reflective practice is so much more than this. Hence, our work will argue that NVQ and HE routes to Youth and Community Work 'must not be reduced to the means of supplying industry with technically competent but socially illiterate [practitioners...but those] capable of creating and shaping a more prosperous, a more just and a more integrated society' (Coffield and Williamson, 1997:23).

Wolf feels a 'high water-mark of activity and enthusiasm' for CBET has been reached and HE institutions are 'still standing and largely intact' (1995:138). The invitation, then, is to consider what this 'wave' has contributed that is significant to the future rather than seeing it as a threat to professionalism and autonomy within Youth and Community Work and HE alike (eg. Russell, 1993). Our work is about reclaiming this 'future' so we can contribute to debate around getting the balance right within the education of new professionals. Interestingly, the same challenge equally applies to the change in nature of the Youth Service itself currently being 'shaped'. In Robertson's (1997:83) terms this balance is more likely to be achieved when 'a less defensive, more open-minded, self-critical and inventive stance than has hitherto been the case' is taken and thus polarised views of HE being 'good/superior' and CBET being 'poor/inferior' are not helpful. Notions of competency have always existed within HE but in terms of the ability to engage in a 'conversation of a particular kind' (Oakeshott, 1989 cited in Barnett, 1997:17). Our work is exploring the kind of 'conversation' we want qualified Youth and Community Workers to be engaged in. Whilst CBET/NVQs may not have 'infiltrated' HE, it does offer a different, competing version of 'competency' which mirrors and is part of large scale social, economic and cognitive change, a significant change in the relationship of education to work and society (Barnett, 1997:17) that requires consideration if programmes are to remain relevant.

Currently, the Government response to 'the wave' includes the common skills for Children's and Young People's workforce that is, arguably, competency based and risks diluting the distinctive qualities of Youth and Community Work that young people and communities seek out; and the Leitch Report (2006), which strengthens the employer voice. These are not the initiatives that will 'recapture the spirit of our dissident heritage' and create critically reflective practitioners in the terms we have explored them. There is not even a balance between the rational-technical and practice-moral; it just promotes and supports the former. Where is awareness of operating within a personal, professional and political value base, such as, a commitment to anti-oppressive practice and analysis of structural power in relation to working for change? Where is political literacy? In sum, where is the space for developing map makers?

NVQs and HE have different historic roots and tracks. Like Middlehurst (1997:54) we argue for a 'radical reassessment and redirection of practice' in Youth and Community Work education, not incremental change and reactive improvement. Such consideration needs to examine how NVQ and HE routes can find a balance within and between them to contribute to developing critically reflective practitioners.

Notes

1 The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Youth and Community Workers, established 1961, sets out the conditions for pay and responsibilities of different levels to post, the most recent developments to which are a single spine for all Youth and Community Workers.
2 Training Agencies Group – the collective 'voice' of the HE training agencies
3 People with NVQ 2 and 3 work at JNC Level 1 and below
4 See Wolf 1995:8-13 for a clear, detailed and concise picture of the context within education and training prior to and following the introduction of NVQs.
5 For example, 'HE: Meeting the Challenge', DES 1987; The Education Reform Act, 1998; 'HE: A New Framework', DES 1991; 'Learning To Succeed', NCE 1993; 'Social Justice: Strategies for National Renewal', CSJ 1994; 'An Adult HE', NIACE 1993; 'Lifetime Learning', DfEE 1995.
6 This is similar to Mezirow et al's (1990) model of non reflectors, reflectors and critical reflectors (although a less hierarchical model has been proposed elsewhere, e.g. Wellington and Austin 1996).

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Farewell to all that? The uncertain future of youth and community work education

Tony Jeffs and Jean Spence

This article considers issues in the field of professional community and youth work education. It does so with particular reference to the development of a range of different programmes since the start of the professional endorsement process following the Thompson Report. The analysis is undertaken with regard to transformations in HE since the late 1980s which, it is argued, have been driven by commercial concerns to the detriment of the educational principles and practices which are relevant to all HE programmes, but particularly important to a profession which claims to be educational in its purposes. The analysis of the institutional and policy context within which qualifying courses currently operate suggests that as presently conceived, they are facing an uncertain and insecure future.

Keywords: professional education; youth work; higher education; policy.

There are five distinct routes to securing a Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) recognised professional qualification in youth and community work.[1] All have standing as Higher Educational programmes, but not all are run within HE establishments. Via such courses, 1094 people became qualified youth and community workers in 2006. During the academic year 2004-2005, there were 1,466 enrolments compared to 1133 the previous year (National Youth Agency, 2006). This compares with the 390 who completed a professional training course in 1984. Qualified teachers were in 1984 still entitled to claim full-status as qualified youth workers and during that year approximately 200 did so. Therefore the number of new workers registered in 1984 was just under 600 (Kuper,1985).

The routes to qualifications are:

- Diploma in Higher Education (Dip.HE) – requiring two years' full-time study or the equivalent undertaken on a part-time basis;
- Foundation Degree – a two year full time employment led programme developed by educational institutions in collaboration with local employers;
- BA (or BSc) with Honours – involving a minimum of three years' full-time study or part-time equivalent;
- Post Graduate Certificate or Post Graduate Diploma – secured after one year of full time study or part-time equivalent;
- MA (or MSc) – usually involving one calendar year of full time study or part-time equivalent.

Between 2008 and 2010 the number of students gaining a Dip.HE qualification will plummet. Currently these are given either to those exiting an honours degree programme

at the end of the second year or as a discrete qualification. The decline will occur partly due to existing diploma programmes being re-configured as Foundation Degrees but also because to secure full professional status all students commencing their studies in 2010 will be required to complete an honours degree. Subsequently those leaving after two years successful full time undergraduate study will obtain an academic qualification equivalent to NVQ level 4. After 2013 this will enable them to secure employment as semi-professional Youth Support Workers. 'Top-up' programmes of, or equivalent to, one year's full time study will provide an opportunity to upgrade to honours degrees for those with Dip.HEs and foundation degrees.

All courses leading to qualification are approved and validated in England by the Education and Training Sub-Committee of the National Youth Agency (ETS) and its equivalents elsewhere in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Variable validating criteria are imposed by each of the national bodies but the equivalence is sufficient for employers and educational institutions in the different nations to treat the courses as comparable. This reflects the porous nature of the labour market with significant movement of staff across borders, and the fact that prior to the creation of the discrete national bodies, ETS validated programmes in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, whilst distance learning programmes have continued throughout to operate in all localities. The following discussion focuses primarily upon the situation in England where the majority of the courses are concentrated. There are variations of emphasis in other countries depending upon local policy, but the English situation highlights a number of key issues relevant to the quality of education in community and youth work.

Thompson does his bit

The current validation structure is recent in origin. No effective validating agency existed anywhere in the UK prior to 1983, although a de facto system operated whereby such programmes were 'inspected' by HMIs in order to secure for their graduates professional status under JNC. Any of the eleven diploma courses or the two post-graduate programmes then operating might have been judged unsatisfactory by the HMIs, who could exert pressure for them either to improve or close, but this never occurred in practice. After 1961, the JNC had a statutory responsibility for granting recognition to a qualification. It might unilaterally have identified a programme as failing, denying qualified status to its graduates. However, JNC lacked the staffing to monitor courses and consequently its capacity for independent action was severely limited. In practice, it required the submission of documentation for new programmes but the process was somewhat perfunctory.

The *Report of the Review Group on the Youth Service in England* (The Thompson Report), (HMSO, 1982), was critical of the existing training programmes and not content to leave intact the prevailing informal mechanisms for assessing their adequacy. Predictably, Thompson reiterated the perennial complaint of employers that course content bore little relation to the tasks expected of new workers, and expressed dismay at the absence of agreement about appropriate course content amongst those teaching on them, and between employers and trainers regarding relevant curriculum and syllabus. Additionally, the report suggested that the focus of some programmes mistakenly prioritise the needs of

students, as 'second chance' learners, at the expense of ensuring that those individuals were fully prepared for entry into a demanding profession.

In order to address these matters, Thompson advocated setting up a national body, to 'monitor and supervise' the initial training of youth and community workers (HMSO, 1982: 96), akin to the Central Council for the Education and Training of Social Workers which had been established in 1962.[2] It was envisaged that this body would be responsible for maintaining professional standards by:

- assessing and endorsing courses against published guidelines and criteria which it would be responsible for producing;
- undertaking continuous surveillance and regular reviews of courses;
- regulating standards of entry to courses;
- investigating the need for new curriculum content for courses;
- monitoring the distribution and volume of training facilities in relation to employment needs.

Thompson was pushing at an open door. The authors, not least the Chair who had been a long-serving HMI, must have been aware that the Secretary of State was already convinced of the need for such a body. Within weeks of the Report surfacing, the responsible minister announced that a Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work (CETYCW) would be established. Within a year CETYCW was up and running with a budget of £120,000 and a staff of eight. It had three areas of responsibility: the development of part-time and volunteer training; the monitoring and development of in-service training; and, on behalf of the JNC, the monitoring and validation of initial training courses that awarded nationally recognised professional qualifications. To undertake the last task, an Initial Training and Education Panel (INTEP) was formed. INTEP comprised representatives drawn from leading youth work employers, trade unions and training agencies, with employers in a majority. Henceforth new and existing courses were to be 'validated' by panels comprising employers, INTEP appointees and staff from the other training agencies. Panels were advised and supported in undertaking this task by a CETYCW officer. To make this possible and the process even-handed, criteria were produced against which courses were to be calibrated. Inevitably the range and complexity of these criteria have expanded over time, but fundamentally they relate to syllabus, resource allocation, modes of assessment, the balance between fieldwork and taught units, methods of recruitment and adequacy of documentation.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s the Conservative government sought in various ways to 'roll back the state'. One strategy involved establishing review groups charged with trimming the number of existing QUANGOs. One of these, the Norton Review in 1991 recommended merging CETYCW with the bigger National Youth Bureau to create a new organisation, the National Youth Agency (Davies, 1999; Wylie, 2007). After a fairly painless amalgamation the NYA undertook the tasks previously allocated to the CETYCW, via an allocated staff team reporting to the Education and Training Standards Committee of the NYA (ETS).[3]

The HE Context

The Thompson Report made its proposals concerning the training of full-time youth and community workers with reference to prevailing conditions in Higher Education (HE) unaware that these were to be swept aside within a decade. The Thatcher government had vigorously pursued policies of marketisation and privatisation throughout the 1980s with regard to public utilities and some welfare sectors such as housing, but did not seriously apply these policies to education until after the 1987 election. Even then the reform agenda, encompassed in the 1988 Education Act, focused initially on schools. This changed with the passing in 1992 of the Further and Higher Education Act, as a consequence of which Local Education Authorities lost control of further education (FE), and the last vestiges of their influence over the polytechnics. The Act technically abolished the binary divide between pre-existing universities[4] and the polytechnics which became 'new' universities. The Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) which since 1964 had been tasked with ensuring that all qualifications taught in 'non-incorporated colleges' and polytechnics were of comparable standard to those offered by the established universities, became defunct as the new universities gained the freedom to bestow their own qualifications in any subject they chose. However, such freedoms were never absolute. For programmes embodying a professional qualification, such as youth and community work, the curriculum and resources allocated had to comply with yardsticks set by the appropriate professional endorsing body, in this case the newly established ETS.

Endorsing bodies are usually established by law, and therefore ultimately answerable to the government. However, membership is dominated by potential employers who thereby exert major control over the content, direction and format of professional education. This 'loose coupling' structure between state and employer applies to youth and community work, child care and social work areas involving employers from the voluntary, statutory and private sectors. Where the state is a monopoly employer, although it may sub-contract elements of the service to private and voluntary agencies, such as Youth Justice, Connexions and Probation, a different model operates. Here the employer, in this case a government agency, imposes content and structure, but introduces the market by inviting universities to tender for the right to 'deliver' the pre-packaged programme for a fixed term. In such circumstances, the university becomes a direct client of the government required contractually to implement programmes as directed.

The 1992 Further and Higher Education Act resulted in a period of intense restructuring within the sector. A profusion of administrative and financial directives involving legislation, government circulars, reports, policy guidelines and alterations in the ways state funding is allocated guided this restructuring. The accumulated impact has been to reconfigure the balance between management, administration, teaching and research. Marketisation has injected competition into each and every corner of the sector, strengthening the autonomy of management, bureaucratising systems and subjecting academic issues to pressures external to issues of educational worth and intellectual validity. Increased commercialisation has been accompanied by an increase in student numbers and a skewing of provision towards courses which are deemed most profitable, modularisation of programmes, and a restructuring of finance to shift the burden of cost towards students. It is in this climate that community and youth work education and training has developed in the post-Thompson

period and only by appreciating the impact and meaning of these changes is it possible to assess the current issues for facing contemporary training.

Commercialisation

The business ethos and orientation of the university sector has a long history, but the commercial imperative is now becoming central. Competition between institutions is encouraging more universities to shift from charitable to company status in order to gain greater freedom to hire and fire staff, expand profit generating activities and avoid meeting the 'public benefit test' introduced under the 2006 Charities Act which requires charities to demonstrate how people on low incomes benefit from their activities. Cumbria University and Trinity and All Saints College are registered as companies and according to one law firm six institutions have 'recently' approached them for advice on how to become companies (Newman, 2007).

Increasing commercialisation is seldom beneficial to the maintenance of educational standards (Bok, 2003). Freedom to operate in market conditions is leading to 'tumbledown' with universities selling courses and themselves using straplines as dishonest as any employed by car or soap powder manufacturers. For example, the Open University has been running a TV advertisement promising, 'All the support you need to be the person you want to be,' whilst Northumbria University pledges, 'Great Learning. Great Experiences. Great Future.' Though there might be little sympathy for those over the age of 18 gullible enough to believe such nonsense, it remains disturbing that institutions unscrupulously sell themselves and their courses in this way. In the United States the temptation to recruit at any cost and without heed to a potential student's suitability to undertake or to complete the programme, has led to one university being fined $9.8 million for 'mis-selling' (Phillips, 2004). Viewed from this distance the fine appears extraordinary but in reality it barely dents the annual profits of the university concerned. The commercial pressure to fill places is intense, especially for universities and colleges which are primarily dependent upon teaching income.

Lee (2006) reports staff in some unnamed British universities being told to take anyone off the street to meet the quotas. On average, over 20 per cent of students now fail to complete their degree course while at London Metropolitan University only 52.2 per cent stay to the end (Pollard, 2006). There are many reasons for non-completion, including financial ones (Quinn et al, 2005) but such figures imply that many who are ill-prepared and un-qualified to study at degree level are being encouraged to do so, wasting their money and, more importantly, precious resources that could more usefully be spent meeting the educational needs of others.

Evidence is emerging about managerial pressure applied to academic staff to recruit, prevent wastage and to meet targets regardless of educational standards. One survey found 84 per cent of lecturers believed they had recently been obliged to lower standards; 71 per cent had admitted students unfit to study at the required level; 48 per cent reported that they had 'felt obliged to pass students who did not merit a pass;' 42 per cent had had fail decisions overturned by managers; and for 46 per cent in their area of expertise 'important areas of the curriculum have been cut because they are too expensive to teach' (Baty, 2004a: Baty, 2007).

Student Numbers

Universities driven by financial imperatives depend upon maximising student numbers. In 1963 around 66,000 (approximately four per cent) of 18 year olds, equivalent to a third of grammar school entrants, went annually to university. The authors of the influential Robbins Report in1963 anticipated a level of growth that would raise the proportion to 15 per cent by 2000 (HMSO, 1963: 71). They warned that this figure might be ambitious as research suggested no more than eight per cent of the population were likely to achieve the educational standards required to make a successful application to a university. In fact, by 2000, almost 40 per cent of 18 year olds entered HE and the government hope to drive this up to 50 per cent by 2010.

It is evident that expansion has been facilitated by demand. Growth propagates growth as parents who are graduates encourage their progeny to follow in their footsteps. More widely, young people and their parents are led to believe that securing a degree leads to higher lifetime earnings. This is only partially correct. Benefits of HE qualifications vary according to subject, place of study and unsurprisingly the class origins and gender of the graduate (Harkness and Machin, 1999; Blundell et al, 2000). Predictably the lower the parental income and more disadvantaged the family background of graduates, the less likely they are to secure a 'graduate' job or they take longer to do so (Furlong and Cartmel, 2005). Unprecedented levels of youth unemployment since 1970 might have further stimulated demand, as a 'push' incentive. Studying is a positive alternative to surviving on 'benefits.' Many undoubtedly benefit from the additional time in education, but in this category there are some who are simply 'entertained,' 'mopped-up' and 'occupied' taking courses that hardly improve their chances of securing a foothold in the labour market or lifting life-time earnings (Winch and Hyland, 2007: DfES, 2003). The promise of post graduate earning is even more volatile for mature students for whom the financial gains from degree-level qualifications vary steeply according to the subject and place of study while gains from NVQ 3 and lower qualifications are non-existent (Wolf, Jenkins and Vignoles, 2006).

Conditions in the labour market have further contributed to increased student numbers. Excess of labour supply over demand enables employers to increasingly opt out of the costs of training the next generation of workers. Between 1985 and 2004 the proportion of young people on employer funded training declined by 50 per cent to a derisory three per cent of 16 year olds (DfES, 2004). Related to this transfer of responsibility and cost, access to ever more crafts, semi-professions and professions, becomes dependent upon successfully completing a graduate or post-graduate programme, regardless of the actual requirements of the job and creating a tension between academic standards and the skills demands of employers.

Thus the priorities of educational institutions have shifted, making 'intellectual culture into a short-term obstacle for students to pass through on their way to credentials' (Collins, 1979: 198: see also Ainley, 1999). Rather than seeking education, students increasingly strive for high grades in school and university in order to secure entry onto professional qualifying programmes. 'Academic' subject based degrees have been sacrificed for vocational variants and this has been welcomed and encouraged by successive education ministers. For example, in 2003 Charles Clarke described medieval historians as ornaments and their departments as undeserving of state funding. Three years later Bill Rammell welcomed the

sharp decline in the number of students studying 'non-vocational' programmes in favour of the increase in those choosing vocational degrees (Clare, 2006). Expansion of this particular hue has been consistently driven by a belief amongst politicians of all parties that it is essential for the economic well-being of the nation. Influenced by 'human capital theory' they hold that investment in education produces tangible economic returns (Becker,1964). As one Minister of Education typically explained,' World class higher education ensures that countries can grow ...It is therefore at the heart of the productive capacity of the new economy' (Blunkett, 2000). Yet despite the enormous growth that has taken place since the late-1950s, Britain remains only fractionally above the OECD average participation rate of 38 per cent and way below Australia's 60 per cent (OECD, 2007), perhaps because other nations share the same perspective.

Expansion of student numbers has not been matched by a corresponding rise in funding. In 1989 expenditure per student was just over £7,500, projected to be just over £5,000 by 2006 (MacLeod, 2004). Between 1989 and 1992 HE student numbers spiralled from 250,000 to 382,000 but during the same period unit costs per student actually fell by 25 per cent (Mizen, 2004). Confirming the prediction made in 1960 by Kingsley Amis that 'more will mean worse,' growth has invariably been sustained by applying economies of scale. Virtually every institution has concentrated on maximising student numbers and minimising costs by raising staff-student ratios, reducing expenditure per student on libraries and equipment, and reducing staff – student contact time. Where courses and programmes have been unable to recruit at levels deemed cost-effective, they have been considered a drain on institutional resources and without reference to any other criteria have been systematically closed.

Laboratory based science courses have suffered the most from closure, but so too have programmes such as education and counselling which require above average tutorial time and practice supervision. In an effort to compensate for the failure of the HE market in some crucial areas of employment, it has been necessary for central government to find alternative options. For school-teaching, and to a lesser extent social work and probation, the 'solution' has been an expansion of 'apprenticeship' routes into these 'semi'- professions. Trainees (they are specifically not called students) on such programmes are work-based, with their learning managed by the employing agency. They are inducted from the start into the ethos of the institution, schooled for compliance and obliged to fit into the agency's pre-ordained norms. Success or failure for trainees becomes tied to the capacity to 'fit' with the needs of the employer as much as to their intellectual ability. Emphasis is placed on learning the skills of 'delivery' and client management rather than subject knowledge or theory. Those trained in this way are not required to acquire a knowledge base adequate to equip them to effectively challenge the supremacy of their managers. For example, trainee probation officers are not taught sufficient criminology, trainee teachers enough educational theory nor social workers the sociology and social policy to enable them to critique the pre-suppositions shaping policy or to question the autocratic leadership that hands down policy.

However, it is not only within such directly employer-led conditions of learning that the critical capacity of education is diminishing. Rising numbers of students who are instrumental in their use of HE and the growing influence of employers and funders in the decision-making process has had significant consequences for approaches to teaching

and learning in general. The response of the majority of university managers to changed conditions has been to intensify and condense the conditions of learning under the rubric of increased flexibility, by modularising programmes within a university calendar based on the semester system.

Modularisation

Modularisation, like the division of labour in industry, increases specialisation and productivity. But it is paradoxical in its effects. Mobilised as a means of accommodating increasing student numbers, it has then been invariably linked to a requirement of higher minimum numbers for units to run. Presenting apparent opportunities for greater choice, many students find their first choice modules culled due to low enrolment numbers. The openness of the modular system is supposed to improve inter-disciplinary contact. Yet no substantive evidence exists as to whether the intellectual and professional horizons of students are extended by being taught with peers drawn from other routes and courses, nor if cross-pollination compensates for the inevitable erosion of disciplinary or professional identity. Modularisation appears to give students opportunity to specialise and follow individual interests but this is contradicted by the way in which it promotes student 'drift', encouraging the take-up of modules which students perceive as 'easy' such as those without examinations, or with minimal theoretical content, or taught by lecturers known to spoon feed students, demand little or no reading and who mark generously – word quickly spreads regarding such matters (Ainley, 1994).

One of the main effects of modularisation is to break down the boundaries of disciplines and to make programmes permeable or semi-permeable. Overlapping and free-standing units facilitate 'shopping basket' or 'pick and mix' approaches to education. Superficially this seems to offer particular benefits for students and staff. By breaking up courses into discrete units, modularisation gifts flexibility allowing students to dictate the pace at which they study whilst obliterating the divisions between full-time and part-time study. Students can move seamlessly in and out of programmes or routes, personalising their learning trajectory. It also allows for uncomplicated transfer between institutions. Like camels students can carry credits gained in one university to another located anywhere in the country, or like squirrels bury their credits to dig them up years later. Credit transfer offers benefits to those students most likely to 'drop-out' of a given programme (Quinn et al, 2005). For staff the system offers the flexibility of adding or subtracting units in any given academic year making it easier to construct periods of study leave. For those who dislike teaching, or view it as unbecoming to their status, it helps them more easily 'buy in' low paid staff paid for from their 'research' or 'consultancy' earnings.

However breaking down disciplinary boundaries also fragments the student experience of education. Students bounce from module to module, sitting alongside others they scarcely know and rarely meet again. William Morris noted that the division of labour led to the 'division of men,' likewise modularisation divides and isolates students and staff. Students are routinely taught by staff encountered only for a given module, who never learn their names or form a meaningful relationship with either the group or individuals. Indeed, it has been argued that setting aside time to learn students' names is time wasted for lecturers which would be better devoted to research. (McCarron 2007). Academic staff have no incentive to invest time and energy in teaching. Harvard Medical School is so concerned

about the lack of enthusiasm amongst faculty towards teaching they have advanced an £8 million annual bonus to entice them to work with students (THES, 2007a). In Britain, some departments opt to employ teaching assistants, post-graduates and part-timers to undertake all first year undergraduate teaching. It is perhaps unsurprising that in many universities a high proportion of students don't so much leave as 'disappear,' dropping out unmissed and unnoticed by peers or lecturers, and that a growing number behave in the disruptive and self-indulgent ways associated with disaffected school pupils (Lee, 2006).

Identified often only by their numbers, students are increasingly denied the opportunity to engage in sustained conversation with either peers or teachers. They are denied sufficient space and time to mutually reflect upon course content and subsequently return to it to seek elucidation regarding niggling inconsistencies that arise when attempting to connect ideas. Any expectation that they will be able to learn from other students via discussion and social interaction in the classroom or outside of it is eradicated by anonymity. As universities become ever more like London terminals with students passing through on personal learning journeys, opportunities are lost to learn from and to teach each other; to engage in the conversations that provide the chance to test out ideas, and formulate theory in the midst of a community of scholars who mutually gain 'for themselves new ideas and views, fresh matter of thought, and distinct principles for judging and acting, day by day' (Newman, 1858: 146). In the world of mass education, opportunities for 'self-education', for exercising the arts of informal education and conversation that will serve students well in life as much as in their working environment are fewer and fewer.

Every policy implemented to raise through-put, to reduce the unit costs attached to each student eradicates more of the free time, open spaces and tranquillity that foster informal education and mutual learning. Production-line learning is achieved through the delivery of packages of information which can not stimulate the acquisition of a deeper understanding of the human condition. Examples of how this operates include the growing expectation or requirement that lecture notes and essential reading materials are put on the web to allow students unbridled access to 'course content' without the chore of attending lectures or visiting a library. Virtual universities, distance learning, the electronic student chat room, and much more besides, promise the ultimate economies of scale. Embraced as an exciting new world by many (Weber,1999: Freeman et al: 2000), they allow for minimal cost instruction along the lines of America's largest higher education institution, the University of Phoenix, a for-profit company with 142 mini-campuses dotted around the country and 240,000 students online. Online and distance learning permits providers to control input and minimise disruption, whilst ensuring students do not infect each other with critical and distracting ideas, wasting time in idle chatter or browsing in a library when they might be digesting pre-packaged course materials. Here at last is the opportunity to create electronically a closed system of learning Bell and Lancaster only dreamt of two centuries ago.

Just as modularisation fragments the student experience so it fragments knowledge. The *modus operandi* requires subjects, ideas, concepts and disciplines to be dismantled, gutted and abridged then extruded into standardised semesterised units. Aims, objectives and outcomes written in formulaic ways allow students to predict what is required of them, and for the unit to be picked-up and discarded by any lecturer – then picked up again

and discarded by their successors. Specialist knowledge and subject expertise become of diminishing significance. Indeed the less the lecturer knows the lower the probability they will deviate from the script and fail to 'cover the material.' These new structures demand that what is 'delivered' in the allotted time must be tested and consumed in isolation. Within them, no lecturer can possibly know what a student brings with them by way of previous learning. The Connexions Diploma operated on this basis. Lecturers, (although they might more appropriately be termed 'delivery agents') were supplied with a collection of 'power-point' presentations to be dispensed in a set time to trainees who had pre-packaged reading but no assumed access to a library.[5] Presentation was followed by standardised exercises assessing the trainee's level of absorption and capacity to apply the techniques and information within their work setting.[6]

Outcome driven processes curtail and in the case of pre-packaged programmes seek to remove the opportunities for teachers to give expression to what Palmer refers to as the 'capacity for connectedness,' to 'join self and subject' (1998: 11) thereby linking ideas and enabling student and teacher alike to move beyond the merely relevant 'what is', towards a liberatory sense of 'what might be.' Compartmentalised outcome-directed instruction runs counter to the very principles of good teaching. Learning aims and objectives, 'benchmarking'[7] and all the paraphernalia of modern education focus on measurable outcomes; on itemised 'endings', transferring competencies and on learning how to internalise and regurgitate the pre-packaged information. As Furedi explains, university teachers are 'no longer supposed to teach what they think needs to be taught, and they certainly do not have the right to lecture material for which the learning outcome cannot be demonstrated in advance' (2004: 76-77). These externally imposed structures, often willingly embraced by anti-intellectual elements within the university and those who expect courses to produce biddable employees, militate against one of the primary tasks of the committed university teacher which as Weber (1967) stressed, is to teach students to recognise 'inconvenient' facts, to question accepted opinion, to interrogate the obvious, to think independently and when necessary courageously. And of course, for many students, simply seeking the qualification which will gain them the right to access a higher paid job, there is little to be gained from critical or disruptive thinking. Their instrumental understanding of the purpose of HE is not only influenced by the demands of the labour market and the culture of educational institutions, but also by their own financial investment in their education which has been increasing exponentially in recent years.

Transferring the burden

Expansion has been achieved by a neat governmental sleight of hand entailing a gradual lowering of expenditure per head whilst shifting costs to individual students and their families. As student numbers have risen, so grants have been cut in real terms, eligibility for grants curtailed and fees introduced. Expenditure previously borne by institutions is transferred to students. For example many programmes no longer supply 'hardcopy' handbooks, reading lists or course outlines, replacing them with digital copies which students print for themselves.

Currently students from households earning less than £15,000 receive a full grant of £2,700, with the expectation that universities will top it up to £3,000 to cover tuition fees.

Despite this largesse Furlong and Cartmel (2005) found that it was those from poorest households whose families were ill-equipped to support them, who acquired the highest levels of debt. Debt and loans have a substantial negative impact on degree completion rates for low income students (Kim, 2006). Most students receive no grant. Barclays Bank calculates that those graduating in June 2008 will do so carrying an average debt of £33,708 (Hunter, 2005). The cost of completing a university degree is now estimated to be £39,000, outside of London – £9,000 fees plus living costs. This figure ignores lost earnings (Lightfoot, 2007).

Tuition fees, which are predicted to rise sharply for 'elite' universities after 2010, already encourage divergence between courses and institutions. Some universities and colleges have elected to charge lower fees (for example Leeds Metropolitan University charges only £2,000), whilst some prefer to offer more substantial bursaries. Cheapest of all are the foundation degrees delivered by further education colleges. This has distorted recruitment patterns as some programmes, especially those leading to public service professions which do not promise high salaries are abandoned in favour of more lucrative options such as law. Some students tend simply to opt for the cheapest and most accessible course of study appropriate to their field of interest rather than choosing on the basis of quality. This will widen an already-present fissure in undergraduate provision. Ultimately what will affect graduate status will be place of study and degree subject rather than degree classification (Wolf, 2002). As Margaret Hodge, when Minister responsible for Higher Education acknowledged to a House of Commons Committee in May 2003, if potential students 'thought and acted rationally' they would not waste their time and resources 'going to one of the new universities.'

As costs rise so it appears does a customer mentality amongst students: 'I pay therefore I pass.' The customer equivalence is obviously restricted. For the 'sale' of teaching is a limited factor in determining a student's success or failure. As Kiloh reminds us, ultimately 'learning is something you do for yourself' (1998: 47). Yet the 'customer – provider' perspective is re-shaping how universities relate to students and vice-a-versa. University marketing encourages the customer mentality by suggesting studying is an investment for a qualification which will lead to lucrative paid employment (Kipp, 2004: 2004a). In some institutions the term 'customer' has replaced 'student' (Hill, 1995). On the basis of her research, Lee (2006), concluded that the burgeoning consumer mentality has significantly altered the nature of the relationship between staff and students. According to a recent study on student behaviour carried out by the University and College Union (UCU, 2007) students increasingly view degrees as a 'traded commodity', blaming teachers if they fail to achieve expected results. Over a quarter of lecturers reported in a survey that they had been victims of physical, verbal and written threats from students. Conflict is exacerbated as students seeking qualifications for purely utilitarian ends come to resent anything or anyone standing in their way.

The quality of the education is thus separated from the 'outcome' and can become an irrelevance in the worst cases of student instrumentalism. Indeed it is economically irrational for the purchaser 'student' to spend more than the minimum required to achieve the license to practice, unless the pricey option offers tangible fiscal benefits. Eventually universities charging reduced fees, or providing higher bursaries may have to convince

enough potential students that their degree is worth more in the market place than cheaper versions, including Foundation Degrees, offered by the local FE college or distance learning programme or they too will be priced out of their host institution. In these matters markets take few prisoners and the long-time survival of some professional education in the wider university sector is by no means assured.

Accumulated student debt forces many to undertake part-time, or even full-time, work whilst studying which has led to a decline in volunteering and pro bono work whilst at college. Moreau and Leatherwood (2006) confirm that a long term impact of the increase in student debt has been a decline in the amount of voluntary work carried out by students from lower social class groupings. For example, whilst forty and fifty years ago it was not unknown for youth and community students to collectively run youth clubs, voluntarily initiate and organise community projects and run holiday play schemes, this is no longer on the agenda as students prioritise paid employment.

Debt further ultimately encourages graduates to seek the best paid, rather than the most suitable job. On the basis of longer experience of this system in the United States, Smith (2004) argues that debts and loans 'place a barrier between a dedicated young person and his or her admirable ambitions after graduation that has proved the most pernicious.' According to King and Frishberg (2001) debts prevent two thirds of American graduates opting for a public service career. Traditionally, compensation for the lower salaries and anti-social hours was found in the heightened social kudos attached to the 'service' and high levels of commitment and dedication in public service careers such as youth work, teaching and nursing. Such work also promised some professional autonomy. These compensations are now significantly diminished in response to Thatcherism's refusal to 'imagine individuals (or institutions) which exist independent of the cash nexus' (Evans, 2004: 138). The ethos of public service professions, where 'ideally, you realise yourself through service to others' (Magnet, 2003: 41) is at odds with a society energetically seeking to convince itself and the up-and-coming generation that self-fulfilment, personal success, wealth and the individual ego must take precedence.

Not surprisingly, unless motivated by a counter ideology such as a religious faith or political commitment, young people are more and more shunning programmes linked to public sector careers if they can. The end result is declining educational entry standards for such programmes. In teaching and social work, such a trend initially motivated the government to introduce monetary incentives, via lower fees, to attract 'high performing' students onto qualifying courses. The relative failure of this initiative was followed by a shift of focus towards attracting 'high flying' graduates into the public sector. Schemes devised to fast track elite graduates up the career ladder in the police and armed services, have been followed by 'Teaching First,' designed to attract to school-teaching those who might otherwise go immediately into high paid private sector employment. Now, in *Aiming High for Young People: A Ten Year Strategy for Positive Activities* (HM Treasury, 2007) the government has announced it will invest £25,000,000 in a similar scheme for community and youth work. Like the initiatives on which it is based it holds out the promise to participants that the career ladder will be tilted in their favour. In an unsubtle way it also suggests the current routes of entry are failing to draw in high quality workers and that only bribes, not a commitment to public service, will attract talented people into the field.

When the costs of acquiring a degree were low, the point of entry into the labour market was less critical for those from middle and low income households. Tuition fees and loss of grants radically altered this. Moreover, it is far easier to manufacture graduates than create graduate-level jobs. Consequently around 40 per cent of those graduating enter jobs that cannot be defined as 'graduate employment' and with 'lower skill levels than in previous years' (Wolf, 2002: 243). Creating an all-graduate youth and community profession paid for to a significant extent by the students themselves will not automatically alter the range of talents required to practise or do little to raise the standard of the service offered if there is little qualitative difference between contemporary graduates and their predecessors with 'lower level' qualifications.

Impact on Community and Youth Work Education

Whatever its highest ideals and values, youth and community work education and training has inevitably, like other disciplines and professions, been forced to adapt, compromise and shift its approach in order to maintain its position within the HE sector. In the face of increased commercialisation, it might have been predicted that community and youth work programmes, which are expensive relative to other subjects, and whose pedagogical methods traditionally rely on relatively small numbers, would have suffered from closure or transfer from the academy to the field. Mainly this has not happened. Indeed, since the introduction of Foundation Degrees and the financial incentives attached to them, the number of courses has increased markedly.

There was an inkling that transfer to the field was a possibility when seventeen 'Apprenticeship Routes', funded by the Educational Support Grant, were established in England and Wales between 1989 and 1990 (see Kavanagh, Rittman and Smith, 1994), but this experiment was not repeated and efforts to replace HE programmes with NVQ qualifications have likewise had minimal success demanding as they are of time and effort from the field. The fragmented nature of the community and youth work field makes it simply unrealistic to develop adequate training in that context. Employers of youth and community workers have been as vocal as head teachers, social work managers and chief probation officers regarding the failings of new recruits emerging from universities 'their heads full of theory' and 'clueless about doing the job in the real world.' These managers are repeating the mantra that Colley (2003) describes as the 'longest whine in history,' but most youth and community agencies lack the financial clout or organisational elasticity to create their own ticket of entry.

The example of the YMCA is instructive in this respect. The American YMCA created its own in-house training route when it established its first college in 1885 to train General Secretaries, and the British YMCA tentatively followed suit in the 1930s. Post-war decline in the number of YMCAs meant that by the 1970s the British course could only survive by incrementally expanding recruitment to provide mainstream youth and community work training and eventually by linking itself to a Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC) affiliated college. Similarly, Westhill College (Birmingham) eventually severed all but the most tenuous links with the Methodist Church prior to amalgamation with Birmingham University (Holmes, 2007). Connexions had, and the Youth Justice Board still has the purchasing power

to fund tailor-made training programmes with compliant universities, but for generic youth and community work, the numbers employed by any given local authority and voluntary organisation are mainly too small, and the financial state of such organisations too parlous, to warrant setting up 'in-house' routes to qualification.

Within the universities themselves, community and youth work staff have been adept at accommodating changed conditions, moving with policy, accessing 'one off' sources of funding such as that available for apprenticeship schemes and foundation degrees, delivering modules in the field to earn extra revenue, helping to meet widening participation targets with non-traditional entrants, and creating pacts with influential local employers to access their funding sources and to provide political support within the universities concerned. In addition to this, the courses have not been as expensive as appears at first glance partly because of placement arrangements which consume approximately one third of the 'contact' time for three-year degrees and almost half that of diplomas and foundation degrees. Placements release expensive classrooms and simultaneously carry minimal overheads as supervision and 'teaching' are undertaken, gratis or for a peppercorn fee, by practitioners. This is attractive to university managers. If placement agencies commenced charging 'commercial rates' for this work, thereby pushing up unit costs per student, it is doubtful if many existing courses would survive.

Placements have also been helpful in limiting the impact of modularisation upon community and youth work courses. Conditions attached to the professional qualification leave students with rarely more than ten per cent of their timetable available for 'free-standing' modules. Nevertheless modularisation has changed programmes, principally because it has breached disciplinary and professional fortifications. To protect their mainstream provision, most courses have been forced to offer their modules to other students. This necessity has stimulated the growth of allied programmes such as youth and childhood studies that share core modules and link to similar free-standing options. Simultaneously, it has encouraged the construction of large interconnected programmes overlapping a plethora of professional and subject degrees. So for example professional programmes including such as youth and community, social work, criminal justice, nursing and play work coalesce around common modules with sociology, criminology, health studies and psychology, creating opportunities for teaching in large groups shared subjects such as 'research methods' and 'human growth and behaviour'. Inevitably this means modules must be self-contained rather than integrated with other components of the programme. The coherence of any given professional route is therefore disrupted. At the same time, the characteristic small group and tutorial work that was once central to the pedagogical practices of community and youth work education is undermined (Newman and Robertson, 2006: Keeble, 1965).

Such losses are no small matter in a profession whose purpose is to foster critical dialogue in the practice field. They may be unfortunate in relation to say nursing or policing, encouraging a bureaucratised approach that de-humanises both practitioner and 'client', but for youth and community work, reliant on the use of self, upon the capacity of individual practitioners to communicate ideas, to enthuse and teach via word and example, they are disastrous. Conversational skill and proficiency with language are de rigueur for youth and community workers. How they learn their craft is not inconsequential.

To enter into this arena of professional practice should be to set out on an uncharted and un-concluded intellectual adventure wherein the practitioner as an educator will strive, as Oakshott explained, to open up 'intimations of excellence,' offering the young person opportunities to ask new questions, 'acquire new interests and pursue them uncorrupted by the need for immediate results,' and 'learn to seek satisfactions' previously never 'imagined or wished for (1972: 24).' Instead, state mandated youth and community work is unfortunately increasingly about socialisation and accreditation rather than education. Discussion, debate, conversation and the fostering of autonomy are being pushed aside by the need to produce measurable outcomes and deliver externally imposed curricula. Inevitably this transformation re-shapes the ways in which workers are prepared for practice. Profound modifications in practice loop back to re-configure the educational experience of the students in terms of course structure and content. Steiner (2003:102) argues that good teaching must always seek 'to awaken doubts in the pupil, to train for dissent.' Methodologically, pre-packaged learning, power point and tool-kits represent a mode of education which trains for conformity and is diametrically at odds with the traditions of informal education in youth work. As informal education, conversation and reflection are supplanted within state youth work so this is reflected in the conditions of HE where a modularised, individualised and isolationist structure comes to the fore, in order to better equip students for the world of work they will encounter. Such complementarity dims critical insight, reinforces the hegemony of employers in both the field and the academy and exacerbates student instrumentalism.

The instrumentalism which besets most students in the current financial climate might ultimately be the most significant factor in reshaping the provision of community and youth work education and training. The 'non-traditional' groups from whom the courses have always recruited are also those who are likely to bear the brunt of costs shifting towards students. This is not helped by the low starting salaries which they can anticipate on graduation. Potential community and youth work students are therefore particularly responsive to fee disparities. Whilst the policy rhetoric of widening participation has seemed to offer an encouraging environment for non-traditional students, in order to sustain or increase numbers, it has also focused course development upon provision of the cheapest possible programmes. In addition to the lure of government subsidy, the sliding emphasis towards offering Foundation Degrees in FE colleges must be understood in this light. This represents a further movement towards employer control and encourages the anti-intellectual managerial culture which emphasises delivery and outcomes in training rather than praxis in education.

The development of foundation degrees within FE is inimical to the security of undergraduate honours degree programmes in the HE sector. It is possible that the closure of long-standing community and youth work undergraduate programmes in the pre-1992 universities is but a foretaste of what might happen elsewhere as recruits choose the cheapest option which will deliver them a qualification as quickly as possible swelling the ranks of semi-professional youth support workers to the detriment of the development of professional youth work. These closures are also symptomatic of the establishment of a lower status profession as the fissure between the old and new universities widens along lines reflecting the unequal division between research and teaching. The split has dire implications for the quality and intellectual development of the community and youth work profession.

Research versus teaching

A survey of Research Council Awards for 2006-07 (*Times Higher Education Supplement*, 2007) shows that amongst the top 30 rated UK universities, only Edinburgh now offers an undergraduate community and youth work programme. Three others, Durham, Reading and Birmingham have during the last decade closed undergraduate programmes. At the other end of the scale, amongst the bottom 30 rated universities, 15 offer such programmes. This must be understood in the context of the drive to maximise funding in which the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has been considered by the old universities as the main indicator of 'quality'. Those who score high RAE ratings reap substantial financial rewards. Indeed, as Roberts (2003:4) highlights in his review of the process, the foremost purpose of the exercise is 'to inform the selective allocation of funds.'

Within the research-led universities vocational education has been considered unduly expensive in terms of teaching, and has been accorded low status within a peer review system which rates 'theoretical' and discipline based knowledge above practice generated and related knowledge. Journals produced with reference to the application of knowledge, and which span an academic and professional readership, have been marginalised as 'irrelevant' to the RAE, whilst obscure 'peer-reviewed' publications with 'international' editorial boards have been afforded high status. In an environment where the numbers of citations and references for each published article are important indicators of 'standing' (which substitutes for 'quality'), a small and specialist subject area such as youth and community work will always find it difficult to compete and must make its way under the wing of other subjects such as social work, health, education, social policy and history. Academic staff in youth and community work who attempt to publish in the journals of allied disciplines are frequently wrong-footed at the outset because their subject is not 'mainstream.' If they are published, then there is little chance their work will be read by those in the field to whom the work is most relevant. Consequently, community and youth work has struggled in the old university sector with specialist staff finding it difficult to respond to the expectations associated with the RAE and research councils which fund high status research at the same time as maintaining a practice orientation. 'Research active' community and youth work academics are increasingly diverted from the professional and teaching base of their subjects and ultimately from the discipline altogether. As vocational programmes have been deemed 'non-viable' in this arena so staff are being redeployed to other disciplines.

Within the new universities, the RAE has had a negative effect in different ways. Here the intensity of the competition in an unequal market, and the cumulative qualities of successive RAEs wherein success begets success, have created a situation where research has begun to seem a luxury that can no longer be afforded. Cost-benefit analysis has convinced the management of many of the post-1992 universities they stand to gain more by maximising teaching income and exploiting opportunities offered by the targeted funding which accompanies government policy initiatives than by pursuing the uncertainties of research income. In some cases they have abandoned efforts to compete for RAE funds in all but a few specialist areas. Consequently, the drive to increase student numbers has intensified, maximising income at the expense of teaching staff and students. Academic staff are left with less time or energy to undertake research even if they have the inclination. As one research project reveals:

> *there is no question that the pressure to meet RAE criteria was an additional source of stress, even for those (probably the majority) who valued research and wanted to engage in it ... research and writing generally had to be done in 'overtime' or rather in 'personal time.'* (Sikes, 2006: 564-565)

Youth and community work teaching and learning, concentrated in new universities, has therefore been systematically denuded of opportunities for related research development. This echoes and reinforces a destructive tension between the vocational and academic in the profession.

The overall consequence of the RAE is increased instrumentalism in both research and practice. The general effect has been a loss of scholarship and of a culture of learning in HE in which debate, critical understanding and analysis might be pursued as much as information and 'evidence'. Research must increasingly conform to the priorities of government if it is to be funded by the research councils. Recently the seven research councils revised the assessment of research proposals to favour those promising the greatest economic impact (Corbyn, 2007). Research which follows knowledge for its own sake or with the intention of developing critical analysis of dominant political principles is unlikely to receive support. Successful applicants are diverted from teaching only to follow research which is subject to the whims and fancies of the dominant political elite (Issitt and Spence, 2005). Meanwhile the increasing collaboration between new universities and local employers and policy makers has led to increased opportunities for academic staff in these institutions to take on 'evaluations'. Although often under-funded these do provide opportunities for the employment of part time or sessional staff to cover teaching whilst full time workers undertake such work as a substitute for the research opportunities they are denied. If such evaluations are pursued as exercises in critical questioning it is unlikely that those involved will be given further opportunities to 'bite the hand that feeds them'. Thus research in both the old and new universities is pursued predominantly as an exercise in evidence gathering and income generation. As Barrow explains:

> *It is 'research' rather than 'scholarship' that the institution as a whole prefers to emphasise, and this verbal choice is significant. 'Scholarship' is a general term implying breadth and depth of knowledge, erudition, and perhaps even a whiff of culture; it suggests understanding and appreciation; it may be in the province of the philosopher as readily as that of the scientist. 'Research', by contrast, implies the generation of new knowledge and the search for definite answers to particular problems; it thus lends itself far more readily to the work of the applied scientist than that of the historian or musician; more generally it suggests empirical than speculative or philosophical work. And the implications of this terminology have clearly been instantiated in the practice of higher education.* (2003: 10)

Without the profound and prolonged questioning implied by scholarship independent of funding considerations and which in the case of youth and community work would inevitably engage theory and practice in sustained dialogue between academics and professional workers, as much as (if not more than) with the policy makers who currently dominate the scene, something is lost. Indeed the absence of scholarship threatens the intellectual future of the professional education of youth and community workers. For

if those in the universities, the natural home of scholarship, cease to prioritise it, then it becomes difficult to justify the presence of such education there. If the university is not 'imbuing students with a love of truth, reason and learning' (ibid: 15), not bringing students into intimate contact with scholars then it really is rather pointless to 'deliver' the training in that place. It might as well be done more cheaply by email and booklet or in the local FE college.

Problems for ETS

A fully developed process of education and training for youth and community work clearly needs to pursue scholarship as well as skills and knowledge in order to create a workforce of the quality traditionally associated with professionalism, and the standard deserved by those at the receiving end of practice. If this cannot be assured by the universities, it could hardly be expected that the endorsing agencies, could do so. In fairness it should be acknowledged CETYCW and the ETS alike have always lacked the funding, and therefore staffing, to adequately undertake even the tasks proposed by Thompson and the government with regards to professional education. Administratively they have been perpetually running to catch up, not least because the re-organisation of higher and further education has led to an escalation of the number of programmes. This rate of expansion would have taxed the resources of an organisation far more generously endowed than either of these have been. That aside it is doubtful if the structures put in place have substantively addressed the issues raised initially by Thompson.

Assessment and endorsement takes place but the quality of the process is variable and somewhat perfunctory. Institutional resources are not scrutinised and far too much must be taken on trust. For example libraries are not checked to ensure that texts cited in documentation are stocked, the quality of placements can not be evaluated nor the qualifications and suitability of fieldwork teachers or tutors on distance learning programmes scrutinised. Guidelines and criteria might have expanded but they often have little purchase on what is actually offered. Prospective and existing programmes tick the boxes and tweak their programme documentation to match the criteria but nothing is done to audit these claims. Once 'approved' surveillance and review is tokenistic.

To do the job it has been given, ETS would need more staff, which means that courses must pay far more for the endorsement process. This is not something they will willingly do, especially as more funding would allow for a more rigorous validation and the creation of an intrusive monitoring system. To maintain standards, it would also be necessary for ETS to be involved, charging a full validation fee, every time an HE institution franchises out a course to another agency or college. Universities cannot be trusted to franchise out programmes without close monitoring because the potential earnings are such it is not in the interests of either the franchiser or the franchisee to ask too many awkward questions. The number of scandals in recent years linked to the franchising process at home and overseas, should be sufficient to alert those responsible for monitoring programmes of the need for vigilance. For example, the library facilities at FE colleges, where many foundation degrees are being offered, are frequently wholly inadequate to sustain under-graduate programmes as even the briefest examination of the journals available to students shows.

Equally the contact hours of FE staff frequently make it impossible for them to undertake the levels of preparation and self-education needed to teach at degree level or monitor placements. Meanwhile, the management structures within FE focus on the need for staff compliance with managerial norms rather than facilitating the creative autonomy that is an essential component for the development of the attributes required of staff teaching at degree level (Hodgson and Jeffs, 2007). Universities might have been seriously corrupted by commercialism, but they still remain different places from FE colleges. Some universities, or more accurately their employees, have managed to retain some allegiance to at least the principle of being more than what Newman called 'educating machines', maintaining a dedication to teaching 'universal knowledge' (1903:11) and developing 'the culture of the intellect' (ibid: xvii). This is almost totally absent in the FE sector which consciously operates according to another set of values and different ends, in particular to 'provide a crucial support for business' (Whittaker 2003: 14; LSDA 2003). ETS has a singular duty to protect some of the poorest and most vulnerable students, who may opt for the FE alternative because it is cheap and handy and all they can manage, against the real dangers of exploitation built into the franchising structure. Initially this must entail ETS in developing processes for 'drilling down' to the point of course delivery.

Because of insufficient capacity, endorsement has become mainly a bureaucratic paper exercise based on the supply of information. No structure exists to enforce inspection, so for example, programmes can, and do, cut resources and transfer teaching to part-time and hourly-paid staff without any fear of sanctions. The prime check is the report submitted annually on each programme by the external examiner(s). Such documents can be of dubious worth. Examiners are selected by the courses themselves, and weak and academically undernourished programmes find it difficult to resist selecting 'sympathetic' individuals to fulfil the role. Even courses with little to fear may be lured into recruiting on the basis of making their own lives more comfortable. Moreover, institutions are learning that by restricting the volume of work shown to the external examiner, reducing the time examiners spend on site and providing standardised report forms with little space for criticism, they can curtail much possible disparagement. Neither CETYCW nor subsequently ETS has infringed on this close relationship or challenged the quality and veracity of the examiner reports submitted. Until the credentials of externals are scrutinised and, when appropriate, appointments questioned or approval withdrawn, this will remain a largely unsatisfactory means of ensuring academic standards are sustained at a time when the pressure from institutions is to cut corners and let the 'customers' through.

For the system of endorsement to be meaningful, courses need to be vigorously held to account to ascertain adequate quality of teaching and quantity of resources to enable what is promised to be delivered. This means the academic standing of those employed to teach on programmes should be monitored not just with reference to the possession of a JNC recognised qualification, but also with regard to the academic qualifications relevant to teaching at under-graduate and, if required, at post-graduate levels. Engagement in appropriate research should be relevant to such monitoring. The CVs which are currently attached to submission documents are insufficient in a context where institutions increasingly buy-in cheaper part-timers to cover teaching so they may redirect their full time staff to other activities.

Students can be, and are bribed by high marks and the prospect of painlessly securing a ticket to practice in an outcome-led world. They therefore cannot be relied upon to insist on 'quality' programmes even if they had the means to assess them. This is usually their first and only experience of higher education, and they possess no comparators regarding what is, and is not, of an adequate standard. They may be vaguely aware the essay returned yesterday with a first-class mark would not pass muster at Cambridge, or the member of staff called professor would not even make the short-list for a temporary lecturer's post at Oxford but so what? Why should they worry about such matters? Why make a fuss when it would diminish their chances of passing? To expect them to act in such a way would be absurd, irrational. Within the context of a higher education system dominated by the cash nexus, ETS must operate on the basis that although they may talk the language of quality, students, universities and employers actually have no incentive to raise professional standards if it costs money or reduces the product 'flow'.

In the current environment courses attempting to apply higher academic standards, demanding more intensive study and enforcing rigorous criteria concerning fitness to practice are the least likely to flourish because they will be more costly. Moreover, they would find it more difficult to recruit because prospective students as rational consumers would avoid them in favour of programmes that promise an easier route to the same professional standing. As 'customers', most would deem it foolish to pay more for a qualification than necessary. A marketised higher education system can only support a limited number of expensive institutions and these will inevitably, like pricey hotels, predominately cater for wealthy clients. To overcome the constant threat of standards being forced down, alternative counter-balancing mechanisms, with adequate finance, and independence are necessary to 'reinforce intellectual standards' as without them 'commercial temptations are bound to take a toll' (Bok, 2003: 198). Once the business model has been allowed to drive out the public service ethic it will take years to overcome the damage done to educational standards by the 'axe of the spoiler and self-interest.'[8]

Unfortunately, ETS lacks the necessary components. Its effectiveness is inhibited not only by resources but also composition. Its *Terms of Reference* (NYA, 2003) mean that it must not have more than 24 voting members. These include two nominated by Training Agencies Group but the majority represent the field and particularly employers[9]. Winch and Hyland (2007) in their authoritative review of related research argue that the predominance of employers in the structures of monitoring training has cultivated a low skill economy by eroding the autonomy of front-line workers and generating a perceived need for a growing army of middle managers. Such control has also devalued theory and focused almost exclusively upon skills, thereby curtailing the capacity of workers to build theory in practice and establish professional sovereignty. That accurately describes the prevailing state of affairs regarding youth and community professional training with its growing emphasis on Competence Based Education and Training (CBET), 'firmly rooted in the functions of employment ...without imposing an educational model of how people learn or behave' (Jessup 1991: 39). European experience suggests that employer hegemony will only be challenged if trade union members and independent academics, unaligned to any of the universities providing courses, are included in sufficient numbers to challenge the opportunity for employers and training agencies to develop the cosy relationships that help sustain the low skill, low cost equilibrium that benefits them all, at least in the short-term

(see Winch and Hyland 2007: 30-44).

The expectation that CETYCW and subsequently ETS would regulate standards of entry is now a dead letter. The number of courses has grown and so too has the pressure to fill every available place. In the race for students, criteria for entry have been downgraded. In particular, requirements that entrants should have substantive practice experience and be over a certain age have been largely set aside. No hard evidence exists that older 'mature' students make better practitioners or students, but even if they did, it would be impossible to return to the position prevailing two decades ago when such students formed a majority on all programmes. Overall, the proportion of 'mature' applicants has declined and will continue to do so as the costs of 'returning to study' inexorably mount. Meanwhile the numbers of teenagers entering higher education continues to rise. The long term implication of this is that the pool of experienced candidates is steadily drained. Social workers, teachers and medics can now all commence professional training at 18 without prior experience and in such circumstances it is difficult to argue that community and youth work should be an exception. ETS could, and probably should, impose minimum requirements for entry such as an acceptable level of literacy or a specified period of approved prior practice. If it did so, some courses would probably close, which might not be a bad thing but, as things stand, it is difficult to envisage how such criteria might be enforced.

It has been impossible for CETYCW and the ETS to address the remaining concern of the Thompson Report that existing courses were focusing unduly on the need to carry students through programmes rather than prioritising their preparation for the morally and intellectually challenging work they would encounter after graduation. Through no fault of the endorsement process, but rather as a consequence of conditions in educational institutions, the situation has probably deteriorated during the intervening years. Fear of litigation from failing students and trepidation that students may hold staff responsible for their own inadequacies, have made a bad situation worse. Increasingly students are treated as child-like creatures in need of protection from the everyday troubles of life by counselling and professional support (Furedi, 2004). The world of higher education, like other welfare and educational agencies, has embraced a therapeutic ethos that 'legitimises beliefs about the diminished self rather than the empowered, autonomous and resilient self' (Ecclestone, 2007:466). Universities advise staff to pre-prepare students for lectures they may find uncomfortable, some even going so far as to create committees that vet the 'controversial' (Baty, 2004). Placements and educational visits are wrapped around by risk assessments, despite a reality that the risks are minuscule, indeed far less than would be encountered on a Friday night out (Adams, 2007). Colleges tell staff not to ask students challenging questions as this may risk damaging their self esteem (Ecclestone, 2007: 456). One youth and community lecturer found himself being warned as to his future conduct by his head of department after students complained he was 'overworking' them, by insisting they read the 'two articles or chapters per week' that he provided. This came on top of a previous complaint that he was being unreasonable and discriminatory by expecting them to read a set text (personal communication). In another instance staff were told not to use handwriting when marking essays as this might be difficult for students to read (presumably no young person or colleague will ever write them a note?) One course tells staff they must start their commentary on an essay with a positive comment, and always balance a

critical one with a supportive one. Another was told to cease using a 'red pen' and writing comments on student essays as some had found the negative feedback upsetting (personal communications). These and countless other examples of 'best practice' reflect a:

> *style of affirmation favoured by parenting experts for infants ... Inevitably, the more energy that academics devote to attending to the emotional needs of their undergraduates, the less seriously they take them as potential intellectuals* (Furedi, 2004: 144/5).

The cosseting of students tends to be greatest on courses such as youth and community work and social work where much of the teaching is undertaken by 'caring' professionals who bring their external modes of practice into the academic environment. The techniques used whilst working with 'troubled' and 'troublesome' young people are deployed in the class and tutorial. Such staff teach by example without reference to the fact that students have voluntarily opted to enter the adult world of the university and that the primary role of lecturers is to address their intellectual, not their emotional needs, to stimulate curiosity and autonomy not to foster the dependency which situates students as clients. The caring approach adopted by academic staff has possibly contributed to the epidemic of stress and absenteeism plaguing youth and community work. By treating students as delicate and immature, unready for the rigours of the world, they both enable those unsuited to practice to qualify, and fail to bring to maturity those who would rise to the challenge and enter practice as confident and enthusiastic professionals.

Where now?

Measured against the functions which Thompson and the government hoped CETYCW and subsequently ETS would perform, it is difficult to say their work has been a 'success.' However in the present circumstances, ETS is worth defending, partly because its existence is an acknowledgement of a discrete body of knowledge associated with the professional practice of youth and community work, but also because the maintenance of the system of endorsement is linked with the terms and conditions of professional employment under JNC. Moreover, in practical terms, a body able to collect data on staff and monitor changes in professional training performs an unglamorous but essential task in centrally registering courses and counting graduates.

Theoretically, as youth and community work evolves into an all-graduate profession, it should be anticipated that the ETS would gain more resources and the authority to weed out poor courses, to act as a counterpoint to the pressures exerted by the universities and employers to constantly reduce costs and deliver the cheapest possible training. However, the wider policy climate does not look promising for the maintenance of such a body and indeed, raises the whole question of the meaning of an 'all graduate' profession. In this climate, driven by various policy developments including *Every Child Matters* (2003) and the 2004 Children Act, *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005), and the 2006 Education Act, it is apparent that not only is youth work being forced ever further away from community work, but that it is also being deconstructed and reshaped as a series of 'specialisms' designed to support other services.

Within the 'integrated workforce' organised under local Children's Trusts, the skills and methods of youth and community workers are required primarily to support work with young people within the terms of reference of health, social work, juvenile justice, and education systems (Jeffs and Smith, 2007). A distinctive knowledge base, let alone any effort to develop a body of associated scholarship is unnecessary for youth work within this landscape. What is more important is that youth workers develop competence in working with specific 'youth' issues within the field of their employment and especially with 'difficult,' or 'excluded' young people. Having already been dislocated from community work, 'professional' youth work is being re-configured as a sub-section of children's services. The implications of this for the training programmes are profound. On the one hand, it is possible that those interested in youth work will find it of more value in terms of their own career prospects to pursue that interest as a specialism of another professional area such as health or teaching. On the other hand, in order to retain their relevance to the practice environment, courses are likely to change their orientation, seeking collaboration and partnership with programmes offering social work, health, teaching or criminology or becoming specialist routes through broader 'children's work' qualifications. The development of new courses serving the integrated children's workforce is inevitable and will be an attractive option for those universities seeking to extend their vocational portfolio. Indeed it is probable that those who have no previous history of offering youth and community work training will be at an advantage in this matter, carrying no 'baggage' about youth and community work . A body such as the ETS is entirely inappropriate for monitoring standards in this context. It might be developed to incorporate specialist sub-sections, but it is more likely to be abandoned in favour of a wider agency for monitoring all courses contributing to the integrated children's workforce. As a marginal profession serving other institutions, the maintenance of youth work theory and scholarship will hardly be a priority for such a body. And if the ETS is abandoned, then JNC terms and conditions of service, already lacking purchase in the voluntary sector, will become more or less meaningless within statutory services.

Questions relating to the meaning of an all-graduate profession linked to 'graduate' rates of pay can only be understood with reference to developments in the sub-graduate arena. Here the influence of *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005) and *Aiming High: A ten year strategy for young people* (2007) become relevant in relation to the widespread development of foundation degrees leading initially to the qualification of 'youth support worker'. These workers will probably become the 'technicians' deployed to work with young people via the medium of the new activities and clubs financed as part of the 'youth offer'. It is not required for such workers to be honours graduates because the emphasis is upon competence and skill in 'activity,' or 'instruction' rather than informal educational methods, even though informal education will be one medium through which they engage with young people. It appears that as the move to an 'all graduate' profession is instigated, generic youth and community work is paradoxically being repositioned as a sub-graduate, quasi-profession with much training located in the underfunded and employer led FE sector. Those who emerge with sub degree qualifications will be rewarded with lower wages and poorer working conditions than those with the 'professional' honours degrees.

Developments in the statutory sector are only one side of the picture. Voluntary agencies have always been major contributors and as 'third sector partners' are increasingly favoured

as a means of 'delivering' government policy and services. The commissioning process which grew apace following *Transforming Youth Work* (DfES, 2002) has effectively devolved much statutory youth work to this sector which has no historic allegiance to JNC terms and conditions of service, nor to recruiting JNC qualified workers. Indeed it is partly this indifference which enables it to deliver the required policy outcomes at lower cost than local authorities. Outside the need to deliver to policy tied to government funding, this sector has a degree of freedom to pursue its own interests which sometimes coincide with those of government but not always. Increasingly, specialist interest groups in the voluntary sector, especially those driven by religious values, are developing forms of education and training rooted in their own belief system and structured primarily to meet the needs of a 'faith based' professional youth and community work practice. Amongst those providing these programmes can be found serious reservations as to the value of training that focuses on technique and practice outcomes rather than theology and ministry (Campbell, 2006: Stow and Fearon, 1987). One might question the quality of the theology, or the values under-pinning much faith-based practice, but at least within that setting serious debate rages regarding what workers need to know in order to be effective informal educators alongside concerns about the intellectual quality and vocational commitment of workers recruited for their 'skills'. It is within this context that the growing trend towards the development of courses with specific religious components must be understood. Courses supported by religious organisations disproportionately recruit highly motivated and high achieving young people. If this development continues the role of the ETS in ensuring the maintenance of the 'professional' education element within them may become problematic because the seduction of evangelism drives a tendency towards self-referencing in such environments. The rationale for such courses seeking the approval of ETS is at times difficult to comprehend partly as complying with the conditions set by ETS erodes the time free to be devoted to theological exploration, but also because JNC recognition has never been a requirement for those seeking employment within the lion's share of this sector.

Conclusion

Youth work is educational. That does not mean being the handmaiden of formal education, rounding up the truants, distracting the disruptive and persuading the disaffected to return to the classroom and take their tests like good boys and girls. Nor is it about 'learning to do this or that' in order to better meet an outcome set by a committee or bureaucrat located far away. Rather it is educational in a deeper sense. For like the good school, the good youth work engages with young people so that:

> *learning may be recognised as, itself, a golden satisfaction which needs no adventitious gilding to recommend it; .... that bestows ... the gift of childhood recollected, not as a passage of time hurried through on the way to more profitable engagements, but with gratitude, as an enjoyed initiation into the mysteries of the human condition: the gift of self knowledge and of satisfying intellectual and moral identity.* (Oakeshott, 1972: 26)

Training of itself will never be even part way sufficient to equip youth workers to undertake this role. The historic struggle to locate youth and community work education in the university sector, and fashion a graduate profession has surely not been motivated merely

by snobbery and a hankering after mythic professional status? Rather it was predicated upon a belief that youth workers would be superior educators if their own education was the best that could reasonably be secured, if it was located within institutions dedicated to educating 'the intellect to reason well in all matters, to reach out towards truth, and to grasp it' (Newman, 1858: 126).

As long as youth and community work degrees are crammed full of sessions and practice designed to teach the supposedly essential 'bespoke' skills, as they are described in recent government publications, too little space is left for them to embrace theory. Students need, and deserve, courses that prioritise theory.

> *There is no shortage of people who disparage educational theory and maintain that decisions are best left to experienced practitioners. But the implied distinction is absurd. ... The business of selecting one procedure rather than another and of assessing one practice as preferable to another is theoretical, so the idea of practice divorced from theory is unintelligible, unless we were seriously to advocate unreflective action.* (Barrow, 1990: 99)

The gradual displacement of theory by skills is removing from practitioners the ability to make their own theory, to engage in critical investigative conversations and construct alternatives to the status quo. As Barrow argues, familiarity with theory makes professional choices possible and under-pins the capacity for reflective practice.

The expulsion of theory from so much training is not the only challenge. Post-graduates theoretically carry with them knowledge accumulated whilst reading for a first degree. Christians, Muslims and others motivated, even programmed, to teach a particular faith, have a well of learning to draw upon (Doyle, 1999). Increasingly apolitical and post-feminist youth workers raised on the thin gruel of the national curriculum have little of comparable substance to offer. This is reflected in the rise of curriculum based work (Ord 2007) and packaged units of accreditation material whose content is assembled by others, often from the perspective of managers of other welfare agencies, for workers to 'deliver'. The higher education currently offered youth and community workers is largely devoid of the cultural breadth and intellectual content that would enhance the students' capacity to offer those they eventually work with a worthwhile educational engagement. It allows no legroom to enable students to acquire the education and wisdom that ensures they have something worthwhile to give young people and communities. The ransom extracted for training is their birthright to a rounded liberal education. Yet what they crucially need to be worthwhile practitioners is precisely that sort of education.

Given the present formulation, it is tempting to say it matters not where youth and community work training is located but that is a council of despair. Rather than accept this situation and acquiesce to further drift towards atheoretical and culturally sterile programmes, it would be better to seek to reverse the trends of the last two decades by insisting upon something better, demanding for youth and community workers the sort of university education Searle argues for:

> *First the student should have enough knowledge of his or her cultural tradition to know*

> *how it got to be the way it is ... However, you do not understand your own tradition if you do not see it in relation to others. Works from other cultural traditions need to be studied as well ... Second, you need to know enough of the natural sciences so that you are not a stranger in the world ... Third, you need to have some knowledge of the subject matter that used to be called political economy. Fourth, you need to know at least one foreign language well enough so that you can read the best literature that that language has produced in the original, and so you can carry on a reasonable conversation and have dreams in that language... Fifth, you need to know enough philosophy so that the methods of logical analysis are available to you to be used as a tool... Finally, and perhaps most importantly, you need to acquire the skills of writing and speaking that make for candour, rigour, and clarity* (1990: 41-42).

Quarrel over the detail by all means, but does this not promise so much more than adding to the skills lists, the tick boxes and finalising the benchmarks? Is this not far more likely to produce imaginative, innovative and effective informal educators as well as better youth workers than tinkering with the ETS list of competencies and ticking LLUK's boxes?

Opportunities for reform may be nearer than we may dare to hope. It is unlikely the existing structure will hold for much longer. Form tends to follow function with regards to professional education. JNC grew directly out of Albemarle and ETS out of Thompson, each to accommodate new structures. Neither now equates well to contemporary circumstance. CETCYW and ETS were based on assumptions regarding the structure of HE and the youth services that are now only partially valid. If, (and it is a big if given the propensity of the present government to dismantle the structures it creates), Children's Trusts should survive for more than a few more years then it seems inevitable that a new qualifications profile will emerge reflecting their workforce needs. Free-standing local authority youth services are already disappearing, consumed by Children's Trusts or re-constituted as attachments to them. As statutory youth work becomes a component, or appendage, of the Trusts so youth and community work training is ever more likely to become a route or specialism within a wider qualification. Confusion over who takes precedence – LLUK, Children's Workforce Development Council or a combination of professional boards such as ETS and the General Social Care Council will ultimately be resolved. The existing qualifications structure has been described as 'confusing' (Rogers, 2006), as 'a mess' and 'not up to scratch' by Estelle Morris Chair of Children's Workforce Development Council (Bennett, 2007). Change and wholesale reforms are clearly inevitable and probably to the detriment of the more fragile bodies such as ETS who will either be absorbed or cut adrift. Activity staff and the managers of 'hubs' and extended school provision may be classified as youth workers, but many will be recruited from the more numerous graduates emerging from Sport, Leisure and Arts Management programmes who have relevant skills but not necessarily the values of youth work.

Giddens argues that:

> *Everyone in the academic world works within traditions. Even academic disciplines as a whole, like economics, sociology or philosophy have traditions. The reason is that no one could work in a wholly eclectic fashion. Without intellectual traditions, ideas have no focus or tradition.* (1999: 45)

Youth and community work education has once before been driven out of the university sector and remains far too marginal and recent, like social work (Henkel, 1994), to have constructed a tradition substantial enough to protect it against expulsion or incorporation a second time. Probation and adult education have in less than a decade been expelled from the academy, so there is no room for complacency. Youth and community work will most certainly retain a presence as a 'route' or 'specialism' within some generic Children and Young People programmes. Elsewhere it will be manoeuvred out by a combination of market forces and managerialism. FE colleges and distance learning providers are eagerly waiting in the wings to mop up the market in the training of Youth Support Workers. Independent faith-based courses, comprising an eclectic mix of Youth Ministry, social action, community development and youth work will continue to expand. Eventually they might realise they neither want, nor need, an ETS to tell them what to teach or do.

The best hope is that a rump of sufficient size will survive around which it will be possible to create and sustain an alternative educational tradition built around informal education and social pedagogy. If this happens it will be the best possible outcome holding out a promise of a more radical creative model of practice that can be linked closely to humanistic liberal arts programmes. Newman who is always helpful at these moments once wrote that 'the cause of truth, never dominant in this world, has its ebbs and flows. It is pleasant to live in a day when the tide is coming in' (1872:251). For informal education and youth work, rather than services for the management and controlling of youth, the tide has been going out for some time. This should not unduly depress; rather it ought to prompt us into seeking alternatives to the drab and Philistine present.

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Notes

1 The JNC, or to give it its full title the Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth Leaders and Community Centre Wardens was created by the government in 1961 and comprises a balanced membership of employers and staff. It is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State regarding the suitability of qualifications for recognition for qualified status and is responsible for negotiating salary scales and conditions of service for statutory youth workers. The terms and conditions it agrees serve as a template for those prevailing in many voluntary organisations.
2 Created by the Health Visiting and Social Work Training Act 1962 it was tasked with securing suitable facilities for training, approving courses and attracting trainees and unlike CETYCW, which followed, was empowered to provide further courses of training and undertake research. CETSW has now been replaced by the employer dominated General Social Care Council.
3 Both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Education and Training Committee are appointed by the Executive Board of the National Youth Agency. Both are chosen from amongst the existing members of that Boardmembership of the Executive Board. In addition to the Chair and Vice-Chair their are 20 members of whom three are from Higher Education institutions delivering qualifying programmes and one is from CYWU (Community and Youth Workers Union). It meets three times a year.
4 Some of the 'old universities' organised themselves separately as The Russell Group which is named after the London hotel where their vice-chancellors first met to plan how best to preserve and protect their interests after the polytechnics were granted university status.
5 One of the authors interviewed, as part of a research project, a number of individuals who were obliged to take the Connexions Diploma as a condition of employment. One of these reported she had asked five times for a card to use the library of the university that was 'franchised' to deliver the programme. Each time she was told she did not need to read anything not in the pack to pass the course so acquiring a card was pointless. Finally the course leader lost his patience with the student and told them no other trainee had asked for a card and that the university would not issue her with one. Another, who happened to be a linguistics graduate, was asked by the lecturer not to ask questions as this caused problems regarding 'covering the material'. He persisted in asking questions until roundly attacked by a number of the other trainees who said this wasted their time.
6 Plagiarism is a major problem within many universities, research indicating that as many as a quarter of students admit to cheating in this way (Lightfoot, 2004). However some programmes make it far easier to do so and the standardised assignments of the Connexions Diploma for example allowed, according to ex-students of the authors, students to donate assignments to those who followed them onto the programme.

One mentioned a box in the corner of the office where copies of marked essays were deposited for colleagues to 'borrow'.

7 'Bench-marking' of academic subjects is an exercise whereby committees are required to establish for each academic disciple exactly what a graduate in that subject should know and be taught..

8 Quoted from John Clare – *Remembrances*.

9 The overall membership is:
2 members of the Executive Board of the NYA who act as Chair and Vice-Chair
1 from the Community and Youth Workers Union
1 from the trade union Unison
1 from the Federation of Community Work Training Groups
1 from the JNC Employers' side
1 from the JNC Staff side
1 from the National Association of Youth and Community Education Officers
2 from the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services
1 from the Regional Youth Work Advisers group
1 from the Association of principal Youth and Community Officers
2 from the Training Agencies Group
1 from the Awarding Bodies Forum
1 from the Sector Skills Council (LLUK)
Plus 5 members from the wider field who are judged by the committee to have a contribution to make to the work of the committee and 3 Co-optees to be determined by the Committee.

Reviews

Pam Nilan and Coles Feixa (eds)
Global Youth? Hybrid identities, plural worlds
Routledge, 2006

Howard Williamson

It is over a decade since Amit-Talai and Wulff's edited collection *Youth Cultures: a cross-cultural perspective* (Routledge 1995) offered some alternative readings of youth culture beyond the dominant paradigm established primarily during the 1970s by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS).

Both the worlds of young people and youth cultural theory have moved a long way in those ten years. Empirically there is much more communication available between groups of young people who are no longer so rigidly divided by social class. There is physical contact through geographical proximity arising from greater migration and mobility; there is virtual contact through the internet and mobile phones. Theoretically, the partial challenges to the thinking of CCCS, first around 'club cultures' and then 'post-subcultures', have become more pronounced, most recently by Laughey (in *Music & Youth Culture*, Edinburgh University Press 2006). He argues for replacing the 'Incorporation/Resistance Paradigm' of CCCS and its successors with a more fluid and eclectic 'Spectacle/Performance Paradigm', radically playing down any political dimension of youth culture.

Nilan and Feixa have brought together a collection of material that, arguably, accommodates both. I suspect few would agree with their Postscript conclusion that 'youth cultures have the potential to lead the way in thinking about global conflict and strategies for resolving them' (p211). I was puzzled that they insisted and persisted with so strong an assertion, given much of the earlier material that points powerfully to both performative and political aspects to the youth cultures they portray.

Huq, for example, looks at the commonalities and differences around the more mainstream emergence of Asian 'underground' music in Britain and French hip-hop in France. Political resistance by prominent performers was often denied or only reluctantly embraced, though rap and hip-hop in other places (discussed in other chapters) did have a stronger political overture. However, Huq paves the way for two key arguments that are sustained through the book: that the cultural forms and forces she describes have their own distinctive character and are not imported or borrowed from elsewhere (though elements may be), and that those specific cultural forms represent a means of 'allowing young people to express their multiply-constituted identities – drawing on local, ethnic, social and other resources' (p.29).

In many different ways, these arguments are reinforced and others are introduced. Dallaire looks at three different youth events in Canada designed to strengthen commitment to the French language beyond the stronghold of Quebec. They may be achieving some success but even those 'Francophone' young Canadians felt their modern identity rested

on identifying themselves with a capacity to operate in both official national languages as well as in relation to specific regional traditions and characteristics. Butcher and Thomas' research on migrant youth in Australia suggests their cultural styles draw both on global youth culture and diasporic connections with their parents' homeland – family, friends, locale and transnational contacts were all important. Holden analyses Japan's generation of 'adolechnics' through a detailed study of two young people's use of their newly-acquired 'keitai' (mobile phones): it is strange that it is not until the third page that he reveals these are his own kids! Nevertheless the analysis he advances is instructive.

While the mobile phone seems to have an overwhelmingly pervasive presence and power in the new youth cultures of Japan, Nilan's chapter on devout Muslim youth in Indonesia shows the sophistication of strategies for the filtering and selection of global influences to ensure they do not clash with religious commitments: 'there is an expanding range of ... cultural practices which approximate the usual activities of global youth while anchoring the youthful consumer firmly in pious religious observance' (p.103). In post-revolutionary Iran, Shahabi looks at the cultural practices of what he calls 'ingenious' youth who engage in subcultural bricolage: neither slaves to fashion nor active political resisters, they push at the boundaries of regulation and produce a climate of co-existence somewhat removed from the 'monotonously dreary' (p. 125) context that is often assumed from the outside.

Across the world in Colombia, Munoz and Marin reflect on the emergence and sustenance of punk culture amongst young people. They are 'volcanic beings' in a climate of political uncertainty and endemic poverty; punk is the 'rallying cry', a basis for counter-information and the quest for alternatives, in a 'panorama of movement and instability' (p.136). The *chavos banda* in Mexico studied by Feixa offer a similar place for some young people to live their lives, and Feixa usefully compares and contrasts these groups, gangs or tribes with his earlier work on *tribus urbanas* in Catalonia. Significantly he shows how negative imputations towards young people in both cultures are transformed into emblems of positive identity – a point made, though usually less explicitly, by many other contributions. Even more importantly, Feixa consolidates the general message that such youth cultures can be distinct and diffuse at the same time. We are starting to witness the emergence of 'global tribes' and need to understand the 'complexity of these new forms of youth socialisation that erode geographical frontiers and transcend generational identities' (p.165). On another continent, in Senegal, Niang explores the distinct forms of hip-hop in cultivating in young people a sense of attachment and commitment, and new political directions in a context of frustration and rupture. Similarly, back in Europe, Petrova maps a spectrum of skinhead cultural orientations in France, though their different beliefs and goals are usually clouded by a shared overwhelming commitment to violence, but even this is articulated and rationalised in different ways.

Across 11 countries on five continents, the common story is that young people who find themselves caught between at least two worlds (and these can take many forms in relation to, for example, migration or religion) have a creative capacity to embrace and develop both. The youth cultures that emerge often capture a striking modernity, particularly through the use of new technologies, and an adherence to traditions. They may want some release from that tradition but may, equally, accept some of its restraint, just as rarely do they wish to accept, unconditionally, the globalising forces of the English language,

MacDonalds and western style and music. Some are more politicised than others; others are more concerned with posturing! More accurately, all youth cultures are not static and may evolve into more politicised positions, often in response to moral panics built around simplistic and exaggerated public (political and media) perspectives on their activity.

It is that activity, and identity, that this book seeks to unravel. *Global Youth?* is immensely well-written, fascinating and informative. It should take its place as a key text in understanding 21st century youth cultures across the world. In ten years' time it will be the benchmark against which the next cross-cultural text should be evaluated.

Howard Williamson Professor of European Youth Policy University of Glamorgan.

Roger Sainsbury, Richard Bromley, Dave Wiles
Young People as Prophets: what is God saying through young people?
Grove Books 2006
ISBN 1 85174 635 8
£2.95
pp.28

Melody Briggs

Young People as Prophets is the fourth book in the Grove Youth Series, a recently launched series of booklets that seeks to explore youth work within a church-based context. This series is not primarily concerned with theoretical reflection but provides useful windows on current thinking on youth work in the church-based sector. The Youth Series is one of eight different series published by Grove.

The booklet argues that the voice of youth is often counter-cultural and frequently ignored, positioning young people alongside biblical prophets who often found themselves speaking against the practices of their contemporaries. They too were mostly ignored (with the obvious exception of Jonah, who was unhappy when he wasn't). The authors call upon the church, and society, then, is to listen to young people as types of prophets.

Sainsbury, Bromley and Wiles bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the discussion. Their years of involvement in both statutory and church-based youth work insure that the booklet's call for the empowerment of young people is delivered with a good understanding of the task faced by contemporary youth work. However, for a booklet of only 28 pages, one wonders if three authors were strictly necessary. The booklet essentially consists of three chapters, one per author; the resulting disparity does not make for a seamless argument.

Sainsbury provides a biblical foundation for the discussion, then goes on to delineate issues and events in which he has witnessed young people functioning as veritable prophets, particularly speaking against the injustices of society. The biblical foundation section is viable: biblical prophets certainly incited political action and the New Testament has a clear vision of the prophetic role continuing in the church, although in a form altered from that of the Old Testament prophet. Less personal narrative – of which it has in abundance – and greater focus on the role of the prophet today would have made the chapter even more

useful to the average youth worker.

In his chapter, Bromley asserts that youth sub-culture has a prophetic function within both church culture and the dominant culture in general. He encourages not only listening to young people, but also observing them, for prophets not only speak out but also enact. The implication here is that the church needs to change as young people point out where it has compromised itself with culturally laden traditions and beliefs. Bromley believes that, 'youth ministry may need freeing up from the pressure to socialize young people into church and protect them from the world, so that it can play its full role in the re-formation of the church' (p.16). Certainly the mass exodus of youth from the traditional churches is a prophetic word demanding these churches' renewal in the face of their demise.

Bromley's examples of young people functioning as prophets amidst the dominant culture are less convincing. He draws, for example, upon clothing fashions, pointing out how young people ripped holes in their jeans as a statement against consumerism, but seems unaware – or at least unwilling to acknowledge – that baggy and ripped clothing has itself been a fashion trend and thus a sign of conformity. The application he wants to make demands a more thorough consideration of the relationship between youth sub-cultures and contemporary Western culture.

In the final chapter, Wiles advocates listening to young people, particularly the marginalised. He also offers a practical methodology for responding to 'prophecy from the edge'. The marginalised, he argues, are not compromised by the dominant worldview; indeed, often they are oppressed by it and reacting against it. By listening to them, the church and society could be forced out of their comfort zone and made aware of needed areas of change. This, of course, cannot be said of youth in general, many of who have imbibed messages of the media since before they could talk. But do not many of the marginalised drink from the same flask?

Wiles' argument overlaps with that of Bromley. Both believe the counter-cultural voice of youth sub-culture may enable the church to hear the gospel afresh, and the strength of their chapters lies in their application to church culture. Relevance for the statutory sector is primarily only alluded to – but this is after all a booklet targeting church-based youth work. Nonetheless, statutory workers may take it as a call for the need to listen to the opinions of young people and their diverging sub-cultures.

All three authors, but Sainsbury in particular, foreground the benefits of the passion and idealism of youth. It would have been interesting to see them engage with Kenda Creasy Dean's *Practicing Passion: Youth and the Quest for a Passionate Church* (2004). Dean, who writes from an American perspective, explores how the passion of youth provides a drive and energy that are essential to the church. This passion is often the driving force behind the 'prophetic voices' of young people and a consideration of Dean's argument within a British context would have added breadth to the argument of the booklet.

As Grove declares on its website, its booklets are generally 'not the last word' on a subject, 'but often the first'. *Young People as Prophets: what is God saying through young people?* is first and foremost a call to churches, particularly those that have marginalised their young

people, to pay heed to youth culture, which is often a barometer of cultural change. If anything, the booklet could have been more radical, detailing the implications of some of the prophetic 'words' from young people but perhaps that will be the next step in the discussion.

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Melody Briggs Durham University

Camila Batmanghelidjh
Shattered Lives: Children who live with courage and dignity
Jessica Kingsley Publishers 2006
ISBN 1 84310 434 2
£13.99
pp.174

Tracey Brooks

Shattered Lives not only made me think, it moved me to tears, it inspired me, it made me angry. Whatever you feel when reading this book, I guarantee you won't feel neutral. It's straight talking with the fighting gloves off! This book is written because of fundamental flaws in our society: the way we treat our children and young people, and the way services are structured. It points its finger directly at each and every one of us, as parents, as workers, as society as a whole and it demands that things should change.

Without a doubt, Camilla Batmanghelidjh (founder of the Place to Be and Kids Company) is a passionate and inspiring woman who has dedicated her life to working with vulnerable and emotionally damaged young people. Using her experience and psychotherapy training she provides the reader with an introduction to therapeutic thinking, written in a way which is easy to read and digest. She explores the impact of shattered lives and provides insight into the consequences of such, explaining how working with such despair may impact on workers and their subsequent relationship with the young person.

The book shares a series of letters which the author has written to individual young people with whom she has developed intensive therapeutic relationships. She has a talent for telling their narrative with passion. The letters are emotive, vivid and powerful creating enormous insight into these damaged young people, the hurt, the torture and the pain. They cover issues such as abuse, neglect, drugs, and violence, highlighting the effects of early traumatic experiences. It highlights inter-generational hate, each generation hurting the one below, seeing the child beyond their behaviour and beyond any labels imposed but as victims of a murdered childhood. You're left not feeling sorry for them but inspired by their courage and their dignity. Against the odds, these young people show tremendous spirit, hope and resilience.

A re-occurring theme is about how these young people have been let down by parents, by workers and by the very systems and structures that have been created to protect them. Batmanghelidjh calls for us to recognise that as individuals we can make a significant difference and not to mistake homogeny for efficiency. She states 'our contribution to this abuse is our complacency, our facile arguments, our pseudo debates, our cosmetic short term initiatives, our offensive neutrality, our readiness to perceive ourselves as victims, denying the children's damage' – hard hitting stuff indeed!

At the core, it's about the need to love as well as to protect as 'it is in the middle space where one persons care and the others need mutually transforms' yet she writes, 'the expression of our humanity terrifies us into political cowardice. We hide, we avoid, and we minimize the truth...so often those in power are too busy minding their own professional backs and personal credit rating'.

What aggravates me is that Camilla appears to consider herself as a lone worker, fighting the cause single-handedly. In her letters to each young person, she appears to be the only one who respects, who understands, who has ever cared. In midst of the letters charting the lives and experiences of these young people, we are told of the sacrifices made by the author, her suffering and her commitment. She criticises all – parents, police, social services, psychiatrists, politicians all it seems except herself. This I find particularly distasteful and immensely disrespectful. I agree with her that 'neutrality is offensive' but must add, this attitude I also found offensive. I have the pleasure of working with dedicated workers, who also work with damaged young people and I can assure you, contrary to what Batmanghelidjh may imply, they really do exist. She has placed herself so high on her pedestal that all below her are either abusers, abused or equally as bad, bystanders to it all; therefore responsible for letting it happen. I was left shouting, but not at the injustice caused, but at her. I started out feeling enlightened and inspired yet ended feeling suffocated by her ego.

Whatever you may think of *Shattered Lives* you can't avoid, it. We need to take this book and respond to the author's call for change and from it, move forward in the fight for justice.

Tracey Brooks is a Counsellor at Streetwise Young Peoples Project in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Jane Ribbens McCarthy
Young People's Experience of Loss and Bereavement
Open University Press 2006
ISBN 0-335-21664-1
pp 212

Steve Hargrave

There will be very few, if any, young people who have not experienced a significant bereavement – even if we restrict the definition to loss through death – by the time

they reach adolescence and their teenage years. The first experience of death and dying may often be the loss of a grandparent, aunt, uncle, or family friend, more unusually that of parent or sibling or a close member of the peer group. It could therefore be viewed as a natural experience for all of us, a normal part of growing up and yet for some young people the event can bring about major traumatic disruption to their lives and long term consequences for their health and well being.

How then can we best help and support young people in this situation? Do we focus our interventions and resources towards those individual youngsters who are either asking for help or who have been identified (by whoever) as being at risk or we do use wider strategies such as the Personal and Social Education curriculum in schools to enable all young people to be better understand and deal with death. Do bereaved young people want to be treated differently by their teachers for instance or do they want access to helping organisations? What do we understand about the factors that can influence whether bereavement becomes a crisis or not? At what stage can intervention be most effective? The issue of young people and bereavement is a massively important yet seriously neglected one.

One of the central themes for Ribbens McCarthy in this book is the context in which young people have to deal with loss and bereavement, looking at both adolescence and bereavement as, not only transitional stages in an individual's life but also a potential source of disruption: a 'double jeopardy invoking deep anxiety'. She looks at and reviews the existing evidence as to how young people survive and grow through both these times of change. It is change rather than loss she argues.

Her review and evaluation of different and often conflicting theoretical perspectives of death and dying, of bereavement grief and mourning and of adolescence is helpful and insightful. The conclusion reflects the predominance of a psychological perspective which influences and informs counselling and medical interventions rather than 'the much more limited contribution of sociology' and perhaps the lack of weight has traditionally been given to bereavement issues within mainstream social work.

I have to declare my own interest as a social worker and in more recent times as a manager of services for young people and the personal concern that I have long held that young people's voices need to be heard, not only in their own personal circumstances but also in the modelling and provision of services. Ribbens McCarthy provides five case studies derived from work undertaken by the South Bank University which enhance and enrich the debate. The young people involved had been interviewed over a period of years as part of a much wider study of the lives of young people in contemporary Britain and not specifically focussed on 'bereaved young people'.

The author comprehensively examines the research evidence on the risk factors which are at work. Bereavement implies a relationship and the nature of the pre-existing relationship can influence an individual's future development. She reflects how for instance the effects of parental absence in general terms largely depends on the competence of the remaining parent and that it is the quality of surviving relationships and support systems for young people rather than the number of parents which can be crucial.

Ribben McCarthy builds on the Case Studies by providing a thorough and illuminating review of the evidence available concerning young people's experiences of bereavement. I may regret the choice of the word illuminating because so much of the research seems to reach contradictory and inconsistent findings – but the issues raised for practitioners on a whole range of risk factors I found to be well presented, interesting and thought-provoking. The author is clear that more and better studies are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions into the lives of bereaved young people. Meanwhile the work goes on and there is a tentative conclusion that 'peer group interventions generally appear to be well supported by evaluation research and there is no evidence that interventions with individual bereaved children result in any harm, but some evidence that they can indeed be useful, particularly for some groups of children and young people' although these groups are not identified. It is also pertinent to keep in the forefront of our minds when working with individual young people that there is no inevitable path down which children who experience these events will follow. The conclusion Ribbens McCarthy reaches confirms that 'any overall strategy of provision for bereaved young people may require a range of supports to be available from both mainstream services and specialist bereavement organisations with a range of possible interventions from basic information and acknowledgment of what has happened to peer group support, individual counselling and clinical interventions. Individual preferences for talk or activity are also recognized to vary greatly'.

While the author acknowledges the strength of the evidence that is available in helping us identify and understand young people's experiences of bereavement, it is clear that there is still an absence of coherent consistent research agreed upon across the professional divisions. She sees the concept of 'meaning' as offering a way forward for the discussion, common ground for the conflicting perspectives to unite around and to help young people make sense of losing someone with whom they have had a close and important relationship, at a time in their lives when they have so many other complexities to deal with.

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Monica Barry
Youth offending in transition: the search for social recognition
Routledge 2006
ISBN 0-415-36792-1
£20.99
pp. 214

Geoff Nichols

This book is based on the research for Barry's PhD thesis. This means it is a methodologically sound piece of research, building on theory and contributing to knowledge. The objectives were to understand why young people start, continue and stop offending; the relationship between these phases, and any gender differences. A useful appendix gives full details of the methods: 40 in depth interviews with 20 male and 20 female offenders, aged between 18 and 33 and details include a frank account of the

substantial difficulties in obtaining this sample and conducting interviews.

From an initial analysis of the interviews 'four key organizational categories emerged that were common to all three phases of offending. These were: practical, personal, relational and monetary' (p.183). A secondary analysis matched these to Bourdieu's four types of capital: social, economic, cultural and symbolic. Bourdieu's concepts are used to answer the research questions: people, especially those in transition to adulthood, need social recognition, and they achieve this through accumulating capital in all the forms above. Offending can be a way of accumulating capital, particularly for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, who 'have few socially recognized means of legitimating their stake in the social world but may see offending or its benefits as their only means of gaining recognition meantime, even if its recognition only comes from their friends' (p.165). This accords with recent research findings that gaining an ASBO is a source of status rather than stigma. Desistence comes with 'increased opportunities to spend capital through generativity and responsibility taking' (p.166). Generativity means 'the desire to care for others and to feel needed through productive and intergenerational outlets' (p.190). Women have more opportunities for this, for example, through roles as partners and mothers.

In an appendix Barry justifies choosing to use Bourdieu's concepts rather than those of Giddens, although Giddens has been more popular in criminological circles. Giddens suggests that inequalities can be overcome as 'power is an attainable asset to every individual, not just a few... power need not be a zero sum game'. In contrast, for Bourdieu, 'power is a restricted zero sum resource and inequalities are collective issues that are class-based rather than personal issues' (p.184). 'Giddens's theory of structuration is less concerned about the uneven distribution of power and agency' (p.184) ...while Bourdieu emphasises structural inequalities.

The distinctive contribution of this book is its attempt to apply Bourdieu's concepts, which it is acknowledged are 'imprecise heuristic devices' (p.167), to understanding youth offending. I found this a fascinating parallel to my attempts to understand the same phenomenon from a different theoretical perspective (Nichols, 2004). Using Bourdieu's concepts, especially that of symbolic capital, the explanation of desistence is that while offending 'the friendship group takes precedence over the family as a means of consolidating and reinforcing one's own identity' (p129). 'It was the losses and the stigma attached to offending, the growing realization of the adverse effects that offending might have on their futures, and the support and opportunities offered by significant others in their lives which eventually gave many of these young people the impetus to desist from offending' (p130).

Questions are: how well do the four organizational categories emerging from the interviews relate to Bourdieu's four types of capital, and how much do Bourdieu's concepts add to the 'middle range' theories? For example, theories that young people may move towards offending because it offers economic rewards (which they feel disadvantaged in opportunities to obtain by legitimate means) and it offers peer group status, in relation to the values of a particular reference group. Therefore, desistence can be encouraged by helping them gain legitimate employment and adopt a new set of values through a new reference group. Further, how easy will it be for research to build on these insights by developing research tools to measure changes in capital, its expenditure and accumulation? However, the findings do not depend only on the application of Bourdieu's concepts as

they are related to criminological theory and to other previous research which has used similar methods (for example Graham and Bowling, 1995; Farrall, 2002; Maruna, 2001). I'd agree that a key to understanding young people's behaviour is the need to achieve social recognition, and in trying to achieve this some young people are at a considerable disadvantage.

Has the research made a convincing case for using Bourdieu's concepts in preference to those of Giddens? I leave it for the reader to judge – but how much does it really matter? Perhaps it matters if the search for legitimate social recognition is a zero sum game in which some will inevitably be disadvantaged. If the different sources of capital that contribute to social recognition are part of a zero sum game, and if this inevitably leads to offending, then an implication is that offending can be reduced by reducing inequalities. Maybe there is a trade off between levels of offending and levels of inequality? Barry does not go this far in drawing implications – and perhaps she would not come to these ones, however the choice between theoretical perspectives seems to be as much based on different preferred views of the nature of society, and of acceptable policy implications, as it is about how well they explain the research findings.

I would have liked the book to have drawn policy implications from the conclusions, especially as it is aimed not only at academics and students, but also professionals working with young people. However, its main value is as an addition to the limited work which has drawn on young people's own accounts of offending, continuance and desistence. The detailed account of the methods in the appendices are also valuable for others considering undertaking similar research – not least because they illustrate the difficulties to be overcome.

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Geoff Nichols, University of Sheffield.

Murray Milner Jr.
Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids: American Teenagers, Schools, and the Culture of Consumption
Routledge 2006
ISBN 0 415 95391 X
£27.50
pp. 305

Gary Prichard

Freaks, Geeks and Cool Kids delivers a clear and readable account of contemporary status systems amongst American high school students. Milner claims students in American schools behave the way they do as they are drawn to status, and they seek status more than other groups because they are excluded from other sources of political and economic power. Milner argues that the social formations, culture and status system present in teenagers' lives derives from the way we organize their everyday experiences. These specific conditions imposed on them from above means that instead of 'learning to labour', adolescents today are, 'learning to consume'. The author draws from the theory of status relations and his previous work on the Hindu caste system to illustrate the complexity and irrationality of status systems among American teenagers.

The methodology is comprehensive: 304 college students wrote descriptions of their own high school experiences and a collective ethnography provided by 32 undergraduates and 3 postgraduate fieldworkers over a period of two years, there is also an unspecified number of interviews (where bizarrely, the interviewer is asked to rank the attractiveness of the children respondents). Part of me was left asking the question of whether the researchers were themselves merely engaging in the type of high school gossip they were recording. A lot of the methodology seemed to simply confirm the obvious and focus too heavily on the thin descriptions of relationships and high school cliques without explicitly getting at the processes involved.

The volume is divided into ten chapters, which are organized into four sections, the first of which begins by showing the organization of peer relationships and a description of the theory of status relationships. The second section looks at the processes that are common in most status systems and especially hierarchies and deals with the issues of conformity, the importance of associations and disassociations with certain people and a description of how these distinctive characteristics shape people's behaviour. The third section illustrates the wide variety of learning institutions and the alternatives to the hierarchical ideal type Milner employs in his analysis. The analysis shifts in the final part and focuses on the link between status systems and broader society, specifically consumer capitalism. Throughout the book Milner provides comprehensive footnotes and at the end there are very detailed appendices.

It is difficult for a UK reader to evaluate the adequacies of Milner's observations as the sum of most of our experience in this area has probably been retrieved from American TV and film. Milner is successful however in linking high school culture with broader social trends and although the link between youth culture and consumerism is well established, Milner's originality is in illustrating how the organization of schools may cause young people to be more susceptible to the allure of consumption. Milner also succeeds in showing the

usefulness of the theory of status relationships in studying high school students and makes a contribution to sociological and cultural understanding of teenagers in contemporary US culture. Milner reminds us that status remains a primary mode of stratification.

The fact that the book is aimed at a non-academic as well as academic audience results in the beginning of the book being overly descriptive. Throughout the book, Milner failed to convince me that, 'perhaps the thing that American secondary education teaches most effectively is a desire to consume'. This is primarily because the book seems to reduce adolescent behaviour to consumerism and status seeking alone which at best does a disservice to adolescents and at worse is a gross distortion. In my experience, childhood behaviour is often just as much about pushing boundaries, rebellion and finding one's identity than mere consumerism. While the book states that children behave the way they do because it is in the interest of adults to organize them in specific ways, it doesn't adequately answer the question of agency. Too much weight is attributed to the will of parent without recognising that such things are not collectively organized. There is no secret conspiracy at work.

The findings of this book might well be complimented by a comparative cross-national study. How much of the content reflects experience in schools outside the US is unclear, certainly I speculate that with our own compulsory uniforms and the fact we delegate the organization of competitive sports to other institutions will make a substantial difference to status within UK schools. This point was highlighted by Milner when retelling an occasion of giving a paper to a German audience. A Professor commented on 'the importance of parties and proms' by asserting: 'We don't have that kind of thing in our high schools; we tend to business'. Milner also concedes that his study only dealt with middle-class children and would have benefited from more diverse learning institutions, for example, home schooling and fee paying schools. Milner is always keen to point out that status systems are not unique to teenagers and could be applied to other groups; it would be interesting to see further research in these areas.

Freaks, Geeks and Cool Kids is clearly written and would serve as an appropriate introductory text for undergraduates in sociology, anthropology and related disciples, especially those interested in stratification, status stems and consumerism. It might also be of interest to parents, teachers and those involved in educational policy.

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Ann Catchpole (ed)
Delivering evidence-based therapeutic support to children and families
Russell House Publishing 2005
ISBN 1-903855-85-3
£22.95 (+pp)
pp. 194

Justin Rolph

As a recently appointed Children's Services Manager with responsibility across a wide range of education and social care services I came to this book with high expectations.

I wanted to read about 'what works', I wanted to better understand the complexities concerning inter-agency teams and most of all I wanted to be inspired with messages of hope. On all these counts I am pleased to report my expectations have not only been met but also exceeded.

The book is fundamentally about how one group of professionals from diverse backgrounds, but whose work touched the field of child abuse, came together to work as a Joint Agencies Child Abuse Team (JACAT). With contributions from past and present members of the team and the considered use of case studies, the book is usefully structured into six sections. This means that whilst it hangs together as a whole, a busy professional can still find value by dipping into sections of specific interest or relevance.

Section one sets the scene and describes how the team was established in 1987 as a result of a clearly perceived gap in therapeutic services for children who had been abused. It is my experience that twenty years on, many of these gaps still exist across the country. Commissioners would do well, therefore, to read about the jointly funded approach undertaken with JACAT in Devon. The section also describes how the team philosophy has been translated into an organisational reality and addresses the inherent dangers in creating a team dedicated to dealing only with child abuse.

Section two covers consultations and the work of JACAT in providing an advisory service to other professionals working in the area of child abuse. Of particular interest to me as a manager responsible for looked after children was the chapter on the consultation service for foster and adoptive parents. Here the description of the model JACAT use to analyse how families deal with the process of development and attachment was particularly welcome.

Section three covers working with individuals. It highlights that 'the adults who refer to us, and the parents or carers of those children, usually expect us to concentrate our efforts on 'sorting them out'. However, this can all too easily have the effect of scapegoating the children and of increasing the already present tendency for all parties, including the children themselves, to regard the children as the problem.' JACAT as a result, undertakes individual work with young people as a last resort.

The chapter on 'working with adolescents' I found particularly insightful. It certainly rang true with my experiences of managing a youth counselling agency when it states that:

> *the difference in mood between sessions can also be startling. In one session the young person can appear devoid of all hope and full of despair, and the next they bounce in...feeling that the world is a fantastic place in which to live...there is a danger that therapists will become hostile and rigid in return, prompted by feeling de-skilled and out of control...a wise therapist looks for the underlying meaning of the behaviour in order to formulate a response.*

In these times when great emphasis is placed on information sharing it is good to be reminded that 'the therapeutic encounter is intrinsically private and personal' and that confidentiality is paramount as this 'is an important issue for adolescents, particularly those that have suffered abuse.'

Section four concerns itself with working with groups. The integrated model of delivery described as incorporating skills, psychotherapeutic and educative components is particularly helpful. One of the key strengths of the whole book is the evidence from case studies. JACAT run groups with carers of sexually abused children and the following direct quotation from a group member is particularly powerful in demonstrating the value of such work: – 'Because I listened to what others had experienced and could see that no fault lay on their shoulders, (only on the perpetrators), I then had to, in turn, release myself from blaming myself.'

Section five is focused on working with families and describes the five main areas of work. These are family support, family education, family consultation, family counselling and family therapy.

Section six addresses research. It recognises that it is difficult to undertake research in a clinical setting but describes a number of limited studies that have taken place over the years. I found the study looking at the proportions of time spent on the various tasks the JACAT undertake (direct work, support/consultation, maintenance, administration, travel, other) particularly useful.

My overall feeling when reflecting on the contribution of this book is to agree with the words of Mary John (Professor Emeritus, University of Exeter) when she states in the Foreword that 'the work of JACAT with traumatised families and children provides a model of trust and support for human beings in all shades and textures of life.' I will certainly be looking to apply a number of the lessons learnt by JACAT in my area of professional influence. I believe I can pay no higher compliment.

Justin Rolph, Area Service Manager, Norfolk Children's Services

Sandra Smidt
The Developing Child in the 21st Century
A global perspective on child development
Routledge 2006
ISBN 0-415-38569-5
£70 (hbk)
pp 150

Jim Rose

We live at a time in which we receive what seem like weekly pronouncements on the requirements for good parenting. These are usually accompanied by a government initiative to ensure certain groups of parents avail themselves of the right sort of support and training, prescribed by experts and consistent with a certain set of values about the moral and social order. Increasingly these pronouncements are supported by reference to the exciting new discoveries of science in the area of brain development, that are called upon to validate the proclaimed notions of how children develop and what good parenting means in order to provide what is necessary for this to happen. By exploring the ideas of

childhood and child development from a global perspective Smidt challenges the idea that there can be such a thing as a model of 'everybaby' irrespective of time and place, but she also scathing of the notion of 'everyparent' in which a particular set of ideas are used as a universal paradigm for what constitutes good parenting.

In this context Sandra Smidt has written a challenging and provocative book; she encourages the reader to think again about what is steadily becoming the received wisdom for understanding child development and the necessity of having a high level of material resources to ensure proper and healthy growth. She also challenges the prevalent idea in contemporary educational policy that there is value in determining fixed points at which all children can be measured in terms of their attainments.

Overall, the book aims to explore not only the way in which our understanding of child development and our ideas about the meaning of childhood have changed over time, but crucially how from a global perspective ideas about childhood and child development are shaped by other significant factors. In other words, child development is more than a psychological process through which there are a number of key stages universal in their application to all children across time and space. The ways in which children grow and learn are diverse, shaped by the economic, social, cultural, political and historical contexts in which they live. As Smidt says; 'development cannot be understood outside of history and culture' (p.3).

Recognising the value of these differences and having due respect for what they mean in terms of the 'realities of life for the majority of the world's children' is another central theme. It is the author's argument that the underlying assumptions of funding initiatives to support child development across the world are shaped by western thinking and therefore not necessarily sensitive towards the different traditions of the host culture. The result of this is that the real root causes of the poverty being combated are not substantively addressed.

The first chapter provides an overview of the book's main themes; changing ideas of childhood and child development are explored from an historical perspective but these ideas are also referenced to the different situations that children encounter across the world. This is enhanced by a series of examples and vignettes illustrating how the same processes are experienced differently by children depending upon the cultural context in which they occur.

The central chapters of the book provide an interesting and readable account of the main theories of some of the most seminal thinkers in the area of child development, including Piaget and Vygotsky. Focusing on the ways in which children's learning and thinking develops Smidt emphasises the child as active in the processes of learning as 'meaning maker, social constructor, creative thinker, and as symbol user and weaver'. The child is seen in the context of its culture and the roles they take on and are ascribed within that specific culture. The crucial role that play has in children's development is looked at in the context of different cultures and traditions. The final chapter is an attempt to put into a more realistic perspective the current emphasis on advancements in neuro-science and some of the more extravagant claims that are made about the implications of these for child development.

The author in her Preface writes that she has tried to bridge the divide between 'academic writing and accessible writing'. There is little doubt that she achieves this aim. The book deals with some complex issues with clarity and the use of vignettes really does help to put the arguments into the wider context that she wishes us to consider. This use of examples and the summaries and questions to think about at the end of each chapter help us to stay with the development of the ideas throughout the book. There is a sense that the author has respect for the reader, acknowledging the complexity but at the same time expecting us to know what she is talking about and be able to engage with the discussion.

This is an important book and makes a distinct contribution to current debates about child development and the emphasis on early intervention programmes. It is rigorous in terms of scholarship, but essentially readable and very worthwhile. It is provocative in the sense that it challenges some of our current wisdom about such things as parenting programmes. It should be of interest to all those who are concerned about children and their development whether through involvement in their education or as parents. It takes a much wider perspective than most books on this theme and challenges us to think more widely as well.

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Jenny Nemko
Who Am I? Who Are you?
Ideas and activities to explore both your and young people's assumptions, beliefs and prejudices.
Russell House Publishing 2006
ISBN 1 903855 93 4
pp. 114

Katherine Whittaker

The title of this book reminds one that few of us like to think we have unwarranted assumptions and prejudices. Thankfully the idea that there are activities in the book to explore these issues immediately makes it less non-threatening without taking anything away from the subjects you are encouraged to think through. Indeed, as I was carrying the book in my bag ready to read it a Religious Education teacher I know, who is a Buddhist, caught sight of it and was immediately attracted to the text. Asking to look at the activities as she teaches about beliefs and prejudices and is constantly looking for new ways to present material and encourage young people to reflect on their thoughts and feelings... already the title of the book alone was opening up interesting discussions.

As the author states early on people rarely speak about the spiritual aspect of their lives. Noting that despite there being numerous multi-cultural/multi-faith initiatives, we rarely exchange ideas about how we function. This book aims to encourage practitioners and young people to engage in conversations both within themselves and with others about who they are, what they believe and how this can affect their own life and that of those around them.

In the first chapter, Nemko considers 'What's The Real Me?' and how we create our identity, looking in particular at the inner self, a type of appraisal system for adults and young people which considers individual beliefs and aspects of our characters including behaviour, emotions, and personality. As a practitioner, I found this chapter interesting. So many of the young people and adults I have worked with struggle with who they are and what they stand for. The labelling activity in this chapter seeks to draw out our individual identities and then look beyond that to the world around us. This activity is ideally suited to working with people who hold particular stereotypes, as the gentle, thought provoking manner in which the activities draw out opinions can lead to in-depth, non-threatening conversations. This is an important stage in challenging stereotypes and the issues which can arise from them. I can relate to the benefit of using such an activity, particularly in relation to the concerns surrounding the perceptions of young people who wear 'hoodies' and are subsequently seen as 'trouble makers'.

Chapter two moves on to looking at 'What Am I For?' – our purpose in life and what can prevent us fulfilling our potential. The author considers how we might define goals for our lives and obstacles which emerge to prevent us from reaching them. This chapter is clear and concise and looks at a variety of problems that can emerge. However, the author manages to avoid being caught up in lengthy debates about each one, which keeps the reader focussed and engaged with the topic. The author's writing style and the layout enables the practitioner to easily choose appropriate activities which would be useful for work with young people facing issues such as low self-confidence, stress and negative memories.

The third chapter considers loneliness and isolation in a variety of situations before moving onto strategies which will enable people to cope with these feelings. For example, the author describes meditation as a means of coping with loneliness and isolation. Throughout this book there are activities which could be used with a faith based group to highlight particular points, or a secular group to prompt discussion. One activity in this chapter looks at the difference between wishing and praying (p.37), which I would feel comfortable using in a variety of settings with different young people from varying backgrounds.

In the next four chapters, the author considers some of the 'deeper' questions surrounding life and its meaning. Nemko discusses the commonly asked questions of 'Why Do Bad Things Happen?' (p. 42), 'Is There A God?' (p. 56), 'What Happens Next?' (p. 69) which looks at life after death and 'What Do I Believe?' (p. 79). These chapters draw information from the major world religions to give an overview of what different faiths believe in answer to these questions. These chapters can be dipped into for some brief understanding on the major world religions or used as a strong foundation for a more in-depth piece of work.

The final chapter considers the place spirituality has in our individual lives. Nemko succinctly discusses the idea of spirituality. However, in defining it, she is careful to suggest what it can involve rather than dictate its meaning – 'so, perhaps, spirituality is an open-minded, questioning belief that accepts that there is more to life than what we see' (p. 98). The author considers spirituality within personal awareness and development and how, by understanding what we believe as individuals, we can have a greater chance of developing a understanding of other people's beliefs. Something that can lead us to 'a change in

attitude, a greater self-esteem and a greater confidence in our relationships with others' (p.99).

The book is finished off with a helpful glossary of terms which is easy to use, giving quick, concise definitions for some of the terms employed in the book which may be new to the reader.

Overall, the book gives practitioners the tools to open up discussions with colleagues and young people about what can be sensitive issues. I wonder if it may be more helpful to include the sections which introduce the major world faiths earlier in the book as a knowledge of these would give a better foundation for using the activities which are inspired by the discussions and themes raised. However, having worked with a number of young people who have seemingly unending questions about spirituality, I was interested and pleased to find that the author tackles this huge subject matter in a thought-provoking, concise manner, while not shying away from vital topics and questions.

As a practitioner I can see that the activities in the book would be helpful as tools for opening up a number of conversations on various levels with young people and adults in a non-threatening manner. I would choose appropriate exercises from the book and use them with necessary adaptations for the groups I work with, while recommending the book to other colleagues I work with who are also looking for a resource which tackles this huge, often unmentioned issue of spirituality with tack and diplomacy.

Katherine Whittaker was until recently a youth worker with a Christian organisation in Derbyshire.

Mae Shaw, Jane Meagher and Stuart Moir
Participation in Community Development: problems and possibilities
Niace 2007
ISBN: 1 86201 956 8
£6.00 (pbk)
pp. 126

Mike Bell

Participation in Community Development marks the sixteenth birthday of the journal *Concept*. The publication brings together 19 articles written during this period; the purpose is to use the historical perspective granted by these papers to inform and aid debate about current and future policy and practice.

In some aspects *Concept* is a unique academic publication; it is deliberately used to provide a platform for accessible debate for those working in the field. Though the work of academics does feature, the bulk of the content is drawn from practitioners facing the daily realities and pressures of the real world.

To my mind, *Participation in Community Development* pivots around four key articles, these

are the editorial introduction written by Mae Shaw, Jane Meagher and Stuart Moir and articles 2, 8 and 16, written by Ian Cooke, Gary Craig and Chik Collins respectively; these papers are explored in turn below.

Naturally the introductory chapter sets the scene by putting the publication in context. It is explained that the papers included in the reader 'highlight the contradictions and challenges produced by different contexts of practice' (page 7). The challenges and contradictions of which the authors speak are borne out of contested notions of political participation, which, it is argued, arose through the emerging crises of the post war welfare state and the incompatible ideals of enhancing 'the exercise of democracy' and at the same time ensuring a 'cheaper means of service delivery in a shrinking economy' (page 8). These contradictions, it is explained, are of particular relevance to Community Work, as the discipline was institutionalised, in part, to manage these very tensions; Community Work, the authors argue, inherited the ambivalent purpose of 'deepening and extending democratic citizenship and, simultaneously, regulation of that process to politically acceptable limits' (page 8).

From this juncture the paper moves on to explore the ways in which the language of partnership became central to the economic restructuring associated with the pro-market policies pursued by successive Conservative and Labour governments over the past thirty years. It is convincingly and articulately argued that under the Conservative government, 'participation' was used as a kind of cover for rolling back the state and exposing deprived communities to the whims of the market; this process it is argued, has evolved under New Labour, where, through the growth of a range of social partnerships, the language of participation has been used to encourage community groups to expect less from the state and to do more for themselves (page 10).

If the introductory chapter sets the scene from above, so to speak, then Chapter 2, written by Ian Cooke quickly roots the book in the daily realities of life in the field. Written in 1991, the paper is used to deal with the authors concerns about the Urban Aid programme and the implications for professional practice. Though at the time of writing the programme had been in operation for eight years, Cooke explains that other than a vague instruction to 'maximise urban aid' (page 15) there was very little in the way of national policy framework or regional strategy guiding the use of associated resources and no evaluation to assess its relevance or effectiveness.

Cooke explains that his concern in writing the article was over the impact Urban Aid programmes were having upon the community development process. He argues that if the role of the worker is reduced to one of simple 'resource getter' and 'project assessor', then the space for any radical practice is undermined. Similarly, he argues that if the energies of community activists are directed into staffing management committees with responsibilities to oversee project development and ensure financial solvency, then their political imagination will be dulled.

Gary Craig's article picks up where Ian Cooke left off, reflecting on largely the same issues, only within the emerging policy framework of Social Inclusion in 1995. Craig explores the evolving language of Social Inclusion to ponder how anti poverty campaigners can use it to

their advantage. He starts by exploring the political discourse of 'poverty' over the past 400 years and notes that the term has always been used to blame the poor for the problems they face; he explains that efforts to ameliorate poverty have tended to reflect these biases.

Though, like Ian Cooke, he is somewhat sceptical of the ways in which community workers will be expected to interact with the newly emerging Social Inclusion Partnerships, Craig's article does reflect a degree of hope that the language of Social Inclusion may be used to promote a different understanding of the cause and effects of exclusion. He notes that where 'poverty' is too easily used to individualise and stigmatise the poor, 'social inclusion' promotes a broader understanding of the myriad effects of poverty and may be helpful in asserting the idea that it is political and economic restructuring which causes inequality; social exclusion, he contends, implies that poverty is something which is done to, and not by, the poor.

Written in 2004, just as the Scottish Executive was launching the Community Planning agenda upon Scottish Local Authorities, Chik Collins' article brings the analysis up to date. For those not in the know, Community Planning Partnerships are new community forums where the espoused purpose is to make public services more accountable to the electorate, they are also now responsible for overseeing efforts to regenerate deprived communities.

Given that the Community Planning agenda was launched in a policy report peppered with positive spin about the promise of partnership working for 'closing the gap' between deprived and more affluent communities, Chik's article is written with some bemusement. Retracing the history of partnership working over the past twenty years, from New Life Partnerships (which succeeded Urban Aid Partnerships) to Social Inclusion Partnerships, Chik draws on a range of research and policy reports which suggest they have largely failed in their stated aims of reducing poverty.

Noting that each successive partnership arrangement is usually built upon the same core assumptions as the preceding arrangement, about the causes and effects of poverty, Chik does not hold out too much hope that things will improve significantly under Community Planning. This is somewhat justified in my opinion. However, drawing upon the work of the Danish political scientist Martin Marcusse and specifically his work in relation to the life cycle of political ideas, Collins reckons we are in the final throws of the partnership game.

In one way or another, the articles that fall in between those noted above explore the general themes and issues they outline. On the whole then, *Participation in Community Development* is certainly a useful publication; its main value comes as a historical document. It serves to remind us of where we've been and how we got there; it prompts us to think more critically about the future. Also, the editors must be commended for giving people in the field the opportunity to reflect on and theorise their practice.

This said, there are weaknesses with some of the texts. It is evident that a proportion of the contributors have been educated at the Moray House School of Education, and many of the texts draw heavily upon the theoretical frameworks that are taught there; for those who have also studied there like me, this can make the reading a bit repetitive.

Also, some articles err toward description rather than analysis; they are used by the authors to tell the wider field about the work they have been involved in, and, at times, there is not enough engagement with social and political theory. It may be that the heavy focus on process evident within these articles, betrays a lack of confidence amongst field workers about our ability to help local communities secure meaningful outcomes.

All in all though, a useful publication and I would recommend it.

Mike Bell, Capacity Building Project, Edinburgh.

Peter Conrad
Identifying Hyperactive Children: The Medicalization of Deviant Behavior
(Expanded Edition)
Ashgate 2006
ISBN 07546 4518 5
184 pp

Don Blackburn

ADHD, hyperactivity, hyperkinesis, minimal brain dysfunction and a range of other labels have been increasingly applied to children since the 1960s. They are labels that denote some difference in children's behaviour from other children – usually implied to be over-activity, lack of concentration and so on. They are usually the sort of actions that schools find difficult to manage in the context of mass schooling, large classes, high staff turnover and teacher shortages.

It may be significant that the increase in incidence of ADHD is related to the removal of dietary requirements for school dinners, together with the disgraceful consequences of privatising the school meals service. No one should be surprised at what may be an associated moral panic about childhood obesity. Equally the reduction in school playing fields and the marginalisation of school sport in the National Syllabus (I continue to refuse to dignify it as a curriculum) may also be key factors in these 'conditions'. However instead of seeking answers in the poverty of children's school experience, the dominant tendency is to regard the child as the problem. The low priority given to children's education is reflected in the school buildings themselves. Even where maintenance has been kept up – the buildings themselves are often unimaginative, cramped and not related to children's own needs- how many secondary schools have adequate locker spaces? Teachers often do exceptionally well in trying to make the context interesting – but with difficulty. It is not surprising that children lose interest or are easily distracted, bored and so forth in these settings. The National Syllabus is a further constraint on both teachers and children in these settings.

The original edition of the book grew out of the author's PhD thesis with an additional chapter. It focuses on 'hyperactivity' or 'hyperkinesis', terms that were in use before the development of the term ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). This new edition has an updated introduction by the author, and also has a further article by Deborah Potter charting the changes in the use of the diagnosis of ADHD from a childhood to a lifetime

condition. Conrad's hope for the re-publication of the book is that further interest in the phenomenon of ADHD will be stimulated. He nicely indicates his initial interest in this area by asking:

> *Where were all the hyperactive children before the middle 1950s? When this writer was in elementary school there were no hyperactive children; active children, disruptive children, restless children, yes, but no hyperactive children.* (p. 6)

This book was a pioneering study when first published in 1975. It was one of the first in the USA to critically examine the institutional process of identifying and labelling children as deviant, within a medical framework. The tendency then was to accept medical decisions and medical categories uncritically. In the case of children with special needs, there was a growing recognition of the flexibility of the terminology, and also that many of the categories of disability, which had been written into educational law in the UK, had been replaced in the early 1970s.

The study began as a analysis of the labelling process, a focus of many sociological studies in the 1970s, but it quickly shifted to a focus on the medicalisation of human conditions, with the identification of 'hyperactivity' in children as the example. In his introduction, Conrad points to the persistence until today of many of the issues that he identified in the original study. Children have been identified by their behaviour, most of the children who are so identified are of school age, pharmaceutical stimulants are used to control the behaviour, aspects of the disorder are still controversial with parents teachers and medics central to the identification process and 'despite new medical theories implicating brain and genetics, physiological causes remain unproven and contentious' (p. xi).

The prevalence in the USA of these kinds of labels in the 1970s was 3% to 5% of school children; in 2004 this had increased to 7% of school children that equated to about 4million children aged 6-11 assumed to have the condition! Conrad quotes from a Doctor Biederman who estimated that perhaps 8 million adults also had the condition. The gender differences in diagnosis are also striking with a ratio of 9 boys to 1 girl who has had this diagnosis. In 2000 – 2002 the estimate of children actually treated for ADHD in the USA was about 5 million. Conrad points to the big business that this entailed for the drug companies, with specialist prescriptions for Ritalin (one of the key pharmaceuticals prescribed for ADHD) increasing from 183,000 in 1991 to 1.58 million prescriptions in 1995. There is also very limited research into the relationship between the promotional activities of the drug companies and the rising incidence of diagnosis. Conrad comments that the USA is the ADHD capital of the world with rates of diagnosis between 10 and 30 times that of the UK.

Conrad's study is in the sociological tradition that explored the ways in which behaviour comes to be identified as deviant, together with an examination of the social reaction to the label of deviance. The focus is on the reaction, not on the actions of the individual who is labelled as deviant. In other words the assumption is that the deviance is not an inherent quality of the person, rather that it is a social process that confers a particular status to an individual or group. There have been a number of criticisms of this approach and Conrad usefully spends some time in defending both this and his approach. He argues that many

critics of labelling theory misunderstand the approach, possibly misunderstanding the term 'labelling theory'. He points out that it is neither a theory in reality, nor is it confined to labelling. Rather it is an approach 'an interactionist perspective on deviance' (from Howard Becker). It is not necessary to construct an explanation, nor to understand the behaviour of an individual labelled as deviant in order to understand the social process involved. He goes on to cover the debate about illness as deviance from the work of Talcott Parsons in the 1950s through to the 1970s with writers such as Elliott Friedson. Conrad also considers the significance of deviance being categorised as illness.

The study begins with an investigation of the medical 'discovery' and diagnosis of 'hyperactivity'. Conrad points out that there were no articles on hyperactivity or hyperkinesis before 1967, and then there was a substantial increase through the 1970s. In relation to the pharmaceuticals used in the treatment of these disorders, there were two major suppliers, Smith, Klein and French who supplied Dexedrine, and CIBA who supplied Ritalin. This was at a time when the medical response to mental illnesses was increasingly turning to a whole range of medications, such as tranquillisers and anti-depressants. At the same time there was a growing interest in the USA in children's mental health, whereas previously this had been relatively ignored. In the USA a government committee was the key to official recognition and approval of medical treatment of the condition of 'hyperactivity'. Conrad remarks that this formal recognition of the disorder came 20 years after the effects of the drugs on children were noted. He comments:

> *an extremely cynical reading of the history of medical control might be that the label (of hyperactivity/hyperkinesis) was invented to facilitate the use of … psychoactive drugs.* (p.15) *The drug companies spent a good deal of time and money promoting the use of stimulants, in the treatment of children for these 'conditions', to doctors*.

In the 1970s although drugs were prescribed for hyperactivity, their effect was difficult to predict, and they were often used as a diagnostic tool. In other words children had the drugs prescribed and if they appeared to work, then this was taken as confirmation that the child was hyperactive. In Conrad's study, only 60% of the children responded to the medication, and it is not clear how much of this was due to the placebo effect. Conrad also discusses the way in which parents are involved in the process of labelling children. He argues that the allocation of a medically recognised label can both give access to a range of resources and can also do something to reduce the guilt that often attaches to having children considered difficult by schools. The idea that there may be a biological reason for the child's behaviour removes the blame from parents who face significant social and institutional pressure to allocate responsibility.

In Chapter three, Conrad justifies his choice of research method – a qualitative exploration carried out in the paediatric centre of a large hospital. He observed the clinical assessment of more than 40 children, and interviewed 38 parents but only 3 teachers, which he acknowledges is one of the weaknesses of the study. He also acknowledges the limited generalisation possible from such a small sample.

In an interesting chapter five, Conrad describes the identification process, and particularly the way in which the child is compared with his or her peers in terms of performance. This

identification of a problem is clearly linked to adult expectations of the child's behaviour and school performance. Within families, parents often accommodated themselves to the child's behaviour, and would tend to 'normalise' it – that is treat it as part of a spectrum of possible behaviours. So some of the mothers would say that they didn't think the child was abnormal 'he's just a boy' for example was a common comment. Parents often reported that the child was "really no problem before he went to school" (p.36). In other words there was a high level of family tolerance towards a range of behaviours. This underlines the key issue of the ability of schools to accommodate themselves to the range of children's behaviour. Schools identified children as hyperactive either because of over-activity or underachievement. One child was even described by school as being 'over helpful'! The failure of a school's technique for managing children leads to the next stage of defining children as having a medical condition. In just over half of the children, the school was the key initiator of the process of diagnosis – usually the teacher, but occasionally the head. In some cases it was the school that insisted on the prescription of medication in order that they retain the child in school. Conrad found that schools were more powerful agents in the identification process. There was considerable weight given to the reports from schools in the process of diagnosis. The school report appeared to Conrad to be the confirming evidence accepted by the medics. He also found that little of the child's medical history actually affected the diagnosis.

The availability of the label of hyperactivity may also lead some parents to apply the label to their child, and then seek medical confirmation. This is an argument also presented in the extra chapter on adult ADHD by Deborah Potter and Peter Conrad:

> *popularisation (sic) may also play a part in diagnostic expansion. Media including TV, popular literature and now the Internet, spread the word quickly about illnesses and treatment. The popularisation of symptoms and diagnoses can create new 'markets' for disorders and empower previously unidentified sufferers to seek treatment as new or expanded medical explanations become popularly available.* (p. 124)

In some cases parents went from one medic to another until they found one who would provide a diagnosis with which they could agree (p. 40). If parents initiated the diagnostic process then medics formally diagnosed only 38% of the children. On the other hand if schools initiated the process then medics formally diagnosed 91% of the children. Conrad speculates that medical staff may treat school reports as 'more objective' than parents. It is certainly plausible that relationships between institutions are more powerful than relationships between individuals and institutions. There are more formal rule systems governing the relationships between institutions. The processes of assessment and evaluation are also formalised and regulated, unlike the processes within families that give rise to anxieties about children's behaviour. Medics might therefore assume that a school report or referral is based upon a substantial history of evidence gathering and careful analysis to support formal judgements made about a child. Medics were not usually the prime movers in any diagnosis; doctors had initially referred only 8% of the children.

One of the themes Conrad explores in more detail in chapter 6 is the lack of clarity about the conditions being diagnosed. This uncertainty applies to the 'condition' itself, such as disagreement about the nature, symptoms, treatment, diagnostic and screening tools. He

also points to the general uncertainty in the medical profession and its knowledge base – which is a mixture of scientific knowledge, impressionistic interpretation and historical practice. The uncertainty of medics themselves, he suggests, "stems from the limits of medical knowledge, the absence of training in a certain medical area, or the ambiguity of the evidence" (p. 53).

In the case of hyperactivity, behavioural reports (from others) rather than the medics own observations are central to the diagnostic process. Many of the staff in the paediatric clinic felt that they had insufficient knowledge or training to be confident in their diagnoses. 'My impression is that doctors are like ducks out of water trying to interpret educational test scores and behavioural (sic) reports' (p.56). This points to the interesting situation where the doctor has the formal responsibility to label the condition for access to 'treatment' but are actually within the control of other professionals (teachers) together with parents. Acceding to requests from others might seem an easy outcome to a doctor in some state of uncertainty, especially where teachers and parents appear to agree about the condition. This also raises interesting questions about the nature of the 'medicalisation' process. It is often assumed and taken for granted that if there is a dominance of a 'medical model' in relation to disability, that it is related to the power and influence of doctors. Yet here in Conrad's study it appears to be the case that doctors are the least influential in decision making. It is the non-medical participants who are asking for an extension of medical authority over an area that has not previously been within their remit.

Conrad discusses the implications of these issues in the final sections and points to the need for medics to be more sceptical about the process of identification of new conditions. He also argues they should be more aware of their possible roles in the social processes that label children in the way indicated in the study. One of his key conclusions is that the process of medicalisation meets the need of institutions like schools, and by implication may not be in the interests of the child. This should mean that the old question of 'who benefits' should underpin scepticism about these processes. The history of schools is littered with examples of the allocation of various labels to children as a consequence of their unwillingness or inability to fit into the institutions of schooling. It is astonishing how complacent most people are about the idea that children should be forced to go to school by the state. Going to school is not regarded as problematic; it may at worst be considered, like some medicine, a necessary but perhaps nasty tasting experience. Rarely is it questioned that children ought to be ordered about and regimented in ways that most adults would resent.

The shameful destruction of any meaningful debate about the nature and aims of education by Tory and Labour governments, the National Syllabus and accompanying half-baked management rhetoric are all reflections of this. There is almost no debate about the institutionalisation and incorporation of children into the dominant ideological framework, which is one that is fundamentally based on inequality. To compound this, deviations from the school's rule system also acquire punishment together with labels that follow children into adult life. In the case of school absence, children and parents are punished, sometimes with fines or prison. Ironically children are also excluded from schools with few or no sanctions for the authorities and schools that then fail in their duty to educate children. There are significant numbers of children whose schooling in reality ends well before the

legal time limit, with apparently little interest from the same politicians who lambaste parents whose children miss school. It's true that many teachers will argue that schools are doing their best to allow each child to develop their abilities and interests. However, the reality often seems a long way from the educational promise.

To point out that schooling, especially at secondary level, is a form of unpaid work for children, with the clear purpose in the UK (and other states) of disciplining the young into acceptable work habits, is to be regarded as eccentric – at the very least. It usually generates a good deal of spluttering indignation, with the same sort of mindless nonsense that accompanies claims that National Service is good for young people. Preparation for work is almost the only justification given to schooling by politicians, and is always their excuse for interfering in the school system. Tony Blair's slogan wasn't 'education, education, education', what he really meant was 'schooling, schooling, and more schooling' the regulation and control of the young, not their emancipation.

In many ways it is easy in our imaginary meritocratic society to place these sorts of labels on young people. New Labour individualise various social problems, seeing them as individual pathology rather than structural inequality. If people are perceived as the beneficiaries of rewards from a bountiful state then the prime explanation for failure will be that it flows from personal shortcomings, disability or medical condition. This appears to underpin a callous disregard for the poor, where Labour politicians no longer have any moral qualms about penalising single parents, people with disabilities or young people for not fitting themselves up with jobs. They are also to be punished for not saying 'thank you'. The political class seem genuinely hurt by the contagious refusal of the population to recognise all the good things that have been done for them – they are hurt that people are not more grateful. It seems relatively unsurprising in this context that deviant labels like ADHD and a host of others become attached to children during school years, reflecting the focus on regimentation rather than education. The limited criticism of the use of ADHD and similar labels, is also a reflection of the general tendency to see problems residing in young people themselves, rather than the institutions. A reflection of the limited degree to which children and young people have the capacity to engage critically with the institutions that are supposed to serve their interests.

In relation to the allocation of ADHD and similar labels to children, there is a considerable degree of uncertainty and ambiguity – they appear to be fuzzy categories that enable schools to legitimate other forms of control than those that are normally at a school's disposal. This uncertainty also applies to explanations of these conditions, with speculation ranging from genetic causes, small amounts of neurological damage, additives in food, sugar metabolism and so forth. I am very sceptical about the existence of such a disorder – ask any teacher what children will be like on a wet Thursday afternoon, after being kept in all day and you would have a very good approximation of the behaviour labelled as hyperactive. In addition, we probably all remember those lovely summer afternoons, when the time dragged unmercifully as we were bored rigid by some tedious recitation. Maintaining concentration and sitting still in those circumstances would have taken a massive effort against the odds.

Conrad's original book was a significant contribution to understanding the way in which

labels like ADHD come to be allocated and used by institutions. Further, it has more general implications about the way that institutional needs take precedence over individual, especially children's needs. This new edition is a timely reminder of that debate and remains a valuable text today. It has not aged.

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Mary Jane Kehily (ed)
Understanding Youth: perspectives, identities and practices
Sage Publications 2007
ISBN 978-1-412930-65-9
£21.99 (Pbk)
pp. 362

Fred Cartmel

Understanding Youth is an Open University edited textbook, which is divided into three distinct sections about youth: perspectives, identities and practices. The perspectives section on youth is further divided into three different chapters that provide contrasting theoretical viewpoints on youth: one anthropological and two sociological perspectives. The cultural perspective chapter traces the emergence of youth through from the early 20th century to the modern day debate about the existence of subcultures or neo-tribes. The chapter has an excellent section on gender and subcultures, a neglected area of study in the youth literature. The chapter provides the reader with a good overview about the cultural aspects of youth, although there could have been more emphasis on recent theories of cultural approaches to youth subcultures. The comparative perspective is an unusual addition to a book about young people as it investigates youth from an anthropological viewpoint and is an excellent introduction for students to different aspects of youth. Social anthropology provides different theoretical perspectives on investigating young people but more importantly uses alternative methodologies.

The theoretical section on biographical perspectives was rather disappointing. The first part of the chapter discusses the methodological issues about undertaking biographical research, with a section on the results that are emerging from a longitudinal qualitative research project being undertaken by the author. Undoubtedly, life biography is a very useful research tool for investigating the lives of young people but stressing the importance of biographical research can mask structured inequalities that are often ignored when analysing life stories. The author makes little reference to the importance of the social background of the respondents and how this can mould their lives and their responses to the interviewer's questions. Academic researchers require information on the background of the young people before useful conclusions can be drawn about the nature of their lives. The author of the biography chapter embraces the theories of 'individualisation' and 'late modernity' in the late modern perspectives without any concerns about the criticisms that these two concepts have generated within the field of youth studies (see Furlong and Cartmel 2007). Through not challenging the two contested concepts the biographical section becomes rather predictable with a section on 'normal' and 'choice' biographies, which only occur in countries with no social polarisation and to young people from middle class backgrounds.

The author does state that 'a biographical approach draws attention to young people's agency it should not, in the process obscure the enduring importance of structural inequalities' (103). A balanced chapter would have been achieved if structural inequalities had been emphasised throughout.

The identities section of the collection is sub-divided into three chapters: gender, belonging and wellbeing, which all investigate different issues around identity. Young masculinities are addressed in the excellent gender chapter, which also investigates young men, emotions and relationships. The next chapter involves exploring belonging in relation to community, choice and diversity. Young people's health is discussed in the wellbeing chapter and covers the main health problems that young people face, with a very interesting discussion around the links between young people with anorexia nervosa and education and the youth labour market.

The practice section has four chapters investigating issues surrounding youth: working, playing, moving and relating. Working remains a central part of most young people's lives and the chapter highlights the main discussions around young people and employment. Playing follows work and is an interesting chapter that explores young people and the changing nature of play. The chapter on moving contains sections on leaving care, unaccompanied minors and then one section on young people who take a gap year. Although a gap year is an interesting topic there is no reference to young people who were raised in disadvantaged areas and have accessed Higher Education. These young people have a different student experience and it appears that the middle class higher education experience is now being touted as the only student experience in Britain. The book concludes with an interesting chapter investigating relationships. All the chapters have questions specific to the chapter at the end and have key points relating to issues raised in the text. The chapters already discussed contribute to our understanding of youth and are a good introduction to academic literature on young people.

The book would have been more balanced if a chapter had been included in the perspectives section on the structuralists approach, which would have provided the students with another theoretical perspective on youth. Social background at the beginning of the 21st century still remains the main determinant of young people's life chances. In Britain, teenage pregnancy is more likely to occur among girls from poorer backgrounds, young men are more likely to be a victim of violence than any other age group and males from certain ethnic backgrounds are most likely to leave school without any educational qualifications. Although some of my comments have been negative about *Understanding Youth* I think that this will be useful text for first year students on all youth courses. The book is of limited relevance for academics or practitioners in the youth field due to its introductory nature.

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E. Kay, M. Tisdall, J. M. Davis, M. Hill and A. Prout (eds)
Children, Young People And Social Inclusion: Participation for what?
The Policy Press, November 2006
ISBN 1 86134 662 X
£21.99 (pbk)
pp. 256

Annie Franklin

This book is a welcome addition to the literature, which is still relatively sparse when we consider that 'Children's and Young People's Rights' – as a field in both social policy and its study – is entering its own 'adulthood'.

The text focuses on the extent to which social inclusion policies are meeting the needs and rights of children and young people. It aims to examine critically the concepts of participation and social inclusion [terms, it argues, with almost identical definitions] and their links with children and childhoods; to consider the geography of social inclusion and exclusion; to explore children's and young people's own conceptualisations of social inclusion and exclusion; and to examine how these concepts have been expressed in policy at various levels.

The book is organised into three parts. Part One is on Children and Poverty and explores poverty as a barrier to social inclusion as well as children's own perspectives and other ways of achieving social inclusion.

The chapter on the effects of poverty on children's and young people's ability to participate (Tess Ridge), draws on two research studies looking at the lives of families with low incomes. It inevitably states the obvious, that children's lives are limited by poverty and that children understand this. But it gives interesting evidence of how poverty works as a barrier to social relationships, school attendance and educational success. And ends with suggestions for government policy changes including both increased financial support for low income families and a more meaningful response to children's expressed needs eg for accessible leisure.

The chapter on children's perspectives on social exclusion and the resilience of disadvantaged urban communities (Hill, Turner, Walker, Stafford and Seaman) reports children's own comments on their lives and situations and how they cope with issues they face, which seemed to be mainly about bullying and safety on the streets. It argues for a more subtle understanding of poverty's implications for children and a more differentiated response.

Part Two is headed, Participation: politics and policy. It includes chapters on the research agenda; children's participation in public life; the Irish National Children's Strategy; and international developments in children's participation.

The chapter on the Irish National Children's Strategy by John Pinkerton is an interesting case study of a document developed by one nation in an attempt to reflect the changing attitudes towards and expectations of children in a new century, and in a country which has gone through a period of massive growth and globalisation. It describes the development and content of the Strategy and also considers the 'real politic' of implementation.

Pinkerton argues that by supporting, inviting and encouraging, the Strategy creates an opportunity, a policy space, in which a politics of childhood can be more fully developed.

Gerison Landsdown's chapter, on the other hand, reviews a wide range of international developments in children's participation since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was first adopted and looks at lessons and challenges at local, national and international levels; in working with different age ranges; and in addressing the rights and responsibilities debate.

The final part – Opening up theoretical spaces for inclusion and participation – looks at spaces of participation and inclusion; the value of conceptualising public provisions for children as children's spaces, rather than services; and child-adult relations in social space.

In this part, as well as a chapter by Peter Moss, on 'From Children's Services to Children's Spaces' (drawing on the thesis he published with Pat Petrie in a book with the same title), there are chapters on Spaces for Participation and Inclusion (Michael Gallagher) and Child-Adult Relations in Social Space (Berry Mayall).

Mayall's chapter frames children's social relations with adults in the context of socio-political characteristics of child-adult relations in the UK and argues that, while acknowledging the picture is complex, broadly children have more chance of respectful relations with adults in the home than they do with professionals in 'public' space. Three socio-political strands are cited as explaining the UK's distinctive attitude to children and childhood. Patriarchy; social class divisions; and emphasis on protection create a unique combination of barriers to full recognition of children as citizens.

In sum, this book argues that social exclusion takes many forms, some of which are rooted in economic circumstances, but others are connected with social relations, both inter and intra-generational. They suggest that true inclusion may require a range of responses including changes to policy at both the national and local levels and a shift in distribution of social, cultural and material resources. And all of this negotiated with children and young people and adults in a way which requires a complex and dynamic understanding of the processes of social inclusion and exclusion.

Well, we all knew it wasn't going to be easy!

Annie Franklin works as a freelance consultant

Alan Dearling, Tim Newburn and Peter Somerville
Supporting safer communities: Housing, crime and neighbourhoods
Chartered Institute of Housing 2006
ISBN 1 905018 30 4
£25.00 (pbk)
pp. 254

Alison Gelder

This book is part of CIH's housing policy and practice series, in collaboration with the Housing Studies Association, but, it is also a valuable attempt to make connections between the different services and service providers who should be (need to be) working together with residents to address community problems. This makes it much more than a text book. What Dearling et al set out to do is to contribute to the policy debates around popular (with government) topics like 'safe and sustainable communities', 'getting tough on crime and anti-social behaviour' and the 'Respect agenda'.

Their focus is the multifaceted interface between housing service providers, communities and crime and anti-social behaviour and the ways in which different groups share views on what works or are at variance. In doing this the many contributors (for there are 13 chapters by different authors, topped and tailed with chapters by Dearling et al) grapple with defining 'anti-social behaviour' and 'community safety'. In its text book role there is a clear summary of the legislation that has changed the role of social landlords in connection with anti-social behaviour since 1997. However, other key agendas are also addressed, for example, the 'remoralisation' of policy by government, the impact of the residualisation of social housing, and the criminalisation of social policy and the consequent effects on housing. Generally the authors seek to draw attention to the steady broadening of the role of housing professionals and housing providers to encompass, inter alia, crime control. An important message that they seem to be trying to communicate to the housing profession is the requirement to work in partnership with professionals from other disciplines (including youth workers and social workers) and that linked with the growth of these partnerships will be an inevitable blurring of boundaries between previously separate activities and professions.

The material is grouped into four broad themes: 'disorder and regeneration', 'the policing of crime and disorder', 'service provider approaches to safer communities', and 'social inclusion and community safety'. There are lots of references for further reading and a reasonable index but, as someone working with faith-based agencies and groups, I was surprised to see no reference to the role of faith communities in supporting safer communities. More consistent use of summaries at the beginning of the chapters would also have been helpful in navigating both the book and the issues. Shaftoe's chapter (chapter 4) provides an interesting insight and lessons to learn from Denmark and Poland. Kapadia and Robertson raise the issue of gender and set out the stall for the Women's Design Service (chapter 5). Throughout questions are raised about the growth of 'plural policing' and it is particularly helpful to hear the voices of two police officers in Dearling's chapter on neighbourhood policing in chapter 7.

Fotheringham's chapter on neighbourhood wardens (chapter 8) disappointingly seems to miss the critical importance of resident input. One of the key success factors in the Goodwin scheme has been the involvement of resident leaders. He also makes no reference to successful neighbourhood warden schemes operating away from estate environments, such as that in Balsall Heath in Birmingham, for example. In several places there are discussions of the paradox of groups, such as young people, who are both the vulnerable, most likely victims of anti-social behaviour but who are at the same time characterised as the most likely perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, for example in chapter 10 by Harrison and Sanders about the development of 'regulatory therapy'. As might be expected, Williamson's

chapter (13) is a gem. He rehearses the importance of the transition to adulthood in relation to the development and control of anti-social behaviour and points out the impact of de-stabilising factors in adulthood. In one of the most hopeful statements in the book Williamson suggests that the agenda shift from a focus on preventing negative behaviour to one of promoting positive experience.

In their concluding chapter, the editors critically identify the 'democratic deficit' in terms of the accountability of agencies involved in anti social behaviour – a deficit which is particularly apparent where young people are concerned. The dissonance at the heart of the debate about ASBOs and Respect has a deserved spotlight shone upon it. The heart of the problem is identified as the fact that the protagonists are speaking about the same people and behaviour but in different languages. Three conditions for creating a safe community are proposed which should go some way to improving the situation because they put the community rather than the professionals in the driving seat:

1) that the members of the community have some control over what goes on there
2) that the community works with 'positive public enforcement approaches' (like neighbourhood wardens and floating support services)
3) that clashes of cultures are faced and not ignored (see pages 247-248).

The challenge to readers of this book is not only how we can take the debates further, but also how each of us can use the insights offered here to change how we relate to professionals from other disciplines.

Alison Gelder is the Chief Executive of Housing Justice.

Hannah Ford
Women who sexually abuse children
Wiley 2006
ISBN-10 0470015748
£25.99 (paperback)
pp. 204

Barbara L Griffin

On opening the parcel that contained Ford's book about *Women who sexually abuse children* my first response was that I had not ordered this book. On reflection, my response is perhaps how other people react when faced with this challenging subject. Initially, I wanted to pass the parcel on because I thought it was someone else's property. Nevertheless, on reading the book my conclusion is that Hannah Ford, a Research Psychologist for the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, a charity that works with both victims and perpetrators of child sexual abuse, tackles the issue about *Women who sexually abuse children* with great skill, sensitivity and authority. The structure of the book draws the reader's attention to the complexity and difficulties that face practitioners, perpetrators, 'victims' and researchers in this area.

Ford tackles the subject at a number of different levels: from the perspectives of the perpetrator, victim and practitioner. At each of these levels there are challenges to assumptions made by each. In chapter 1, page 7, Ford argues 'Estimating the prevalence of sexual abuse by women has been difficult as the issue is one that until recently has been insufficiently researched'. This book aims to fill this gap in the research and does so by comprehensively drawing together the different elements of this issue.

Ford adopts a wide-ranging approach in explaining what may appear as uncharted territory. The strength of the book is the way Ford carefully presents supportive arguments and counter-arguments to the notion that women can and do sexually abuse children. The book avoids scare mongering by carefully detailing the literature and discussing the problematic nature of assessing the extent of this problem. For example, she illustrates from research that 'victims' may be ignored by professionals if the perpetrator was a woman. The 'victims' may choose to say the perpetrator was a man in order to receive help because male sexual abuse of children is the dominant construction.

The contents of the book are in five parts with eleven chapters. Summaries of the main points at the end of each chapter help the reader to assimilate the arguments before moving onto the next chapter.

Part I explores what is known about sexual abuse by women including the estimated extent of the problem. Ford compares the prevalence of women who sexually abuse children to the prevalence of men who sexually abuse children and considers reasons for the differences. From documented evidence there is a greater prevalence of males sexually abusing females. Nonetheless, is the low number of instances of female abuse to children due to under-reporting of crimes by victims, non-acceptance by professionals or because the number of instances are low. Denial by professionals such as police or probation officers may not consider crime has been committed because of generally held beliefs about women and their caring role with children. Ford discusses the construction of these beliefs without losing sight of the reader who might also be challenged by the nature and prevalence of sexual abuse perpetrated by women. If professionals deny or ignore evidence about women's behaviour then this will impact on the collection of evidence about this behaviour. It also impacts on 'treatment' of perpetrators and the support services for victims.

Ford does not shy away from the hard conclusions one might draw from the evidence that if women do sexually abuse children then who do these victims turn to for help? For instance, Ford discusses how mothers who abuse their sons disguise their abuse as care or medical attention. The problem for the 'victim' is compounded if the mother is a single parent; then it is likely the mother will accompany her son to the doctors should a consultation arise thus making any disclosure problematic.

Part II sets the subject into context and examines the social, cultural and legal implications of sexual abuse committed by women against their children. Ford reviews the existing literature and highlights the gaps in knowledge and the methodological difficulties that impede research in this area. An underestimation of the extent of the problem has implications concerning gaps in knowledge and methodological problems in research studies such as difficulties in drawing conclusive results from small samples.

Part III examines the harm to victims who have been sexually abused by women. Ford challenges the reader to consider what is meant by 'harm' and in doing so provides a well balanced summary of existing research about psychological damage to victims.

Part IV presents the case for further research into this problem including interventions for perpetrators, training for professionals and support for victims. In terms of the professionals, Ford suggests that women convicted of sexually abusing children receive harsher penal sentences and less help in terms of criminal sentences than their male counterparts. Ford provides compelling arguments about how the general cultural beliefs permeate the legal context and the subsequent interventions used to treat perpetrators and provide support to victims.

Part V presents the reader with questions concerning the issue of women who sexually abuse children without scaremongering. Ford's writing brings a difficult subject to light and simultaneously illustrates other aspects of abuse such as how men and women might collude in their sexually abusive behaviour; the authors' final conclusion is that this topic needs further discussion by practitioners and more research in order to be able to offer help to those involved.

This book is valuable to students, practitioners and researchers working with people who are 'victims' or perpetrators of sexual abuse. The strength of this book is the skill with which Ford leads the reader through difficult and challenging material.

Barbara L Griffin, University of Sunderland.

Sturla Bjerkaker and Judith Summers
Learning Democratically: Using study circles
NIACE 2006
ISBN 10 186201 284 9
£12. 95
pp. 123

Tony Jeffs

When the history of education policy during the Thatcher, Major and Blair years comes to be written the chapter on adult education will make for sorry shameful reading. The dismantling of our system of liberal adult education, that had taken centuries of sacrifice and endeavour to create, in less than a quarter of a century has been a heart-rending scandal. One made less easy to bear by the calumny of so many 'professionals' and administrators in whose care it was entrusted. Forget not it was the Vice-Chancellors of some of our leading universities who closed down or emasculated so many Extra-Mural Departments - they were never legally or politically obliged to do so. It was their choice. At the policy level, as always there were micro and macro explanations for why the system was effectively dismantled. In part adult education was the victim of political indifference. The procession of philistines and time-servers appointed to run our education ministries must take their share of the blame. After all in the last few years we have had a Minister of Education who could see no value in studying Medieval History and another who confessed

she had not read a book in the previous 12 months upon being asked to name her best read of the year. Plus a Deputy Prime Minister, who, one suspects with a measure of pride, revealed he had never read a book for pleasure. More significant however has been the underlying distrust of all forms of liberal education that has seeped (or rather been injected) into our political and educational systems at ever level. Liberal education within universities and adult education was about the fostering of conversations and learning that would permit the individual to better 'think for oneself'. It was about 'learning to respond to the invitations of the great intellectual adventures in which human beings have come to display their various understandings of the world and of themselves' (Oakeshott 1989: 22). And as such it sought to offer individuals a route to greater understanding of the world around them and themselves, to gift those who desired it a chance to move forward towards greater intellectual autonomy. 'Thinking for oneself', autonomy and learning what one wishes to learn, as opposed to what others believe you must learn, have of course never been high on the agenda of school-teachers, employers, politicians and the powerful. With few honourable exceptions they prefer training to education, externally imposed curricula to autonomy, docility to irreverence. That is why securing state resources for liberal adult education has always been a struggle. It is why pioneers such as Lovett, in Britain, and Grundtvig, in Denmark vociferously opposed direct state control of education. Sadly the plight of adult education in Britain today confirms the prescience of their analysis - for what they foretold has come to pass. That analysis led Grundtvig and his Scandinavian colleagues to create first the Folk High Schools, then the free schools and eventually the study circle movement.

This short book is an account of how study circles operate and the means by which they can be sustained and developed. This is not a history book, although chapter five does offer the reader a brief overview of how they grew. The thinking behind study circles is simple, but by our standards revolutionary. Basically it is a method based on the idea of individuals freely coming together to manage their own autonomous learning. The guiding principles are mutuality, all are responsible for the learning of themselves and each other; and democracy with content, direction and process freely decided upon by the participants. It is based on the idea that groups of adults who live in reasonably close proximity to each other, or share a common interest, or work together will meet for an agreed period of time to collectively study a particular subject or issue. In some instances it will be because they wish to be better informed about say French literature, opera, global warming, or glass-making; in other circumstances it is because they wish to work towards a mutually agreed end. For example a group of community activists might study the economics of retailing or planning laws in order to better oppose the building of a new hyper-market on the outskirts of town; a mix of social workers, young people in care and parents might study comparative child care policies in order to campaign for better alternatives; or some youth workers might study mentoring programmes in order to decide if they should invest in this option locally.

The philosophy underpinning study circles may be summarised as follows:

- independence and self-determining: participants prepare for the meetings by reading and learning the material the circle itself selects for its work;
- co-operation: closeness and friendliness are essential to the working climate and successful learning;

- relevance and a sense of responsibility: work flows from participants' interests and needs and participants take responsibility for contributing to work in progress. (p. 71)

The idea is simple, cheap and effective. So popular have they become in Scandinavia that the movement has negotiated limited financial support from governments, who have come to view them as an essential component of a healthy system of participatory democracy. Olave Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister, without a hint of sarcasm, once described Sweden as 'to a great extent a study circle democracy'. How very different from our focus group democracy where politicians listen in on the ill-informed opinions of randomly selected voters then trim their policies according to the 'popular' consensus. Today in Norway, 600,000 out of a population of 4.5 million participate in study circles and similar forms of organised liberal adult learning; in Sweden 35 per cent of the population are similarly involved (p. 117).

The book is invaluable because it makes the case for study circles. It tries to find examples of this approach operating in the UK, it 'nips and tucks' and ultimately fails to make a convincing case for any of those cited. Probably because adult education here has been reduced to a jumble of remedial teaching compensating for the failings of our school system, training programmes managed by employers and a threatened rump of taught liberal education programmes. Because we have allowed the participatory democratic model of adult education to wither on the vine and replaced it all too often with trainer-customer alternatives delivering packages to passive 'consumers'. Here we need to reclaim adult education as a tool for liberation rather than a route to subservience. And the best way to do that is probably the development of 'study circles' as an alternative to training events, expensive away days, consultations and for-profit conferences. Think, you could probably fund three or four study circles involving 30 to 50 active learners for the cost of sending one manager to a ridiculously expensive *Young People Now* conference. So perhaps youth workers might begin to consider boycotting such 'jollies' and campaign for training budgets to be transferred to a pool made available for groups of workers, young people and interested outsiders to establish study circles to reflect on practice, policy and, dare one say it, mutual learning. At this point in time that is probably a pretty revolutionary idea.

Reference

Oakeshott, M. (1989) *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.

Tony Jeffs, Durham University

Mark Simpson, Tracy Shildrick and Robert MacDonald (eds)
Drugs in Britain: Supply, Consumption and Control
Palgrave, Macmillan 2006
ISBN 1-4039-3695-1
£19.99 (pbk)
pp.205

Richard H. Kimberlee

This book, specifically aimed at an undergraduate audience, attempts to discuss some of the contradictions and controversies surrounding illegal drug use in Britain. Each chapter contains advice on further readings and there are study questions which students and practitioners may find useful. Most of these chapters are individually fascinating and each will remind policy makers and undergraduate teachers that drug usage and the culture that sustains this illegal activity can only be better understood by anticipating complexity in our understanding of drug usage and diversity in our policy solutions to displace the simplistic stereotypes that continue to sustain political and popular discourses about drugs. For example, McSweeney, Hough and Turnbull's chapter problematises and highlights the complex inter-relationship that exists between drugs and crime. Also, in Crowther-Dowey's chapter, the reader learns that the policing of drug laws continues to exacerbate the problems caused by drugs. Discussing the increasing drift towards the development of multi agency partnerships to deliver effective solutions to the social ailments that confound our communities the latter discusses the dilemmas of both control and punishment, and care and treatment, that have confronted service providers involved in the Brixton/Lambeth Cannabis Experiment. Even though complexity remains the key in this chapter and in others, there is little reference to complexity theory in this book. For example McInness and Barrett usefully review the development and state of drug education in the UK and remind us that there are few simple answers about how to proceed. This resonates with me when reflecting on our recent evaluation of the Rock Challenge drug education prevention programme which, although demonstrating little in terms of statistical impact, revealed masses on strong qualitative, complex outcomes in young people's lives. This prepared me to be more able to listen to similar implicit references to complexity when reading Webster's interesting chapter on drug treatment which the editors argue reveals the complex, shifting and ideological nature of national policy and practice; which the chapter achieves very successfully.

Additional to the implicit and unspoken theme of growing complexity another interesting sub theme of this book is the increasing cultural toleration of illicit drug use in British society which has sparked an evaluation of the normalisation thesis which is usefully reviewed in both Blackman's cultural chapter and in Newcombe's chapter on the trends in the prevalence of illicit drug use in Britain. The latter contains a survey of the evidence; reviews the data on consumption patterns; elucidates on cocaine use in the dance club scene and assesses the so called plateauing-out thesis which is now more apparent in contemporary, large, data sets on drug usage. Newcombe also advocates the growing relevance of cohort approaches to understanding drug careers and for tracking and understanding the aetiology of individual behaviour change. Drug careers are also explored in the editor's chapter which reinforces the sharpness of the divide drawn between different categories of drug users. They argue that a differentiated understanding of normalisation may help to reveal the complexity of young people's drug use beyond the over generalised accounts which sometimes characterise the debate.

Geoffrey Pearson's work and research has always been of interest to me and I believe his work has additionally inspired many undergraduate students. Although, perhaps not directly comparable to his work *Hooligan: a history of respectable fears* (1984) in terms of its breadth and insight, his chapter in this book on dealers details and explores their world and in particular the blurring of dealer/user roles which will provide nascent young undergraduates with a fascinating and realistic insight into the facilitators of pleasure of

often encountered normalised leisure arrangements in university towns around the nation. Highlighting the enduring and self-contained nature of dealer/user cultures he reminds policymakers and practitioners of the complex dynamics that underpin this relationship which will inevitably challenge the normal moral discourse that tend to dominate media and cultural understandings.

Against the orchestral backdrop of complexity delineated in practically every chapter in this book you can surprisingly read Shane Blackman's chapter on how illegal drugs have featured in popular culture and an evaluation of their contribution to normalisation processes. This chapter opens with an auto-biographical sub-cultural encounter which is vacuous to say the least. But, unlike any other contributor, Blackman bravely sticks his neck out and suggests that youth culture and recreational drug consumption have been a constant commercial strategy used by capitalism to attract income generation. Stating the obvious this chapter provides a tortuous and selective review of drug references in cultural works which not only ignores effect debates, but also constructs phases of youth culture which additionally suffer from similar amnesiac related problems. Being a veteran of the Stonehenge Free Festival I can still recall the near sunrise apocalyptic rendition of *Thank Christ for the Bomb* by prog' rock group the Groundhogs before experiencing the druid led solstice celebration in '83. Instead of mythologizing the experience and blaming capitalism this encounter made me realise that a lot of cultural endurance experienced by young people was simply rubbish and relatively undeserving of the intense attention we pay to it from our own selective cultural plateaus. Despite my reservations on selectivity this remains an enjoyable chapter, but to me it is perhaps a bit misplaced in this over wise excellent excursion and insight into the supply, control and consumption of drugs in Britain today.

Richard H Kimberlee is a Senior Research Fellow at University of the West of England, Bristol.

Hazel L. Reid and Alison J. Fielding
Providing Support to Young People: A guide to interviewing in helping relationships
Routledge 2007
ISBN 978 0 415 41960 4
£18.99 [pbk]
pp. 110

Thoby Miller

Reading this book in the context of the breaking news of Connexions impending 'partnership' with the Youth Service in Chester and the likelihood of further arrangements of this kind occurring elsewhere, it is hard to avoid some apprehension over how it may influence youth work practice, particularly when it has been written as the result of a request from the Connexions Service.

The foreword by Ken Roberts suggests that the book is relevant to a wide range of practitioners, providing a non-directive toolkit which works through a three-part sequence from where the young person is, to where they would like to be, via possible means of

getting there, on the basis that any of these three elements are liable to change and thus need constant re-assessment. This sounds like a reasonable approach but the devil is not so much in the detail as in the context in which the help is being offered.

In the Introduction, the proposed Single Interaction model [SIM] is designed to emphasise the importance of listening to the young person's narrative and 'talking with a shared purpose' to support the young person in their own decision-making. It is based on the concern expressed in *Every Child Matters* and *Youth Matters* for standardised provision and the need for a recognised framework, a more focused approach to youth support. The insistence on the need for standardised provision and a recognised framework raises the question of whose needs are being met; it does not seem to be the needs of young people. It seems more likely that a 'focused approach' would fit more easily into a regime of accountability and audit, enabling a more efficient, though less effective way of 'managing' young people.

The SIM model is intended to be flexible and able to be adapted to different situations and in this respect, there is no doubt that there are some very useful individual strategies which could be used within many areas of social education. The concern however, is whether attempts might be made to propose such a model in its entirety, as a benchmark for what comprises good youth work. Its instrumental, goal-oriented and focused intentions are only one aspect of working with young people and cannot be seen as a framework for holistic practice.

Chapter 2 provides a definition of the nature of a 'professional helping relationship' which is seen as formal in that it is governed by ethical codes of practice, seeming to imply that informal relationships with young people are not similarly constrained; a suggestion that is both unfortunate and ill-informed. The authors use Egan's phrase 'skilled helper' to describe a goal-oriented, action-related intervention, based on reaching an agreement on how to reach positive outcomes with young people. They offer an 'alternative' to directive and non-directive approaches which they describe as 'facilitating', where the helper attempts to guide the young person to make their own decisions, in the context of their own lives. The relationship is intended to enable young people to move towards their personal goals and strengthen their ability to manage issues or problems, as part of a reflective learning process. However there are difficulties in these claims. Egan's model is specific to counselling and thus restricted in its potential use. Furthermore, the SIM model is adapted from Egan's to enable shorter interventions to take place, with all three stages [agreeing an agenda, identifying goals and planning action] to be completed within a single interaction. This is an unrealistic timescale for a model that is aimed at enabling young people to construct meaning in their lives by facilitating them to understand their own stories. It is hard to see how a single interaction could do any more that initiate this process. Providing genuine support to young people needs to be part of a long term process, not a short term expedient.

Chapter 3 gives details on the various activities that might make up a helping relationship, including informing, advising, assessing, enabling, advocating, feeding back, networking and referring. Whilst these are listed as a menu of possibilities rather than a checklist to be followed, how many of these activities could be included within a single interaction? Is

this a model that has been principally designed to respond to demands for accountability? Furthermore, there is the distinct possibility that some young people may not be ready for any of these activities and may need more 'unfocused' support before any of the above activities can be embarked upon.

Chapters 4 and 5 expand on the role of the youth support worker and concede how complex it is and we might add, how extremely busy these workers will be, as they try to achieve all three stages of the SIM model in one session, selecting from a number of possible helping strategies, whilst maintaining a sensitivity to preferred learning styles and cultural values and a genuine, respectful and empathic relationship. Of course, these are all worthy goals but if such an intervention is to be genuine, the young person needs time to consider and reflect. This is not a process which can be hurried if it is to avoid being either superficial or highly directive.

Despite my reservations about the model as a whole and the reasons for its being developed, there is no doubt that Chapter 6 with its detail on helping skills and strategies provides a valuable resource, with the strategies described capable of being adapted to many different purposes and situations. There remains however a fundamental concern that the framework provided in this book offers many of the elements of good youth work practice within a context that is too narrow to allow such helping strategies to be developed properly. As youth transitions become ever more protracted and complicated, young people need time to make sense of their own personal narratives and the direction in which they might lead, not the token gesture of a single interaction which attempts to provide far more than it could possibly achieve.

Thoby Miller, Youth and Community Studies, NEWI – Wrexham.

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The Harvard system should be used for references ie. author's surname and year of publication in brackets, with page numbers where appropriate eg. (Smith, 1994:25); 'as Smith (1994:25) suggests ...'; or 'Smith's (1996) argument is ...'

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Report:
The Thompson Report (1982) Experience and Participation, Cmnd 8686, London: HMSO.

Abbreviations which are commonly understood can be used, but please spell out in full, with the abbreviation following in brackets, the first time they are used.

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